



Outline of Systems of Care and Drug Courts **Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services**

Contact: Jeff Dismukes
405/522-3907

Systems of Care

Oklahoma's Systems of Care is a comprehensive array of mental health and other support services organized into a coordinated network to meet the multiple and changing needs of children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances and their families. It is targeted to impact children, ages 6-18 years, with serious emotional and behavioral problems at home, school and in the community. The objective is to fully integrate and expand the variety of services and support systems to construct the most effective and efficient mean to address a family's needs. This collaborative effort, specifically attuned to a child's environment, has been proven as a model system.

Typically, a child with emotional disturbance will have a different caseworker and treatment plan from juvenile justice, child welfare, schools and mental health programs. Systems of Care brings these systems together to build on a child's strengths and the family directs the treatment plan. Results have been impressive, with better performance in school and a reduced need for out-of-home services. Systems of Care intervenes with children and their families when mental illness first appears in their lives. The program provides a radical and improved way by which to respond to their needs and, hopefully, lessen the impact that mental illness has on them during the rest of their lives.

Evaluation demonstrates significant achievements in a child's behavior when measuring occurrences 90 days before entering the SOC program, and following four to six month participation.

Key Statistics

- 302 days in the hospital versus 105 days in the hospital
- 283 days suspended from school versus 81 days suspended from school

- 74 contacts with law enforcement versus 38 contacts with law enforcement
- Funded with a six-year, \$9.4 million federal grant

Drug Courts

Considered one of the agency's most successful programs, drug courts continue to grow in number and impact. Today, Oklahoma has 37 drug courts in operation and 15 in planning. Drug courts offer non-violent felony offenders with substance abuse problems an opportunity to enter into a district court-supervised substance abuse treatment program instead of being incarcerated.

Drug courts keep substance abusers engaged in treatment long enough to receive benefits, return participants as productive members of society, reduce prison overcrowding, and save taxpayer money. Cost for the drug court program is approximately \$5,000 per year, per individual, compared with a minimum of \$16,000 a year for incarceration.

The program is proving highly successful in treating methamphetamine addicts; 92 percent of those who listed methamphetamine as their "drug of choice" had stayed clean and sober two years after drug court treatment. Drug court participants also are more likely to obtain, and retain, jobs, and to not re-offend. For prison inmates, the re-arrest rate after three years was 67.5 percent, compared with only 19 percent for those who completed a drug court program.

Key Statistics

- 19% re-arrest rate for drug court graduates
- 39% of females in full-time employment upon entry versus 51% of females in full-time employment upon graduation.
- The cost of substance abuse treatment through drug courts versus prison incarceration is approximately \$5,000 per individual for a year versus a minimum of \$16,000 per individual for a year to incarcerate.