

Wraparound Maine Evaluation Examination of Program Fidelity: Year One



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Wraparound Maine Evaluation

Examination of Program Fidelity: Year One

Introduction

In 2007, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), funded a multi-site project establishing a high-fidelity community based wraparound initiative in Maine. The project, commonly referred to as “Wraparound Maine”, is considered an intensive level of care for youth with complex needs and is expected to serve as an alternative to residential treatment. The target population includes youth, ages 5-18, with serious emotional or behavioral disturbance who are either in residential care or at high-risk of such placement.

The first Wraparound Maine family was enrolled in March 2007. Later that year, the University of Southern Maine (USM) was contracted to provide technical assistance to OCFS and conduct periodic process and outcome evaluations of the wraparound sites. This report examines the process by which Wraparound Maine is delivering care to families to determine whether that process is consistent with national wraparound standards. These standards are generally described as the Ten Wraparound Principles (Walker, Bruns, Adams, Miles, Osher, Rast, VanDenBerg & National Wraparound Initiative Advisory Group, 2004). These principles are listed below and described in Table 1:

The Ten Principles of the Wraparound Process

- 1) *Family voice and choice*
- 2) *Team-based*
- 3) *Natural supports*
- 4) *Collaboration*
- 5) *Community-based*
- 6) *Culturally competent*
- 7) *Individualized*
- 8) *Strengths-based*
- 9) *Persistence*
- 10) *Outcomes-based*

Table 1: Philosophical Elements of the Wraparound Process

Element	Description	Sample WFI Item
Voice and Choice	Family and youth/child perspectives are intentionally elicited and prioritized during all phases of the wraparound process. Planning is grounded in family members' perspectives, and a wraparound team strives to provide options and choices such that the plan reflects family values and preferences.	Are important decisions made about your child or family when you are not there?
Team Based	The wraparound team consists of individuals agreed upon by the family and committed to them through informal, formal, and community support and service relationships.	Does your team go out of its way to make sure that all team members present ideas and participate in decision-making?
Natural Supports	The team actively seeks out and encourages the full participation of team members drawn from family members' networks of interpersonal and community relationships. The wraparound plan reflects activities and interventions that draw on sources of natural support.	Is there a friend or advocate of your child or family who actively participates on the wraparound team?
Collaboration	Team members work cooperatively and share responsibility for developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating a single wraparound plan. The plan reflects a blending of team members' perspectives, mandates, and resources. The plan guides and coordinates each team member's work towards meeting the team's goals.	Does your team brainstorm many strategies to address your family's needs before selecting one?
Community-Based Services	The wraparound team implements service and support strategies that take place in the most inclusive, most responsive, most accessible, and least restrictive settings possible; and that safely promote child and family integration into home and community life.	Does the wraparound plan include strategies for helping your child get involved with activities in her or his community?
Cultural Competence	The wraparound process demonstrates respect for and builds on the values, preferences, beliefs, culture, and identity of the child/youth and family, and their community.	When you first met your wraparound facilitator, were you given time to talk about your family's strengths, beliefs, and traditions?
Individualized Services	To achieve the goals laid out in the wraparound plan, the team develops and implements a customized set of strategies, supports, and services.	When your wraparound team has a good idea for a support or service for your child, can it find the resources or figure out some way to make it happen?
Strength-Based Services	The wraparound process and the wraparound plan identify, build on, and enhance the capabilities, knowledge, skills, and assets of the child and family, their community, and other team members.	Are the supports and services in your wraparound plan connected to the strengths and abilities of your child and family?
Persistence	Despite challenges, the team persists in working toward the goals included in the wraparound plan until the team reaches agreement that a formal wraparound process is no longer required.	Does your team come up with new ideas for your wraparound plan whenever your needs change?
Outcome-Based Services	The team ties the goals and strategies of the wraparound plan to observable or measurable indicators of success, monitors progress in terms of these indicators, and revises the plan accordingly.	Does the team review each team member's follow-through on their tasks at the next meeting?

Note: Description of wraparound elements adapted from Burns and Goldman (1999). Sample items are from the caregiver form of the Wraparound Fidelity Index (Suter, Burchard, Bruns, Force & Mehrrens, 2002).

