



# ENGAGEMENT OF FAMILIES IN EVALUATION

ENSURING AUTHENTIC FAMILY VOICE IN EVERY ASPECT OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Accurate family assessment of programs and family input into what is beneficial to their success is essential for effective evaluation. When evaluators and families are partners in the evaluation process, the results reflect the most successful interventions for families' success.

In this toolkit you will find a variety of resources that can help your team understand the value and importance of engaging families in the evaluation of mental health services. The resources included explore family engagement in evaluation and offer strategies as well as examples of successes and lessons learned from several organizations. Exploring these tools can help your team develop a process that effectively engages and solicits valuable input from families about the design, implementation and ongoing evaluation of mental health supports and services.

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This toolkit is the product of a family-driven process. Three family-driven organizations worked with the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health (NFFCMH) and were involved in the writing and reviewing of materials. NFFCMH would like to thank each of the affiliates for their time and expertise developing the content of the toolkit. Families as Allies in Mississippi, Family Involvement Center in Arizona and Association for Children's Mental Health in Michigan were integral partners in the development of the toolkit. We would like to thank Misty D. Gooden and Kansas University Center on Development Disabilities for allowing the adaptation of *Using Infographics in Early Intervention*. Lastly, this workbook would not have been possible without NFFCMH staff members who contributed and coordinated the development - Michelle Covington, Project Manager and Kelsey Engelbracht, Project Manager. We believe this toolkit will be a valuable tool in the engagement of family voice and inclusion in evaluation. Thank you to all who contributed to this publication and to all parent peer support providers for the work you do each day.

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The State Chapter of the Federation of Families



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES

## 1. Training Presentations

- [Engaging Families and Family Organizations in Evaluation](#)
- [The Importance of Family Involvement in Evaluation](#)
- [Parent-Professional Partnerships in Evaluation](#)
- [Family Engagement in Evaluation](#)
- [Family Engagement in Evaluation: Overcoming Barriers](#)
- [Family-Driven Evaluation: Our Journey to Collaboration](#)
- [Practical Strategies for Involving Families in Evaluation](#)

## 2. Written Materials

- [Family Engagement in Evaluation: Lessons Learned](#)
- [Understanding and Using Performance Measurement as a Tool for Advocacy](#)
- [EVALBRIEF: SYSTEMS OF CARE - Study Family Involvement in Systems of Care: Findings from the Family-Driven Study](#)
- [Data-Informed and Family-Driven Decision Making: Evidence Is Co-Pilot](#)
- [TIP Sheet: Lessons from a Family Driven Evaluation Process](#)
- [What Do Families Need to be Engaged?](#)
- [Family Involvement in the Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care Initiative](#)
- [Indicators of Family Involvement Recommended by a Workgroup of Parents and Evaluators](#)
- [Program Evaluation Toolkit](#)
- [Creating Infographics to Support Engagement](#)

## 3. Video and Graphic Materials

- [Interview with Family Run Leader and Evaluator](#)
- [Blueprint: Developing a Family-Drive, Youth-Driven Sustainable Evaluation Process](#)
- **Measure What You Treasure**
  - i. [Children's Mental Health Initiative \(CMHI\) – National Evaluation: The Big Picture](#)
  - ii. [Measure What You Treasure: Strategies to Engage Families in Data Collection](#)
  - iii. [Measure What You Treasure: Strategies to Engage Youth in Data Collection](#)
- **The Centre of Excellence**
  - i. [What is Family Engagement?](#)
  - ii. [Evaluation = Excellence](#)
  - iii. [Evidence Informed Practice Evidence](#)
- [What Do Families Need to be Engaged?](#)
- [Family Voice in Evaluation of Mental Health Services](#)
- [The Value of Family Voice in Data Collection for the Evaluation of Mental Health Services](#)

## 4. Additional Resources

# TRAINING PRESENTATIONS

## **Using Family Voice in Evaluation Training**

The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health was originally tasked with defining family-driven support in 2004. This working definition, still used today, includes family involvement in the design, implementation and evaluation of mental health supports and services. This training outlines the challenges and benefits of engaging families and family-run organizations as partners in the evaluation process.

## **The Importance of Family Involvement in Evaluation**

SAMSHA produced a series of webinars on family and youth involvement in evaluation that focused on the importance and value of engaging families in evaluation efforts related to System of Care expansion. This first installation of the series explored the implementation of family-driven practice in evaluation and is designed for individuals fulfilling multiple roles in System of Care expansion grant sites, including family-run organizations, family leaders, evaluators, directors and managers, and other team members.

Audio is available on your [Children's Mental Health Initiative National Evaluation SharePoint Site](#).

