

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past 15 months, a diverse and broad-based group of youth-serving professionals have come together to form the King County System Integration Initiative, intent on reforming the culture, policies, practices, programs, and protocols that currently make up that fragmented method of service delivery. Our consortium has engaged in a comprehensive, strategic planning process designed to improve the coordination and integration of the juvenile justice, child welfare, and other relevant youth serving systems. This effort has brought together an impressive representation of county and state officials and personnel to conduct a thorough examination of existing data, information sharing processes, information management systems, program and fiscal resources, and federal and state statutes governing our work. During this examination, our interagency relationships have been outstanding. The commitment to developing meaningful recommendations and action strategies has been tremendous.

The primary goals of the Initiative, as established in a charter to which participating agencies and organizations are signatories, include:

- Promote increased cooperation, coordination, and integration at the administrative and service delivery levels for the benefit of children and families within the purview of children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
- Through a comprehensive, strategic planning process that embraces and values inclusion of youth, families, and a broad-based representation of youth serving agencies and organizations, achieve and institutionalize greater multi-system coordination and integration to improve outcomes for King County children, youth and families.

Each member agency and organization agreed to collaboratively:

- Produce an inventory of program and service resources in local child serving systems; a comparative analysis of missions, mandates and policies; an examination of assessment instruments; review and analysis of the funding to support the services and programs.
- Assess the current management information systems utilized by participant agencies/organizations and prepare a report on the current capacity to share information across agencies/organizations.
- Inventory available data systems and identify data sets that must be shared across agencies/organizations and ensure that this information contributes to improved analysis of current trends.
- Conduct an examination of the legal, policy, and procedural mandates unique to each agency/organization in order to make recommendations for changes that will contribute

to improved coordination of initial decision-making, case management, and service delivery.

- Utilize the best available information, research, and practices to guide the process.
- Assist in the development of a means to track and evaluate the Initiative's success.

The work on the Initiative has been guided by an Executive Committee, maintaining final decision-making authority regarding the work of the collaboration; a Steering Committee, providing additional oversight, perspectives, and guidance; and by 3 subcommittees, with membership committed to information gathering and analysis in targeted areas of examination. Each of the three subcommittees (Legal Analysis, Resource Assessment and Inventory, and Data and Information Management) detailed their findings, recommendations, and action strategies. The Strategic Plan report contains a compilation of our findings, recommendations, and action strategies from this comprehensive analysis. We believe this work goes a long way toward constructing a more effective service system for King County children, youth, and families that will enable the construction and institutionalization of coordinated policies, protocols, and practices across multiple systems.

The subcommittee action strategies include:

#### Legal Analysis Subcommittee

1. Develop a Model Interagency Agreement to Guide Information Sharing
2. Produce Legal Opinions to Dispel Myths Regarding Information Sharing
3. Convene Annual Meetings to Consider Statutory and Court Rule Reform
4. Convene Attorney Focus Groups to Discuss Solutions to Information Sharing Issues
5. Participate in the Development and Execution of Cross-Systems Training.

The subcommittee will continue to be responsive to the needs of the Executive Committee and subcommittees in providing information that supports the implementation of the Strategic Plan and will inform legislators of actionable issues necessary to implement the action strategies.

#### Resource Inventory and Assessment Subcommittee

1. Develop a Cross-System Infrastructure Supporting Integration for Improved Outcomes
2. Expand Blended Funding Mechanisms and Shared Responsibility
  - a. Consider Implementing Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care
  - b. Better Engage with our Mental Health Services to Improve Outcomes

3. Further Develop & Implement a Cross-System Training Approach Supporting Integration
4. Better Engage with our Educational Systems to Improve Educational Outcomes
5. Better Engage Families in Planning and Service Delivery
6. Consolidate Court Processes

#### Data and Information Management Subcommittee

1. Construct a Cross-System Sharable Information Grid
2. Explore Fiscal Feasibility & Funding Plan for Technology Solutions to Cross-System Information Management
3. Develop a “Guidebook” to Instruct the Use of the Sharable Information Grid
4. Provide Ongoing Support for Data and Information Requests from the Executive Committee
5. Recruit Additional Subcommittee Members with Expertise to Support the Implementation of the Action Strategies
6. Support the Development of the Cross-System Training Curriculum

All of the action strategies have been adopted by the King County System Integration membership and work has begun on the implementation phase of the strategic planning process. In several areas, the partners have already begun activities that move the strategies into action. For example, a working group has already met on several occasions to begin formulation of the cross-system training. Additionally, funds have been secured to access consultation for the development of the technology-based sharable information grid and information management system. Specifically, in May 2005, a governance and committee structure was ratified that will provide the decision making and working foundation for the implementation of the action strategies. It is through this construct and continuing effort that the King County Systems Integration Initiative Strategic Plan will provide for improved coordination and integration of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems that will result in improved outcomes for our children, youth, and families.