

National Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for
Systems of Care



Community Partnerships that Improve Child and Family Outcomes
Webinar Presentation
May 18, 2011

Welcome

- Thank you for your interest in this webinar. Our telephone lines are maxed at 125 participants. We apologize if you are not able to access the audio portion of the webinar.
- The webinar will be recorded and transcribed and made available via the Child Welfare Information Gateway (<http://www.childwelfare.gov>)

Workshop Overview

- Overview of the Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care demonstration grant program
- What we've learned about interagency collaboration and community engagement from the national, cross-site evaluation
- A closer look at Dauphin County's (PA) system of care
- Strategies for empowering community engagement beyond service providers
- Questions and discussion

Presenters

- Peter Vriens, Director, Office of Human Services, Dauphin County Human Services,
- Helen Spence, Community Outreach , Office of Human Services, Dauphin County
- Troy Tate, Family Coach and Community Advocate, New Beginnings Youth and Adult Services, Harrisburg, PA
- Nicole Bossard, TA Specialist, National Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center (moderator)

A vision for Systems of Care in Child Welfare

“The vision of the systems of care initiative is transforming how child welfare does its work and how it relates to families and interacts with other agencies to make a difference for children and families and all the people who serve them.”

*---Jan Shafer, Director
Division of Research and Innovation,
Children’s Bureau*

What is Systems of Care?

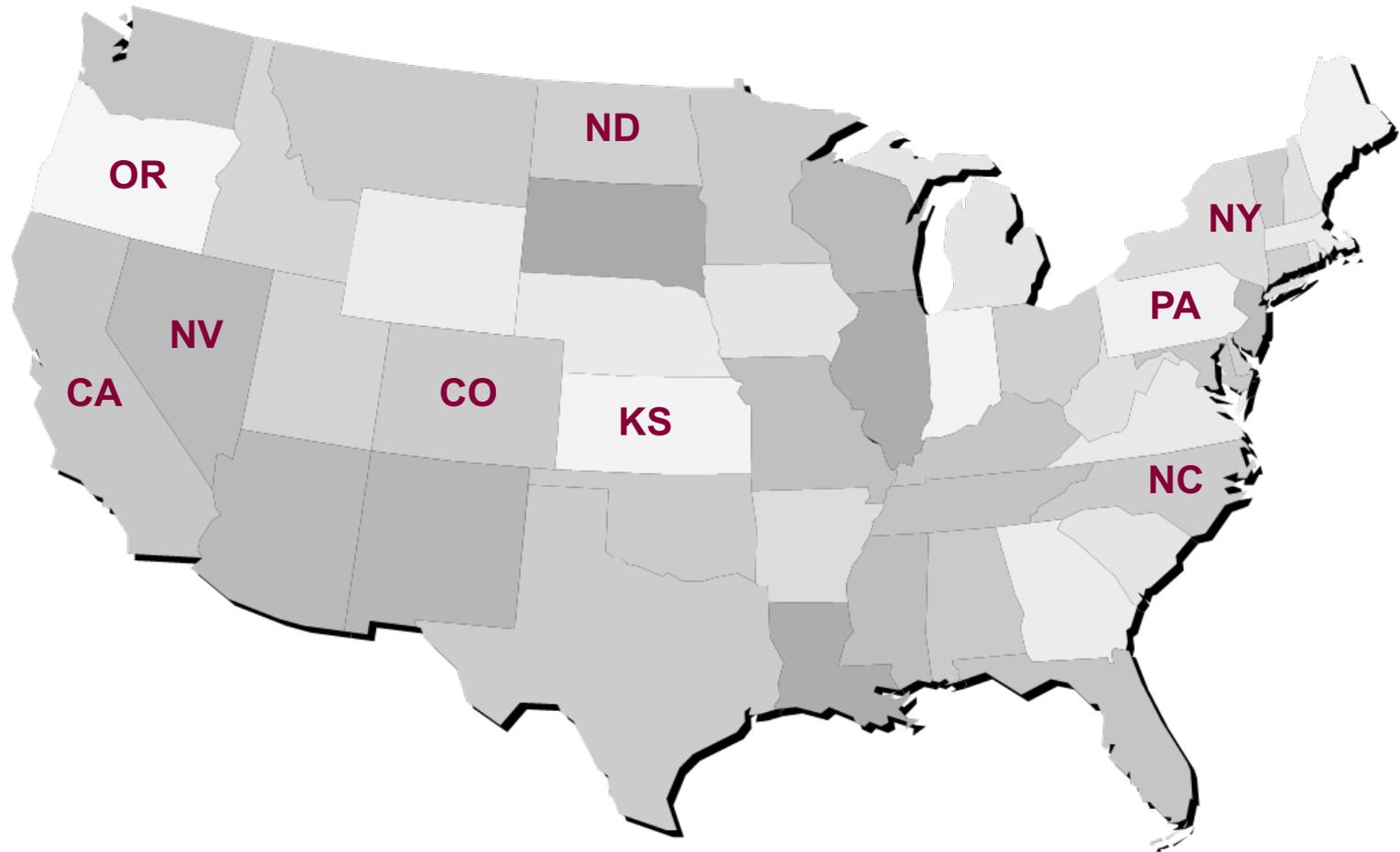
- Systems of care is an initiative that incorporates a core set of principles that combine to meet the diverse needs of children, youth, and families.
- The systems of care concept provides a framework that States, Tribes, counties and cities can utilize as they develop the infrastructure to support key guiding principles:
 - Interagency Collaboration
 - Individualized, Strengths-based Care
 - Cultural and Linguistic Competence
 - Child, Youth and Family Involvement
 - Community-Based Approaches
 - Accountability

