

# Behavioral Health is Essential To Health



Prevention Works



Treatment is Effective



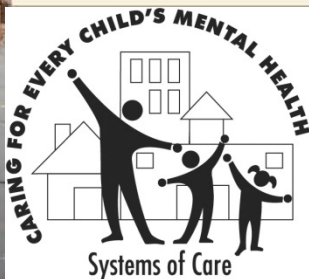
People Recover



# Practical Strategies for Involving Families in Evaluation

Lynda Gargan, National Federation of Families for  
Children's Mental Health

Millie Sweeney, Family-Run Executive Director  
Leadership Association

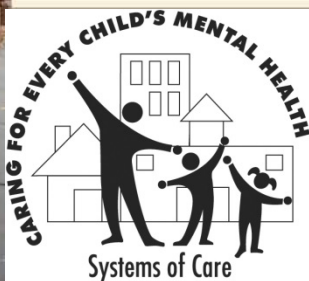






# Incorporating the Family Voice into the National Evaluation for Systems of Care

Lynda Gargan, PhD



# Polling Question #1


How often do you currently include families in your evaluation?

- 1) Not at all
- 2) Sometimes
- 3) Often
- 4) Always

# A Task or a Commitment?

Evaluation teams may approach the job of including family voice in the design of instruments and protocols as a task to be completed or as a commitment to quality

# The National Evaluation Team Committed To.....



Inclusion of the family voice in every component of the process:

- Proposal Development
- Research Design
- Instrument Design
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Dissemination

# This Commitment Wasn't About...

- Getting family “buy in”
- Helping families to “feel heard”
- Helping families to “feel connected”
- Ensuring that families have a “seat at the table”

This commitment was a deliberate decision to create an evaluation that reflected elements that are important and relevant to families

# This Commitment Also

- Improves the quality of the evaluation/research
- Improves the capacity to implement the evaluation/research
- Enhances relevancy and meaning of results
- Improves evaluation dissemination
- Keeps the evaluation grounded and reality based



# What Were the Benefits of This Approach?

This is a often heard question that bears a thoughtful answer. While no one questions the benefits of the inclusion of other team members, the value of the inclusion of the family voice is often not well understood

# How Did the Family Voice Contribute to the Design?

- Families contribute an authentic perspective regarding the value and relevance of the protocols, processes, and instruments being considered
- Families bring a unique perspective on navigating and understanding service delivery systems
- Help avoid “blind spots” in the evaluation process

# Did Families Have Final Decision Making Authority on all Aspects of the Evaluation?

- Absolutely not. Families were fully participating members of the evaluation team and, as such, were subject to the same rules of group process as every other member
- In the evaluation of complex programs and systems, there are often multiple approaches and perspectives that require discussion and negotiation

# Wouldn't It Be Easier to Design the Evaluation and Ask Families for Feedback?

- To ensure authentic family voice, the optimal approach is to have families included throughout the process
- Designing an evaluation process and then asking for feedback may lead to frustration for all parties if significant design flaws are identified

# Were All Team Members Equally Committed to the Inclusion of Family Voice?

- Even when team members have significant experience and commitment to the inclusion of family voice, there is always more to learn and every project is different
- Team members came to this process with a variety of experiences and attitudes. While some may not have fully understood the value of designing an evaluation that reflected an authentic family voice, these attitudes changed significantly with exposure to this approach



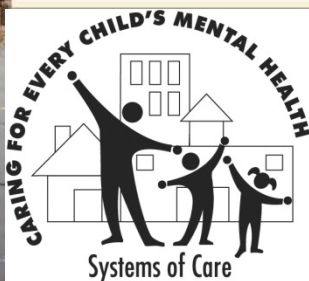
# Do Family Members Continue to be Involved?

- The family voice is embedded in every aspect of the evaluation and dissemination process
- As team members, families:
  - conduct stakeholder interviews,
  - assist with the analysis of data, and
  - participate in dissemination such a conferences and reports



# Involving Families in Evaluation

Millie Sweeney, M.S.