Methods

This report is based on information collected by Wraparound Maine providers through the use of the Wraparound Fidelity Index, version 4 (WFI-4). The WFI-4 is a semi-structured interview designed to assess the extent to which both the principles and core activities are being implemented in service delivery, according to the model defined by the National Wraparound Initiative (NWI) (Bruns, Burchard, Sutter, Leverentz-Brady, & Force, 2004); also refer to: www.rtc.pdx.edu/nwi. The WFI-4 measures adherence to the principles and primary activities of the wraparound process on an individual child, youth, or family basis. In Wraparound Maine the WFI-4 is completed through brief, confidential telephone or face-to-face interviews with three types of respondents: (1) parents or caregivers, (2) youths (11 years of age or older), and (3) wraparound team members. This set of interviews is to be completed approximately three months after the families have been enrolled. To avoid a potential conflict of interest, the wraparound team facilitator does not collect the WFI-4 on the family, team member or youth that he/she serves. In most sites, the mobilization specialist or a designated coordinator collects the forms.

Caregivers and team members are asked nearly identical questions on all 10 principles of wraparound; these respondent forms include 40 items – four items per wraparound principle. Many youth items do not measure exactly the same components as the caregivers and team members (e.g., Voice and Choice items on the caregiver and team member forms ask about caregiver involvement while the same principle on the youth form asks about youth involvement). This was done to make the questions more relevant to youth and better capture their motivation. The youth form includes 32 items.

Once completed, the WFI-4 forms are sent to USM evaluation staff for tracking and data entry. From this information, a fidelity score can be calculated for each of the ten wraparound principles.

Interpreting Results

It is important to note that the information presented in this report is descriptive and any differences noted (e.g., between respondent types or principles) do not necessarily reflect statistical significance. Additionally, the responses only reflect the perceptions of caregivers, youth and team members after three months of participation in Wraparound Maine. It is possible that changes may have occurred at a later point that would have caused any subsequent ratings to increase or decrease. However, the three-month mark is still considered a critical period in the wraparound process. The presumption is that families come to wraparound in crisis and that wraparound providers must act swiftly and definitively upon enrollment. At the end of three-months, all families should have experienced the wraparound guiding principles.

There is one final caveat in the interpretation of results. In the time frame of this report, there were six sites participating in Wraparound Maine. The number of completed WFI-4 interviews varied widely from site to site. Any interpretation of results should be tempered by an analysis of the site completion rates (refer to Table 2). High completion rates encourage confidence that the WFI-4 interviews were collected on a representative sample of the site's population. Low completion rates mean that the WFI-4 interviews may not adequately reflect the experience of families in those sites.

Table 2: Wraparound Maine WFI - 4 Completion Rates by Site

Site	WFI-4 Completion Rates		
	Caregiver Form	Youth Form	Team Member Form
Aroostook	75.86%	53.57%	93.10%
Cumberland	72.00%	72.00%	64.00%
Knox/Waldo	54.55%	27.27%	25.00%
Penobscot	64.10%	53.85%	31.58%
Sagadahoc	76.92%	76.92%	41.67%
York	33.33%	11.11%	22.22%
Statewide	66.67%	54.40%	52.00%

Description of Participants

This report described the experiences of families enrolled between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008 (the first year of the evaluation). During this time period, 138 youth were enrolled in Wraparound Maine. Of those families that have been discharged (51%), the average length of stay in Wraparound Maine was 168 days or approximately six months. See Table 3 for a breakdown by sites:

Table 3: Youth Enrollment Data by Site

Site	7/1/07 – 6/30/08		
	# Enrollees	# Discharges	Average # Days LOS*
Aroostook	30	15	197
Cumberland	27	19	135
Knox/Waldo	14	6	157
Penobscot	45	26	175
Sagadahoc	13	4	180
York	9	0	N/A
Statewide	138	70	168

