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# NYS SUCCESS & SUSTAINING SYSTEMS OF CARE



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# Introduction on Program Sustainability

Funders, service providers, stakeholders, and community members often have a shared desire for activities and ideas to be sustained beyond the period of grant funding. Sometimes, along with this desire is confusion over the best route to sustainability, and how practices can be optimized to ensure sustainability.

The purpose of this research brief is to provide information for stakeholders to optimize the likelihood of sustaining successful practices and collaborative relationships that were developed through NYS Success. The research brief begins with a literature review on sustainability followed by findings from stakeholder focus groups and interviews, highlighting what aspects of Systems of Care (SOCs) can/should be sustained. The brief concludes with barriers to sustainability and strategies to help mitigate these barriers.

## Sustainability in SOC Communities

Sustaining SOC is not easy, and communities typically face some declines in innovative practices and system reforms post-grant, despite their best efforts. As described in a recent SOC evaluation by Stroul and Manteuffel (2007), SOC sites tend to experience a boost in their SOC implementation as the end of the grant approaches, with increases in service delivery, the adoption of SOC principles, and the development of system reforms. However, post-grant, SOC communities see declines in each of these domains. In particular, communities saw the greatest service challenges in maintaining supportive services (vs. more traditional services). They also experienced further difficulty in maintaining the principles of individualized care, interagency coordination, and family involvement. System reforms that were particularly challenging for communities to maintain included continued evaluation, a focal point for system management, and an active family organization. Strategies to enhance sustainability can be somewhat effective in reducing these decrements. However, some of the most effective strategies, like having a strong family partner organization and mobilizing resources, can be difficult to establish in some communities (Stroul, & Manteuffel, 2007).

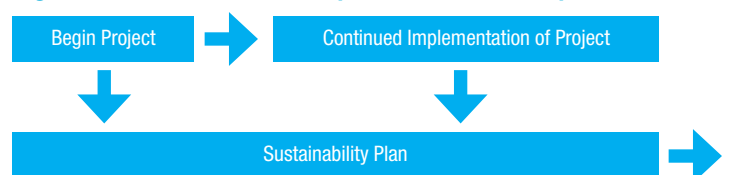
## Sustainability Planning Process

The literature describes two different “routes” to planning for sustainability. The first describes sustainability as the final phase of program implementation (Figure 1). The second route considers sustainability as an ongoing consideration concurrent with program implementation that is assessed and planned at regular intervals (Figure 2) (Pluye, et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2004). The concurrent viewpoint seems to be most dominant in recent and current literature (e.g., Riggs, 2012).

Figure 1. Final Phase of Program Implementation Example



Figure 2. Concurrent with Implementation Example



Grants often emphasize that one should have a sustainability plan at the planning and onset of any newly funded activities (CCG, 2002; USDOL, 2015). SAMSHA, in particular, seems to value early sustainability planning, as they require grantees to describe their sustainability plan in their application for the Expansion of Systems of Care funding (<http://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/sm-16-009>). However, early sustainability planning can be challenging for programs because during early stages of implementation, providers and staff may be more focused on getting programming and activities up and running.

Another challenge to sustainability planning early on is the recommendation to demonstrate program effectiveness before planning continuation or expansion (Cassidy, Leviton, & Hunter, 2006; Riggs, 2012; Koyanagi & Feres-Merchant, 2000). So how does a community plan for sustainability before even knowing if something should be sustained? One possible solution to this challenge is to develop a flexible plan that can be constantly revisited and adjusted as new findings emerge (Koyanagi & Feres-Merchant, 2000; Riggs, 2012).

In addition, it is important to consider that every project or initiative should not necessarily be sustained. Sometimes initiatives do not work out or run their course. In addition, in most projects some activities are effective and others are not. In these instances, only the activities that have been shown to be effective should be sustained. Decisions need to be made regarding altering or changing activities to optimize effectiveness (USDOL, 2015). It is best if sustainability decisions are tied to a pre-determined set of outcomes or benchmarks. That way, the determination of whether or not to sustain an initiative can be made as objectively as possible (CCG, 2002).

Stakeholders also need to decide on the domains that are the focus of sustainability efforts. The goals of sustainability can include survival of an entire initiative or survival of certain aspects of an initiative. Some specific sustainability goals include the survival of (CCG, 2002):

- the organization,
- core ideas and relationships,
- of the community direction,
- key staff,
- relationships that were built, and
- funding.

A good way to remain focused on the goals of sustainability is to create a theory of sustainability, which in essence is a logic model focused on sustainability. By creating this tool, individuals can ensure that they are thinking about and focusing on sustainability in a concrete and explicit way. In addition, drafting a theory of sustainability can gather some of the preliminary information one needs to make a sustainability plan.