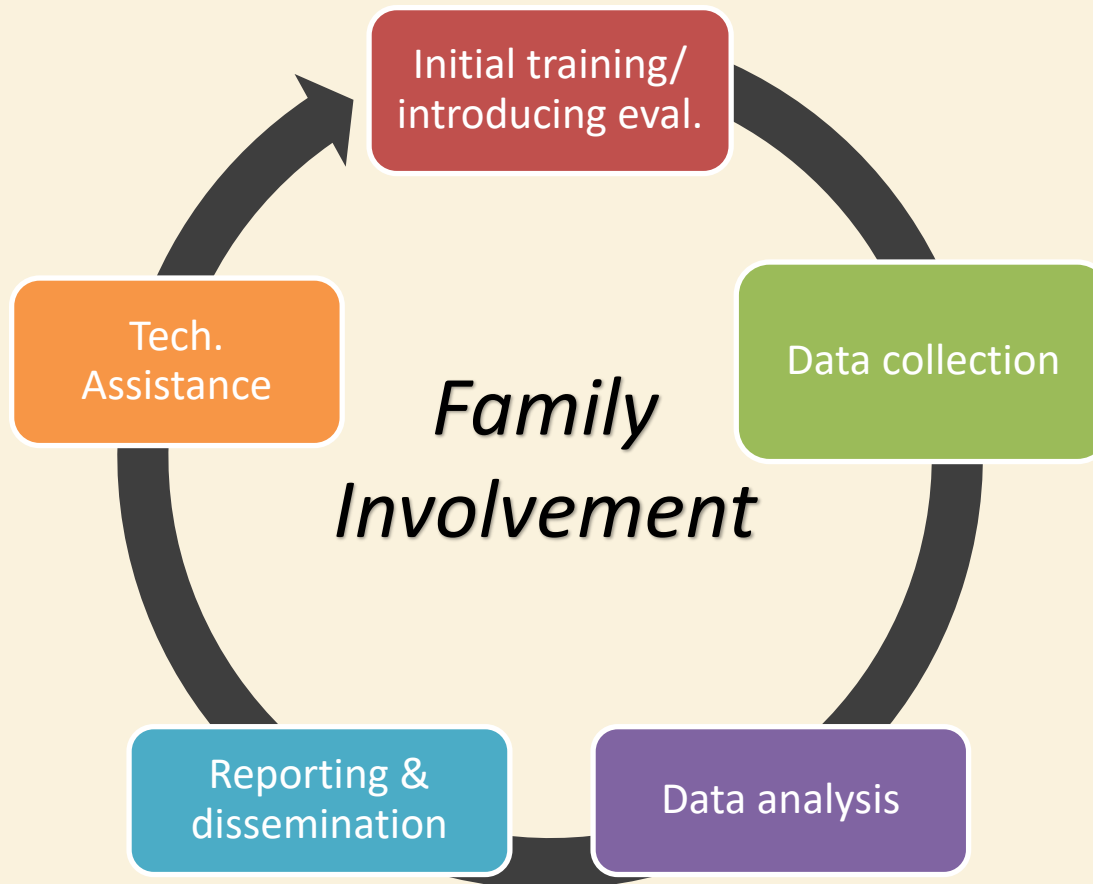


# Polling question #2

During which phase of evaluation, is it MOST important to have family involvement?

