



# Checklist for Ensuring Meaningful Parent and Youth Participation on Committees, Workgroups and Councils

Youth and parents with experience navigating the system of care offer a wealth of invaluable information to teams which can improve positive outcomes for youth and families who may be experiencing similar challenges. For additional information, please read: <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA16-4985/SMA16-4985.pdf>

✓	Checklist	Description	Action Steps
	Demonstrate Value for Member Participation	Every member plays a critical role to ensure successful team outcomes and each opinion and recommendation should carry the same weight when making decisions impacting the youth and families we work with. Remember to show appreciation for team contributions which will increase feelings of being a valuable team member.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a formal policy affirming commitment to parent and youth participation</li> <li>• Overcome barriers preventing participation (travel, meeting time)</li> <li>• Provide stipend(s) for representatives</li> <li>• Ensure voting privileges</li> <li>• Provide business cards</li> </ul>
	Create an Inclusive Environment	A positive atmosphere is critical to ensure that every team member feels comfortable to share their recommendations. Non-adversarial approaches are best. During meetings and other activities related to decision making, team members should be consistently respectful and responsive to ideas and suggestions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an environment that is inviting and objective (offer introductions at the beginning of each meeting, use name tags, plan ahead).</li> <li>• Provide acronym cheat sheet or have ground rules for a jargon free meeting</li> <li>• Clear communication pathways (texts, social media) as determined appropriate by the team.</li> </ul>
	Offer Clear Expectations	Teams are most productive when each member feels welcomed, valued and fully understands the goals and mission of their team. A clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities is critical to success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create, share and review an orientation packet with all team members.</li> <li>• Review annually with entire team.</li> <li>• Consider culture and generational differences.</li> </ul>
	Provide Ongoing Support	Remember that taking on a new role can be overwhelming. Provide ongoing support and feedback, as needed, for youth and parent representatives. Methods include: Reinforce positive attitudes; stay in frequent contact and listen to expressed needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect youth and parent representatives with a team mentor.</li> <li>• Invite, follow-up and follow-through to ensure continued participation.</li> </ul>
	Share educational opportunities	Imagine our work without continuing education to highlight new trends, evidence based practices and the professional application of such methods. To provide better outcomes, we must grow in our ability to serve youth and families in Kentucky.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer ongoing training opportunities and connections</li> <li>• Cover costs to attend</li> </ul>