

ENHANCING IMPACT: STRENGTHENING THE PARENT REPRESENTATIVE ROLE WITHIN CSA TEAMS



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CSA Conference 2025: Elevating Youth Voices: Stepping Into the Future

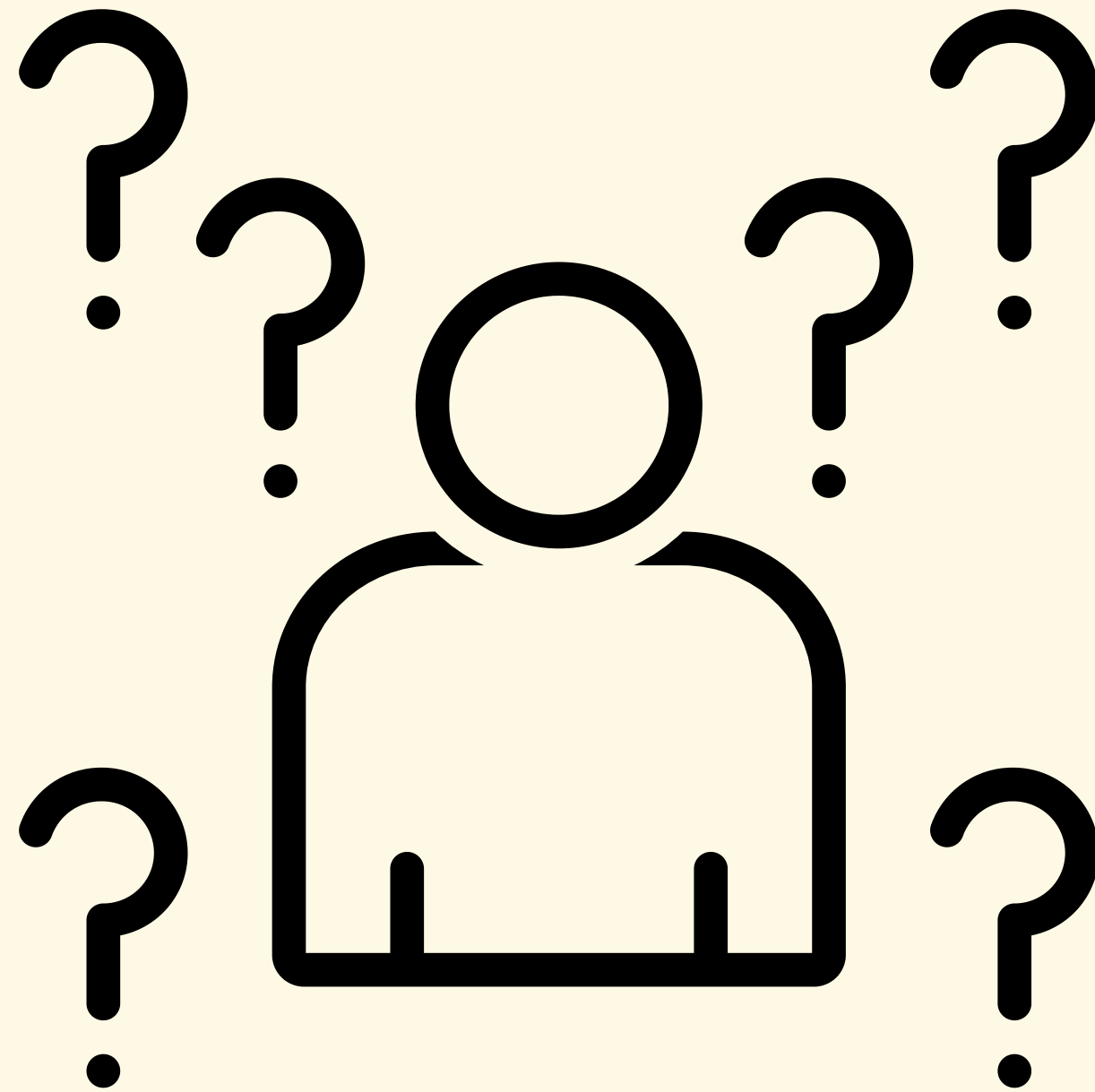
Today's Focus



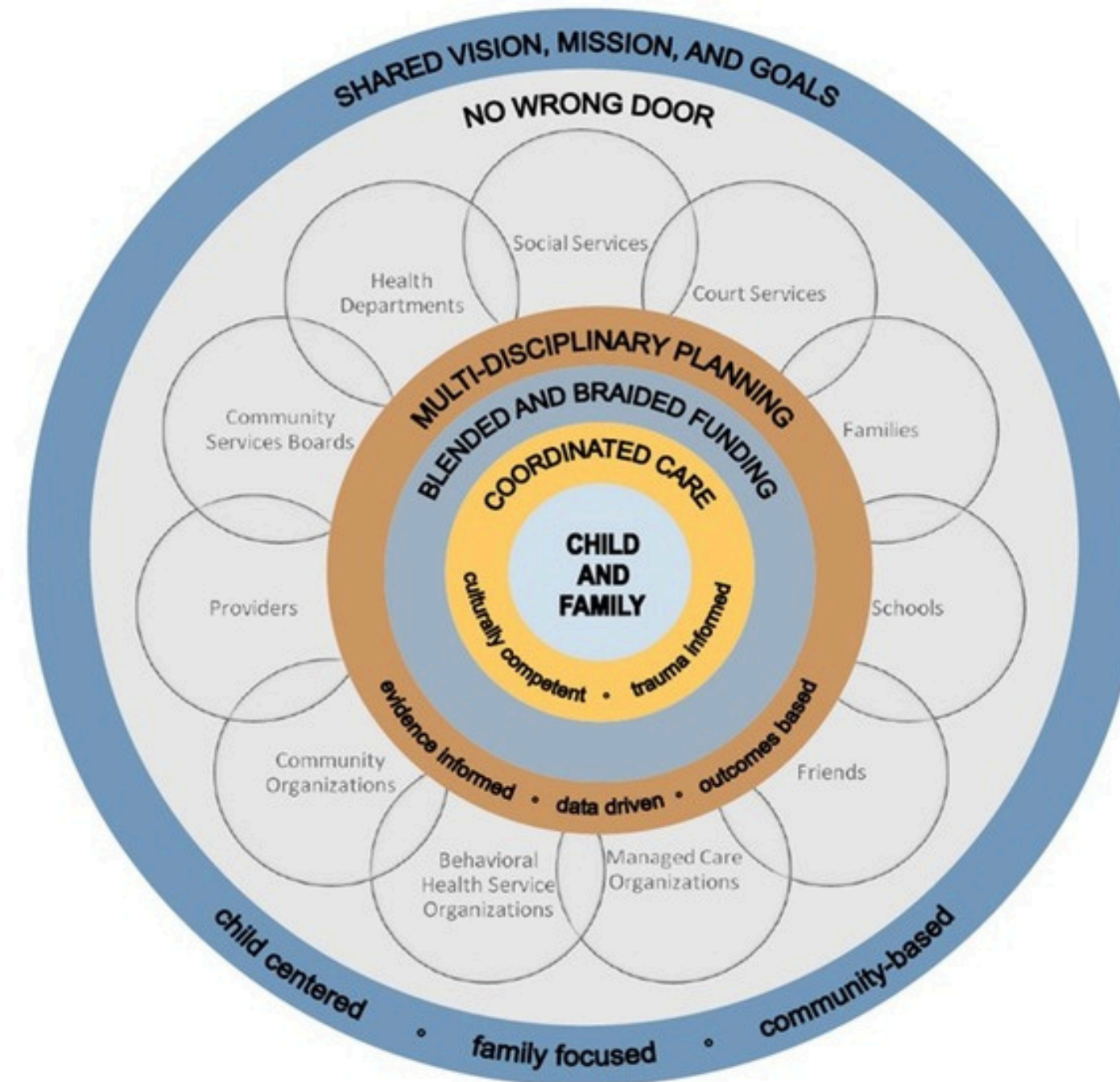
- Children's Services Act as a System of Care
- Recruitment & Retention
- Support & Collaboration
- Resources



WHO IS IN THE ROOM?



VIRGINIA'S COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF CARE



System of Care Principles

Shared Vision

No Wrong Door

Multidisciplinary Planning

Blended and Braided Funding

Coordinated Care

Child-Centered and Family Focus



CPMT



“The team shall also include a representative of a private organization or association of providers for children's or family services if such organizations or associations are located within the locality and a parent representative.”

