

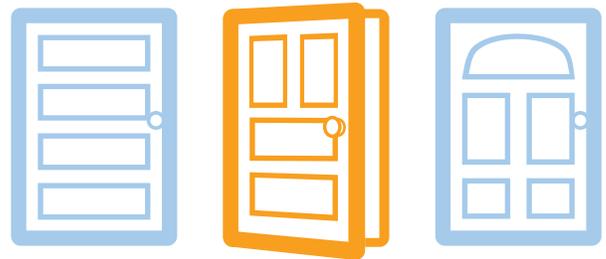
A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE on SYSTEM OF CARE

Julia's Family

Julia and her husband have helped raise their 15-year-old granddaughter throughout her life, and now have full custody of the pregnant teen who has been diagnosed with fetal alcohol syndrome. As an added difficulty in this complicated family dynamic, the girl's loving and supportive father (and Julia's son) has recently been deported. The Spanish-speaking grandparents were left to figure out how to get help for their granddaughter in a system they didn't understand.

Julia knew that over the years people from various agencies were trying to help her, but since most didn't understand Spanish and they'd visit without interpreters, they got nowhere. She felt like even those who understood her were just "talking to her...not listening." She was frustrated and alone and said she often felt like running away.

When Julia's family was accepted into the System of Care program, finally she knew someone was listening to her. The family was assigned a care manager and family peer support who immediately got to work building a support system for the family and connecting Julia and her granddaughter to appropriate community-based services. The teen wants very much to keep her baby and to be a good mother, but at age 15, she needs a lot of help. With some assistance, she was able to get into the Horizonte Instruction and Training Center where she is part of the young mother program and takes classes to help her learn parenting skills. She's had some success and was so happy when she received an "A" on an assignment that involved taking home an "electronic baby" and providing for its needs overnight.



The care manager and family peer support helped the granddaughter sign up for programs through the Department of Workforce Services, and enroll her baby in the Head Start program and WIC. She is also participating in the Teddy Bear incentive program where she gets rewarded with diapers and baby clothes when she completes tasks such as going to her prenatal appointments.

Understandably, the pregnant girl worries about her baby and her delivery along with all the other things a teenage girl worries about. Her care manager and family peer support try to anticipate her needs and worries and have even developed an emergency plan for getting to the hospital when labor begins. All this support has boosted the teen's confidence that she will be successful as a parent...and her grandmother is able to sleep better at night.

About Utah's System of Care

System of Care is a coordinated approach to service delivery for children, youth and families with complex behavioral, medical and mental health needs. This collaborative approach strives to keep children and youth safely in their homes, schools and communities through service delivery that is family driven, youth guided, strength and community-based, trauma informed and culturally competent. System of Care is implemented in the western region (Juab, Millard, Summit, Utah and Wasatch Counties) and will be fully implemented in the northern region (Box Elder, Cache, Davis, Morgan and Weber Counties) by June 2016. System of Care will be implemented statewide by June 2017.