Wraparound is about the Whole Family

Jennifer was a busy mom of three teenagers—each going in different directions—when Wraparound stepped into their lives. Family voice and choice was at the heart of the successful engagement the Wraparound team made with Jennifer and the family: Sharriah, now 19, Tyrail, age 15 and Dakota, age 14.

“I was surprised,” said Jennifer as she describes her family’s first encounter with their team. “I learned right away that we were in charge of our family.” The whole team came to the house. Jennifer made it clear that her goal was to keep her kids at home. All of the children had significant issues. Jennifer described what it was like to have the two oldest on probation, one incident away from out-of-home placement. “Having your kids on probation is not easy. There are terms and conditions, lots of rules to follow. I was working, trying to meet all our needs,” Jennifer said.

“It didn’t feel like counseling; it felt like I was talking to a friend.”

Constructing the Wraparound plan was a step-by-step process. As the family completed tasks, new elements were added. As they made positive changes, so did the plan. “They helped me with parenting, communication skills, how to set and keep rules, and how to work together as a family,” Jennifer said.

The team also helped teachers learn how to best work with the kids. Tyrail gave an example. “I need time to cool off when I get upset, and I learned that if I walk away, I can prevent a fight with someone.” At school, the team met with Tyrail and his teachers and developed a plan that included a safe place he could go to “take space.” Tyrail learned that he had control over how he handled himself. Jennifer feels this helped Tyrail learn to be more responsible.

Tyrail added that Wraparound counseling was very helpful. “I hated going to offices and talking, but the Wraparound counselor was different. He would come to school or pick me up, and we would go for a walk in the park or do something. It didn’t feel like counseling; it felt like I was talking to a friend.” Tyrail added, “He told me what I was doing right.”

continued on page 2
The Wraparound team also helped Dakota with school and scheduled medical appointments without delay. As a result, Dakota credits Wraparound for making it possible for him to do better in school. He began high school this fall.

Community resources also made an impact with the family. Wraparound was able to connect them with resources the kids felt would be helpful. With baseball, basketball, swimming, biking, caring for horses and exploring—these boys are active! Constructive activities produced and channeled positive outcomes. Wraparound also helped them plan fun activities as a family, things they never did before. The family continues to do activities together today that were part of their original Wraparound plan.

Jennifer felt supported from the beginning. The kids agreed. Team members went with them to many school meetings, doctor’s appointments and probation meetings...anywhere they were needed.

Jennifer especially appreciated the support of the team with the juvenile court and the feedback Wraparound gave to the judge. The information always focused on the positive, and the judge responded with direct, positive feedback for all the hard work the family was doing.

The family continues to grow in a positive direction. Sharriah graduated from high school and earned two scholarships for college. Dakota just entered high school, and Tyrail is staying out of trouble and has the confidence to try new things. The boys continue to be involved in sports, and they still find time to do things as a family.

Jennifer would encourage any family to “give it a chance” because many doors were opened for her family. “We are so glad they were here to help us.”

And as Tyrail added, “It [Wraparound] could be your last chance—use it!“
Editor’s Column:
Beyond Safety and Permanency

We know the three major outcomes of child welfare services are safety, permanency and well-being. Safety and permanency have been the primary focus of child welfare for some time. We have made great strides in both areas as the number of children placed in foster care has decreased and the number of exits to permanency (reunification, guardianship and adoption) has increased.

Well-being has been a less clear-cut outcome. It is an outcome Wraparound has embraced. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) identified a well-being framework that is worth examining. It includes cognitive functioning, physical health and development, behavioral/emotional functioning, and social functioning. ACF has placed particular emphasis on behavioral/emotional functioning because of its “ripple effects” in the life of a child. Positive behavioral/emotional functioning impacts permanency, school learning and success, relationships with others, and the development of pro-social behavior.

Wraparound has focused on behavioral/emotional functioning and has experienced much success. A focus on underlying needs rather than behavior alone has been a mainstay. Development of the Child and Family Team brings a broad spectrum of support and expertise to families as they deal with “big behaviors.” The necessity of crisis plans, interventions and services to address “big behaviors” is an integral part of Wraparound. Wraparound can offer all of this to the emerging implementation of the Core Practice Model.

The workshop proposal for the Partnerships for Well-Being Institute has been issued. Please take a few minutes to consider what you can share from your expertise in Wraparound for the implementation of the Core Practice Model and the further enhancement of Wraparound. Look for further information in this edition of Connections. You have made the lives of a child and his/her family better; now you can make the lives of many children and their families better. Share your wisdom!

