



United Advocates for Children and Families

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MEMORANDUM TO: MHSOAC

FROM: Sandra Duval
Chief Officer of Policy and Research

RE: MHSA Issues

United Advocates for Children and Families is a statewide organization comprised of parents, family members, caregivers, parent partners, youth and other advocates for children's mental health. Our mission is to promote the emotional, behavioral and social well-being of children, youth and families through transformational leadership.

UACF is particularly concerned about Prevention and Early Intervention. We feel that this is key to the transformation of the mental health system. In our fail first system, children and their families are often in danger of being torn apart before the child receives mental health services. This further exacerbates the child's mental health problems making treatment more difficult.

Because the majority of mental illnesses first manifest themselves in youth and young adults, UACF believes that the majority of Prevention and Early Intervention programs should be aimed at children and transitional age youth. As the counties' Prevention and Early Intervention plans begin to come to the Oversight and Accountability Commission, we hope that the Commission will closely exam plans and question programs that are not aimed at children and transitional age youth. This is not to suggest that no Prevention and Early Intervention programs should be geared toward adults. However, Prevention and Early Intervention plans should be focused on the population that is most likely to benefit from these types of programs sooner than later.