## **Parent-Professional Partnerships in Evaluation**

The Family Involvement Center has a long history of using a parent-professional partnership model in the evaluation of mental health services in their state. This training explores what parent-professional partnerships are, how to build them and why they are valuable. It describes the roles parents/family members and evaluators play in the evaluation process based on their experiences as a family run organization in Arizona.

## **Family Engagement in Evaluation**

The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health defined the values and principles of family-driven support. This training explores family engagement in evaluation as a fundamental aspect of that support. It explores power and key principles of family engagement and offers insight on how evaluation teams can shift their culture to successfully engage families.

## **Family Engagement in Evaluation: Overcoming Barriers**

The Association of Children's Mental Health conducts a variety of projects and activities to help improve outcomes for families of children and youth with mental health challenges. This training examines the various types of barriers that can stymie authentic engagement of families in the evaluation process. It offers a close look at the roots of those barriers as well as strategies to overcome them.

## **Family-Driven Evaluation: Our Journey to Collaboration**

Families as Allies is a family run organization that developed a sustainable evaluation process that engages families in the design, implementation and evaluation of mental health services. This presentation chronicles their journey from becoming a collaborative partner with the evaluation team to engaging families at all levels of service evaluation.

## **Practical Strategies for Involving Families in Evaluation**

This SAMSHA webinar focused on practical, “how to” strategies for involving families in the evaluation of System of Care expansion efforts. It was designed for individuals fulfilling multiple roles in System of Care expansion grant sites, including directors, managers, evaluators, family-run organizations, and family leaders, to explore the implementation of family-driven practice in evaluation.

## WRITTEN MATERIALS

### **Family Engagement in Evaluation: Lessons Learned**

In the 1990s a movement unfolded to include family engagement in the evaluation of programs and systems within the children's mental health field. This paper discusses barriers that can arise as well as the benefits of families and evaluators working together and the value of this approach.

### **Understanding and Using Performance Measurement as a Tool for Advocacy**

Developed by the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, this TIP sheet introduces performance and outcome measurement as it relates to assessing the quality and effectiveness of behavioral health care systems and programs. It covers family involvement in the selection, implementation, and evaluation of these measures; basic beliefs and values underlying outcome measurement; vocabulary of outcome measurement; suggestions for using outcome measurement data; and the family role in ensuring the accountability of programs and systems.

### **EVALBRIEF: SYSTEMS OF CARE - Study Family Involvement in Systems of Care: Findings from the Family-Driven Study**

As part of the national evaluation of systems of care, a team led by parents and supported by researchers came together to study the experiences of families in systems of care. The study was jointly conducted by the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health and the Georgia Parent Support Network. They identified three goals that provided a framework for their work: (1) to identify research questions that would be of interest to family members and align with family values; (2) to have family members take the lead in designing and directing the study; and (3) to record the history, process, and experience in order to understand and document the team's journey.

### **TIP Sheet: Lessons from a Family-Driven Evaluation Process**

The Family Involvement Center conducted System of Care Practice Reviews (SOCPR) and Brief Practice Reviews (BPR) in Arizona and they provide a summary of the lessons learned. This process engaged families in evaluation of mental health services and supports in the state.

### **What Do Families Need to be Engaged?**

The results of a survey of families designed to solicit the answers directly from families about what they need to be engaged, conducted by the Association for Children's Mental Health in Michigan is summarized.

### **Indicators of Family Involvement Recommended by a Workgroup of Parents and Evaluators**

A summary of the three-year project by the Parent Partner Assessment Workgroup (PPAW), this tool offers evaluators important indicators to be considered when involving families in evaluation efforts.

## **Program Evaluation Toolkit**

This toolkit contains resources for planning, doing and using program evaluation. These worksheets can assist your team in focusing on what is important and feasible as you begin to formulate and implement your evaluation project.

*Recommended prerequisite reading:* [www.centrelearning.ca](http://www.centrelearning.ca)

## **Family Involvement in the Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care Initiative**

This report is based on the 5-year cross-site evaluation of the implementation of the Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care demonstration initiative in nine grant sites representing 18 communities. Findings from the national cross-site evaluation of the Systems of Care initiative confirm the hypothesis that systems of care can result in systems and organizational changes that lead to improvements in child welfare outcomes. The experiences of the grant communities indicate that a principle-driven system of care approach has considerable potential for strengthening child welfare system.

## **Creating Infographics to Support Engagement**

This guide helps to address the constant need to share information. How can programs faced with limited resources actively inform others about what is working and what is changing? Infographics may be a step in the right direction and this guide walks you how to use infographics to support family engagement.

# VIDEO AND GRAPHIC MATERIALS

## **Interview with Family Run Leader and Evaluator**

Families as Allies Executive Director, Dr. Joy Hogge and evaluator Rodney Washington sit down for a frank and insightful discussion about their journey to creating a family-driven evaluation partnership.

