

The report summarizes the results of the
Georgia Family Support Network Launch
Events.

Georgia Family Support Network Planning Session Report & Bylaws

Proposed Vision, Mission,
Goals, Objectives, Bylaws and
Initiatives

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Overview

Twenty-five (25) participants attended the launch event for the Georgia Family Support Network (GFSN) on November 5, 2018 sponsored by the Prevention and Community Support Section, Georgia Division of Family & Children Services. The event included an overview of the National Family Support Network and Family Support model. The facilitator (Dr. Chris Allers, Advantage Consulting, LLC, Atlanta) reviewed the results of a pre-meeting survey that included questions about local community alignment with the Family Support Principles, the importance of the Family Support approach in Georgia and addressed roles that the GFSN should and should not play.

Participants worked in small groups to draft vision and mission statements. Participants then identified state level initiatives for the GFSN aligned with the national network's three focus areas:

- Connecting and convening member networks to enhance their effectiveness;
- Promoting Family Support best practices and evaluation;
- Raising visibility of the value and impact of Family Support and Strengthening local networks in order to strengthen and increase support for families.

A second event occurred on February 7, 2019 to finalize the goals, objectives and initiatives. Additionally, the group reviewed and endorsed the values of the National Family Support Network and developed initial by-laws. Information obtained from other state Family Support Networks was shared and discussed.

A third event occurred on July 17, 2019 to finalize the by-laws and convene initial workgroup meetings.

Vision Statement

The vision of the Georgia Family Support Network is a state in which every family is thriving and has access to a strong and effective family support and strengthening network.

Mission Statement

The mission of the GFSN is to leverage state, county and community networks to strengthen practices and policies that champion quality family support.

Goals

1. Georgia network members are connected and supported to enhance their effectiveness.
2. Family Support best practices are fully implemented across Georgia.
3. The value and impact of the state Family Support and Strengthening network is highly visible and leads to increased support for families in Georgia.

Objectives

1. Increase the number of organizations implementing the national Family Support and Strengthening Standards.
2. Increase the number of local and state policy makers, funders and communities who understand the value and impact of the Family Support Network and are investing or directing resources to organizations implementing the national standards.
3. Increase the number of families who are supported by high quality Family Support programs and services.

Initiatives

The proposed initiatives of the GFSN are:

GOAL 1: Georgia network members are connected and supported to enhance their effectiveness.

- Develop network Family Support and Strengthening goals and measures which align with those of existing partners.
- Coordinate workgroups to prevent duplication of efforts and keep all groups focused on the plan.
- Define what is unique and additive about GFSN and how it will be connected to existing networks (e.g. Family Connections Partnership, Strengthening Families Georgia, etc.)
- Embed Family Support convenings, trainings and information sharing into the conferences and events of partners.
- Provide networking opportunities for partners at meetings and events.
- Create and implement MOUs with state level partners to strengthening understanding and commitment (e.g. DFCS, Health Department, Family Connection Partnership, etc.).
- Develop a social media campaign (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to engage members and aligned organizations.
- Produce a GFSN video and talking points presenting a clear and consistent message.
- Develop and maintain a database of network partners and Family Support and Strengthening programs.
- Produce a statewide newsletter or other communications strategy (e.g. webinars, conference calls) to keep members connected and informed.
- Provide financial and staffing support to establish and maintain the network.
- Develop and revise, as needed, a strategic plan for the network.

GOAL 2: Family Support best practices are fully implemented across Georgia.

- Create a “community of practice” around implementing the national Family Support standards (i.e. general education about the standards and their value, implementation technical assistance).
- Develop strategies to encourage established nonprofits to take another look at Family Support and challenge them to work together to enhance their current models.
- Advocate for funders to incorporate the implementation of the Family Support quality standards into funding opportunities, technical assistance and professional development.
- Research how other states are effectively implementing and supporting their state networks and efforts to implement standards and best practices.

- Provide a Family Support and Strengthening best practices training series using adult learning best practice approaches.
- Research and design a “quality rating” certification system to support the implementation of the national standards, Family Support best practices and effective evaluation practices.
- Identify and secure financial resources to support evaluation and quality improvements for network members.
- Partner with the business community to secure resources to support the implementation of standards and best practices.
- Conduct a Family Support and Strengthening gaps analysis to identify local assets, needs, and barriers which includes a parent-focused needs assessment.
- Identify strategies to create the expectation and understanding of evaluation as being a support for programs.
- Provide technical assistance on effective evaluation methods.
- Conduct telephone or video conferencing calls for organizations looking for peer support in implementing standards and best practices.