“Parent representatives who are employed by a public or private program that receives funds pursuant to this chapter or agencies represented on a community policy and management team may serve as a parent representative provided that parent representatives who are not employed by a public or private program that receives funds pursuant to this chapter or agencies represented on a community policy and management team are prioritized for participation where practicable.”

Code of Virginia– section 2.2–5205



FAPT



“Each family and planning team also shall include a parent representative...”

“Parent representatives who are employed by a public or private program that receives funds pursuant to this chapter or agencies represented on a family assessment and planning team may serve as a parent representative provided that parent representatives who are not employed by a public or private program that receives funds pursuant to this chapter or agencies represented on a family assessment and planning team are prioritized for participation where practicable.”

Code of Virginia– section 2.2–5207





WHY PARENT REPRESENTATIVES MATTER

- Bring vital lived experience to the team.
- They serve as cultural brokers between systems and families.
- Enhance family trust and engagement.
- Directly support systems change through their presence and voice.





**Lived experience offers a
mirror for other families to see
their own strength.**





RECRUITMENT & RETENTION



RECRUITMENT



- **Case Managers**
 - Previous families
- **Foster Care Agencies**
 - Foster/adoptive parents
- **Private Providers**
 - Family/Youth Support Partners
- **Advocacy Organizations**
 - Child/family-focused
- **FAPT Members**
 - Awareness campaign
- **Social Media**
 - Job boards
- **Schools**
 - Parent-Teacher Organizations
 - Special Education Department



RETENTION



- **Acknowledge Their Time**
 - Monetary compensation
- **Onboard & Train**
 - Purpose & Intent
- **Ongoing Professional Development**
 - Conferences, trainings, events
- **Preparation & Debrief**
 - Share information & feedback
- **Value Their Voice**
 - Prioritize their input & insight
- **Point of Contact**
 - families with questions
 - system partners needing resources





SUPPORT & COLLABORATION



SUPPORT



- **Coaching opportunities**
 - mentorship
 - follow-up between meetings
- **Include in presentations**
 - internal/external
- **Collaboration**
 - Connect with other Parent Reps
- **Preparation & Debrief**
 - Share information & feedback
- **Value Their Voice**
 - Prioritize their input & insight
- **Encourage Engagement**
 - demonstrate
 - allow space for it



PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



1. **CLARIFY ROLES & EXPECTATIONS** – Provide clear descriptions of the Parent Rep's role, responsibilities, & authority within the team.
2. **ACKNOWLEDGE PARENT EXPERTISE** – Recognize lived experience as a form of expertise that is equally valuable to *professional* knowledge.
3. **PROMOTE INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION** – Use accessible language, avoid jargon, & ensure Parent Reps are included in all relevant discussions.



PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



4. **ESTABLISH MUTUAL RESPECT** – Model respect for diverse perspectives & emphasize the value of shared decision-making.

5. **PROVIDE TRAINING & ORIENTATION** – Offer guidance on team processes, confidentiality, & ethical standards to support effective participation.

6. **OFFER ONGOING FEEDBACK & SUPPORT** – Check in regularly to affirm contributions, address challenges, & encourage growth.



PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



7. ENCOURAGE SHARED LEADERSHIP – Involve Parent Reps in agenda-setting, planning, and decision-making rather than limiting them to advisory roles.

8. ENSURE PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY – Create a supportive environment where Parent Reps feel comfortable voicing concerns or offering dissenting views.

9. MAINTAIN EQUITY IN PARTICIPATION – Balance power dynamics so that Parent Reps have equal opportunity to influence outcomes.



PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



10. COMMIT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT –

Reflect as a team on partnership practices and adapt to strengthen collaboration over time.





**Parent voice isn't a token
seat at the table; it's the
heartbeat of transformation.**





[Watch video on YouTube](#)

