



PRIORITY 7

Strengths-based supports and services are available to promote healthy families and relationships.



CROSS-CUTTING AND SYSTEMS BUILDING

OBJECTIVE 7.1

Increase the proportion of MCH-led activities with a defined program plan for family and consumer partnership (FCP) to 75% by 2025.

OBJECTIVE 7.2

Increase the number of individuals receiving peer supports through Title V-sponsored programs by 5% annually through 2025.

OBJECTIVE 7.3

Increase the number of families and consumers engaging as leadership partners with the MCH workforce through the FCP Program by 5% annually through 2025.

OBJECTIVE 7.4

Increase the number of MCH-affiliated programs providing holistic care coordination through cross-system collaboration by three through 2025.

SPM 4: *Percent of children whose family members know all/most of the time they have strengths to draw on when the family faces problems*

Family and Consumer Partnership (FCP) Program

Objective 7.1: Increase the proportion of MCH-led activities with a defined program plan for family and consumer partnership (FCP) to 75% by 2025.

Family and Consumer Engagement Implementation Toolkit: [The Family and Consumer Toolkit](#) (FCP Toolkit) webpage went live at the end of August 2023. In February of 2024, the team engaged in review of other states toolkits to get ideas for improvement. The vast amounts of information and content that was collected during conversations with the Family Advisory Council (during FY21-22) on their experiences was sorted to develop one-pager tip sheets for partners to use while increasing the way they engage their consumers and families. There were no changes made from May- August as the new Family Systems Consultant was about to start. In September 2024, the new Family Systems Consultant began to review the current toolkit and make needed changes.

Technical Assistance Activities: With the further development of the FCP Toolkit and feedback from our Aid to Local MCH Grantees on their annual applications with requests for Technical Assistance, the Technical Assistance for FCP related work is under development. Key topics brought up in the annual application include:

- How to engage with those with lived experience to gain their input/feedback
- Evaluation
- Starting a Family Advisory Board

Peer Supports Initiatives

Objective 7.2: Increase the number of individuals receiving peer supports through Title V-sponsored programs by 5% annually through 2025.

Supporting You: This peer-to-peer support network had been developed by the FAC based on their desires to find connections with other parents who had gone through the same or similar life circumstances. This informal peer-to-peer program was designed to offer a variety of opportunities for authentic connections, giving individuals and families the opportunity to sign up for a peer-to-peer program and be connected through a variety of experiences. The system was set up for expansion to bring new programs to the network and offer connections for different populations.

An ambitious 3-year plan for development and expansion of the Supporting You Network was planned to take place over SFY23-SFY25. Due to significant internal turnover, the capacity of the staff involved in the expansion process was limited and only a small amount of progress was made during FY23.

After more internal staff turnover at the beginning of FY24, the decision was made to shift the program from something internal to KDHE to a program in partnership with individuals already engaging in this work. Title V reached out to Families Together, Inc., the state F2F organization, and found they were engaged in similar work. The decision was made to pass funding through to Families Together, Inc to conduct this work. Before the end of FY24 there was a contract in progress with them to support and expand their current program.

Family Leadership Programs

Objective 7.3: Increase the number of families and consumers engaging as leadership partners with the MCH workforce through the FCP Program by 5% annually through 2025.

Family Delegate Program: In November 2023 Contracts were completed for our previous Title V Family Delegate and Delegate Elect to work on developing a plan and timeline for future Family Delegates in Kansas. In February 2024 there was a hold on work because of a change in the staff that had been overseeing this development and program. In May of 2024 the FAC was able to provide feedback on the way the plans had been developed which was met with great interest from the council members. We took the feedback received from the FAC and polished the documents so that we could post them along with an application to go out in July, where we had the goal to select a new Title V Delegate Elect by August. However, there were some unexpected events that prohibited that application to be finished and posted at our expected date. We look forward to being able to expand on the Kansas Title V Family Delegate in practice and sharing about our new program during the upcoming plan.



Family Advisory Council (FAC): The Bureau of Family Health Family Advisory Council (FAC) kicked off FY2024 with an in-person meeting on October 14th in Hays, KS. During the meeting, members had time in their work groups to work on projects and build connections, had an overview of what Title V is, had some discussion on the upcoming Needs Assessment, and had additional time to get to know the members of the other work groups.

After the October in-person meeting, the council met the remaining 3 times as proposed, however the members voted to move the meetings back to the 4th Saturday of the month instead of the 3rd:

- January virtual
- April in-person 2-days, in Emporia
- July virtual

Strengths and challenges have been identified with in-person meetings post-pandemic and with the larger council. The members who join for the in-person meetings find them extremely valuable. After the October meeting, members asked about the next 2-day in-person meeting, finding the longer time together brought better bonding, it was then proposed to move to just one in-person meeting a year as long as it could be a 2-day meeting. The decision was made to make the April meeting the 2-day meeting until otherwise requested to change.

In FY24, each work group identified a project to advance the work of the Kansas Title V State Action Plan as it aligned with their Title V Domain. More information on the ideas that were selected and will continue to be worked on are presented in the FY26 cross-cutting plan narrative.

The membership of the FAC continued to change and grow as we added new members and lost some members due to other commitments which allowed us to continue to recruit and diversify our council. Starting FY24 with 42 members and ending FY24 with 33 members, some of the

drop in numbers were related to individuals committing to the council but then not showing up for meetings consistently.

