

## **Integrating families & youth into the national and local evaluation work of System of Care Communities**

Systems of care communities funded by SAMHSA as Phases IV and V are required to involve families in the implementation of their evaluation activities. They may be included by “*providing feedback on the design and objectives of the evaluation, conducting interviews, analyzing data, and interpreting and reporting results*”, to give a few examples.<sup>1</sup> As TA Providers, we offer a framework in which the communities can discover successful strategies. We also hope communities will develop successful strategies that will inform further development of the framework.

### **The Framework for Involving Families & Youth in Evaluation:**

**Families & youth are integrated into every aspect of the national and local evaluation.** Especially:

- Providing feedback on the design and objectives of the evaluation
- Recruiting and introducing families & youth to the evaluation
- Conducting interviews
- Analyzing data
- Interpreting data and identifying findings
- Reporting results
  - To families & youth
  - To the system of care staff
  - To the system of care governance
  - To the community at large
  - To the national community (i.e.: regional TA meeting presentations)
- Providing input into decisions about the management of the evaluation budget
- Identifying and/or meeting training needs of the evaluation team

**Families & youth are appropriately compensated** for their time and experience-based expertise.

**Families & youth are provided training** in evaluation and in the policies and procedures of their team.

**Families & youth receive supportive supervision** that guides their development as an evaluation team member bringing experience-based expertise to the evaluation.

**Families & youth working in evaluation are supported to link with and have access to other families & youth**, thereby strengthening the “family/youth voice” in evaluation and the “family/youth” use of data. I.e.: the Key Family Contact, Youth Coordinator, families/youth in need of services, families/youth receiving services, the family-run organization, and families/youth enrolled in the evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> DHHS, SAMHSA, CMHS. CFDA 93:104; Section D