Families’ Journeys: Are we there yet?

Oklahoma’s Family Assessment Measure

Data from Fiscal Years 2013-2016.

Oklahoma Systems of Care Family Support
OKSOC provides services to children, youth, and young adults experiencing serious emotional disturbance. Beginning in 2 communities in 1999, state and federal financing and the active sponsorship of the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) have helped OKSOC expand across the state.

OKSOC supports, maintains, and grows local systems of care communities by providing infrastructure, training and technical assistance, and staff professional development.
Contact Info

Gerri Mullendore
OKSOC Coordinator of Family Involvement
emullendore@odmhsas.org
(405) 522-4155

Geneva Strech
Associate Director, ETEAM
University of Oklahoma
strech@ou.edu
405-325-4132
Oklahoma Systems of Care (OKSOC)

Systems of Care is an organizational framework for providing supports for children, youth, and young adults with a serious emotional disturbance. Their families are also provided supports.

The Systems of Care philosophy involves collaboration across agencies, families, children, youth, and young adults.

Systems of Care improves access to and expands the array of coordinated supports for these families.
OKSOC Values

Community-Based
Oklahoma Systems of Care brings services to the family’s home community. The responsibility for decision-making is placed at the local level.

Family-Driven
Families have a primary decision-making role in the care of their children as well as in the policies and procedures governing care for all children in their community, state, tribe, territory, and nation.
OKSOC Values

Youth/Young Adult-Guided
Youths/Young Adults are engaged as equal partners in creating systems change in policies and procedures at the individual, community, state, and national levels.

Culturally and Linguistically Competent
Services and supports must be tailored to the unique culture of the child and family.
Family Driven

Families have a primary decision-making role in the care of their children as well as in the policies and procedures governing care for all children in their community, state, tribe, territory, and nation.

- Choosing supports, services, and providers
- Setting goals
- Designing and implementing programs
- Monitoring outcomes
- Partnering in funding decisions
- Determining the effectiveness of all efforts to promote the mental health and well-being of children, youth, and young adults
Data Informed Decision Making

Data-informed organizations have the use of assessment, revision, and learning built into the way they plan, manage, and operate. A data-informed organization has continuous improvement embedded in the way it functions.

- We understand that developing our positions on various issues requires more than opinions, assumptions or ideas.
- Indeed, the credibility of the family movement depends on our ability to bring forth accurate, reliable and valid information.
- The underlying premise is simple. The more informed by data, the better the decision.
How Families, Youth, and Young Adults Contribute to Data-Informed Decision-Making

Family members can impact decisions in:

• Local Family-Run Organizations
• Governance Committees
• Community Meetings
• Parent Teacher Associations
• Support Groups
• Peer to Peer Programs
• Advisory Boards
OKSOC Evaluation

• Provides feedback to state leadership, site leadership and staff, families, and partners on whether goals and objectives are being achieved so changes and adjustments can be made in practice

• Provides outcomes information for individual children, youth, young adults, and families, as well as outcomes information for community sites and the state

• State evaluation committee
  • Evaluators from E-TEAM at the University of Oklahoma
  • State management leadership and staff at Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
  • Community provider leadership and staff
  • Family members
  • Youth and Young Adults
OKSOC Outcomes

• All OKSOC outcomes measures continue to show substantial positive program impacts. Youth in OKSOC show:
  • decreases in school suspensions and detentions,
  • decreases in contacts with law enforcement,
  • decreases in self-harm and suicide attempts,
  • decreases in problem behaviors; and
  • clinically significant improvement in functioning.
OKSOC Outcomes for Children, Youth, and Young Adults Served Fiscal Years 2013-2016.

- **Ohio Scale Improved Significantly**
  - (1279 Improved; 564 not improved)
  - 68% improvement

- **Out-of-Home Placement Days**
  - (24757 to 15418 days in placement)
  - 38% improvement

- **Contacts w/Law Enforcement**
  - (623 to 419 contacts)
  - 33% improvement

- **Days Absent**
  - (7818 to 5606 days)
  - 28% improvement

- **Days Suspended**
  - (1886 to 1245 days)
  - 34% improvement

- **Days in Detention**
  - (1423 to 841 days)
  - 41% improvement

- **# Youths Self Harming**
  - (763 to 446 youths self harming)
  - 42% improvement
Are we there yet?
Why a Family Assessment?

To Tell a Family’s Story.
To Hear a Family’s Story.
To Make Families’ Stories Count!
OKSOC Family Assessment

• The OKSOC data system is rich in client and child/youth/young adult detail but has little family-centric data with which to measure outcomes.

• OKSOC engages families, youth, and young adults in the evaluation in multiple ways—including developing assessment questions and interpreting data.

• OKSOC Coordinator of Family Involvement, family members, and E-TEAM evaluators developed the OKSOC Family Assessment.

• 10 item survey

• Administered at baseline and every 6 months to caregivers and youths aged 9 and up
OKSOC Family Assessment

• Measures caregivers’, youths’ and young adults’ perceptions of various family dynamics

• Allows providers to engage families in talking about
  • where the family has been,
  • where the family is now, and
  • where the family wants to go.

• Allows providers to support and validate families
  • track progress,
  • re-evaluate goals, and
  • intervene when needed
# OKSOC Family Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all like my family</th>
<th>Very much like my family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My family spends too much time arguing.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. We don’t know how to work problems out.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I don’t feel safe in my home.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It is hard to know what the rules are in my family.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. We don’t trust each other.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. You can’t say what you really think in my family.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My family is there for me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I never know what to expect from my family.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. It’s ok to talk about my feelings with my family.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My family doesn’t spend enough time having fun.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So…what did the Family Assessment Scores Look Like?

Both youth/young adults and caregivers rated their family dynamics positively, with only 1.7% of caregivers and 3.9% of youths producing scores in the lowest ‘even distribution’ quartile (38 to 50).

Youths were somewhat less positive than caregivers. Caregivers had their highest score count in the best ‘even distribution’ quartile; youths were evenly distributed between the 1st- and 2nd-best quartile.
Female youths were more likely than males to evaluate their family dynamics poorly.

Caregivers with male children were more likely to rate their family in the best group. While youth ratings were fairly even, female youths were more likely to rate their family in the lowest group.

Caregivers of female clients evaluated their family dynamics less positively and were underrepresented in the high group.

Female youths were more likely than males to evaluate their family dynamics poorly.
Are there differences in Family Perception by Age?

Caregivers with elementary-aged children were more likely to rate their families in the higher groups. Caregivers with high school-aged children were the most likely to rate their family in the lowest group. Generally caregiver ratings shifted toward the lower rated groups as the age of the youth increased. Youths evaluations showed similar trends.
OKSOC Family Assessment and Ohio Scales Improvement at 6 Month Follow-Up

The Family Assessment seems to predict how likely it is that the youth’s Ohio Problem Scale scores will improve and, to some degree, by how much. If the family scores itself in one of the 2 lower quartiles at baseline, then neither their scores on the FA or on OS Problems will improve by much. The families that rate themselves highest (the best functioning families) that produce the most substantive improvements on the Problems scale.
Families’ Journeys: We’re getting there!

Oklahoma Systems of Care
Family Support
The E-TEAM at the University of Oklahoma is a full service department with senior researchers, data analysts, technical writers, and data base developers and managers representing decades of experience in all phases of research data processing. E-TEAM also has several years’ experience as evaluation manager for Oklahoma Systems of Care (OKSOC), implementing its national and local evaluations as well as special OKSOC collaborative studies with child welfare and juvenile justice.