

TEAMMATES (TM)

Tracks Wraparound Fidelity to Improve Services

Data are being collected based upon independent assessments (by non-program personnel) of the correspondence between the delivery of wraparound services by *Star View Children and Family Services'* TEAMMATES (TM) program to the wraparound model. In wraparound, team-based planning and services are to be strength-based, client and family driven, culturally appropriate, and flexible in order to meet each client and family's evolving needs. Wraparound typically serves youth who have high levels of behavioral and/or placement risk requiring an intensive level of service that includes densely collaborative problem-solving, frequent contact, and professional mental health treatment in combination with multiple, varied community services and supports. Helping youth and families achieve an independent and healthy life with adequate ongoing (non-professional) social support is a primary objective.

The fidelity of TEAMMATES (TM) is measured by the Wraparound Fidelity Index (WFI)¹ along with other SBHG total quality management procedures. The WFI is in the process of being standardized, with reliability testing and upgrades planned by the WFI authors. The WFI assesses fidelity from the multiple perspectives of the youth, caregiver, and the TM Resource Facilitator. The WFI operationalizes wraparound values, principles, and service expectations into eleven elements, typically posing identical questions to each of the three respondent types (youth, caregiver, and facilitator, although youth are not asked about the last three elements). The eleven elements are:

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ✚ Youth/parent voice and choice | ✚ Natural supports |
| ✚ Youth and family team | ✚ Continuation of services/supports |
| ✚ Community based services/supports | ✚ Collaboration |
| ✚ Cultural competence | ✚ Flexible resources and funding |
| ✚ Individual services/supports | ✚ Outcome based services/supports |
| ✚ Strength-based services/supports | |

WFI (version 3.0) data for a small sample of clients were collected by a trained field researcher to both assess how well TEAMMATES' services correspond to the wraparound model and to contribute to WFI measurement development. The measurement protocol was set up to conduct five sets of interviews (one set includes a youth, caregiver, facilitator) each month. The TM census was used to randomly select clients from among those whom had been in TEAMMATES for at least six months. The WFI interviews took 25 minutes on average; caregiver interviews tended to be a little longer (30 minutes on average). The majority of youth and caregiver interviews occurred face-to-face, while the majority of interviews with Resource Facilitators were completed over the phone. Altogether, there were 22 completed interviews out of 10 sets (30 potential interviews) in the initial sample. All respondent families were enrolled in TEAMMATES at the time of the survey and had been receiving services for 17 months on average (range = 7 to 36 months).

The initial data indicate high levels of fidelity of TEAMMATES' services with respect to many items across most wraparound elements. TEAMMATES' current areas of strength (90% or better endorsement) include the following items (paraphrased from question format for simplicity), along with other items that also received majority endorsements:

¹ *Wraparound Fidelity Index (WFI)*. Copyright 2002 Burchard, JD., University of Vermont. Used with written permission from the Wraparound Evaluation and Research Team, Suter, J., Force, M., E Bruns, E., Leverentz-Brody, K., Burchard, JD, & Mehrtens, K., August 2003. Available only through the authors at <http://www.uvm.edu/~wrapvt/>.

- ✚ Caregivers are comfortable expressing their opinions
- ✚ Youth and caregivers are active team members
- ✚ Caregivers have the people they want on the team
- ✚ Youth are living in community settings
- ✚ Team members respect family beliefs and traditions
- ✚ Providers do not act like they would be a better parent
- ✚ Team members respect youth for who they are
- ✚ Teams have sufficient understanding to develop service plans
- ✚ Consumers help develop the written plan and have a copy
- ✚ Services are delivered per the service plan
- ✚ There are crisis and safety plans with assignments
- ✚ Youth and caregiver strengths and abilities are used in planning
- ✚ The youth and family cannot get kicked out of treatment
- ✚ Tension and conflict are resolved on the team
- ✚ Meetings are held in convenient times and places

TEAMMATES' areas for improvement that are being worked on by the program include youth themes such as team participation and community involvement, agency partner (social workers, teachers, etc) participation at team meetings, and the development of natural supports that will continue beyond formal services. WFI data are presented as part of an Annual Report to LA County's departments of mental health and social services. Future analyses with more WFIs completed will address differences between youth, caregiver, and Resource Facilitator perspectives on TEAMMATES' services.