A GUIDING PHILOSOPHY FOR SYSTEMS, PROGRAMS, AND PROVIDERS THAT SERVE WISCONSIN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

OUR VISION…

Children with disabilities and their families will pursue their unique hopes and dreams with assistance that:

- Is family-designed and controlled,
- Is individualized and seamless,
- Lasts as long as needed, and
- Involves a variety of community partners.

PRINCIPLES…

Children are Children First. All children need acceptance, love, nurturing and security. The focus will first be on the child as a child, and second on the problem or disability. The developmental, social, spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of the whole child, regardless of age, must be considered in the delivery of any service.

Children are best served within their families. The best way to meet the needs of children is to support and build on the strengths of their families. Public policy will be supportive of what contemporary families need to survive and thrive. Policies and support systems will promote culturally competent practices.

Families are the best allies in any activity that serves the child. Families have a great capacity to care for children with disabilities if given the supports they need. Families will have informed, real choices in selecting needed services and supports. Families will be the primary determinants of how they get the supports they need.

Children and families are best supported within the context of their community. The service system will enhance the opportunities that allow children with disabilities and their families to become connected to the community. Services will focus on supplementing, not replacing the natural support that people get from family, friends, neighbors and volunteers.

Families will have convenient access to information and service coordination. Children and families want a trusted person to help them find out about and make use of services and supports. This service coordinator will be someone chosen in consultation with the family with whom they can work comfortably.

Collaboration is the best way to provide comprehensive services. No single agency is able to provide all services to all children and families. Cooperation among providers is necessary to provide a flexible, seamless system.

Family perspectives and presence will be included in all aspects of the system. Families and youth with disabilities will be partners with other families, providers and policy-makers in the areas of policy and program development, professional education, and in the delivery of supports and services. Family perspectives contribute to system-wide improvements and cost efficiencies.

Adapted from A FOUNDATION FOR A SYSTEM OF LONG TERM SUPPORT FOR WISCONSIN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEVELOPED BY THE CHILDREN’S COMMITTEE ON LONG TERM SUPPORTS. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT LIZ HECHT, WAISMAN CENTER, 1500 HIGHLAND AVE., MADISON, WI 53706, 608-263-7748.
Adapted from "A Foundation for a System of Long Term Support for Wisconsin Children and Families" developed by the Children’s Committee on Long Term Supports. For additional information contact Liz Hecht, Waisman Center, 1500 Highland Ave., Madison, WI 53705, 608-263-7408.