Questions to be answered in a theory of sustainability include (CCG, 2002):

- Is it expected that the initiative will continue beyond the end of grant funding?
- What financial resources are needed to continue the initiative?
- What capacity building activities are needed?
- What aspects of the initiative can attract interest and support?
- Who are likely future funders of initiative?
- How can money be diverted to this initiative?
- Who do you need to get on board in order to get funding for the initiative?

## Creating a Plan

A sustainability plan is essentially a guide or roadmap designed by stakeholders that clearly lays out the future plans in areas including: resources, partnerships and collaborations, benchmarks and outcomes for success (USDOL, 2015; Koyanagi & Feres-Merchant, 2000). The process of creating the plan can

be important for building the commitment to sustainability among its crafters. In addition, it ensures that everyone involved in the process is on the same page and understands what is needed in order to sustain an initiative.

In deciding what to sustain, stakeholders should consider the feasibility of continuing some components and how an initiative may be altered in the transition period from implementation to sustainability to improve likelihood of success. Alterations can include changing or reducing activities or the target population. The process of assessing these domains and how sustainability decisions will be made can be outlined in the sustainability plan. A plan will also typically contain an array of strategies that can be applied to an initiative for sustainability.

There are several sustainability planning steps/domains that should be addressed in the sustainability plan (USDOL, 2015):

- Clarify your vision.
- Determine what you want to sustain.
- Build collaboration.
- Choose sustainability strategies and methods.
- Develop action steps for sustainability.
- Document and communicate sustainability successes.

## Introduction to Findings

The NYS Success evaluation team gathered data through focus groups with county stakeholders and interviews with technical assistance (TA) providers about sustaining SOC. The focus of the data collection was on the following topics: what they are hoping to sustain, the barriers they anticipate, strategies that can be used to overcome these barriers, and how stakeholders can optimize the likelihood of sustainability success.

Three separate focus groups were conducted, one during each of the three regional meetings.<sup>1</sup> Overall, there were representatives from 74% of NYS Success counties in attendance for the focus groups. Representatives from 19 expansion counties, and seven mentor counties were present. In addition, regional representatives from Families Together attended each meeting. Responses from differing county types (mentor vs. expansion) and regions (Hudson, Central, Western) were fairly consistent and therefore will not be broken down by these categories for analyses.

In addition to focus groups, interviews were conducted with four members of the NYS Success Implementation Team, who provide TA to counties in SOC value areas.<sup>2</sup> Since these TA providers work regularly with the counties on their SOC related activities, they offer a unique perspective. With the information gathered from interviews and focus groups, NYS and the current NYS Success communities can better prepare and plan to sustain important and successful implementation practices. The following sections present information divided out by topic and incorporate multiple data sources, including interviews, focus groups, and relevant literature, as appropriate.

## What Should Be Sustained?

Counties were asked to report on what their current grant-related activities were, what they hoped to sustain, and what they felt they would be able to sustain. Additional context was contributed by TA provider interviews and relevant literature. Decisions on what should be sustained are made at the community level,

1 For focus group findings displayed by item, please refer to Appendix II.

2 For more detailed information regarding interview and focus group participants and methodology, please see Appendix I.

based on local programming and priorities, and therefore all communities may not select to sustain all domains. The following section describes the most frequently described priority areas for sustainability.

## SOC Values

*“The intent of the SOC approach has always been to provide a framework and philosophy to guide services and systems that improve the lives of children and youth with serious mental health conditions and their families—not to create a special ‘program’...”* (Miller et al., 2012, p. 574).

Consistent with other communities, the NYS Success initiative did not provide resources for a particular program or defined set of services within the participating counties. Rather, it focused on infusing SOC values tailored for each participating county. The two most commonly reported grant-related activities in NYS Success counties were:

- increased collaboration and
- adoption of SOC values and priority areas (e.g., youth-guided, family-driven, culturally and linguistically competent, and trauma-informed).

In general, counties felt they will be able to maintain the commitment to SOC values and collaboration. However, it should be noted that TA providers expressed that counties are highly variable in their degree of integration of SOC values into practice. Some counties have progressed at a rapid pace, while others had difficulty getting past the starting line. Because of this diversity, counties will require very unique and individualized plans for sustainability.

Collaborative work is an important component of SOCs. Collaborations were highlighted by counties, both for what they have built during NYS Success, and what they hope to continue to build in the future. Although most recognized that maintaining collaborations would be challenging in the sustainability period, they felt this was a beneficial aspect of NYS Success that is worth the extra effort to continue.

## Training and Technical Assistance

The trainings and technical assistance (TA) offered by NYS Success were well received, and counties felt that continued training and TA that focused on SOC values of youth guided care, family driven support, and cultural and linguistic competence would be helpful. Although not a defined SOC value area, counties also valued and would prefer continued training in trauma-informed care as well.

Counties felt that they could continue to use the knowledge they obtained from NYS Success trainings and TA. However, it is important to note that maintaining this knowledge base would likely become more challenging as time continues, when trainees are more susceptible to forgetting and agencies experience staff turnover. In these instances, counties could potentially utilize resources like webinars, training guides, and manuals to help maintain and promote SOC values. In addition, some counties participated in few TA and trainings, these counties will likely need additional support going forward.

