**State of Connecticut**



**Children’s Behavioral Health Plan**

**Recommendations for**

 **Self-Guided Discussion Groups**

 **Revised 3-28-14**

**Overview**

Individuals and organizations are invited to conduct Self-Guided Discussion Groups to develop input into the Children’s Behavioral Health Plan for the State of Connecticut. This document provides recommendations for organizing and leading such groups. However, those individuals convening the group will determine its structure and process.

**General Suggestions**

✔ Select two co-facilitators

1. One to facilitate the discussion
2. One to take detailed notes about the discussion

✔ Seek diversity among the facilitators

✔Engage a parent or community member as one of the facilitators

✔ Set aside two-hours for the discussion

✔ Include no more than 25 to 30 participants so that everyone can be heard

✔Choose a central and easily accessible meeting location

✔Decide if the meeting will focus on the general topic of children’s

behavioral health or a specific topic related to children’s behavioral health

✔Download the following documents (copy and paste the URLs):

1. Overview – Children’s Behavioral Health Plan

<http://www.plan4children.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Overview-Childrens-BH-Plan-2-17-14-revised.pdf>

1. Form for Submitting Written Input

<http://www.plan4children.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Written-Input-Form_2.20.14_Jeff.pdf>

**Pre-Meeting Checklist**

☐ Facilitators identified

☐ Invitation list developed

☐ Date and time set

☐ Meeting location secured

☐ Invitation finalized

☐ Invitations sent

☐ RSVPs collected

☐ Meeting reminder and directions sent by email

☐ Make copies of the Overview document as a meeting handout

☐ Facilitators confer prior to the discussion

☐ Bring the following to the meeting:

 Laptop for taking notes

 Overview handout

 Sign-In Sheet

**Estimated Time Allocation**

 5 min: Delayed start

10 min Welcome & Overview

10 min Brief Introductions

 5 min Questions & Answers

20 min Discussion Question 1

30 min Discussion Question 2

25 min Discussion Question 3

 5 min Request for Final Comments

 5 min Wrap Up

 5 min Request for Feedback

**Agenda Content**

1. Welcome Participants
	1. General welcome
	2. Introduce facilitators
2. Provide Overview
	1. Distribute and review the Overview handout
	2. Review the discussion group process:
		1. The group is scheduled to last two hours, ending at [time].
		2. We will have brief introductions.
		3. And we will then answer any questions you have before getting started.
		4. This discussion is on [indicate a “specific topic” or “any an all topics” related to children’s behavioral health.
		5. There will be open discussion today of three basic questions:

**1. What Are Connecticut’s Strengths?**

What is working well? What needs are being met?

**2. What Are the Major Areas of Concern?** What are Connecticut’s weaknesses? What needs are not being met?

**3. What Recommendations Do You Have?** How should we fix these problems? What are your practical suggestions for improvement? As our discussion begins, please be thinking about the practical recommendations that you would like to offer.

* + 1. We will focus on the questions one at a time: strengths, concerns, and recommendations.
		2. Our objective is to make sure that everyone in the room who wants to be heard is heard.
		3. The goal is to gather the opinions of those in the room. If someone states an opinion that you disagree with feel free to state you opinion. However, our purpose today is to gather those opinions – not to debate and settle differences of opinion.
		4. As you offer your ideas, one of us will be facilitating the discussion and one of us will be taking notes on the discussion.
		5. In our final notes on this meeting we will not be recording “who said what”. We will report the comments made and the names of the people in attendance.
		6. If we don’t have time for you to offer all of your opinions you can submit individual written input by going to the Plan’s website at: [www.plan4children.org](http://www.plan4children.org).
1. Brief introductions
	1. Before taking your questions about this discussion, let’s have introductions.
	2. Please share your name and something brief about yourself. For example, you may wish to identify yourself as a family member, provider, or state administrator OR identify the organization in which you work and your position in the organization.
2. Questions
	1. Before we get started are there any questions about this discussion?
3. Discuss Question 1
	1. So let’s get started with the first question.
	2. With respect to [specific topic OR children’s behavioral health in general] **What Are Connecticut’s Strengths?** What is working well? What needs are being met?
	3. Additional prompt if needed: In what ways are services accessible for families?
	4. [Seek clarification of comments that are unclear.]
	5. [Ask if there are differences of opinions on views expressed.]
	6. [Allow up to 20 minutes to discuss this question.]
4. Discuss Question 2
	1. So let’s move on to the second question.
	2. With respect to [specific topic OR children’s behavioral health in general] **What Are The Major Areas of Concern About Connecticut’s Service System and Services for Children and Families?** What are the major weaknesses? What needs are not being met?
	3. Additional prompts if needed: What is missing from our system? What are some of the barriers families encounter when trying to access appropriate services? Which populations within our communities experience greater difficulty accessing services?
	4. [Seek clarification of comments that are unclear.]
	5. [Ask if there are differences of opinions on views expressed.]
	6. [Allow up to 30 minutes to discuss this question. Allow plenty of time to discuss the next question regarding recommendations for improvement.]
5. Discuss Question 3
	1. So let’s move on to the third and final question.
	2. With respect to [specific topic OR children’s behavioral health in general] **What Recommendations Do You Have?** What are your practical and concrete suggestions for improvement? Who should do what to strengthen the system and its services?
	3. Some of your recommendations may already be apparent from the comments you’ve made about Connecticut’s current strengths and areas of concern.
	4. Additional prompts if needed: What services are most important so that all of our children and families have the supports they need? What do we need to do to improve access to care for all of Connecticut’s children and families?
	5. [Seek clarification of comments that are unclear.]
	6. [Ask if there are differences of opinions on views expressed.]
	7. [Allow up to 30 minutes to discuss this question.]
6. Ask for Any Final Comments
	1. We are drawing toward the close of the discussion.
	2. Is there anything you haven’t said that you would like to comment on before we close [assuming there is time remaining for such comments]?
7. Wrap Up
	1. So let’s talk about next steps.
	2. We will summarize your comments in writing.
	3. This will become part of the formal input into the planning process and will be considered by CHDI and DCF as they create a draft plan.
	4. A draft of the plan will be available for public comment at the Plan website in late August.
8. Feedback on the discussion
	1. What has this discussion today been like for you?
9. Thank Participants
	1. We want to thank you for sharing your ideas with us today.
	2. [Remain for a few minutes after the meeting to handle comments or questions that individuals may pose].
10. Finalize Written Summary of the Facilitated Discussion
	1. Create a written summary of the discussion using the downloaded input form. Include the names and email addresses of participants on this form.
	2. Submit the completed document to CHDI at: info@plan4children.org
	3. Email a copy of the submitted document to participants.