

ICSP RESOURCE B

Strategies for Involving families and youth in Integrated Children's Services Planning

The *role of family and youth* in integrating services is critical to for the success of service delivery. Counties should clearly articulate what steps it will take to ensure families/youth are involved in all steps of system development for integrating services. The following checklist will assist you in the planning process to increase meaningful involvement/engagement of families and youth. This is a priority integration area for the Department.

Strategy for involving families and youth is currently in place in the county	YES	NO	2010/11 plan will include
<p>Special orientation and training is offered on an ongoing basis to assist families/youth that need a better understanding of administrative, budgetary, and other issues that play a role in planning.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include families in the planning and delivery of these trainings. • Use existing family leaders from local support groups and programs. • Identify these leaders from community centers, religious organizations, parent groups, disability groups or school family committees. 			
<p>Families/youth have more than token representation at meetings and staff are actively asking for their input at both the process and implementation stages.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a variety of methods to give input including going to where families meet frequently, like shopping centers • Having a variety of levels for input, paper surveys, phone surveys, focus groups, and attending the formal county ICSP meetings. • Make sure that all families, including contributing families get regular and informative updates on what actions have occurred even if families could not attend the meetings where decisions were made. 			
<p>There are active working partnerships with parent groups within the county. Please list groups in your narrative section.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask people charged with collaborating with family groups for a list to identify groups, including the CASSP Coordinator, and Intermediate Unit staff (Migrant worker programs, local substance abuse parent support groups. Autism Specialist, Alternative Education Specialist, Special Education Task Force and Early Intervention Coordinators, Easter Seals/Rehabilitation Services, Clergy etc.) 			

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical Local PA Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head Start ○ Family Support Alliance (formerly Parents Anonymous) ○ Mental Health Association ○ NAMI ○ Ahead (Autism) ○ Family Centers (school districts) ○ 21st Century Afterschool Programs 			
<p>A process is in place to ask other agencies that work with families/youth (such as schools and child care centers) to recommend parents to participate in planning.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit families to help develop outreach materials – newsletters, brochures and/or county website information. 			
<p>Families/youth who participate in planning sessions are compensated in some manor.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay a stipend/salary • Provide transportation, meals, child care (on site or reimbursement) • Offer donations from businesses- meals, gift cards 			
<p>Meeting times and locations are flexible to meet family/ youth needs and availability.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding planning meetings on the evenings or on weekends • In locations such as schools, community centers, churches and other settings that may be more familiar and comfortable to families/youth than state or local office buildings. • Work with schools to develop capacity for students to use participation to meet graduation or other school requirements. • Work with JPO to develop capacity for youth to use participation to meet probation obligations including community service. 			
<p>Surveys are conducted to elicit the views of a wide range of families/youth.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use families and youth to design and edit surveys. • Make sure they are culturally and linguistically accessible • Make sure they are clearly written at a 6th grade level. • Provide an option to submit them anonymously. 			

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<p>Parents or others who work regularly with families/youth are utilized to conduct focus groups that probe the views of selected groups of parents such as teenage parents, single parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, foster parents, and adoptive parents.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop funding that supports the operation of these groups. Direct or in kind, i.e. invite leaders to participate in county trainings. 			
<p>A process is in place to work with family and youth support programs to tap into informal networks such as family support groups or youth advisory councils, for example Independent Living Programs.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop process with stakeholders • Commit decisions to writing and make them public 			
<p>A process is in place to work with home-visiting programs, such as Parents As Teachers (PAT) through Family Centers or health clinics to involve families/youth who may be otherwise difficult to reach.</p>			
<p>A process is in place to work with families/youth involved in specific programs, for example Family Group Decision Making or Independent Living Programs, within children and youth, mental health, early intervention, juvenile justice, drug and alcohol, etc to involve families who have benefited from these services.</p>			
<p>Acknowledgment of the contributions of families and youth are done routinely and publicly.</p>			
<p>Experienced facilitators are utilized to conduct sessions for planning group members, administrators, and staff when exploring attitudes and stereotypes about different ethnic, racial and religious groups.</p>			
<p>Family and youth satisfaction surveys regarding their satisfaction with being actively involved in the ICSP process are routinely conducted.</p>			

DPW Bulletin #2010-1
Integrated Children's Services Plan Guidelines

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County resource mapping is utilized to show what services are available, including family support groups.			
County staff have attended local family support groups to understand the services they offer and to promote integration activities.			
Articles about ICSP as well as meeting times and places are placed in local newspapers.			
Mailings are sent to all school administrators, guidance counselors, and Student Assistance Program representatives to be involved in the ICSP process.			
There is a system in place to routinely follow up after meetings with mailings or phone calls to individuals who were unable to attend meetings for their input.			
There is an assumption that if you generate lots of public participation that you will, by default if nothing else, have people who have a personal stake in seeing things improve.			
There is a uniform note taking/ tracking process in place so that all of the groups and meetings can be recorded and used to create a concrete plan that incorporates the spectrum of discussions and input and is available and understandable to all participants.			
OTHER:			

For technical assistance on involving and engaging families and youth contact Angie Logan anglogan@state.pa.us or Sherry Peters at shepeters@state.pa.us