Community Systems:
This group will identify priority areas that need attention related to systems of care for birth to 21.

Families need guidance to determine what questions they need to ask of medical providers, schools, service providers, recreation, social etc.

Parents need to know how to ask good questions.
1) What do parents need to ask to insure a provider isn’t just riding the autism wave?
2) What do parents further along down the line wish they would have asked?

Action Plan
Contact Family Voices and Parent to Parent to see if they have a list of questions parents need to know to ask. (Julia Stavran)
Include these two questions at Regional Core Team Meetings and report back. (Tim)
Work on a list of “systems” to be included as we look at community systems. (Through email)

Funding issues
Some providers that are funded don’t have autism specialists.
There could be areas to collaborate with Policy Group (funding, coverage, etc.)

Coordination of Services
The coordination between the medical side and the educational side has room for improvement. Services seem to be better connected when B-3 is involved especially with Service Coordination. Families don’t receive that from schools. It seems the older a child gets, the harder it is to find services.

Families don’t always know what they need, but know they need something.
Professional supports are under capacity and can’t be the whole answer.
Social groups for individuals with ASD
Person to person mentor to support and facilitate joining (very uncomfortable doing it along)
Northern region AUsome group for middle schoolers—parents wait for this group and then after the group there is nowhere for the kids to go.
A need to develop natural supports for families—families sharing with each other strategies that have worked, although each family is different.

Can communities utilize the LaCrosse Task Force model and pull together a team to help improve the natural and professional supports in there community?

Resources
Current guides are missing information. There needs to be an access point that has the information on all the resources maybe even a service coordination component. Sometimes need a neutral agenda free perspective. The Regional Centers for CYSHCN can help in this role, but maintaining quality information is challenging.

How can we build their capacity?
Increase awareness
Increase presence
Increase credibility
Build relationship with community partners to maintain a quality information flow and stay up to date.
   Listen to families stories
   Support the community resource mapping project

Resource guides should include “what makes your organization different?” How do you work with children with autism?
   Current guides have too much information:
   Key points for guides:
   1) What is the primary info about the organization and what makes them different.
   2) Contact information, hours, expenses, etc.

There seems to be an umbrella of resource available, but if a person starts on one road, they don’t have access to others. We need to help us all look beyond our own niches.

**How can we help professionals access quality information about autism?**
   No real incentive today. It seems to be a personal motivation that drives some to increase their knowledge.
   Could use capacity building grants to work with professional and personal mentors to spread information. Use experts holding office hours and taking calls to answer questions from other professionals.

**WIC formula**

WIC is instituting new formula guideline which will have an affect on CYSHCN mothers. So far we have no details, but will need to make sure the Regional Centers and others are aware and ready.