Best regards,
Debbie

Deborah K. Lowery, M.S.W., Director
Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice
Center for Human Services, UC Davis Extension
Being a parent partner can be challenging. The very life experiences that qualify a person to be a parent or family partner—such as raising a child with difficult behavior or special needs or changing your own behaviors and actions—can also be the very thing that keeps a parent partner from integrating as a productive team member for someone else. It’s not the distraction of dealing with what’s going on within our own family (although that, too, can happen). It has more to do with how we limit ourselves. How we may undervalue the abilities of others on the team.

As a new parent partner determined to help families, I had what I like to call a “Messiah Complex.” I started this role based on my passion and strong desire to help. I was devoted and energetic. I also found myself comparing my personal commitment and passion with that of others on the team and would find myself thinking, “Am I the only one who understands the family and understands what they truly need?” These thoughts rose up when professionals on the team talked about services, support, problem solving or, frankly, anything. “What do they know? How can they? They haven’t been there. They don’t even have kids! They just don’t get it.”

What families need can’t be learned in a classroom or from a textbook. I thought I was the only one at the table who understood.

Then things began to change. I had a reality check, resulting in a lesson well-learned. Of course it was bound to happen. The effective team process in supporting families relies on seeing the strengths and resources of the family, which are built upon to move the family forward. As I worked side by side toward common goals, this strength-based approach also enabled me to see and appreciate the strengths of the other professionals on the team. I learned to trust the process and model it in my behavior. Trust that there is value in each person on the team. Trust that a one-size approach to dealing with a situation doesn’t work and what worked for me may not work at all for others. I learned to trust the team as a whole.

In order for both the professionals and the family to see me as an equal, I needed to see them in the same light. Just as I value my ability to “relate” and the unique path I have traveled, I understand that I serve as an example and can be the hinge that swings open possibilities. All in all, I’ve grown to value the role of the professionals who provide balance, knowledge, rich information and expertise. Something I needed and now fully support for the families I serve.

Other keys to being a team player and ensuring the family’s voice is present and balanced are:

• Calling the parent ahead of time to find out his/her needs and hopes for a meeting
• Staying in constant communication with team members between meetings
• Following through and completing all assigned tasks
• Brainstorming ideas
• Letting other team members know you appreciate what they bring to the table
• Helping parents see the value of the team process and fully participating
Statewide Learning Collaborative to Begin! (Katie A. and Implementation of the Core Practice Model)

By Jim Dickinson, CDSS Wraparound Consultant

The Statewide Learning Collaborative is now in its beginning stages, and its focus is the implementation of the Core Practice Model (CPM). In preparation for this process, an All-County Information Notice (ACIN I-26-13) was sent to all counties on May 29, 2013. It describes the learning collaborative strategy as a model of training where multiple teams work together to adopt or improve a practice or system and to focus on learning from collective experiences in diverse service settings.

A Readiness Assessment tool and a Service Delivery Plan (SDP) were developed to help counties determine their readiness for implementing the CPM, as well as to develop a plan for providing Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) and Intensive Home-Based Services (IHBS). Counties with a desire to participate in the Statewide Learning Collaborative were selected by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) and the County Mental Health Directors Association (CMHDA). Criteria for this selection included: identification of co-leads from county mental health and child welfare agencies; commitment to develop and test strategies for implementing the CPM; commitment to participate in trainings, convenings and webinars; commitment to transfer lessons learned to local programs and to use any coaching/training materials or other aids to fully adopt and implement the CPM; commitment to act in a peer capacity with other counties; capacity to deliver ICC and IHBS consistent with the CPM; and a commitment to build an implementation team.

The selected counties are grouped by three regions plus one additional group for small counties. The Bay Area Learning Collaborative will include Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Cruz and Solano counties. The Central Learning Collaborative will include Fresno, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Tuolumne counties. The Southern Learning Collaborative will include Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego and Ventura counties. Finally, the Small County Learning Collaborative will include Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Mendocino and Shasta counties. CDSS consultants for the Learning Collaborative include: Bay Area and Central regions: Caroline Caton (Caroline.Caton@dss.ca.gov), Southern region: Connie Hamilton (Connie.Hamilton@dss.ca.gov), and Small County region: Jim Dickinson (Jim.Dickinson@dss.ca.gov).

According to an executive summary published in July 2013 by the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC), UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare, the Learning Collaborative will last 12-18 months and bring together representatives from the fields of mental health and child welfare, stakeholders from parent, youth, community and tribal partners, as well as subject matter experts.

Being that the Katie A. Settlement Agreement requires timely access to mental health services in all California counties for children in the child welfare system, counties that are not part of the initial team will still be implementing aspects of the CPM during this period. This will be done without necessarily acquiring the full benefit of implementation science-based processes and lessons learned from the Learning Collaborative experience.

One of the goals of the Learning Collaborative will be to disseminate new information, knowledge and tools as swiftly as possible to all counties. If additional information or copies of the CPM Guide or Medi-Cal Manual are needed, they can be accessed on the CDSS website at www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG1320.htm.