In addition to TA, participants also found collaborative learning opportunities offered by NYS Success to be beneficial

and desired continuation of learning activities that build communication and collaboration within and between counties, such as Learning Circles, the NYS Success Conference, and regional meetings.

## SOC Practices and Services

Fewer counties reported changes in practices and services from NYS Success. However, in a few cases, changes to practices and procedures were described; these changes included an improved referral process and the use of motivational interviewing. For counties that did make changes to service-delivery, there was desire to sustain these enhanced services, including mental health respite and solution-focused group therapy. For the remaining counties who didn't change service delivery, policy, or procedures, little change in operation was expected post-grant, with one county stakeholder explaining “we were used to working without a lot of resources, even prior to SOC.”

## Incentives

In addition to changing services and practices, some counties used small amounts of funding to provide incentives to those they serve. The most common incentive provided was transportation assistance and gas cards. County representatives found this small incentive to be very helpful, especially in areas where public transportation is limited. If they had additional funding, this is an aspect of the SOC that many counties would want to continue.

## Summary-What Should Be Sustained?

In summary, the current grant activities were very similar to what counties hoped to sustain. The counties felt they could sustain a commitment to SOC values, changes to practice and procedures, collaborations, and knowledge gained from the NYS Success initiative. If no constraints were in place, counties generally wanted more of what NYS Success is currently providing, including TA, training, facilitation of collaborations, expanded services, and additional incentives. It is likely that counties in NYS Success will want to sustain at least some of these SOC priority areas post-grant. Counties also recognize that in order to sustain their SOCs, they will likely face some barriers. These barriers, along with strategies to overcome them, are presented in the next section.

## Barriers to Sustainability and Strategies

Barriers to sustainability were identified through the literature, focus groups and interviews. Major categories are presented, followed by a description of the barrier and some strategies to help mitigate them. Multiple strategies are presented. Counties should select the strategies that are most relevant to their priorities and needs and those that are most feasible in their community.

### Changing Environment due to State Level Changes

**BARRIER:** Many counties expressed concerns associated with State changes, such as Medicaid reform and the implementation of Children's Health Homes. They felt uneasy about how these changes would affect their practices, and desired more information and guidance related to these changes.



**STRATEGIES:** Here are a couple of ways that can improve community confidence in preparing for NY State level changes.

- Prepare for state level changes, by accessing the state websites and reviewing available materials such as webinars<sup>3</sup>
- Seek out and attend State led Q and A sessions, small group discussions, or in-person meetings. These additional contacts with the State may help to improve comfort with the “roll-out” of these initiatives.

## Funding

**BARRIER:** Previous research has found that communities experience the greatest challenges with maintaining flexible funding and covering the costs of transportation in the post-grant period (Stroul, & Manteuffel, 2007). This is consistent with the expectations of NYS Success counties. Once the grant ends, counties felt that losing funding to cover the costs of transportation for families (such as gas gift cards) and services would be an obstacle. Some felt there is also a lack of funding for non-Medicaid billable services (e.g., respite) and desired support for blending funding across systems.

**STRATEGIES:** Finding funding for activities and services after grant funding ends is an important aspect of sustainability. Previous research has found that programs that have a diverse set of funding sources tend to be more successful in sustaining aspects of their initiatives (Leviton, Herrera, Pepper, Fishman, Racine, 2006; Pluye, Potvin, Denis, 2004). Some strategies that have been most effective for other SOC communities are:

- Increase the use of Medicaid reimbursement for services and supports.
- Explore ways to create more administrative efficiencies.
- Develop procedures to receive and review funding announcements from federal and state agencies (see <http://www.hhs.gov/grants/grants/get-ready-for-grants-management/index.html> for information on finding, preparing, and managing grants).
- Join and regularly view information sent from youth and children’s behavioral health groups (e.g., subscribing to e-mail newsletters and listservs) for locating grant announcements (e.g., Social Work Research Network contact: [swrnet@bu.edu](mailto:swrnet@bu.edu); Children’s Mental Health Network: [scott@cmhnetwork.org](mailto:scott@cmhnetwork.org); National Federation of Families: <https://www.ffcmh.org/content/get-updates>; SAMHSA TA Network: [tatelegram@ssw.umaryland.edu](mailto:tatelegram@ssw.umaryland.edu)).

## Continued Challenges with Implementing Meaningful Youth & Family Engagement

**BARRIER:** Family and youth involvement can be an invaluable resource for SOCs. However, implementing meaningful youth and family engagement is a challenge for some communities. Counties mentioned that on occasion, youth and family are not fully integrated into SOCs and instead are given less-involved tasks like making copies. Counties also expressed

that there needed to be more youth/family voice at the NYS level. Counties anticipate meaningful youth and family involvement to be a continuing challenge as SOCs move towards sustainability.