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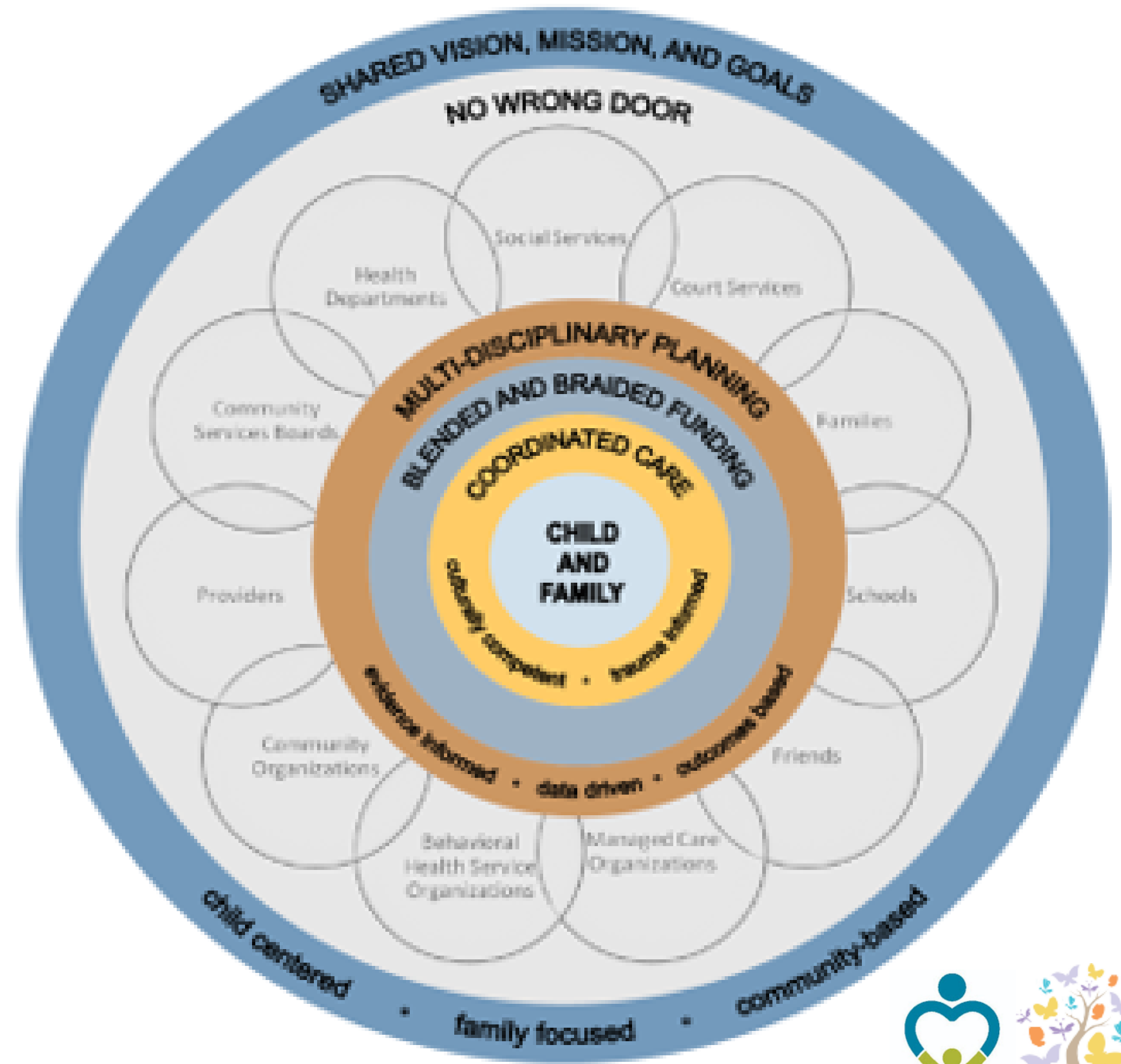


Group Discussion



Parent Representatives are part of the CSA System

Collaboration within the System of Care facilitates authentic family engagement and allows CSA to help families identify and meet their needs, build upon strengths, and function with increased safety, productivity, and fulfillment.





RESOURCES



CSA WEBSITE

[HTTPS://WWW.CSA.VIRGINIA.GOV/PARENTSANDFAMILIES/INFORMATIONFORFAMILIES/WHATISCSA/](https://www.csa.virginia.gov/parentsandfamilies/informationforfamilies/whatisCSA/)

[HTTPS://WWW.CSA.VIRGINIA.GOV/RESOURCES/GUIDANCE/FAMILYENGAGEMENT/](https://www.csa.virginia.gov/resources/guidance/familyengagement/)

PARENT REPRESENTATIVE
E-LEARNING- VIRGINIA
LEARNING CENTER
COURSE #CSA44

VIRGINIA FAMILY NETWORK

[HTTPS://NAMIVIRGINIA.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/VIRGINIA-FAMILY-NETWORK/](https://namivirginia.org/get-involved/virginia-family-network/)





THANK YOU!!

What questions do you have?



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