Building Greater Collaboration for Better Outcomes: A Direct Service Providers Approach

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Session Objectives

- Identify why greater collaboration is important for older youth and successful transitions
- Identify resources available within systems to achieve better collaboration
- Understand the youth voice and empowerment achieved in the collaboration process
- Recognize how a child’s developmental level requires different sets of systems and collaboration
- Understand the methods employed and outcomes achieved so far from the Lackawanna County Independent Living Collaborative
- Identify goals for collaboration in their own community
Laying the Foundation for TCOM

- Building a willingness to collaborate is necessary for success.
- Obtaining buy-in is a challenge due to the tensions between systems.
  - “Competing pressures arising from the incompatible or opposing goals and objectives that push or pull the system in opposite directions.”
- Direct service workers are often not researchers by nature.

(CKM: Redressing the Emperoro, Lyons 2004 (pg.31))
What is Collaborative Practice?

“A relational system in which two or more stakeholders pool together resources in order to meet objectives that neither could meet individually” (Graham & Barger, 1999, p. 7)

Intervention-driven collaboration develops interdependent relationship; characterized by norms of reciprocity and trust, allowing participants to organize for collective action.

Collaboration is the most difficult to develop, institutionalize, and sustain because it requires new organizational designs, including inter-organizational partnerships, as well as policy change. (Encyclopedia of Social Work)

“Collaboration is essential to identifying and prioritizing unmet needs and determining evidence-based strategies to implement.” (D’Agostino, 2013, p.248)
What Does Collaboration Mean for Lackawanna County?

- To identify, invite, and listen to current and potential partners to improve outcomes for older youth.
- As a team, assess, prioritize needs, and act together on shared goals in order to achieve more positive transitions for older youth.
- Develop a “Shared Vision” or a “Desired End State”.
- Use a common language to discuss cross-system issues.
  - Example: Transition Age Youth
- Progress to utilizing TCOM and EBP in the collaborative process.
Lackawanna County Independent Living Collaborative

- A group of over 30 organizations who work with transition age youth in various capacities
- Monthly meetings to discuss barriers to success and to develop solutions
- Sub-committees to focus on specific barriers, development of solutions
- An opportunity to network and develop personal relationships with other providers and systems
How did we start?

- Identifying & engaging multiple systems
  - Pennsylvania Child Welfare Quality of Service Review
    - Focus group with current partners & youth
    - Identified the need to communicate more about youth that are mutually served
  - Identifying Collaborators
    - Current Partners
    - New Partners - Think Outside the Box
Assessing Collaboration Needs & Priorities

- Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center
  - Technical Assistance
  - Utilized the DAPIM Model
    - Define
    - Assessment
    - Plan
    - Implement
    - Monitor
- Chart Paper
- Conducted a SWOT Assessment
Assessing Collaboration Needs & Priorities

- Conducted a Root Cause Analysis
  - Fishbone Structure
  - The 5 Whys

- Determined nine major root cause categories
  - Lack of Resource Families for Older Youth
  - Coordination of Services
  - “Transition” Services
  - Transportation
  - Teen Parenting
  - Permanent Supports/Mentors
  - Career/Education Planning
  - Turn over of staff
  - Trauma
Outcomes of IL Collaborative Work

- Direct Service Provision
  - Coordinated services for mental health treatment (more to come)
  - Increased communication and prevention work with schools
  - “Safety Net” with community agencies

- For Example: Emily N.
  - Housing
  - GED
Outcomes of IL Collaborative Work

Cross Systems Trainings

- Connections Training to improve the knowledge of various resources and to build personal connections to those resources.

- Over 150 direct service providers from various fields (Drug & Alcohol, Mental Health, Education, Employment, Disability Services, etc.)

- “(One of the most valuable tools I will take back with me is that) there is always a service we don’t know about, learning more about who’s out there and how to network to help individuals.”
Outcomes of IL Collaborative Work

- Annual Networking Events
  - Speed Networking Event - provide continued opportunities to meet and learn more about community agencies.
- Use of technology to increase communication
- “Making connections is what best helps our youth.”
- “Understanding functions and services of different agencies (is one of the tools that is most valuable from this event).”
Outcomes of IL Collaborative Work

- Advocacy
  - Transportation
  - Housing

- Cross-Systems Transition Conferences
  - Review of individual, multi-system youth
  - Standing members from multiple systems
  - Specific members of identified youth’s team
Next Steps

- Coordinated, Evidence-based Assessments
  - FAST & CANS
  - OYFS & Community Partners
  - PCIT, Trauma-Informed CBT, Motivational Interviewing, Solution Focused Therapy
  - Cross Systems Transition Conferences

- Systems of Care
  - Revisiting a Shared Vision
  - Developing language to communicate the shared vision across systems
Next Steps

- TCOM
  - Total - embed in all activities with families as full partners
    - All Lackawanna County Intakes
    - Family Team Conferences & Permanency Team Conferences
    - Cross Systems Transition Conferences
  - Clinical - The focus is on the child an family health, well-being, and functioning
    - Shared Vision
    - Common Language
  - Outcomes - Measures are relevant to decisions about approach or proposed impact of interventions
    - Penn State University Research Project
    - Aggregating Data
  - Management - Information is used in all aspects of managing the system from individual planning to supervision to systems operations
    - Utilizing the data appropriately to develop services and enhance programs
Next Steps

- **Youth & Family Voice**
  - Nothing About US, without US!
  - What youth want vs. What others want for them.
  - “Give the youth a voice and listen to them, as well as listening to what they are NOT saying.”
  - “If the adults are confused, the youth are more confused.”
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