References

All County Information Notice: I-26-13

Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC), UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare. Learning Collaborative Proposal. 7/26/2013 p.2
Northern California Hub Meeting Notes

The Northern Hub met in Davis on August 1, 2013, and was facilitated by Nicole Nelson. The morning began with several updates from the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice (UC Davis Extension), including upcoming regional trainings and information on the 2014 Partnerships for Well-Being Institute (formally the Wraparound Institute) slated for June 4-6. Email about workshop proposals was sent out in August.

The rest of the morning was spent on a planned open discussion/sharing among providers about safety planning with Wraparound families. There was a connection made to Safety Organized Practice (SOP) used by social services and how this framework fits into identification of core issues and incorporates Wraparound principles. The process helps to narrow down the main issues and directly speaks to the role the family plays in creating their plan. Topics ranged from how to write a plan, what elements should be included, the role of family voice and values, proactive vs. reactive response, training staff on plan development and response, how the plan is implemented, system responses including who, when, what and how responses are handled (e.g., after-hours calls) and the types of interventions commonly used. Key strategies were presented on how parents use the plan, how and when to update it and how the plan can be used after Wraparound services have ended. Providers agreed to email their safety plans to the Northern Hub chair for distribution to members. You can email Sarah_Smith@senecacenter.org to submit your agency’s safety plan and/or to get a copy of others.

In the afternoon, we covered several topics such as High Fidelity Wraparound, working with After 18 foster youth, and Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment eligibility. CDSS opened a discussion on realignment funding strategies and how various counties’ providers structure their funds. Also mentioned was the upcoming Continuum for Care reform that will look at the current Rate Classification Level requirements and rates.

Next meeting will include a review and discussion of Out of County Wraparound, including the ACIN and how providers are ensuring that there are services for families. Additional topics will include natural supports, their role with Wraparound and how to keep them at the table. The next meeting will be at EMQ FamiliesFirst in Davis on Thursday, November 7, 2013.

Central California Hub Meeting Summary

The Central Hub participants met in San Luis Obispo County on July 26, 2013. Hub chairs Julie Brueggeman, Tabitha Baldwin and Pete Gonzalez opened the meeting with the agenda review and brief announcements. Another outstanding presentation by a local Wraparound family and their Wraparound team kicked off the meeting. The family, including three teens, highlighted their journey through Wraparound. The presentation concluded with thoughtful questions from the Hub members.

County and Wraparound provider updates, sharing and discussion followed. Highlights included development of new partnerships; slot increases funded by realignment to address needs of high-risk families in voluntary services; Katie A. implementation; development of non-minor dependent programs; educating the school systems in the re-identification of youth (former 3632 eligible) needing Wraparound services; changing the enrollment process to expedite services to families; hiring family specialists; and developing step-down programs that allow families to maintain support.

The topic of the Affordable Care Act was also mentioned and how an increase in newly eligible clients may impact mental health departments and the delivery of services. Other topics focused on training highlights and the desire to ensure that standards are a focus for service delivery.

The meeting concluded with updates from the state and UC Davis. Jim Dickinson from CDSS provided information about Katie A. implementation and the Pathways to Mental Health Services/Core Practice Model and Medi-Cal implementation guidelines that are now available on the web: www.childsworld.ca.gov under the Family Center Services section. This section also provides links to all the letters and notices that address implementation requirements. He encouraged participants to use this website to find answers to questions regarding Katie A. vs. Bonita. He also brought copies of the Core Practice Model and Medi-Cal Guidelines for members to review.

Jim talked about the learning collaboratives that are underway with selected pilot counties. Those counties will then assist/train other counties with implementation. Jim also mentioned the Quality Improvement project he’s
involved in: Improving the Use of Psychotropic Medications with Youth in Foster Care. The mission is to improve the health of youth through oversight and monitoring of psychotropic medication. The QI began in July 2012 and is estimated for completion by 2015. Participants in the project are staff from DHCS, CDSS and California Mental Health Directors Association (CMHDA).

Jim concluded with an update on the CWAC (California Wraparound Advisory Committee). The Wraparound Standards workgroup is now up and running. Participation is encouraged.

Lynne Jones from UC Davis highlighted the current California Wraparound Connections newsletter and encouraged Hub members to subscribe and make a contribution by adding a story or referring a family for future issues. Please contact Monica Caprio at macaprio@ucdavis.edu for information on ways to contribute.

Next year’s Wraparound Institute information and the evolution of the new name, the Partnerships for Well-Being Institute, was announced. Lynne recommended keeping in mind the theme “Embracing a Shared Vision” when developing workshops. Next year’s event will be June 4-6, 2014, at the Hyatt Regency Garden Grove in Orange County. Registration cost is $375. Additional Information can be found in the newsletter. The release of the Request for Proposals for workshop presentations is due out from Deborah Lowery at the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice in early August. The guidelines in the letter will assist you in developing a workshop around specific concept areas. Now that our Institute has an expanded focus, we can’t wait to see your creative and informative entries!

