

## Why DATA is Important to Advancing Your Systems of Care Work

*“The goal is to turn DATA into information and information into insight.”*  
– Carly Fiorina, former executive, president, and chair of Hewlett-Packard Company.

### DATA can be used to:

Accurately **D**etermine your population needs

Continuously **A**lign services to the needs of the community to improve and sustain outcomes

Develop Strong SOC **T**eams (through professional development/growth opportunities, understanding staff environment and potential factors that impact burnout and turnover)

Effectively **A**dvocate for service provision with stakeholders

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Many see DATA collection and reporting as something that must be done to fulfill grant requirements and project deadlines. It is also often only imagined as numbers presented as tables and/or figures providing results for a certain project. This one-dimensional view of DATA can limit your ability to share successes and understand what drives them.

DATA can be thought of as information that helps to provide a picture or tell a story of your work. It can be used for more than reporting and is found in all aspects of program development and implementation. Furthermore, DATA can have a substantial impact on your ability to provide services through workforce recruitment/retention and the capability to secure future funding for sustainability. Organizations that understand this and make a concerted effort to fully utilize DATA are more likely to have successful Systems of Care outcomes.

DATA can be used to:

### Accurately **D**etermine your population needs

- DATA helps you better understand the population you serve by giving you an overview of characteristics unique to your area. This can be useful when trying to determine how to market your services and how marketing should occur.
- Determining needs and tailoring them for your population also helps you better target an expanded array of home and community based programs/supports, individualized services and evidence based practices.



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## *Continuously **A**lign services to the needs of the community to improve and sustain outcomes*

- DATA enables you to have a constant “feedback” loop (i.e. evaluation) to inform you of program/service progress, strengths and challenges. DATA can be used both to develop your evaluation plan as well as understand how well your services are providing what is needed within your target population. Return on Investment (ROI) is one way in which evaluation of service delivery can be used to show cost savings and improved outcomes. Nationally, ROI studies have used DATA to show how implementation of targeted community based services such as HFW decrease utilization of intensive services as much as 40% and monetary savings of \$37 million dollars (Stroul, B., et. al., 2014) .

## *Develop Strong SOC **T**eams (through professional development/growth opportunities, understanding staff environment and potential factors that impact burnout and turnover)*

- Staff turnover can hinder productivity and service delivery of the best programs. Though turnover is not avoidable, constantly onboarding new staff takes away precious time from service provision. For families receiving services such as High Fidelity Wraparound (where establishing relationships is an integral part of success) this can be stressful and prolong services because they are constantly forming new relationships with different team members. In one study which looked at the impact of turnover on Wraparound service provision, 80% of service providers said turnover negatively impacted families and children. That same survey showed that over half of organizations felt turnover hurt the quality of their Wraparound care and 67% felt it hurt co-worker morale. Using DATA from sources such as satisfaction surveys and informal meetings is key to minimizing turnover, boosting co-worker morale and ultimately providing quality services for children and families. (Walker, et. al, 2017) .

## *Effectively **A**dvocate for service provision with stakeholders*

- DATA helps to tell your story. It is difficult to state a case to stakeholders to invest in your service if you do not have outcomes to show the results of your hard work. Currently the Systems of Care grant\* has served over 300 youth and families in Virginia since 2016. Of those, we only have follow up DATA for roughly 15% of those youth. Given this small percentage relative to the total number of youth, it would be difficult to show how services in your area are having positive outcomes over time. If services such as High Fidelity Wraparound become Medicaid reimbursable services, having DATA showing positive outcomes would help to convince stakeholders to provide funding for this service.

Systems of Care, High Fidelity Wraparound and other youth/family serving programs have the potential to improve lives for many families across the Commonwealth. With DATA, we have the information to tell their success stories as well as highlight the work of those who help to make that success a reality. Remember, DATA helps to tell the story, provide insight, show others all your hard work and helps to convince others why they should be a part of this effort.

Sources:  
Walker, J.S., Schurer Coldiron, J., and Taylor, E. (2017). Turnover Among Wraparound Care Coordinators: Stakeholders' Views on Causes, Impacts, and Remedies. Baltimore, MD: The National Technical Assistance Network for Children's Behavioral Health. <https://nwi.pdx.edu/pdf/Turnover-Among-Wraparound-Care-Coordinators.pdf>  
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