

The *Outcomes Roundtable for Children and Families*, is sponsored by the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The mission of the *Outcomes Roundtable* is to bring together multiple perspectives and expertise to provide leadership that stimulates culturally competent and data driven improvements in policy, practice and research for children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral health needs and their families. This mission underscores *Outcomes Roundtable's* current focus on the development of an appropriate outcome accountability system within child service systems. Presently, there is little unity across child-service systems on how to accomplish this, and virtually no means of sharing information across these systems. In response to this dilemma, the *Outcomes Roundtable* is working to identify of a parsimonious, consensus-based set of behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse) performance measures that can be implemented and commonly shared across child service systems in both the public and private sectors.

In order to work effectively, the *Outcomes Roundtable for Children and Families* is currently organized into two workgroups: *Family Involvement/Education and Outreach*, and *Data/Methodology/Measurement*. The *Family Involvement/Education and Outreach* workgroup is charged with developing and disseminating information about the *Roundtable* and its activities and products; and engaging the active support of families in participating in *Roundtable* efforts and activities. The primary focus of this workgroup is to increase the knowledge base of family members through education and training programs, to provide coaching and support in understanding scientific and professional reports, and to establish family/professional partnerships.

The activities of the *Data/Methodology/Measurement* workgroup focus on the development and/or identification of a proposed set of *common* performance measures for child behavioral health. *Common* measures are defined as those measures that are appropriate for use across child service systems (mental health, substance use, other child service systems, etc.) This proposed set of common performance measures builds on a variety of existing frameworks and systems, for example, the Institute of Medicine (*Crossing the Quality Chasm*), NCQA/HEDIS, FACCT (Foundation for Accountability), the American College of Mental Health Administration (ACHMA), *Washington Circle Group*, NASMHPD, as well as other groups. The meaningfulness and scientific soundness of each measure, as well as the feasibility of implementing the performance measure are used as criteria for selecting the proposed performance measures. Operational definitions, measures, and measurement approaches accompany each of the proposed performance measures. The *Outcomes Roundtable* will be conducting a survey of the initial proposed draft set of performance measures to solicit feedback from individuals experienced with performance measurement. The results of this survey will be used to identify a reduced set of measures in terms of priority, importance, and appropriateness for child service systems. This information will be used as the first step in an iterative process of building a parsimonious set of common performance measures.

The *Outcomes Roundtable for Children and Families*, (under the auspices of CMHS/SAMHSA) is participating with the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), and the Adult Mental Health Group in a national *Forum on Common Performance Indicators*, to accomplish the objective of identifying a parsimonious set of consensus-based performance measures for potential use across service sectors. The *Forum* initially met in the spring of 2001, and is tentatively scheduled to meet for a second time in the winter 2003. For more information on the *Outcomes Roundtable for Children and Families* please contact the co-chairs: Ann Doucette (adoucette@aol.com) and Trina Osher (tosher3@comcast.net).