Texas System of Care
Achieving Well-Being for Children and Youth

Why is System of Care Important?

1) Families benefit from systems working together.
2) Systems benefit from coordinating activities and services.
3) Communities benefit with healthier and happier citizens, expansive options, and connected resources.

40% of Texas youth do not receive the mental health services they need[1]

Nationally, 20% of children have a diagnosable mental health disorder.[2] The percentage of youth with a mental health need who do not receive services due to expense, stigma, or the inaccessibility of appropriate services and supports is close to 40%.[3] The risk of negative outcomes, including school drop-out, unemployment, substance use disorders, arrest, homelessness, and suicide, increases when needed mental health services are not received.

High expenses accompany the lack of timely treatment as deteriorating mental health requires that youth receive intensive services in hospitals, residential treatment centers, and juvenile detention settings. A positive trend is occurring in Texas as the percent of children and youth requiring counseling who received mental health care increased from 41.7% in 2007 to 59.5% in 2011, but further improvement is needed.[3]

Alex: A Texas System of Care Success Story

Background

Prior to developing a system of care (SOC), one Texas community had difficulty coordinating mental health services that resulted in long-term change for youth. Families didn't know where to go to find the services they desired. Some organizations were worried that youth were not benefiting from their services because providers were not aware of these organizations in order to collaborate and refer youth.

Daily Life

Indeed, youth were not effectively served. In particular, eight-year-old Alex* tried to jump out of his bedroom window many times and also became assaultive toward his mother. Alex received therapy, but when these incidents occurred, he was admitted to a psychiatric hospital. Alex stayed briefly and then returned home, where he continued therapy with no change in services because his mother and his therapist were not aware of other options. When Alex began to cut himself and expressed suicidal ideation, resulting in another hospitalization, the hospital knew that a dramatic change in service coordination was needed to help Alex experience a fulfilling childhood.

Resources

A hospital clinician had learned about the SOC approach in other communities and saw the potential benefit to Alex and to the community. To get started, a community meeting was held, inviting family members and youth, mental health providers, the school district, hospital representatives, juvenile justice, child welfare, and other interested community members. Soon, a governance board representing each of these groups was formed and began strategic planning to determine how collaboration would occur to provide families with an array of services. Blended funding and formal agreements between systems were part of the SOC development process.

Outcome

Alex returned home from the hospital as his community was developing the SOC. His therapist was part of the governance board and she referred Alex and his mother to supports offered by agencies joining the new collaboration.

Gradually, Alex's mental health improved and he made friends at school, enjoying a fulfilling childhood made possible by meaningful partnerships in his community.

Research on Systems of Care Found that Families Receiving Services and Supports had[4] . . .

⬆ School attendance and grades

⬆ Family functioning

⬇ Juvenile justice involvement

⬇ Suicide attempts

⬆ Resilience and coping skills

Youth & Families

Family voice is essential to the TXSOC vision and to the success of treatment and recovery for youth. TXSOC collaborates with the Texas Family Voice Network, a group of family leaders who provide a unified, collective voice for families of Texas youth with mental health needs.
Learn more at:
https://txfamilyvoicenetwork.org/.

TXSOC collaborates with Allies Cultivating Change by Empowering Positive Transformation (ACCEPT), a cross-system group of Texas youth and young adults who work together for system transformation by supporting partnerships among youth, young adults, and organizations. Members' lived experience and that of their peers informs and drives system improvements.

Learn more at: www.acceptexas.com.

A Shared Vision for Texas

Vision

All Texas children and youth have access to high quality mental health care that is family-driven, youth-guided, community-based, culturally-grounded, and sustainable.

Mission

To strengthen the collaboration of state and local efforts to weave mental health supports and services into seamless systems of care for children, youth, and their families.

Partners

Texas Health and Human Services
    Commission (lead agency)
Family and Youth Representatives
Hogg Foundation for Mental Health
Texans Care for Children
Texas Department of Family and Protective
    Services
Texas Department of State Health Services
Texas Education Agency
Texas Federation of Families for Children's
    Mental Health
Texas Juvenile Justice Department
Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental
    Health at the University of Texas
    at Austin
Via Hope
Texas System of Care Communities

Recent TXSOC Accomplishments

TXSOC is making strides toward the goal of expanding system of care statewide as an approach to plan and deliver services and supports to youth with serious mental health concerns, as well as their families.
Recent accomplishments include:

♦ Implementation of the system of care framework by numerous communities across a variety of geographical regions in Texas. The positive impact of TXSOC across geographical regions emphasizes the adaptability of the system of care framework and its effectiveness in providing prompt access to coordinated services. An interactive map, which received a 2016 Excellence in Community Communications and Outreach award, illustrates the TXSOC communities:
http://www.txsystemofcare.org/texas-system-of-care-map/.

♦ Partnerships between TXSOC communities and CRCGs to increase access to services for youth identified by CRCGs as at risk for out-of-home placement.

♦ An anti-stigma campaign that featured inspirational presentations in the Rio Grande Valley for youth, family members, and staff in juvenile justice facilities and local school districts by a former adjudicated youth who spent three years in the Texas juvenile justice system.
In Houston, the *Drop the Stigma* print and social media campaign was designed by and for youth of color.
Downloadable resources are available: www.dropthestigma.org. Youth may also tweet about what stigma means to them at #dropthestigma on Twitter.

♦ Implementation of Building Bridges Initiative residential treatment center (RTC) best practices in several Texas RTCs.

♦ A TXSOC Leadership Academy that used the Georgetown University model. Participants included family leaders, TXSOC community leaders, and state agency leaders who are applying their skills to strengthen coordination and collaboration across Texas.

♦ The selection, through an application process, of a number of youth and young adults to comprise ACCEPT's core team. ACCEPT was accepted as a statewide chapter of Youth M.O.V.E National. ACCEPT also applied for and received a Dare to Dream America grant, which is being used to develop a statewide public service announcement.

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