

System of Care Values and Principles

(Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health, 2010)

SOC Defined

The system of care model is an organizational philosophy and framework that involves collaboration across agencies, families, and youth for the purpose of improving services and access and expanding the array of coordinated community-based, culturally and linguistically competent services and supports for children and youth with a serious emotional disturbance and their families. The system of care philosophy is built upon these core values and guiding principles:

The core values of the system of care philosophy specify that the system of care:

1. Should be child centered and family focused, with the needs of the child and family dictating the types and mix of services provided.
2. Should be community based, with the locus of services as well as management and decision-making responsibility resting at the community level.
3. Should be culturally competent, with agencies, programs, and services that are responsive to the cultural, racial, and ethnic differences of the populations they serve.

SOC Values

<http://www.tapartnership.org/SOC/SOCvaluesTopics.php>

- Family Driven
- Youth Guided
- Culturally and Linguistically Competent
- Individualized and Community Based
- Evidence Based

Guiding Principles

The following represent the ten foundational principles of the system of care philosophy¹:

1. Children with emotional disturbances should have access to a comprehensive array of services that address their physical, emotional, social, and educational needs.
2. Children with emotional disturbances should receive individualized services in accordance with the unique needs and potential of each child and guided by an individualized service plan.
3. Children with emotional disturbances should receive services within the least restrictive, most normative environment that is clinically appropriate.
4. The families and surrogate families of children with emotional disturbances should be full participants in all aspects of the planning and delivery of services.
5. Children with emotional disturbances should receive services that are integrated, with linkages between child-serving agencies and programs and mechanisms for planning, developing, and coordinating services.
6. Children with emotional disturbances should be provided with case management or similar mechanisms to ensure that multiple services are delivered in a coordinated and

therapeutic manner and that they can move through the system of services in accordance with their changing needs.

7. Early identification and intervention for children with emotional disturbances should be promoted by the system of care in order to enhance the likelihood of positive outcomes.
8. Children with emotional disturbances should be ensured smooth transitions to the adult services system as they reach maturity.
9. The rights of children with emotional disturbances should be protected, and effective advocacy efforts for children and adolescents with emotional disturbances should be promoted.
10. Children with emotional disturbances should receive services without regard to race, religion, national origin, sex, physical disability, or other characteristics, and services should be sensitive and responsive to cultural differences and special needs.

¹ Stroul, B., & Friedman, R. (1986). A system of care for children and youth with severe emotional disturbances (Rev. ed.) Washington, DC: Georgetown University Child Development Center, National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health. Reprinted.