*DeCarolus, G., Southern, L. and Blake, F. (2008) Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care: Building the Infrastructure. US Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.

Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care

- Five-year demonstration initiative (2003 – 2008)
- Awarded 9 grantees in 18 communities
 - Rural, Urban, County, Tribal
- Goals:
 - Engage in **infrastructure development** activities to change the culture of child welfare agencies and the conceptual framework within which services are delivered (systemic change)
 - Work collaboratively with partner agencies in order to assure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and their families (Child & Family Services Reviews, Program Improvement Plan)

Systems of Care Grant Communities



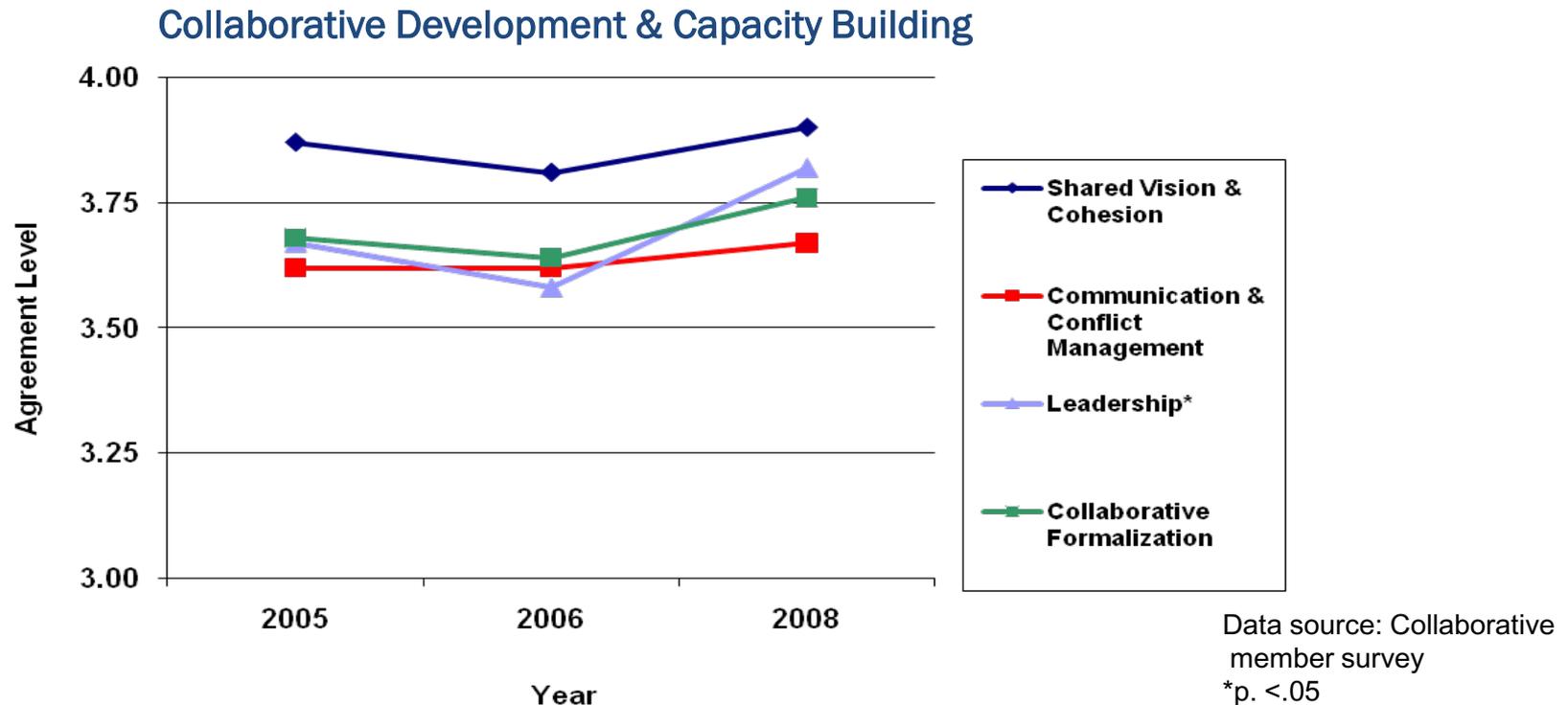
Summary of Evaluation Findings

The cross-site evaluation found that:

