



Mental Health Transformation Texas Youth Voice Summit

July 9-10, 2008

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Youth Voice Summit Purpose Statement



The purpose of this summit was to explore opportunities for establishing and supporting a Youth Voice in Texas that:

- Maximizes the statewide benefits of the expertise of youth who have received services and/or supports from state agencies, private providers, or others;
- Impacts state policy;
- Provides the basis for structured youth peer-to-peer supports; and
- Educates youth, policymakers, and providers.

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Youth Voice Summit Goals

- Share information with Texas Youth regarding possible benefits of Youth Voice mechanisms in Texas;
- Provide an opportunity for informed discussion of potential benefits and challenges of Youth Voice mechanisms in Texas; and
- Make recommendations to the State regarding establishment of Youth Voice mechanisms in Texas.



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Summit Participants

- Eleven youth
- THI staff and
- Mental Health Partners



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Learning from Texas Successes

- Three System of Care Youth Coordinators and their Youth partners shared information on Youth Voice as it exists in Texas communities in Ft. Worth, El Paso, and Houston.
- DFPS Youth Coordinator shared information on CPS Youth Coordination and other CPS Youth Voice opportunities.
- These presentations focused on lessons learned, challenges faced, and innovative strategies.



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State Policy Level Youth Voice



Jessica Olson from Governor Perry's office led a presentation and discussion session on how youth can impact state policy.

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State Policy Level Youth Voice

CPS staff Stacy Lake and Caroline Bogues (CPS Youth Coordinator) shared information: lessons learned, innovative strategies on how the Texas CPS system has developed, implemented and supported youth voice mechanisms in that system including the hiring and support of youth coordinators in all 11 CPS regions in Texas.



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Tool Kit

Participants were provided with a tool kit developed by THI staff and consultants which included a number of resources, examples of youth voice mechanisms from across the world, and information on other youth voice efforts.



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Community & State Level Recommendations

Small group exercises resulted in development of community and state level plans including recommendations for Establishing Youth Voice at both the community and state levels in Texas.



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Next Steps

Based on input and recommendations from youth participants at this event:

- Monthly conference calls with participants to share information and seek innovative solutions to challenges
- Proposal being developed to implement state and community Youth Advisory Councils at the state and community levels in Texas
- Continued exploration of potential youth voice mechanisms for implementation in Texas



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