



The Federation of Families
for Children's Mental Health
Colorado Chapter

BUILDING A FAMILY ORGANIZATION

FEBRUARY 2013



OMNI Institute
899 Logan Street
Denver, CO 80203

INTRODUCTIONS & AGENDA OVERVIEW

- The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health Colorado Chapter
- Family Organizations

TODAY'S AGENDA

- Building a Family Organization
- CO Federation Toolkit
- Other CO Federation Technical Assistance Offerings

Sponsored by the SAMHSA Statewide Family Network Grant

GOALS FOR TODAY

- Learn about how **families start family organizations**
- Recognize the **unique role and value of family organizations** in systems change work
- Understand how to **begin cultivating opportunities** for family organization growth
- **Consider opportunities** for partnership with the CO Federation

BUILDING A FAMILY-RUN ORGANIZATION

- What is a Family-Run Organization?
- Goals of a Family-Run Organization
- Initial Steps/Key Considerations
- National & CO Federation Experience
- Family Member Perspective

CO FAMILY-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

Colorado Definition:

An organization with the explicit purpose to serve families who have a child, youth, or adolescent with special physical, mental, emotional, behavioral, substance use, developmental and or educational needs.

It is governed by a board of directors and comprised of a majority of individuals who are family members.

CO FAMILY MEMBER DEFINITION

A Family Member:

- *Is a person who is raising or has raised a child, youth, or adolescent with special physical, mental, emotional, behavioral, substance use, developmental, and or educational needs*
- *Has experienced working with many of the agencies and providers in their community*
- *Can be recognized and utilized as collaborators by serving on state and local boards, committees and coalitions. They also can be hired as Individual Service Plan care managers and or facilitators, family advocates, evaluators and trainers*

FAMILY MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

Individual family members bring to the table:

- Their own experiences
- Their own expertise
- Their own values and beliefs
- Their own attitudes
- Their own concerns and needs
- Their own strengths and resources

FAMILY-RUN ORGANIZATION INVOLVEMENT

- Teach, coach, and support families navigate systems.
- Teach, coach, and support the leadership of those systems to work with and support families.
- Provide information of rights of children, youth, parents and caregivers in all child-serving systems.
- Promote family-driven and youth guided policies in their communities.

From the: "Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health Guide to Sound Business Practices for Family-Run Organizations in Children's Mental Health", March 2012

WHAT SHOULD A FAMILY-RUN ORGANIZATION LOOK LIKE?

- Have an independent governing structure
- Give preference to family members as leaders and voices
- Promote family involvement at the all levels:
 - Individual
 - Local
 - State
 - National
- Follow a “System of Care” Model
- Provide opportunities for the “family voice” to be instrumental in shaping policies that meet the individualized needs of families and their children.

GOALS OF A FAMILY ORGANIZATION/WHY START ONE?

A Family Organization...

- Enhances opportunities for voices of families to be heard
- Fosters collaboration between systems and families
- Recognizes and capitalizes on the gifts and talents of family members and provides appropriate tools and training for families to carry out effective work
- Creates unique and empowering support systems for families
- Establishes a unified voice for families

Because no family should have to worry that a system will do harm.

THE CO FEDERATION EXPERIENCE

OUR STORY

- **1993: The CO Federation was started by CO families**, in partnership with the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, the Mental Health Association of Colorado and the CO Department of Mental Health's Child and Adolescent Service System Program.
- **On-going commitment to:**
 - Promoting System of Care values, principles and reform
 - Influencing the CO Mental Health and other child-serving systems to promote family-driven and youth guided polices in Colorado.
 - Develop a network of family advocates
 - Create and sustain affiliate family organizations throughout Colorado
 - Provide information and referral services to CO families.
- **Continue to link with the national family movement and the National Federation**

THE CO FEDERATION EXPERIENCE

Our Successes...

- Presence at State and Local Tables
- Providing support for families
- Offering technical assistance
- Incorporating unique contributions of families in our work

THE CO FEDERATION EXPERIENCE

Our Challenges/Lessons Learned...

- Balancing individual services for families with participation in systems change work (micro v. macro work)
- Pressure to represent family voice in broad range of contexts and groups with limited resources (establishing priorities)
- Can't do it alone; need to collaborate with other family organization partners

Together we will have the capacity to be the voice at every table!

FAMILY MEMBER EXPERIENCE

- Personal Perspectives...
- Affiliate Perspectives...

STARTING A FAMILY ORGANIZATION: PURPOSEFUL STEPS/KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Starting a family organization is:
 - Hard work
 - Challenging
 - Rewarding
 - The Right Thing to Do!

Ongoing support by the CO Federation is available!

Transformational change happens by transforming how business is done.

Become a team, there to cheer each other on or help pick up the pieces.

COLORADO FEDERATION TOOLKIT

- **Where?**
 - Online
- **For Whom?**
 - Accessible to public
- **What does it contain?**
 - Resources for building family organizations
- **In what form?**
 - Resources, guides, sample documents

COLORADO FEDERATION TOOLKIT

Key Toolkit Resource Areas:

Building a Family Organization

- Board Development
- Family Involvement
- Information Sharing
- Funding and Sustainability

*SFN Guide to Sound Business Practices

*Family Organization Handbook

Special Populations – Understanding Families

- Cultural Responsiveness
- Military Families
- Trauma/Trauma-Informed Care
- Kinship and Foster Care

CO FEDERATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Possible TA suggestions:

- Monthly Conference Calls
- Subject-specific webinars
- Trainings:
 - Family Advocate Training (based on Parent Support Program from Tennessee Voices)
 - Parent Professional Partnership
 - The Tale of O video and curriculum
- Mentoring/Coaching

DISCUSSION

Questions?

What are some ways you can move forward with building a family organization in your community?

What resources and supports do you need?/What training and technical assistance would be most helpful?

NEXT STEPS TO YOUR FAMILY-RUN ORGANIZATION

- **Commit** to growing family involvement and building family organizations in your community!
- **Participate** in upcoming training offerings.
- **Explore** the toolkit and put the available resources into practice!
- **Give us feedback** on the toolkit – complete our online survey!
- **Share** your other technical assistance needs with us.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
<http://www.ffcmh.org>

CO System of Care Collaborative
<http://cosystemofcare.org/>

THANK YOU!

