

2013-14 ND COMMUNITIES TOPICAL CALL SERIES

CALL RECAP

MEANINGFUL FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT
TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2014

- [CALL RECORDING](#) (Adobe Connect)
- [CALL SLIDES](#) (PPTX)

The involvement of family members, caregivers, and other caring adults is critical in the lives of youth who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk. But often times schools, facilities and programs struggle to actively engage these individuals. The [“Meaningful Family and Community Engagement” topical call series](#) explores ways of fostering, increasing, and sustaining meaningful engagement of the important adults in the lives of N or D youth, from the time a youth enters the justice system through his or her return to the community. This series addresses culturally relevant outreach, preparation and training for family members and caregivers, the importance of community and natural supports, and much more.

This document provides a summary of the second topical call in this series. It discusses:

- The importance of maintaining engagement of family members and caregivers once a youth is system involved.
- Examples of ways in which systems, facilities, and programs can actively engage families and caregivers.

OVERVIEW

During this call, Ms. Grace Bauer, Executive Director, Justice for Families and Dr. Ryan Shanahan, Sr. Program Associate, Family Justice Program, VERA Institute of Justice, discussed the importance of continuing family/caregiver engagement once a youth has entered a juvenile justice facility or program. Ms. Bauer shared her perspective from both her professional role with Justice for Families as her personal encounter as a mother of children who experienced system involvement. Dr. Shanahan shared the findings of research conducted by the VERA Institute for Justice that underscores the importance of encouraging continued family/caregiver engagement once youth are system involved. Both presenters provided examples of activities programs and facilities can undertake to encourage family/caregiver engagement. A synopsis of the role of State TIPD coordinators in family/community engagement concluded the presentation.

TOOLS, TIPS AND TAKE-AWAYS

For Family Members and Caregivers

- Family/caregivers should share all relevant or missing information about their child with the facility or program to ensure the child's needs are met.
- Families and caregivers are vital participants in treatment and follow-up care.

For Systems, Facilities, and Programs

- Systems, facilities, and programs must work diligently to overcome barriers and challenges to family/caregiver engagement.
- Due to the inherent distrust between families and systems, it is essential that families who are new to the juvenile justice system connect with experienced families that can help them navigate the system.
- There is a continuum of family involvement and system changes do not have to occur all at once.
- Many States have best practices, e.g., a Parents' Bill of Rights, which can be replicated.

For State TIPD Coordinators

- Encourage subgrantees to include family/caretaker engagement as a part of their TIPD applications, which is consistent with Section I in the Nonregulatory Guidance.
- Include family/caregiver engagement as part of your monitoring plan.
- To the extent feasible, support use of TIPD funds to encourage family/caregiver engagement in programs and facilities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [NDTAC Toolkit: Facility Toolkit for Engaging Families in Their Child's Education at a Juvenile Justice Facility](#). This Toolkit expands on the guide to family involvement (below), providing facilities and programs multiple tools to enhance family engagement.
- [NDTAC Guide: Family Guide to Getting Involved in Your Child's Education at a Juvenile Justice Facility](#). This guide presents practical strategies for families to build a relationship with their child's facility or program and keep their child on track to success.
- [Families Unlocking Futures: Solutions to the Crisis in Juvenile Justice](#). This report details how the rapid growth of the prison system, zero-tolerance policies, and aggressive police tactics, coupled with the decline of social services and public education have wreaked havoc on low-income communities and communities of color. The report also provides viable proven solutions and a blueprint for youth justice transformation.
- [Family Comes First, A Workbook to Transform the Juvenile Justice System by Partnering with Families](#). This workbook is the first comprehensive analysis of current family engagement and family partnership practices in juvenile justice systems across the country and provides practical tools and resources for juvenile justice system practitioners invested in undertaking a family-driven approach to juvenile justice. Available for ordering online at