In March, the Family & Consumer Partnership Program Coordinator moved positions to become the Title V CSHCN Director. The position was renamed as the Family Systems Consultant, organizationally moved to be with the Bureau of Family Health Consultants, and the position was filled in August.

At the end of September, the Child and Adolescents work groups, which have been working together on a joint project since October 2022, were able to present their breakout session on mental and behavioral health services for children and teenagers in communities across the state at the Parent Leadership Conference. This conference is held yearly, planned by the Kanas Children's Service League and supported by many state agencies; it is for families across the state to attend and learn parenting skills. The FAC members held two sessions with great discussions on what is missing in their communities when it comes to services for families. They plan to use the information gathered at the conference to help inform policy change, as it highlights areas of need for families.

Family Leadership Team: The FCP Program Coordinator continued to be involved in the broader early childhood systems work around family engagement and leadership. The goal of the Family Leadership Team (FLT) is to inform, support, develop, and advise on issues and initiatives that engage families to support the healthy growth and development of children, parents, and their communities. The FLT aims to influence and enable systems-level change with a focus on cross-systems collaboration and alignment at the state and community level within the early childhood care and education system. To accomplish this, the Family Leadership Team has been in the process of implementing the following strategies:

- *Directly engaging family leaders to better understand diverse family needs, challenges, and preferences*
- *Researching and identifying best practices and innovative strategies*
- *Exploring partnerships and tools to increase representation among family engagement opportunities throughout the state*
- *Increasing alignment and commitment to family engagement among state agencies*
- *Developing directory of existing statewide and regional councils, coalitions, and committees with a family leadership focus*
- *Developing and disseminate family engagement tools and resources for families and professionals*
- *Creating a resource hub for family engagement resources and opportunities*

The FLT is meant to be comprised of state and community leaders working to support families, as well as family representatives who are strong advocates for their own families and families across Kansas. During the pandemic and in subsequent years, state agencies and program partners have experienced high amounts of turnover in positions which has put extra burden on those who have stayed along with many vacancies in key positions that had been involved with the start of the FLT, this created an issue in having those partners constantly able to participate in FLT activities. The FLT was still new and bringing in new people to a structure that was loosely defined presented another set of difficulty to the continued buy-in. This lead to a lot of struggles in the original design of the FLT. The structure of the FLT has been altered a couple times to better fit family voice, action, and oversight, with the unexpected new landscape for the work.

The FLT held two round table sessions in November, on the 4th and 8th, the goal of these open periods of guided conversation was to hear about issues, bright spots, ideas, and anything else

families wanted to talk about. From those conversations the idea was born to create an opportunity for parents and caregivers to learn more about statewide resources and ask questions to gain clarity. With that our Parent/Provider Fireside Chats were developed.

Topics of 2024 were:

- 1-800-CHILDREN
- ASQ Screenings
- Resources for kids aged 5-8
- Home Visiting
- Prenatal to postpartum
- In-person discussion on family resources

The September in-person Fireside Chat took part during the annual 2024 Parent Leadership Conference. The round-table discussion with parents from across Kansas included topics such as family advocacy network for parents across the state with connection to state legislation to elevate needs and concerns; resources for ages 5 and beyond with emphasis on pre-teen and teens; trauma training for child care providers, school employees, and first response units; and the ever-ongoing ask for a family “hub” where parents can easily find what they need, when they need it.

The Family Leadership Team and members of Help Me Grow-Kansas ended the day with a Books, Balls, and Blocks event in the evening, which included backpacks with social emotional and developmental health activities for parents and children to engage with one another, books provided by the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and information about hosting an HMG-KS Books, Balls, and Blocks event in their own communities.

Fatherhood Engagement: Kansas Title V was selected to host two interns during summer 2024 through the National MCH Workforce Development Center. Beginning in June, the interns worked with the Title V MCH and CYSHCN directors and the Family Systems consultant on mapping father/non-birthing partner serving organizations and programs across the state. Upon completion of the mapping project and after receiving KDHE IRB approval, one of the interns continued into the fall and conducted key informant interviews with the leadership of agencies and programs serving fathers or other partners of birthing persons. The final step of this project will be to conduct focus groups with non-birthing partners to lay the groundwork for the Title V team to expand its services to help to support fathers and other partners in the future. These are tentatively planned for mid-year 2025.

Holistic Care Coordination Initiatives

Objective 7.4: Increase the number of MCH-affiliated programs providing holistic care coordination through cross-system collaboration by three through 2025.

Holistic Care Coordination Expansion: Since the development of the 2021-2025 State Action Plan, Kansas Title V has experienced significant turnover in key positions leading to loss of expertise and institutional knowledge. The loss of this knowledge and expertise limited the ability of the Title V team to make progress on our Holistic Care Coordination expansion goals. The KS-SHCN program continued to offer care coordination through this five-year period but the other ideas for HCC were put on hold due to limited capacity and funding. If the need for care coordination rises to the surface in the new five-year needs assessment, the Title V team will evaluate work that can be done to advance that within the state.

Care Coordination Environmental Scan: The completed report was shared out by the contractor, Kansas Health Institute, and by KDHE via social media and listserv. More information on the report can be found in the CSHCN report section.