**STRATEGIES:** Since family and youth involvement is a core component of SOC, and having a strong family partner organization has been an effective sustainability strategy for SOCs (e.g., Stroul, & Manteuffel, 2007), it is vital to continue to prioritize youth and family into the sustainability period of the SOC. The following strategies include advice for continuing to integrate youth and family into the SOC at the local and state level.

- Plan carefully on how family and youth advocates will be involved in your SOC and have meaningful roles available for these individuals beyond the grant period.
- Gather input from youth and family advocates on how they feel they can continue to contribute to the SOC in the post-award period.
- Ensure continued representation of youth and family representatives on county governance committees.
- Provide continued trainings for youth and family. By offering training to youth and family, they are more able to take on new roles within the SOC. Examples of trainings include topics such as family/youth advocacy, peer empowerment, and how to use/implement SOC values and raise awareness.
- Designate funds to continue to employ youth and family advocates/engagement coordinators directly into on-going services. By having youth and family advocates present and incorporated into activities, staff stay abreast of youth and family points of view, and this will help to foster and sustain SOC value areas.
- Provide child care at meetings to facilitate family involvement.
- Take advantage of Medicaid State funding for family advocates.

## Maintaining and Building Collaborations

**BARRIER:** Collaborations are an important SOC value. With the end of NYS Success, counties anticipate challenges with sustaining both local and state-level collaborations. After the formal meetings convened by NYS Success end, it will be more challenging to maintain the collaborations fostered with this initiative.

**STRATEGIES:** Due to shared interest in SOC values, many stakeholders will likely want to continue to communicate and share ideas with others in NYS Success.

- Establish formal memoranda of understanding (MOUs) among child-serving agencies to promote cross system initiatives.
- Develop cross-agency protocols that specify how the

agencies will work together at the system and service delivery levels.

- Continue the learning community for counties by conducting regular group meetings via conference call. This would be a low cost way to maintain and build collaborations.
- Develop shared meetings and trainings, or by opening their own trainings/meetings to the surrounding communities.

### Self-Assessments and Data Collection

**BARRIER:** The counties also face challenges with measuring and monitoring progress. All interviewees mentioned that there is very little done at the county level to track progress in the SOC value areas. Without tracking, it is very challenging to understand readiness, measure improvement, or to even know where to focus efforts.

Counties also felt that data coordination was a barrier. Some counties expressed that there is a need for consistent data collected at the local level that does not come and go with changes in state or grant requirements. They also felt that data reporting and systems cross-agencies should be coordinated. This would improve information flow and reduce redundancies to improve efficiency and service planning for youth and children.

**STRATEGIES:** TA providers expressed the need for counties to measure implementation of the value areas on a regular basis in order to track progress and understand areas for improvement. In addition, programs that demonstrate positive outcomes and disseminate success stories tend to have more success in the sustainability period (Blasinsky, Goldman, & Unutzer, 2006; Stevens & Peikes, 2006; Scheirer, 2005). Here are some strategies for self-assessments and data collection:

- Implement self-assessments to help counties understand strengths and areas of improvement and to ensure that they are progressing on the value area. Self-assessments can also help in avoiding implementation issues like misunderstandings of SOC values and tokenism of youth and family members, in which counties may think they are implementing a value, but they actually are not.<sup>4</sup>
- Use multi-methods to collect data. It may be advantageous for providers to utilize several methods of assessment in order to understand multiple perspectives. TA providers highlighted the importance of implementing focus groups to gain an understanding of the youth and family perspective on implementation effectiveness.
- Seek help if you need it. Assessments can take time and evaluation skill. If the program/organization does not have this type of personnel available, they may want to seek out assistance. For instance, a graduate student may be available to help facilitate and analyze assessments at a low cost.

- Reduce redundancy when possible. Unfortunately, grants often have unique data reporting requirements and forms. In some cases, this data collection process can be streamlined, by using electronic data collection, and/or prepopulating information you already have in order to decrease the burden on the data collector and the service recipient.
- Use social marketing and strategic communications to highlight the changes in outcomes; this can be effective for garnering support for SOC's (Stroul & Friedman, 2011).
- In addition to assessing progress, it is also important to assess what should be sustained. Not all aspects of an initiative need to/should be sustained in all cases. It is important to assess all activities and practices to determine if they should be sustained (Riggs, 2012).

### Staff Turnover

**BARRIER:** One barrier to sustainability that was prominent in both the literature and the interviews was the challenges associated with staff turnover (Peterson et al, 2013; Leviton, Herrera, Pepper, Fishman, Racine, 2006; Koyanagi & Feres-Merchant, 2000). Interview participants described that high turnover of both managers and front line staff was a major barrier for NYS Success counties to the building and maintenance of SOC values and practices. Turnover is disruptive because it necessitates the ongoing delivery of introductory trainings to get everyone on track and makes it challenging to move beyond the preliminary level of the material.

