

Overview of the Core Function: Coordinating Systems and Services

Definition

One of the unique functions and a required mandate of Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council and County Family and Children First Councils is to *provide a formalized venue to facilitate the alignment of systems, policies, resources, and services with and for children and families.*

Mandated Responsibility

The mandate for county FCFCs to coordinate systems and services derives from the OFCF statute. There are two levels of coordinating systems and services.

The first level is the micro level which requires county FCFCs to develop a county service coordination mechanism to serve as the guiding document for coordination of services in the county. FCFCs must offer and have available a service coordination process for families with children with multiple needs and agencies to access. OFCF Cabinet must be responsive to referrals and appeals from county FCFCs and families. The OFCF Cabinet is responsible for assisting with the coordination of services for children and families.

The second level is the macro level which requires the OFCF Cabinet and the county FCFCs to effectively align systems and resources to meet the needs of children and families in the communities.

Philosophy

The service coordination mechanism conveys the vision for a system that provides a comprehensive and individualized set of supports and services; involves partnerships between professionals and parents in all phases of service planning and delivery, and system development; builds on strengths of children and families as well as needs; and responds effectively to the diversity of our population of children and families. Service coordination emphasizes a system of care which includes:

- Collaboration across agencies at policy, management and service levels
- Partnership with families
- Cultural and linguistic competence
- Blended, braided, or coordinated financing
- Shared governance and liability across systems and with families
- Shared outcomes across systems, reflecting community values
- Organized pathway to services and supports
- Interagency/family services planning and monitoring teams.

The purpose of the service coordination plan meeting is to develop a creative, strengths-based, family-centered plan for providing the necessary wraparound services for a child and family that allows them to succeed in the least restrictive setting, keeping the child in their home and community whenever possible, or to determine the appropriate out-of-home services that will allow successful reunification.

State Sponsored Support

The support and assistance the OFCF Cabinet Council provides to county FCFCs to effectively coordinate systems and services is quite limited to meet the true capacity of service coordination. Some counties have been provided with past training and support on an evidence-based approach called Wraparound. Some state funding streams are accessed to pay for services that are identified and/or assist in the operations of service coordination; however, this is a local level decision for the dedication of these funds that would be allowable. OFCF Cabinet Council, through ODMH's contract with NAMI-Ohio, has established the Parent Advocacy Connection. Parent advocates have been trained to provide support and assistance to families going through the county FCFC service coordination process. OFCF Cabinet Council is also sponsoring through ODMH Title IV-B allocation from ODJFS and TSIG funding the development and implementation of a web-based service coordination database. This database when implemented statewide will for the first time ever report the demographics of children and families in FCFC Service Coordination; the referral sources; custody and placement status; and to track the child and family outcomes as a result of service coordination.