- 1) Initial training and introducing the evaluation
- 2) Data collection
- 3) Data analysis
- 4) Reporting and dissemination
- 5) Technical assistance

# All Phases!



# Initial Training and Introducing the Evaluation

- **Initial training by National Evaluation**
    - As trainee
    - As part of delivering the training
  - **Introducing the evaluation**
    - To staff
    - To families
    - To partners and community members
- > Family or Transition Support Provider conducts introduction to and connection with families; evaluation as topic of family group mtg*



# Data Collection

- **Data collection involves several moving parts**
- **Families can be involved in all parts in some way:**
  - Releases, Initial or baseline data collection
  - Data entry, accuracy and maintenance
  - Follow-up or longitudinal data collection
  - Retention in evaluation
- *> Trans. Support Provider conducts the NOMS, parents hired as data collectors*

# Data Analysis

- Partnership with the evaluator
- Interpretation of the data
  - For SAMHSA, partners, families
  - For social marketing
  - For funding/sustainability, CQI
- > *Parent Advisory Group developing data newsletter to families and community; annual focus groups co-facilitated by LFC and Evaluator*

# Reporting and Dissemination

- Plan for using data and for dissemination
- Implementation
  - Written materials, reports
  - Trainings
  - Other venues
- > *“Inquiring Minds” mtg regarding use of data; “Data Dinner Theater;” impact quotes/stories; presentations or advocacy (CMH Week)*

# Technical Assistance

- Family understanding of evaluation and data use
  - Involvement and engagement strategies
  - Inclusion in dissemination and use of data
  - Co-trainers
- > *Trainers for new evaluation staff on engagement; LFC support of parent leaders or facilitator of focus groups*

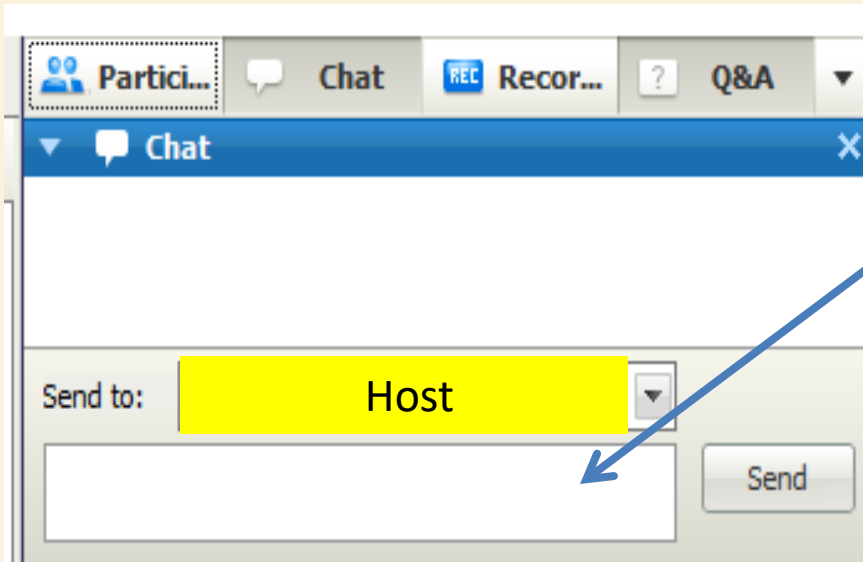
# Examples from the Field

- Debbie Cohen, Texas
  - Evaluator involving families
- Brenda Donaldson, Tennessee
  - Family member employed as Evaluation Team member
- Jenah Cason, South Carolina
  - Family organization partnering with evaluation
- Malisa Pearson, Michigan
  - LFC involvement in evaluation



# Q & A

**Submit your questions now**



The screenshot shows a web interface with a 'Chat' window. The window has a title bar with 'Chat' and a close button. Below the title bar is a large text input area. At the bottom of the window, there is a 'Send to:' dropdown menu with 'Host' selected. To the right of the dropdown is a 'Send' button. A blue arrow points from the text 'Submit your questions now' to the 'Send to:' dropdown menu.

**Submit your questions later**

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# Presenters



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# CMHI Web Event Training Series

## Upcoming Events

- ***Cultural Considerations in Evaluation***

Wednesday, February 22, 2017 from 2 – 3:30pm ET

Registration to come

- ***Return on Investment in Systems of Care***

Thursday, March 23, 2017 from 1-2 pm ET

Registration to come