

System of Care Planning and Policy Council

Statement of Vision

Children and adolescents will achieve self-sufficiency and wellness and become productive members of their communities with the support of integrated, client-centered, family-focused, and culturally responsive services facilitated by creative and innovative staff in the least restrictive, least intrusive settings possible.

Purpose

The purpose of the System of Care Planning and Policy Council is:

- To ensure the inclusion of the community, so that cultural competence is inherent in all aspects of its governance structure, decision-making process, and service delivery on behalf of children and families in Contra Costa County.
- To work collaboratively to advise and make recommendations regarding programs, service delivery and allocation of resources for the benefit of children and families.
- To review and revise policies in order to create interagency ownership of children and youth within our County.
- To implement a shift from a particular array of services to the collective need of children within Contra Costa County, including the population of children with SED who may have barriers to accessing the System of Care within their respective public agencies.
- To expand the knowledge of each agency's parameters regarding the referral of children within Contra Costa County including children with SED and the children in out-of-home placements into the service-delivery system and the evaluation of outcomes.
- To troubleshoot and resolve barriers that may interfere with the delivery of services to children and families within each public agency.

Principles

The System of Care Planning and Policy Council has revised and adopted the following System of Care Principles:

1. Clearly identified target population

Since there are not enough resources to serve all children, social and fiscal responsibility suggests that public agencies first give priority to children with complex needs and their families who are the most vulnerable, most in need of services, and most costly to society. However, an effective System of Care will also include prevention and early intervention services to benefit all children. Service planning and delivery should be based upon a culturally responsible assessment of the needs of the target population.

2. Clearly defined and measurable goals and objectives

The cornerstone goal of an effective System of Care is to bring together the resources and expertise of families and appropriate public and private agencies in providing the highest quality services to the target population in the most efficient and cost effective manner. Outcomes of achieving the goals and objectives must be relevant to all partners in the System of Care, and they must be important enough to justify spending public monies on them.

3. Partnerships across agencies

Collaboration involved individuals, groups, and/or agencies working together for the mutual benefit of the child and family in a teamwork approach, where that approach is a united one and is decided upon jointly by the team. The process of developing formal interagency agreements is, in itself, an important element in building and nurturing the partnership, which must be visibly supported from the top down.

4. Family/professional partnerships

Parents are part of the system as partners, providers and experts. Professionals are supportive and work jointly with parents as decision-makers.

5. Community-based, individualized services

Services focus on the child and family's goals and objectives rather than the program's needs. Services are delivered from a strength-based approach and include wraparound to extend the range of services needed by unique families. Service planning begins with an assessment of the strengths of the child and family. Service planning values and expects community input in decision-making.

6. Cultural competence

A culturally competent System of Care will value diversity and will engage in ongoing self-assessment of its ability to serve a range of clients. It is aware of the dynamics of difference; that is, that differing histories will affect the patterns of communication and problem solving. Cultural knowledge is institutionalized in an effective System of Care, which is able to adapt to changing diversities.

7. Evaluation, performance outcomes and accountability

Each planning step for each component is evaluated, and feedback regarding the success of each step is provided through a continuous process into the service delivery system. This ensures accountability and a means of tracking progress toward achievement of the stated goals, objectives and outcomes.

Membership

The System of Care Planning and Policy Council will be composed of leaders from public agencies who receive input from community groups, as well as representatives of consumers and family members served by the System of Care. Members of the group will represent the cultural diversity of the county and of the population served by the System of Care. Members shall be change agents with the authority to make decisions on behalf of their constituencies. Members shall have an investment in children and families and be willing and able to think about the broader System of Care.

Standing membership shall be comprised of representatives from:

- Children's Mental Health
- Children and Family Services Bureau, EHSD
- Juvenile Probation
- Family Members
- Contra Costa SELPA
- Mount Diablo Unified School District
- West Contra Costa Unified School District
- County Office of Education
- Alcohol and Other Drug Services Division
- Child Health and Disability Prevention
- Family and Children's Services, Community Services Department
- Youth Representatives
- Regional Center of the East Bay

Standing members can designate an alternate to serve in their absence.

Staff members from member agencies will serve as *ex-officio* members of the Council. The Council may designate additional *ex-officio* members as it deems necessary or appropriate.

Liaisons to Community Groups

Policy Council members will act as liaisons to community groups as designated in the Governance Structure chart.

Committees

The System of Care Planning and Policy Council will establish Subcommittees, including, but not limited to:

- Program/Policy
- Fiscal/Reinvestment
- Evaluation/Quality Assurance
- Cultural Competence/Training
- Parent/Family Involvement

The System of Care Planning and Policy Council will establish the following Advisory Committees:

- Provider CBO's
- Parent Councils
- Youth
- Others