



GEORGIA SYSTEM OF CARE STATE PLAN 2017



The Interagency Directors Team (IDT), a multiagency, public-private partnership of child and adolescent experts and a workgroup of the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (BHCC), developed a three-year System of Care (SOC) State Plan for Georgia (pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 49-5-220). The SOC State Plan is a strategic roadmap for improving the child and adolescent behavioral health system in the state. It is grounded in SOC philosophy and aligns its strategies and action items around a services and supports delivery framework with five key focus areas.

SOC Philosophy and Development of the SOC State Plan

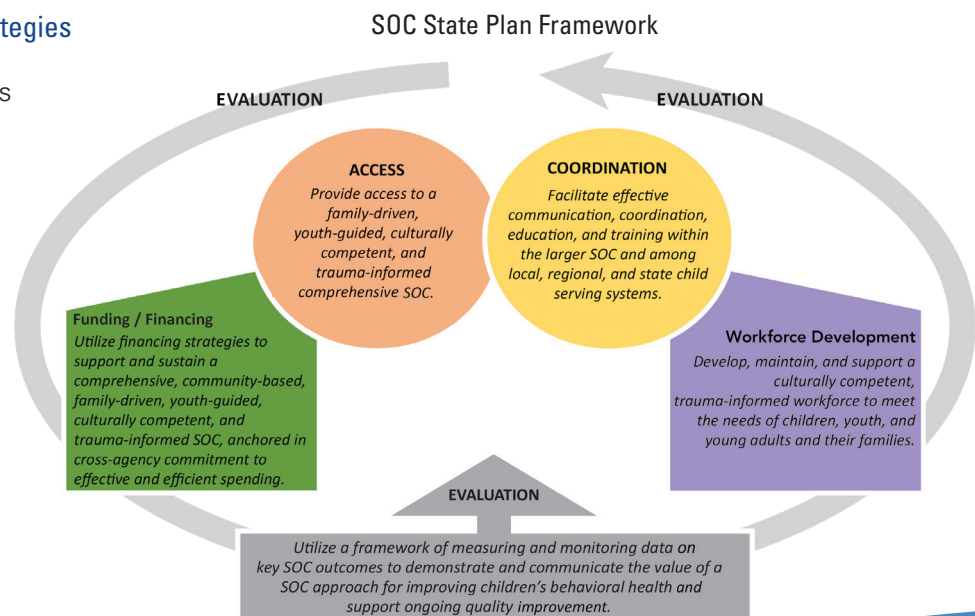
The SOC concept provides an organizational framework for how a behavioral health services and supports delivery system should work. The SOC philosophy is characterized by three core values:¹

- Community-based — The locus of services and decision-making responsibility rest at the community level.
- Culturally competent — Agencies, programs, and services are responsive to the cultural, linguistic, racial, and ethnic differences of the populations they serve.
- Child, family, and person-centered and -guided — Needs of the child or individual and family dictate the types and mix of services.

As the director-level working group of the BHCC, IDT is tasked with designing, managing, facilitating, and implementing an integrated approach to a child and adolescent SOC that informs policy and practice, and shares research and funding. Over the course of state fiscal year 2016-2017, all IDT members, including child-serving agency directors, provider representatives, care management organizations, family and youth representatives, child advocates, and behavioral health researchers were engaged throughout the plan's development. Importantly, the continuous involvement of family and youth representatives with lived experience ensured that the family and youth voice was present throughout the development of the SOC State Plan. With input from the BHCC, the final plan was approved in August 2017.

SOC State Plan Framework and Strategies

The SOC State Plan uses a framework for services and supports delivery with five key focus areas, identified as the areas of greatest impact: Access, Coordination, Workforce Development, Funding and Financing, and Evaluation. The framework provides detailed goal statements for each focus area and integrates the focus areas with overarching goals of the plan. Access and Coordination were deemed the most critical areas of focus, as they are the foundation of a functioning delivery system.



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Ensuring ease of access and availability of services for children and families is critical in meeting complex behavioral health needs. Additionally, coordination between providers and among systems is essential in delivering appropriate and family-centered care. Through Workforce Development and Funding and Financing strategies, Coordination and Access can be increased. Evaluation wraps around the entire plan and informs future planning efforts.

For each focus area, the SOC State Plan outlines short- and long-term strategies, as well as detailed action items to achieve the focus area goal. The table below contains SOC State Plan strategies for each focus area.

SOC State Plan Short- And Long-Term Strategies

Short-Term Strategies	Long-Term Strategies
Access	
1.1 Service mapping for behavioral health service utilization.	1.5 Utilize data to inform a strategic approach to access.
1.2 Increase behavioral health services in schools.	1.6 Recruit practitioners in shortage areas.
1.3 Improve families' abilities to navigate the current service system.	1.7 Support continuity of care by addressing continuity of eligibility for Medicaid (address children and youth going on and off the Medicaid rolls).
1.4 Increase utilization of Intensive Customized Care Coordination services.	1.8 Strategically increase the use of telemedicine or telehealth services within child-serving systems.
Coordination	
2.1 Build and maintain feedback loops between local, regional, and state agencies and systems.	2.3 Create and utilize a common language for discussing SOC principles and making the business case to internal and external stakeholders.
2.2 Increase training on SOC principles for all stakeholder groups.	2.4 Address gaps that lead to extended stays in psychiatric residential treatment facilities; develop and support a community continuum of care to support youth with serious emotional disturbance.
Workforce Development	
3.1 Targeted expansion of education and financial incentives to address behavioral health workforce shortages.	3.4 Develop a state mental health workforce plan across IDT agencies with a managed and budgeted scale-up plan.
3.2 Develop a clearinghouse of evidence-based and evidence-informed educational materials related to children's behavioral health.	
3.3 Explore issues of scope of practice related to workforce shortages.	
Funding & Financing	
4.1 Interagency funding of the IDT as the governing body for SOC in Georgia.	4.4 Review financial mapping reports and implement recommendations from these (look for opportunities to braid or blend funding).
4.2 Interagency funding of the Center of Excellence for Children's Behavioral Health to support training, education, and evaluation related to SOC.	4.5 IDT agencies will collaboratively plan, apply for, and release funding opportunities and procurements when behavioral health is a key component.
4.3 Create and utilize SOC guiding principles for contract development.	
Evaluation	
5.1 The IDT will review SOC Evaluation tools to identify key metrics applicable to Georgia.	5.3 The IDT will institute and maintain a continuous quality-improvement process utilizing identified metrics that will be reviewed annually and will regularly be reported to the BHCC.
5.2 Provide tools to Local Interagency Planning Teams, Regional Interagency Action Teams, and other child-serving systems to self-evaluate their SOC work.	

SOC State Plan Implementation

IDT finalized a detailed implementation plan for Year 1 of the SOC State Plan, which its 30-plus state agency and nongovernmental representatives are working to fulfill. IDT is also working closely with the BHCC to coordinate its SOC State Plan efforts with recent recommendations from the governor's Commission on Children's Mental Health. Additionally, IDT is soliciting and incorporating public feedback on the SOC State Plan to inform the implementation of the goals and strategies outlined for Years 2 and 3. The full SOC State Plan and the public feedback form, as well as additional information on IDT and Georgia's System of Care, are available on the IDT's website at <http://gacoeonline.gsu.edu/idt/>.

¹ Stroul, B., Blau, G., & Friedman, R. (2010). Updating the system of care concept and philosophy. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health.