**STRATEGIES:** Staff turnover is an ever present challenge for many agencies and organizations, therefore it is important to carefully plan for how to best handle the disruptions to SOC's due to turnover.

- Establish SOC champions. It is important for counties with high turnover to have SOC champions who can express the importance of SOC to new staff, supervise and guide them in implementation of SOC values, and build enthusiasm. In prior research, programs with supportive champions tend to have more success in the sustainability period (Stevens & Peikes, 2006; Scheirer, 2005).
- Highlight and explain SOC values in orientation trainings for new staff.
- Refer to the TA and Training section below for additional tips and resources for optimizing trainings.

### Training and TA Ending

**BARRIER:** Using available TA was a strength in implementing SOC values among counties in NYS Success. Capitalizing on TA opportunities was also an aspect of programs that was associated with sustainability in the research (Stevens & Peikes, 2006). However, once the grant ends, TA will no longer be freely available. The end of NYS Success funding will end NYS Success provided trainings and TA, so counties will lose that support. Counties will be on their own to prioritize

and build skills in these value areas. Agencies may not have adequate tools on hand to teach their workforce about implementing SOC values on their own without the expert-lead trainings and TA, which becomes especially problematic when combined with high turnover mentioned above.

**STRATEGIES:** Even with grant funded training and TA ending, communities can use the following strategies to continue to build knowledge in SOC value areas.

- Seek out additional TA with alternative funding streams, since TA is so valuable and beneficial.
- Create the capacity for ongoing training and TA on systems of care and evidence-informed practices through the creation of institutes, centers of excellence, TA centers, intermediary organizations, and/or partnerships with higher education. These have been developed both at the state level and at the local/provider agency level for other SOC (Stroul & Friedman, 2011).
- Utilize the webinars, guides, and resources saved on the NYS Success website. TA providers were committed to updating tools and resources on the NYS Success website during the final stretch of NYS Success. Many have created easy to understand guidebooks for counties to use as a helping hand in sustaining SOC practices and values.
- Use SAMHSA TA resources (from Georgetown University National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health and the Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health) for implementing and sustaining SOC. There are many SOC resources, including guides, tools, and assessments. Some resource links are available in Appendix III.

### **Maintaining SOC Values**

**BARRIER:** SOC practices and activities tend to reduce once grants end. Although communities may continue to implement SOC values post grant, they do not tend to implement them as strongly during this period. In addition, some report a drop in enthusiasm towards the end of a grant, this could further stymie sustainability efforts (CCG, 2002).

**STRATEGIES:** Programs that have strong institutional/organizational support may have more success in sustaining SOC values (Stevens & Peikes, 2006; Blasinsky, Goldman, & Unutzer, 2006). SOC can also implement the following strategies to ensure that counties continue to prioritize SOC values.

- Create a sustainability plan that incorporates concrete steps to continue implementing SOC values (Stroul, & Friedman, 2011).
- Incorporate the system of care approach into requests for proposals and contracts with managed care organizations, community mental health agencies, and providers (Stroul, & Friedman, 2011).
- Incorporate SOC approach into rules, regulations, standards, guidelines, and/or practice protocols (Stroul, & Friedman, 2011).
- Reach out to other counties that thrive in that areas where you need assistance. The county profiles on the NYS Success website may be a good tool for identifying the counties that are "doing it well."
- Solicit feedback from families and youth to assess how well the SOC is family driven, youth guided and culturally linguistically competent and how to improve SOC value areas. Those served by the SOC are a great source of information.
- Seek out feedback from the community on SOC implementation; they can help inform and facilitate sustainability efforts (Stroul, & Friedman, 2011).
- Link and build on other system change initiatives (e.g., health reform).
- Identify a focal point to manage SOC and be accountable for the maintenance and sustainability of the system of care approach at both the state and local level (Stroul, & Friedman, 2011). This way SOC values remain in focus and can continue to permeate practices.

## **Conclusion**

Sustainability of SOC services, philosophy, and goals can be challenging once grant funding ends (Stroul & Manteuffel, 2007). In general, there is a desire among NYS Success SOC communities to continue some of the philosophy, services, and goals that were implemented with NYS Success. Because counties are so diverse in their implementation of NYS Success, they will likely require varying and individualized sustainability plans. During the sustainability period, most programs face decrements in implementation (Stroul & Manteuffel, 2007). Although counties will likely face barriers in the maintenance and building of their SOC, careful planning to address the applicable barriers, along with the implementation of sustainability strategies, assessment of sustained domains, and state level support and guidance, can enhance the likelihood of sustainability success.



