



Developing Systems of Care for Youth and Young Adults
with Mental Health Needs Who Are Transitioning to
Adulthood, and Their Families

Ohio's Youth and Young Adults in Transition (Y/YAT) Policy Team

SHARED VISION:

All transition age youth and young adults with mental health needs will have access to developmentally and culturally appropriate services and supports they need to reach their maximum potential.

Mission: To develop and implement seamless treatment, supports, and services that result in improved outcomes for transition age youth and young adults with mental health needs through an inclusive process driven by young people.

Target Population: 14 to 25 with mental health needs (regardless of status, system, or diagnosis)

Policy Team Goals and Progress

The Ohio Y/YAT Policy Team that was developed as a result of being chosen to participate in this technical assistance grant identified three goals that we would work on through the grant period (December 2008 – September 2009) and beyond.

Goal 1: Launch a state supported and youth guided interagency group to develop and evaluate policy that supports youth and young adults in transition.

Our Policy Team began with 10 members and we grew to a team that numbered over 20 representatives. Team members invited youth/young adults who became regular members of our team and provided input and recommendations on our work. The team is in the process of transitioning into an oversight team that will provide information and input to the Ohio Department of Mental Health as we collaborate with other partners.

Goal 2: Develop standards of practice and technical supports for incorporating comprehensive and youth driven transition planning within individualized services plans.

Policy team members divided into sub-committees to provide recommendations for the child serving systems and adult serving systems to enable them to adequately transition youth and young adults within their systems. We encourage that boards and agencies review and adopt these recommendations for use within their local systems.

In addition, team members have advocated for the national accreditation organizations to adopt standards that will require agencies to develop transition plans for this population. ODMH Accreditation Staff will monitor the status of the accreditation standards.

Goal 3: Address the continuity of benefits for young adults with Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED)/Severe Mental Disability (SMD).

Ohio's policy team working with Georgetown consultants and local experts in Ohio agreed that our best approach to bridge this gap was to ask the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) to research Ohio's options for a Medicaid waiver. We are aware that this option will take time and will not be without controversy. In the meantime, we agreed to monitor the Federal government's progress on universal healthcare that would include young adults.

Agencies providing services to this population were offered an option to participate in a Social Security Income pilot that would expedite eligible youth/young adults benefit approval.