GOAL 3: The value and impact of local Family Support and Strengthening networks is highly visible and leads to increased support for families in Georgia.

- Evaluate the network as an evidence informed practice in order to use collected data to illustrate our collective impact.
- Create an evaluation plan including a mechanism to systematically gather and report aggregated data.
- Create and implement a statewide awareness campaign to promote the value and impact of Family Support and Strengthening.
- Develop profiles to highlight examples of thriving communities and share Family Support success stories.
- Develop a Strategic Communications plan.
- Educate policy makers about the Family Support Network standards and its impact on positive family outcomes
- Brand GFSN and develop strategies to promote member credibility and visibility.

Proposed Structure and Roles

Sponsor: Prevention and Community Support (PCS) Staff

Steering Committee: Co-chairs of the Working Groups and PCS Staff

Work Groups: Network Members

- Program & Standards
- Strategic Communications
- Data Utilization & Evaluation

Roles (Note: Six-month priorities are in bold)

Sponsor

- **Provide financial and staffing support to establish and maintain the network.**
- **Create and implement MOUs with state level partners to strengthening understanding and commitment (e.g. DFCS, Health Department, Family Connection Partnership, etc.).**
- **Provide a Family Support and Strengthening best practices training series using adult learning best practice approaches.**
- Work with Strategic Communications Workgroup to produce a statewide newsletter and other communications strategies (e.g. webinars, conference calls) to keep members connected and informed.
- Research how other states are effectively implementing and supporting their state networks and efforts to implement standards and best practices.

Steering Committee

- **Coordinate workgroups to prevent duplication of efforts and keep all groups focused on the plan.**
- **Develop and revise, as needed, a strategic plan for the network.**
- **Embed Family Support convenings, trainings and information sharing into the conferences and events of partners.**
- Identify and secure financial resources to support evaluation and quality improvements for network members.
- Partner with the business community to secure resources to support the implementation of standards and best practices.
- Educate policy makers about the Family Support Network standards and its impact on positive family outcomes.
- Advocate for funders to incorporate the implementation of the Family Support quality standards into funding opportunities, technical assistance and professional development.
- Provide networking opportunities for partners at meetings and events.

Program & Standards

- **Create a “community of practice” around implementing the national Family Support standards (i.e. general education about the standards and their value, implementation technical assistance).**
- **Develop strategies to encourage established nonprofits to take another look at Family Support and challenge them to work together to enhance their current models.**
- **Develop and maintain a database of network partners and Family Support and Strengthening programs.**
- Research and design a “quality rating” certification system to support the implementation of the national standards, Family Support best practices and effective evaluation practices.
- Conduct telephone or video conferencing calls for organizations looking for peer support in implementing standards and best practices.

Strategic Communications

- **Define what is unique and additive about GFSN and how it will be connected to existing networks (e.g. Family Connections Partnership, Strengthening Families Georgia, etc.)**
- **Develop a Strategic Communications plan.**
- Create and implement a statewide awareness campaign to promote the value and impact of Family Support and Strengthening.
- Develop profiles to highlight examples of thriving communities and share Family Support success stories.
- Develop a social media campaign (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to engage members and aligned organizations.
- Produce a GFSN video and talking points presenting a clear and consistent message.
- Brand GFSN and develop strategies to promote member credibility and visibility.

Data Utilization & Evaluation

- **Create an evaluation plan including a mechanism to systematically gather and report aggregated data.**
- **Develop network Family Support and Strengthening measures which align with those of existing partners.**
- Evaluate the network as an evidence informed practice in order to use collected data to illustrate our collective impact.
- Identify strategies to create the expectation and understanding of evaluation as being a support for programs.
- Provide technical assistance on effective evaluation methods.
- Conduct a Family Support and Strengthening gaps analysis to identify local assets, needs, and barriers which includes a parent-focused needs assessment.

