



## ***Marion and the N of 2***

### ***A short story about families and evaluation***

Marion became a family advocate while raising her three children who needed services and supports from the local system of care. She networked with many other local families who were unhappy with the serious lack of adequate services and supports in her community. Together they formed a small support group and began to take turns attending meetings and keeping each other informed.

As Marion was preparing to attend a local city council meeting where there would be important decisions made about resources to be allocated to children's mental health services in her community. She was astounded and frightened to learn that the city council was preparing to release a research report that indicated:

***The families in her community were 98% satisfied with services and supports for their children with serious emotional disturbances.***

Marion called researcher with whom she had a "partner" like relationship. They reviewed the report together and Marion learned the significance of N!

***The N was 2!!!***

That is, only 2 families were surveyed in this study. Marion was able to counter – in a most polite way - the City Council's report and caused the members to pause and reconsider their decision.

Thus...

***There are indeed critical questions to ask of the evaluation!***