- Community partners perceived that their collaborative efforts were effective in promoting positive changes in policies, procedures, and practices, and, ultimately, in creating positive outcomes for children and families.
- Child welfare staff felt increasingly encouraged and supported to adopt collaborative practices and community-based approaches.
- Child welfare agencies experienced increases in broad-based community support, which helped them weather crises associated with child fatalities.
- Interagency partners became more active participants in child welfare case planning processes and their services to children and families in the child welfare system nearly tripled.

Systems Level Findings

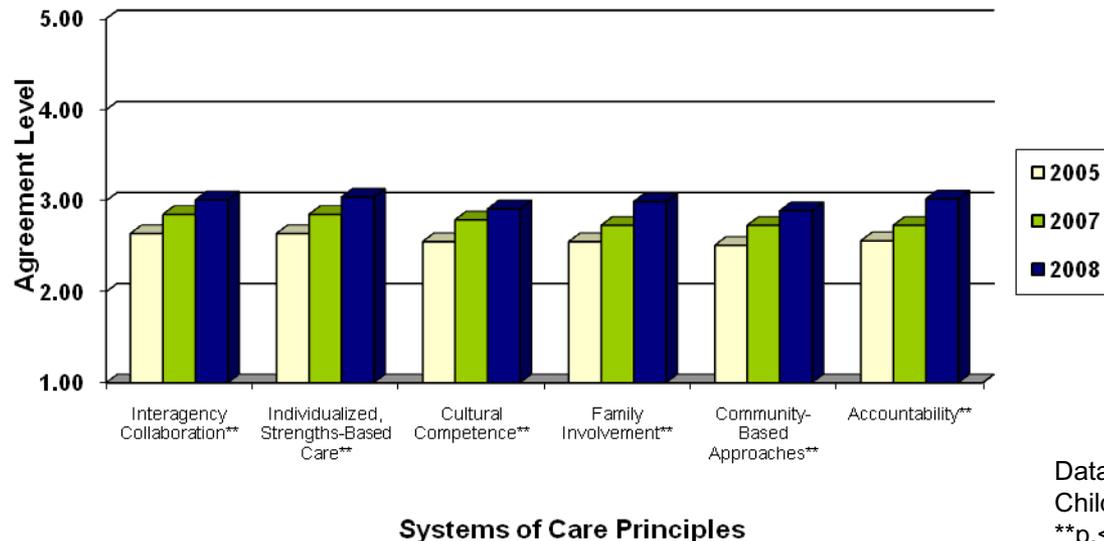
- Interagency collaboration increased and/or improved across grant communities



- Trajectory of collaborative development was uneven across grant communities
- Stakeholders perceived that their efforts improved child welfare outcomes

Organizational Level Findings

Agency Support for Principles across Time



- Principles applied across child welfare and partner agencies and infused in policy and practice
 - Increased support for System of Care principles over time
 - Improvement in caseworkers' implementation and day-to-day practice
 - Integration of individualized, strengths-based and family-centered practice
 - Family involvement accepted and embraced by child welfare staff

Family and Community Engagement

- Through the grant program child welfare agencies discovered new ways of working with families and the community
 - Community collaboratives created a space and place for family and community engagement.
 - Policies and procedures developed to support family-centered practice.

Building Community Partnerships in Systems of Care

A Closer Look at Dauphin County's (PA) System of Care

The Systems of Care Grant Program: Expanding the Foundation

- Adopted and implemented Family Group Conferencing (FGC) as our foundational practice based on its strengths-based and solution focused orientation.
- Incorporated the system of care principles into the FGC practice throughout our human service network - children and youth, juvenile probation, mental health, drug & alcohol, area on aging, and adult probation.

The Systems of Care Grant Program: Reaching Out to the Community

- The systems of care grant made it possible to hire Community Liaison to work directly with families, youth, and community/faith-based partners throughout the county to develop and expand strengths-based practice.
- Began hosting open community forums to inform the community about systems of care, but also to invite their participation in improving the system.
- Formed five subcommittee workgroups which became essential to engaging community: (1) Family Committee; (2) Faith-Based Committee; (3) Community-Based Committee; (4) Cultural Competency Committee; and (5) Youth Leadership Committee.

