Dear Child and Family Team Member:

As Executive Director of the Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families in Montgomery County, Maryland, I am excited to welcome you to the Maryland Choices wraparound process as a member of a child and family team. The Council firmly supports the mission, core values and guiding principles of Maryland Choices.

The community partners that participate in the Collaboration Council believe that the Maryland Choices wraparound model embodies a powerful approach to provide strength based, family centered, culturally sensitive and truly individualized services to youth with serious emotional disturbances and their families in our community. The Collaboration Council offers administrative, financial and philosophical support to demonstrate our belief that the Choices team approach can produce successful outcomes for youth and their families. National research shows this kind of teamwork can bring about enduring change for all involved. By working together with youth and their families, we become jointly accountable for their achievements and the improvements of our own public service systems.

I understand that as a team member, you will face challenges and even some differences of opinion as you engage in this process. While consensus building is sometimes difficult with a diverse group of people, it is essential to achieving positive results with families and your participation in the child and family team is an expected and necessary part of this very important work. It is truly from this type of collaboration that many families have experienced successes through Choices, and I anticipate that there will be many more built upon your commitment and involvement.

Sincerely,

Kathy Lally
Executive Director
Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families

Maryland Choices®

Helping You Change Lives®

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Montgomery County
Collaboration Council
FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
A LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

Maryland Choices®

Child and Family Team Guide

ABOUT
Child and Family Teams

Our Mission
To strengthen individuals and families while advancing community systems of care.

Family Driven
When a child is referred to Maryland Choices, a child and family team is formed. The goal of this team is to help the child and his or her family find the supports they need to succeed. Success is defined by the family and the team members work together with the family to achieve goals.

Team Based
Team members are parents or legal guardians, the child, the Maryland Choices care coordinator, school teacher or counselor, probation officer or child welfare worker and approximately three other family members, such as a neighbor, clergy person or other friend. The goal of this team is to support your child and family to help ensure your child's success in the community.

The primary team should be made up of five to nine people who will be involved with the child and family on an ongoing basis. A primary team should include:

- Parent or legal guardian,
- Child or adolescent (when appropriate),
- Maryland Choices care coordinator,
- School teacher or counselor,
- Probation officer and/or child welfare worker and
- Approximately three other family or community members such as a clergy person or neighbor.

The Responsibility of a Care Coordinator
Your care coordinator will serve as an advocate for your child and family, and will help to guide you through the process of team meetings. Your care coordinator will work to help remove barriers like transportation, time of day, child care and work conflicts, to assure your family is able to fully participate in the team meetings.

The Responsibility of Family Members
Family members must choose other team members and serve as the "driver" of the team process. They should participate actively on the team and share successes and concerns regarding the needs of your child.

Using a Provider Network
Together, the child and family team will create a plan to fit the special strengths and needs of the family. Part of this plan includes a list of all treatments and services that the family feels are important to achieving success. These services are part of a provider network.

Maryland Choices Families have the right to:

- Expect what is said to be kept private,
- Receive treatment regardless of race, religion, national origin, gender or sexual orientation,
- Make a complaint and receive a timely answer,
- Dispute the treatment plan and be told what that might mean for your child's health,
- Provide input on what providers of services you would like and
- Receive notices in a form you can read and understand.

Child and Family Team RESOURCES

Finding Resources
Your care coordinator can assist you in finding the resources you need for your child or family through the provider network. A directory of resources is available in the Child and Family Team Handbook, as well as online at www.MarylandChoices.org.

Family SUPPORT

Role of the Family Support Partner
The Montgomery County Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health has family support partners who assist parents and other primary caregivers on Maryland Choices child and family teams. The family support partners are trained family members who have experience raising a child with emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges. They help link families to resources and can mentor, coach, support and advocate for families.

The Federation believes that family members of children and youth with emotional, behavioral and mental health challenges:

- Should be treated as equal and full partners at every level of decision making,
- Are entitled to a wide variety of formal and informal services, family-to-family support, and education programs and
- Deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.

For more information on family support partners or the Federation of Families, contact Celia Serkin at 301.681.8929.