## **Blueprint: Developing a Family-Drive, Youth-Driven Sustainable Evaluation Process**

Graphic blueprint depicting key steps to developing an evaluation process that is family-driven, youth-guided and culturally and linguistically responsive.

## **Measure What You Treasure**

The Children's Mental Health Initiative (CMHI) National Evaluation team created an animated video series for CMHI grantees that demonstrates the value of the CMHI National Evaluation and the data collected. The first video describes, through animation, how data and information from this evaluation can ultimately impact the life of a child with behavioral health conditions and his/her family, highlighting the importance of the System of Care approach and the need for its expansion in state, counties, territories and tribes. The second and third videos offer strategies for effective engagement of families and youth in data collection.

- [Children's Mental Health Initiative \(CMHI\) – National Evaluation: The Big Picture](#)
- [Measure What You Treasure: Strategies to Engage Families in Data Collection](#)
- [Measure What You Treasure: Strategies to Engage Youth in Data Collection](#)

## **The Centre of Excellence - Graphic Story Presentations**

Short graphic story presentations to quickly educate and engage audiences around the importance of family engagement, evaluation and the use of evidence informed practices.

- **What is Family Engagement?**  
Helping children and youth facing mental health problems includes making it easier for families and caregivers to embrace their roles as partners in the treatment process. This is a graphic presentation emphasizing the importance of family engagement
- **Evaluation = Excellence**  
Evaluation provides a constant source of directly-relevant evidence. It's the GPS of service delivery - telling you where you are, how far you are from your destination and where to turn in order to get there.
- **Evidence Informed Practice**  
Evidence is everywhere, and it's always evolving. Evidence-informed practice means staying connected to up-to-date knowledge and using it to grow.

## **What Do Families Need to be Engaged?**

Infographic developed based on results from the Association for Children's Mental Health's survey of families about what families need to be engaged. Linked and found on the following page.

### **Family Voice in Evaluation of Mental Health Services**

Infographic created to illustrate the role and importance of family voice in the evaluation of mental health services. Linked and found on the following page.

### **The Value of Family Voice in Data Collection for the Evaluation of Mental Health Services**

Infographic created to show the benefits of collaborating with families to design a data collection instrument and/or process. Linked and found in the following pages.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### **Evaluating Family Engagement Strategies: Addressing Measurement Challenges**

This webinar was funded in part by the U.S. Department of Education's Parental Information and Resource Center. It highlighted promising approaches for evaluating family engagement strategies, addressing challenges in defining and measuring outcomes, and providing guidance for building evaluation into a family engagement plan from the beginning. efforts.

- [Slide Presentation](#)
- [YouTube Video](#)

### **An Evaluation Framework for Community Health Programs**

An Evaluation Framework for Community Health Programs can be used by community-based organizations and community health workers to enhance their understanding of evaluation and to build their capacity to more actively and aggressively participate in evaluation efforts of their programs.

### **Incorporating Family and Youth Voice in Evaluation**

This presentation provides an overview of the basic terms and concepts of evaluation and to increase competence on incorporating family and youth voice in evaluation efforts.

### **Participatory Evaluation: What is it? Why do it? What are the Challenges?**

Community Based Public Health article focuses on Participatory evaluation. Participatory evaluation is a partnership approach to evaluation in which stakeholders actively engage in developing the evaluation and all phases of its implementation

### **PDSA: Plan-Do-Study-Act**

The PDSA, or Plan-Do-Study-Act, which is an iterative, four-stage problem-solving model used for improving a process or carrying out change is described. The tools for implementing the model are included.

### **Principles of Family Engagement**

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) worked to develop a research-based definition of family engagement, identify exemplary family engagement practices in early childhood programs, and share what was learned with the field of early care and education by assembling a tool kit of materials to help programs more effectively engage families in children's early learning.

### **Reflect and Improve: A Toolkit for Engaging Youth and Adults as Partners in Program Evaluation**

This tool kit was produced as part of a four-year joint initiative of the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development and the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University. The goal of the initiative, known as the Planning and Evaluation Resource Center (PERC), is

to advance the field of positive youth development by strengthening the program planning and evaluation cycle of youth-serving agencies.

### **Tip Sheet for Effective Parent-Professional Partnerships**

Successfully partnering with the professionals who support your child and family can be key to the success of any treatment or other type of plan to help your child. Building a strong working relationship with those professionals can help ensure that your child gets the services and supports they need to be successful. This tip sheet offers Tips to successfully work together.

*To share additional tools that you believe can assist others in developing an evaluation process that engages families, please email us at [ffcmh@ffcmh.org](mailto:ffcmh@ffcmh.org).*