Activities of the System of Care Sub-Committees

- Developed community- and family-led Summer Enrichment programs
 - Expanded from one to eight sites, collaborating with three different school districts , three police departments, 79 businesses ,banks, corporations, the National Guard Army and Dauphin County Human Service providing agencies.
- A core group of a hundred plus family members, community and faith-based organizations, schools, police departments, colleges, and businesses have created a seamless array of services to our families
 - Continue to meet monthly to share information, resources, and supports.
- In 2010, the Systems of Care subcommittee workgroups provided resources, supports and services to over four hundred (400) families, children and youth.

System of Care Grant Ends, but the Work Continues

- The system of care grant gave us the approach. We applied it wherever we're working to maintain consistency across formal and informal systems.
- The system of care values helped develop an overarching, integrated plan for the county and to expand and integrate even further.
- Rather than an abrupt end to a grant, we had a natural progression and sustainability of the work on which we could expand through the Integrated Human Services Plan.

Sustaining Dauphin's System of Care within the Integrated Human Services Plan

- The Integrated Human Services Plan is a comprehensive planning approach to serving children, youth, adults and their families across all ages.
- The integrated services approach focused on long-term prevention, early intervention, and support of family stability, child safety, community protection, healthy child development and keeping both children and adults in their own homes and communities through local supports and services.
- Dauphin County felt it critical to include both adult and child serving systems with representation from over 30 organizations including human services agencies, faith-based organizations, parents, youth, and consumers.

The Integrated Human Services Plan: Core Vision

- Families and communities are empowered through the use of strengths-based solution focused practices that create true partnerships between family and informal and formal community support systems.
- Plans to keep children, adults, families and the community safe are individual and family driven, culturally sensitive and are supported by an integrated approach that results in a seamless array of services.
- This holistic approach combined with positive, supportive relationships and family centered resources will result in positive outcomes through healthy and communities.

Results of a Dauphin's Integrated Planning Process

- 25.5% decrease in the number of children re-entering care over the previous year. This result greatly exceeds our goal of a 10% reduction by the end of FY 2009/10.
- 16.2% reduction in the number of children in out of home placement through Child Welfare of Juvenile Probation during the two year period ending December, 2010.

Keys to Success: What Made Agency-Community Partnerships Work in Dauphin

- A values-based planning process, i.e., system of care principles and Family Group Conferencing practice model that reflect inclusion, empowerment, and mutuality in all phases from planning to practice.
- Support from the top for *real* community engagement, i.e., funding for a Community Liaison/Coordinator position.
- Strengths-based, solution-focused practice that is modeled throughout the agency; not just with consumers.
- Ultimately, agencies must be willing to share power with informal systems, i.e., see families and community members as EQUAL PARTNERS.

Take-a-ways for Building Better Agency-Community Partnerships

- Create multiple opportunities for agency and community members to work together.
- Keep it simple and avoid textbook jargon.
- Don't depend on the money to solidify the relationships; trust, showing up, and walking your talk are necessary for success.
- Be willing to share authority, and ask for help from communities and families.

Closing Comment from our Presenters

“Don’t be afraid to walk the walk, and not just talk the talk. Modeling the practice is key”

Facilitated Discussion



Community Partnerships that Improve Child Welfare Outcomes: Questions, Challenges, and Opportunities

Key Knowledge Development Products

- Systems of Care: A Guide for Strategic Planning
- Building the Infrastructure: A Guide for Communities
- A Closer Look Series
 - Overview of Systems of Care
 - Interagency Collaboration
 - Youth & Family Involvement
 - Individualized Strength-based Care
 - Cultural & Linguistic Competence
 - Community-based
 - Accountability
- System of Care Infrastructure Toolkits

For more information visit:

<http://www.childwelfare.gov/management/reform/soc/communication/initiative/ntaec.cfm>

Key Knowledge Development Products

- Evaluation Reports from the Grant Program
 - Overview of the **National Cross-Site Evaluation**
 - **Systems and Organizational Change** Resulting from the Implementation of Systems of Care
 - Systems of Care **Implementation Case Studies** (Contra Costa County, CA and North Carolina State grantees)
 - **Family Involvement** in the Improving Child Welfare Outcomes Through Systems of Care Initiative
 - **Leadership** in the Improving Child Welfare Outcomes Through Systems of Care Initiative

For more information visit:

<http://www.childwelfare.gov/management/reform/soc/communicate/initiative/>

Key Knowledge Development Products

- **Action Brief Series** – now available online
 - Creating and Communicating a Shared Vision
 - Building **Agency Capacity** for Family Involvement
 - Building **Family Capacity** for Family Involvement
 - Forging Partnerships
 - Obtaining Buy-in for Change from the Frontline – coming soon!!!
- **Webinar Series** – transcript, powerpoint, & audio online
 - Strategic Planning: Setting the State for Change – now available
 - Family Involvement: Supporting Kin Caregivers – now available
 - Generating Buy-in for Change – June 2011
 - Policy Assessment to Support and Sustain Effective Practice – June/July 2011

For more information visit:

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