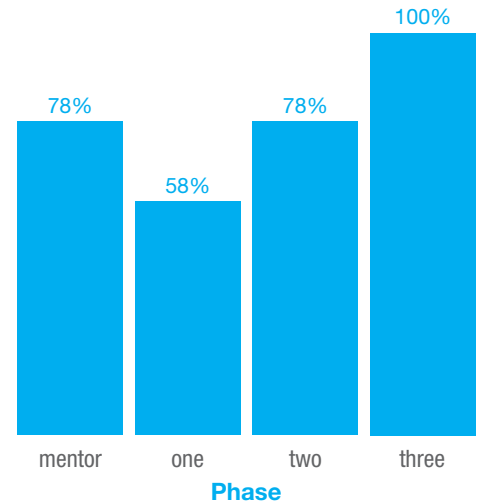
# Appendix I:

## Methods and Sample Description for Focus Groups & Interviews

Focus groups were conducted in April 2016, during the regional NYS Success meetings. All counties (Mentor and Expansion) were invited to participate in one of the three meetings. The Center for Human Services Research (CHSR) moderated three discussions focused on sustainability within the three regional meetings in the Hudson, Central, and Western Regions. Focus group discussions were guided by a prepared protocol, focused on activities and sustainability plans. Each discussion lasted approximately one hour. All groups were asked about what activities and changes they made with the NYS Success grant, what they thought they would be able to sustain, challenges they foresee in sustaining grant activities, and how NYS can help. Different questions generated different levels of response from participants. Participants were most willing to share information about their current grant related activities, and had the fewest responses when asked about what activities do they feel they will be able to sustain.

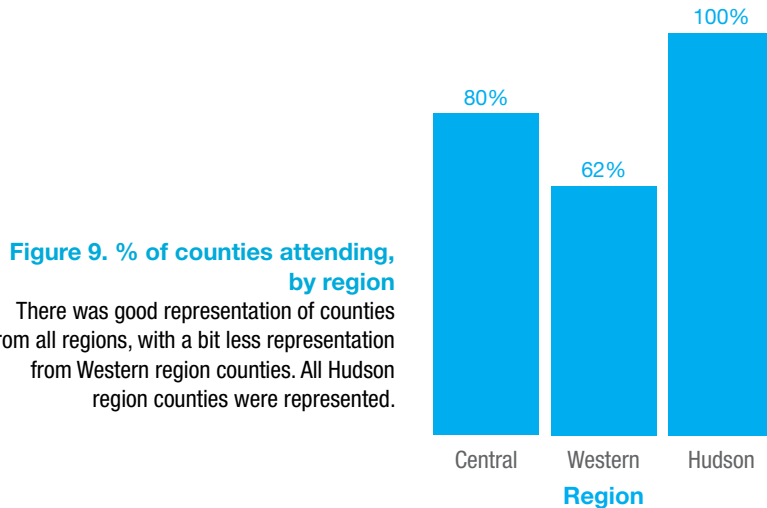
Interviews were conducted in June 2016, with the Implementation Team members who provide TA in various SOC value areas, youth guided, family focused, cultural linguistic competence, and social marketing. Four interviews were conducted. These interviews took approximately 30-45 minutes to complete. Interviews were guided by a prepared protocol focused on impressions of sustainability readiness and advice to enhance sustainability readiness.

Please refer to Figures 8-10, which describe percent of counties represented by phase and region. In addition, percent of counties with 1, 2, or 3 or more representatives is depicted.



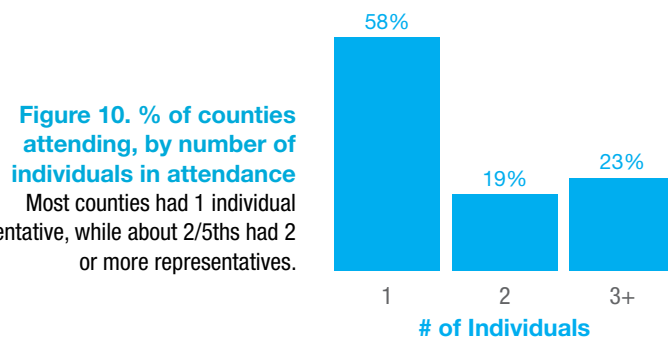
**Figure 8. % of counties represented by phase**

There was good representation of counties for all phases, with a bit less representation from phase one.



**Figure 9. % of counties attending, by region**

There was good representation of counties from all regions, with a bit less representation from Western region counties. All Hudson region counties were represented.



**Figure 10. % of counties attending, by number of individuals in attendance**

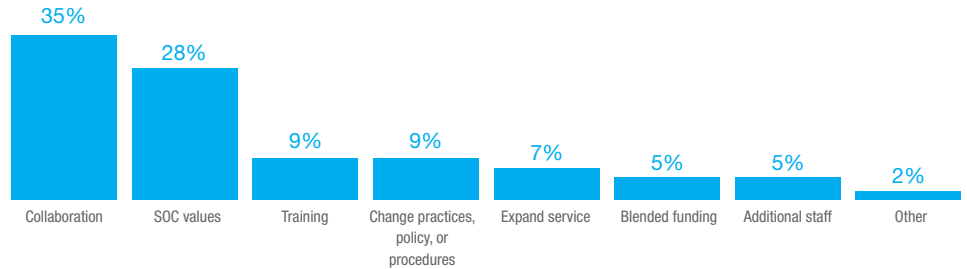
Most counties had 1 individual representative, while about 2/5ths had 2 or more representatives.