ARTICLE I – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1 – Name

The name of the organization is Georgia Family Support Network. The organization shall be referred to as Georgia Family Support Network or GFSN. It is a peer network affiliated with the Georgia Department of Human Services, Georgia Division of Family & Children Services, Prevention & Community Support.

Section 2 – Purpose

The mission of the GFSN is to leverage state, county and community networks to strengthen practices and policies that champion quality family support.

Goals

- Georgia network members are connected and supported to enhance their effectiveness.
- Family Support best practices are fully implemented across Georgia.
- The value and impact of the state Family Support and Strengthening network is highly visible and leads to increased support for families in Georgia.

Objectives

- Increase the number of organizations implementing the national Family Support and Strengthening Standards.
- Increase the number of local and state policy makers, funders and communities who understand the value and impact of the Family Support Network and are investing or directing resources to organizations implementing the national standards.
- Increase the number of families who are supported by high quality Family Support programs and services.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Section 1 – GFSN Membership

Members consist of all agencies, groups or individuals that work to develop community-based family support and primary prevention services for all families. Each agency or group member shall designate one representative to vote on their behalf.

Section 2 – Types of Membership

1. Member agencies provide direct service to families through community-based programs that adhere to the principles of family support practice including the promotion of protective factors. Agencies must have completed the Family Support America standards training within the past 2 years and be committed to the promotion and use of the national standards. Examples of member agencies may include family resource centers, family support programs, and early care and education programs.

1 A. Family Resource Center Member Agency – A Family Resource Center is a unified point of entry where families, caregivers, children and youth in schools or communities can obtain information, an assessment of needs, referral to, or direct delivery of services in a manner that is welcoming, strength-based, family-centered, multi-generational and is responsive to the community needs, cultures and interests.

A Family Resource Center - Self-identified and designated by the GFSN based on having multiple characteristics of Family Resource Centers AND the provision of multiple services in the following categories: Parenting and Family Support, Access to Resources, Child Development and Educational Activities, Family Economic Success, Health and Wellness, Family Engagement or Community Engagement.

1 B. Family Support Member Agency – Self-Identified and designated by the GFSN as a Family Support Member Agency based on the provision of stand-alone family support programming in the categories of Parenting and Family Support, Access to Resources, Child Development and Educational Activities, Family Economic Success, Health and Wellness, Family Engagement and/or Community Engagement

2. Affiliated Members – Affiliated members are committed to supporting families and principles of family support practice but may not work directly with families. Affiliated members must be committed to the promotion and use of the national standards. Examples of affiliated members may include businesses, community members, individuals, non-profit organizations, students, coalitions, councils, foundations, institutions of higher education and healthcare professionals.

Section 3 – Membership Meetings

1. Steering Committee meetings shall meet at least 6 times per year. Steering Committee meetings are not counted in the 75% meeting attendance requirement.
2. Work Group Meetings shall be held at least 6 times per year.
3. General membership meetings shall be held annually. Annual meeting is not required for membership, but may count towards 75% meeting attendance requirement.
4. Meetings may be held remotely.
5. Members must attend at least 75% of all network meetings.

Section 5 – Membership Requirements (A member is an organization and not an individual)

1. At least one person in a leadership role per member agency or affiliated member must be trained in the National Family Support Network's Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support to become a member organization.
2. Members have 3 years to have 35% of all staff trained in the Standards.
3. To be a member, agencies must have at least one member attend 75% of all meetings and be on at least one workgroup.
4. Members must attend at least 75% of all network meetings.
5. Each member organization is required to have at least one representative join at least one Workgroup.
6. The National Family Support Network's Introduction to the Standards Webinar will be required as part of the onboarding of new members within the first 90 days.
7. It is recommended that staff at member organizations not yet trained in the Standards view the Introduction to Standards Webinar.

Section 6 – Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the organization shall be held at a date and time identified by the Steering Committee. All members of the organization shall be invited to attend. Attendance at the Annual Meeting is not required for network membership. The Annual Meeting can count towards membership requirement of attending 75% of meetings.

Section 7 – Workgroup Requirements

1. Must hold at least 6 workgroup meetings per year.
2. At least one meeting will be held face to face.
3. Additional meetings may be held remotely at workgroup discretion.

Section 8 – Revocation of Membership

The Steering Committee reserves the right to revoke any GFSN membership based upon its membership requirements.