

# Texas Children's Mental Health Forum

Convened by Texans Care for Children and the Texas Health Institute

Tuesday, August 23, 2011

## TOPIC:

### **Children's Mental Health in Texas: Identifying Priorities for the Upcoming Year**

***Below are the issues and concerns stakeholders identified during the meeting as priority areas needing to be addressed in order to promote the mental health of children and youth in Texas.***

#### Supporting Healthy Families:

- Addressing the economic well-being of the families, including workforce development, childcare, access, navigating social service systems

#### Prevention/Early Intervention:

- Early Detection and Early Intervention—screening in well-child checks
- Strengthening the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) system
- Expand Parent/Caregiver Education programs, including:
  - In home programs such as Nurse-Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers
  - Counseling and co-parenting education for divorcing parents
  - Increase training and support services for grandparents who are raising or providing child care for their grandchildren
- Promoting quality child care through Mental Health Consultations and enhancing Texas Rising Star child care initiative
  - Targeted efforts in communities with high concentration of military families
- Educate judges and lawyers of the impact on children of high-conflict divorces and strategies to help children reduce stress and anxiety
- Prevent guns on campuses

#### School Based Efforts/Supports:

- Effects educational cuts will have on students mental wellbeing, schools' ability to address behavioral concerns
- Promote the use of school-wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) in schools
- School-based Mental Health supports through Coordinated School Health
- Reasonable student to counselor ratios
- Implementation of school counseling programs already set forth in the Education Code
- Uniform Standards to implement bullying and cyber-bullying prevention programs and Reasonable, appropriate and consistent consequences for violating bullying protocols
- Address the "School to Prison Pipeline", including PBIS and School Resource Officer (SRO) training

#### Access to Services:

- Maintain existing services
- Monitor Resiliency and Disease Management (RDM) redesign
- Additional funding for CHIP/Medicaid mental health services
- Lack of insurance coverage for children with serious emotional disturbance (SED)
- Expand Youth Empowerment Services (YES) Medicaid waiver into more communities
- Additional hospital beds for children, especially for those with co-occurring MH/Substance diagnoses
- Non-medication alternatives to addressing behavioral problems in children
- Grow mental health provider workforce; Graduate Medical Education initiatives
- Effective implementation of evidence based practices
- Reduce waitlist for local mental health services, for children and parents
- Using family partners to help families navigate systems and access needed services
- Promote peer-to-peer support for youth
- Increasing outreach to families w/ uninsured children
- Addressing gaps created by state's differing eligibility systems
- Financing services not covered under pending Affordable Care Act provisions
- Healthcare for Undocumented Persons

#### Within Child Welfare System:

- Ensuring that behavioral assessments utilized in Child Protective Services are consistent and appropriately used
- Training county level providers in Trauma Informed Care
- Mental health supports for homeless and former foster youth
- Ensuring youth transitioning out of care have access to services, help in navigating mental health system, getting enrolled in Medicaid
- Promote Peer to Peer Supports
- Addressing the needs of children/youth with dual diagnoses of MH/developmental/intellectual disabilities
- Treatment Foster Care
- DFPS and YES Waiver enhancements

#### Within the Juvenile Justice System:

- Promoting use of school-wide PBIS to address "school to prison" pipeline
- Monitoring juvenile justice agency merger to ensuring appropriate provision of MH services and supports, including access to community based treatment
- Address disparities in juvenile justice
- Address the unique needs of children committed to TYC who are subsequently abandoned by parents
- Expanding trauma informed care into TYC facilities

- Prevent criminal enhancements

Cross-System Issues:

- Need for new revenue
- Need for stronger coordinated statewide leadership focused on children's mental health, esp. in light of loss of some of the state's interagency coordination structures (TxCEDs, TIFI Consortium, Texas Mental Health Transformation Workgroup)
- Implementation of funding strategies to provide children/youth with comprehensive, coordinated services
- Need for a systemic response for diversion efforts within Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice systems, including cross-system education
- Develop a state infrastructure for training/technical assistance to:
  - Facilitate cross-systems training
  - Develop workforce
  - Promote use of EBP, promising practices
- Expand opportunities for education and preventive programs for parents, educators and those who work with children, including:
  - Identification of and intervention strategies for self-destructive behaviors such as cutting, substance abuse, unsupervised use of technology and suicide
- Establish regional councils, similar to the state Council on Children and Families