# Appendix II:

## Methods and Sample Description for Focus Groups & Interviews

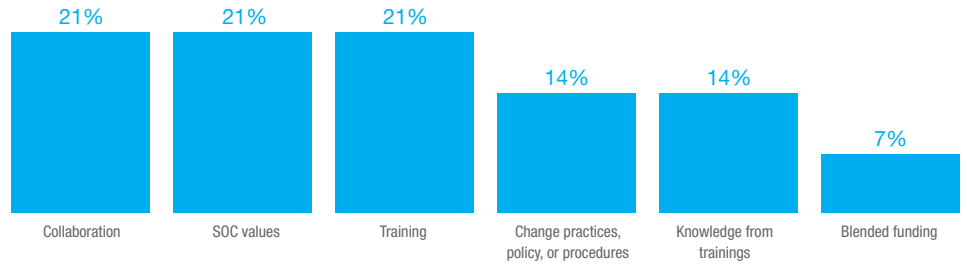
**Figure 3. What are your current grant-related activities? (43 total responses)**

Most grant-related activities represent commitment to SOC and NYS Success priority areas, such as collaborations and SOC value areas.



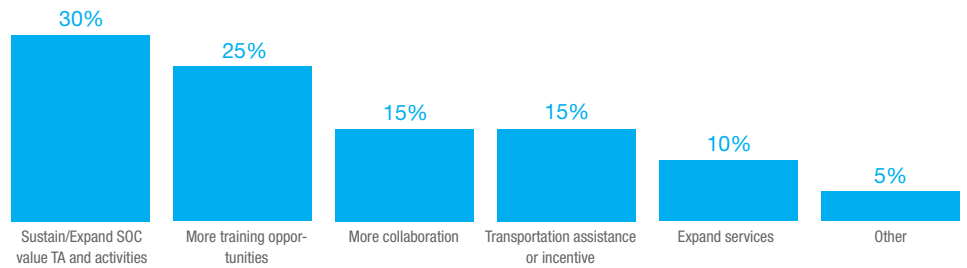
**Figure 4. What do you think you will be able to sustain? (14 total responses)**

Most counties reported being able to sustain the commitment to and practices reflecting SOC values, collaboration, and changes to services and procedures.



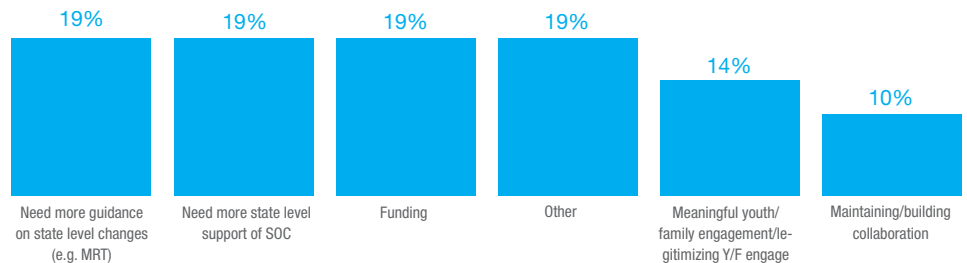
**Figure 5. What would you want to sustain if “Unlimited Funds” were available? (20 total responses)**

With unlimited funds, most counties would want more of the services currently provided by NYS Success, such as training and TA.



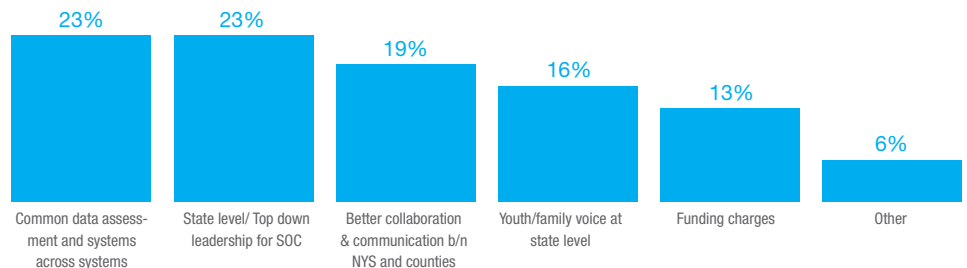
**Figure 6. What barriers do you anticipate with sustaining your SOC? (21 total responses)**

Counties reported a variety of barriers including need for guidance on state level changes, need for more state-level support of SOC, funding, authentic youth and family engagement, and maintaining and expanding collaborations.



