

## PROJECT DIRECTOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

### Purpose/Goals of Interview:

- To assess the impact of System of Care activities on each community, including changes in collaborative dynamics and changes in formal and informal policies and practices in the child welfare system.

### Interview Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview.
- Convey to each interview participant our confidentiality policy: (1) the interview is voluntary; (2) they can decline to answer any questions, or they can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the site visit team.
- All information will only be reported in summary form to ensure your confidentiality. The information we discuss will be used ONLY to (1) answer research questions about the impact of System of Care activities on your community and (2) to help your site's technical assistance liaison determine your site's needs regarding technical assistance and sustainability efforts. The information we discuss cannot be used to directly determine funding decisions. If you give us permission to tape this interview, only evaluation team members will access to the interview tape.
- Please remember to ask permission to tape record the interview. They can decline.
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.

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### SECTION I: IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES AND SOC PRINCIPLES

*First we would like to talk a little bit about the activities that your community is implementing through its System of Care initiative. Throughout this interview, System of Care activities are defined as any activity that the System of Care collaboration in your community has initiated, strengthened, modified, or influenced significantly. These activities may include formal and informal policies and procedures, other changes in agency practice, meetings, retreats, conferences, media campaigns, legislative changes, trainings, new positions or changes to the work of existing positions, and the like.*

- 1) What has been guiding your site's System of Care activities; for instance, has a logic model, strategic plan/s, or another document guided your activities?
- 2) Please tell me about how implementation of the SOC principles has been going. Specifically: What activities has your SOC implemented in the past year and what (if

any) are your current plans for SOC activities in the coming year regarding each of the SOC principles?

- Interagency collaboration
- Cultural competence
- Family involvement
- Community based resources and services
- Individualized and strengths-based
- Accountability

(For each principle: Have there been problems? What has contributed to success? )

- a. Are these implementation activities consistent with what was intended or planned? If not, please describe *how* and *why* they are different or have changed over time.
- 3) Overall, what would you characterize as the main success(es) of System of Care activities thus far? The main challenge(s)? What lessons have you learned about this process to this point?
- a. Is there anything you would have done differently?
- 4) What has been the impact of System of Care activities on children and families?
- a. What evidence do you have of the impact on children and families?

## **SECTION II: SYSTEM OF CARE COLLABORATION**

*This next series of questions relates to the collaboration process and collaborative membership at your site.*

- 5) Has the organizational structure of your local System of Care initiative changed over the life of the grant (e.g., committees, workgroups)? If so, please describe how it has changed and why.
- 6) How is your initiative involving family members? Youth?
- a. Are family members represented? To what degree, which family member populations, and in what roles?
  - b. What efforts have been made to recruit and retain family members/youth?

- c. What has been the impact of family involvement on your initiative?  
(Evidence?)

7) How has your collaboration been functioning as you moved into full implementation and sustainability? Are the right people active and engaged?

- b. What do you see as two or three of the main challenges to maintaining commitment and participation from stakeholders?
- c. What strategies have you used to overcome these challenges? (i.e. efforts to recruit those missing from the table?)
- c. Have interagency agreements been put into place (Get approximate #)? If so, to do what? Have these agreements facilitated collaboration?
- d. Are there any agencies with whom agreements need to be in place but are not? Any with whom the agreements are not working? Are there any plans to address this in the future?
- e. Is there a process through which information is shared across agencies at the management and supervisory level (e.g., cross-agency training, interagency case consultation or review at the supervisory or management level)?
  - If so, is there a method by which issues identified by this group can lead to changes in agency policies, procedures, and practices?

8) Up until this point, what do you see as the impact or result of your collaborative work?

- a. How do you think the dynamics among collaborative members and/or the structure of the collaboration have impacted System of Care activities? Please describe, giving specific examples.
- b. Are resources shared between the various public agencies involved in your SOC?
  - If so, what agencies are involved and how are resources divided? Do the partners feel that the resources are shared equitably or does it seem like one or two agencies provide all of the resources?
  - If not, what barriers have kept your community from blending funds or sharing resources to support your target population?

9) What are the main lessons learned from the successes and challenges of System of Care collaboration at your site? Please give concrete examples.

### **SECTION III: SUSTAINABILITY**

10) Will the System of Care work be sustained in your community once Federal funding ends? If so, how? *(Ask how and if each of the implementation activities discussed in Section 1 will be sustained)*

- a. Will members of the collaboration keep meeting? If YES, which agencies will be represented? Who are the key members?
- b. How will [specific implementation activities or positions] continue to be funded? Where are your resources coming from to continue the process?
- c. Which of the SOC principles will be sustained and how?
- d. At this point in time, what do you see as the major facilitators to sustaining System of Care efforts in your community?
- e. What are the major challenges to sustaining SOC, and what strategies have been identified to help overcome these challenges?

### **SECTION IV: COMMUNITY CONTEXT**

11) How has the community context changed as the System of Care project has evolved at your site (excluding those changes you feel are the result of System of Care)?

- a. Have any major changes occurred related to:
  - Agency budgets?
  - Staffing?
  - Political factors?
  - Community interest or media attention to this issue?
  - Legislation?
- b. How have these changes influenced your collaborative activities?
- c. How have these changes influenced System of Care implementation activities?

### **SECTION IV: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

12) Has technical assistance had an impact on the planning or implementation of any System of Care activities? If so, how? *(Note TA received from outside sources as well as the Center)*

- a. What technical assistance was received?

- b. Who from your site benefited from/participated in the technical assistance?
- 13) Has technical assistance helped you to negotiate any of the collaborative challenges, build on your successes, or otherwise influenced your collaborative processes? If so, how?
  - 14) Has your interaction with other System of Care communities impacted the planning or implementation of System of Care implementation activities? If so, how?
  - 15) Over the course of the initiative, were there any technical assistance needs that were not met? Or, looking back, was there any technical assistance that you wished you had? If so, please describe.
  - 16) What technical assistance needs do you anticipate in your site over the next year, particularly around the issue of sustainability?