

Family Involvement

Youth and Family Involvement is the first of the six Guiding Principles of Family Centered Systems of Care to be featured because it is the most important of all. Interagency collaboration, individualized strengths-based care, cultural competence, community-based services and accountability are not as effective if the process is not family-driven or family-centered.

Our agency's vision of "Partnering to connect Kansans with supports and services to improve lives" begins with this principle. The "Partnering" of our vision statement begins with the very family and youth we are here to serve. And our agency's mission "To protect children and promote adult self-sufficiency" cannot be truly fulfilled without this principle. We must develop a "nothing about them, without them" attitude.

Full youth and family partnership is an investment, and essential to the development and provision of any service, program, or policy for the individuals, families and children we serve. This principle requires mutual respect, and the intentional establishment and support of meaningful partnerships between youth, families and staff. It requires us to not only "make room at the tables" where they were not previously invited, but to also consistently challenge ourselves to view the work we do in light of their perspective.