**Figure 7. How can NYS help in sustaining your SOC? (31 total responses)**

There were varied responses on how NYS can help as well. Counties desired common assessments and data systems across systems, more top down SOC leadership, improved collaboration and communication with NYS, more youth and family voice at the state level, and funding changes.



# Appendix III:

## Sustainability Tools

This section will emphasize tools for sustainability that have been gathered from TA provider interviews and literature search. In all the interviews, TA providers stressed the importance of doing assessments of the different SOC value areas at regular intervals to understand how you are doing in these areas. The following tools could be used for that purpose. In addition, some tools presented are appropriate for determining what aspects of a program should be sustained.

### The following provides some examples of useful tools and toolkits for planning for sustainability.

- SAMHSA's Sustaining Grassroots Community-Based Programs: A Toolkit for Community and Faith-Based Service Providers (<http://sites.ed.gov/aapi/files/2014/03/SAMH-SA-Toolkit.pdf>) is an extensive toolkit for planning for sustainability. It includes many resources, samples of tools, and templates and worksheets.
- Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (<https://sustaintool.org/>) is a 40 questions assessment that helps you understand the sustainability capacity of your program on a number of factors and is helpful in developing a sustainability plan.
- Sustainability Resources and an Assessment Tool are also available from the TA Partnership (<http://www.tapartnership.org/SOC/SOCsustainabilityPlanning.php?id=topic1>)<sup>5</sup>
- Bringing the Future into Focus: A Step by Step Sustainability Planning Workbook (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/sustainability/pdf/bringing-the-future-into-focus-sustainability-planning-workbook.pdf>) is not SOC-focused, but provides a step by step guide for sustainability planning.
- Although not specific to Systems of Care, Moving Forward: A Sustainability Guide was created by the Department of Labor (<https://www.doleta.gov/business/PDF/SustainGuide.pdf>) and contains some generic templates that can be helpful in drafting a sustainability plan.
- SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment guide, Preparing for the Future: Strategies for Program Sustainability ([http://www.nattc.org/userfiles/file/MidAmerica/CSAT-GPRA\\_TA\\_Package\\_6\\_Strategies%20for%20Program%20Sustainability.pdf](http://www.nattc.org/userfiles/file/MidAmerica/CSAT-GPRA_TA_Package_6_Strategies%20for%20Program%20Sustainability.pdf)) is a guide for program directors and leaders on how to make programs more sustainable.
- SAMSHA's Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies offers an online training called Prevention Sustainability: Understanding the Basics (<https://captonline.edc.org/enrol/index.php?id=127>) introduces sustainability concepts within the context of prevention.
- To gain more knowledge on the New York State level changes that may impact children/youth's behavioral health care, you may want explore the Office of Mental Health and Department of Health's websites, [https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/health\\_initiatives.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/health_initiatives.htm) and <https://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/bootstrap/providers.html>

**Assessments of SOC values:** Additional assessments and tools for SOC values are available on [NYSSuccess.org](http://NYSSuccess.org).

- Cultural linguistic competence assessments
  - the National Center for Cultural Competence <http://nccc.georgetown.edu/resources/assessments.html>
  - The Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence <http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/library/cultural%20and%20linguistic%20competence/language%20access/assessments%20and%20checklists/ny%20center%20for%20excellence%20clc%20assessment%20tools.pdf>
- Family driven assessments
  - Family Driven Care Self-Assessment Tool <http://huffosherconsulting.com/>
- Youth guided assessments
  - Youth Efficacy/Empowerment Scale- Mental Health (YES-MH) <https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/pbCompleteSurveyPacket.pdf>
- General SOC assessments
  - Self-Assessment of Strategies for Expanding the System of Care Approach [http://gucchdtacenter.georgetown.edu/Activities/Training-Institutes/2014/Resources/Sem\\_1\\_R3\\_Self-Assessment%20of%20Expansion%20Strategies%2011-22-13.pdf](http://gucchdtacenter.georgetown.edu/Activities/Training-Institutes/2014/Resources/Sem_1_R3_Self-Assessment%20of%20Expansion%20Strategies%2011-22-13.pdf)
  - The Rating Tool for Community Level Implementation of the System of Care Approach for Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults with Mental Health Challenges and their Families <http://gucchdtacenter.georgetown.edu/resources/Webinar%20and%20Audio%20Files/Data0313SOC%20Rating%20Tool%203-3-13.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Tapartnership.org website is currently down for maintenance, so this resource is not accessible at the moment

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## About the Center for Human Services Research

The Center for Human Services Research (CHSR) is a research department within the School of Social Welfare at the University at Albany. CHSR has over 20 years of experience conducting evaluation research, designing information systems and informing program and policy development for a broad range of agencies serving vulnerable populations. Rigorous research and evaluation methods, strong relationships with project partners, and timely, accurate and objective information are hallmarks of CHSR's work. For more information about CHSR please visit [www.albany.edu/chsr](http://www.albany.edu/chsr).



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