A UC Davis training on “Self-Sufficient Families in Wraparound through Needs and Strengths” will be held in the three regions in August.

At the next meeting, providers/counties are asked to make a brief presentation on their Wraparound eligibility and enrollment process. The next meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2013. The meeting location is TBA.

**Southern California Hub Meeting Notes**

The Southern Hub met in Camarillo on August 19, 2013, and was hosted by Casa Pacifica. Co-chair Jarred Vermillion facilitated the meeting with roundtable sharing among providers.

Key updates from providers included: increase in successful SELPA connections and referrals, Katie A. status and referrals, expansion of programs in new areas, staff hiring and experiences with the Learning Collaborative.

Announcements from the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice included training information, details about the Partnerships for Well-Being Institute and the vision, changes in submitting workshop proposals and topics that might be considered, website access and training. California Wraparound Connections newsletters and an invitation to submit articles. Feedback from recent trainings was positive, but there is a need for additional sites in the Southern region as workshops are filled quickly and sites do not always have adequate parking.

Updates from the California Wraparound Advisory Committee and the Northern and Central Hub meetings followed. Wraparound trainings in other states were also announced: September 23-24, 2013, in Clermont, Ohio, and the National Wraparound Conference March 11-13, 2014, in Coco Beach, Florida.

In addition, there was discussion and idea sharing on the first contact/engagement of families referred to Wraparound. Issues have come up when having to leave messages on a phone and the family does not respond. Practices shared included dropping by the home (drop bys), having the referring agency set up the first meeting with the family, recognizing that parents are more receptive to partner contacts, and having the referral source provide the family with written information so the family knows what to expect.

Youth Engagement was the afternoon training topic. Casa Pacifica staff provided an informative look at practical components for successful youth engagement. Highlights from the training included: ways to engage various age groups, potential barriers, the engagement process, and tips from staff and clients. The main focus is to know who your clients are, their functioning level, experiences, concerns, trauma triggers, culture, environmental aspects and relationships. Most importantly, be genuine, present and supportive. Listen and remember key information the client provides, and show acceptance and respect. Try different strategies and allow the client to lead. Other major recommendations included making a connection with interests, providing a safe environment and promoting POSITIVITY!

Jarred will be creating a Drop Box for the Southern Hub to hold all the minutes, general information, announcements, training, resources and links. Providers can also “drop” documents that can be shared across the region. Jarred will contact LA providers to determine the host and email the location out to the Southern Hub members.

Next meeting will be in Los Angeles on Monday, November 18.
Announcements

Partnerships for Well-Being Institute
June 4-6, 2014
Hyatt Garden Grove
For more information, check out our website at:

Upcoming Hub Meetings: Fall 2013

Northern Hub Meeting
Thursday, November 7, 2013 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Host and location: EMQ FamiliesFirst, 2100 5th Street, Davis, CA 95616
Co-chairs: Leticia Galyean at Leticia_galyean@senecacenter.org and
Nicole Nelson at Nicole_Nelson@senecacenter.org with Seneca Center
Contact: Sarah Smith at sarah_smith@senecacenter.org or (415) 482-6182

Central Hub Meeting
Friday, October 25, 2013, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Host and location: EMQ FamiliesFirst, Fresno Wraparound, 5168 N. Blythe Fresno, CA. 93722 (559) 446-3076 Office
Co-chairs: Julie Brueggeman, Regional Director for Family Preservation
Community Services (651) 754-2277 and Tabitha Baldwin, LMFT, Clinical
Associate Director, EMQ FamiliesFirst Wraparound-Fresno (559) 446-3076
Contacts: jbrueggeman@fpcscorp.com and tbaldwin@emqff.org

Southern Hub Meeting
Monday, November 18 2013, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Host and location: Five Acres, 4401 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte, CA 91761
Co-chairs: Jarred Vermillion, Facilitator/Wraparound program specialist,
Oak Grove Children’s Center, Riverside County (760) 449-7854 and
Kristal Audoma, TFS Program Manager, Five Acres, Los Angeles County
(626) 246-1765
Contacts: Kaudoma@5acres.org and Jarredvermillion@gmail.com

Partnerships for Well-Being Institute Workshop Proposals
Requests for proposals are still available! Feel free to submit your proposal today! Be sure to circulate them to your colleagues! For more information and/or to obtain the forms, please contact Monica Caprio at (530) 752-9726 or macaprio@ucdavis.edu, or visit the web at http://humanservices.ucdavis.edu/Resource/wellbeing.aspx.