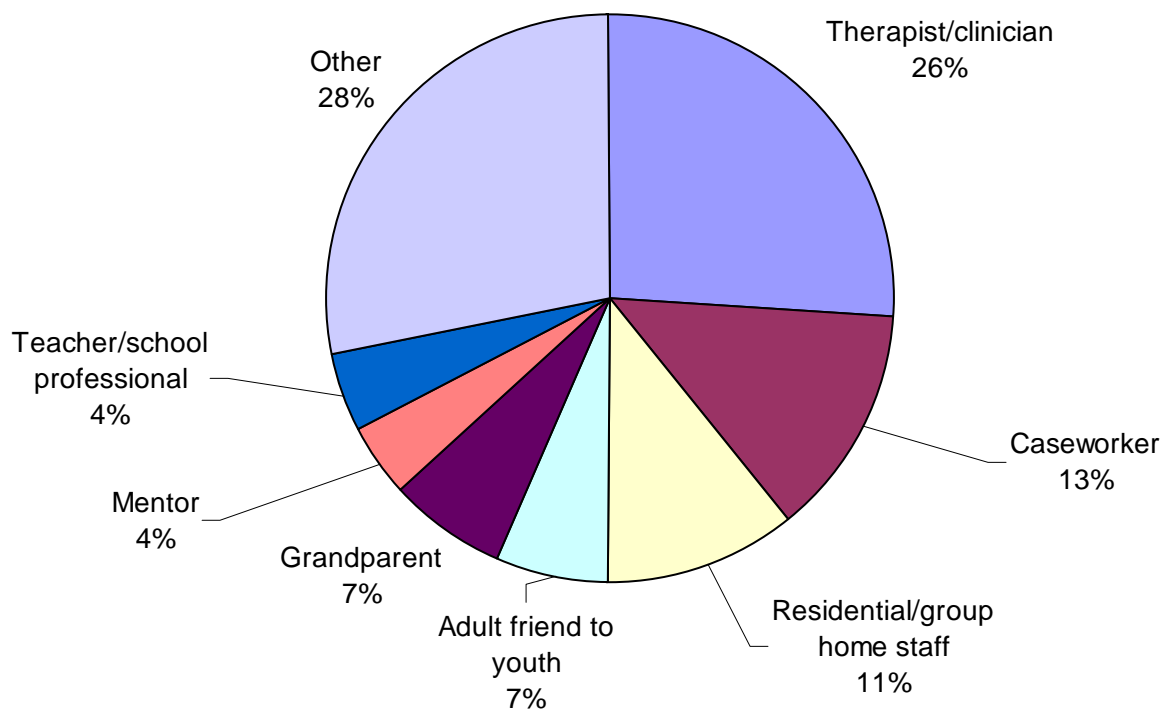
* Refers to wraparound youth that were enrolled between 7/01/07 – 6/30/08 and have been discharged.

Information collected by the WFI-4 interviews on these families determined that after three months in Wraparound Maine:

- 95% of families already had their wraparound team established
- 41% of Wraparound Maine youth have previously been in the custody of the state
- 73% youth were male; 27% were female
- The average age of youth at the time of the WFI was 14.5 years
- Legal custody of Wraparound Maine youth was being held by:
 - Two birth parents: 48.5%
 - Birth mother only: 19.7%
 - Adoptive parent(s): 12.1%
 - Ward of the state: 12.1%
 - Grandparent(s): 6.1%
 - Other: 1.5%

Team members participating in the WFI interviews were diverse in their background and relationship to the participant (refer to Figure 1):

Figure 1: Wraparound Maine Team Members



Statewide Findings

Fidelity to the wraparound process was measured in Maine and then compared to national estimates compiled by the National Wraparound Initiative. Figure 2 represents an overall fidelity score that summarizes the total level of fidelity demonstrated across all ten wraparound principles. Figures 3 thru 5 depict the level of fidelity to each wraparound principle as rated by Wraparound Maine caregivers, team members, and youth respectively. In all instances, a higher percentage reflects greater fidelity to the wraparound principles than a lower percentage. A score of 100% would be perfect adherence to the wraparound principles.

The availability of national averages allows Wraparound Maine to compare its process against the larger population of sites that are attempting to adhere to the same principles. However, national estimates include sites that may not be comparable to Wraparound Maine and should be used with caution for several reasons. First, the NWI sample includes sites with diverse community contexts and populations that are dissimilar to Maine's. Second, as a relative newcomer to wraparound, Maine will be comparing its progress to sites that may be more fully established. Lastly, data collection procedures vary across sites and this may negatively impact the utility of national estimates. Maine collects the WFI-4 interviews after roughly three months of service. Sites in the national sample may be collecting the WFI earlier or later in the process. At the time of this report, there was not enough data in the NWI sample to support the calculation of national estimates within different data collection timeframes.

Figure 2: Perceived Level of Commitment to all Wraparound Principles by Interviewees

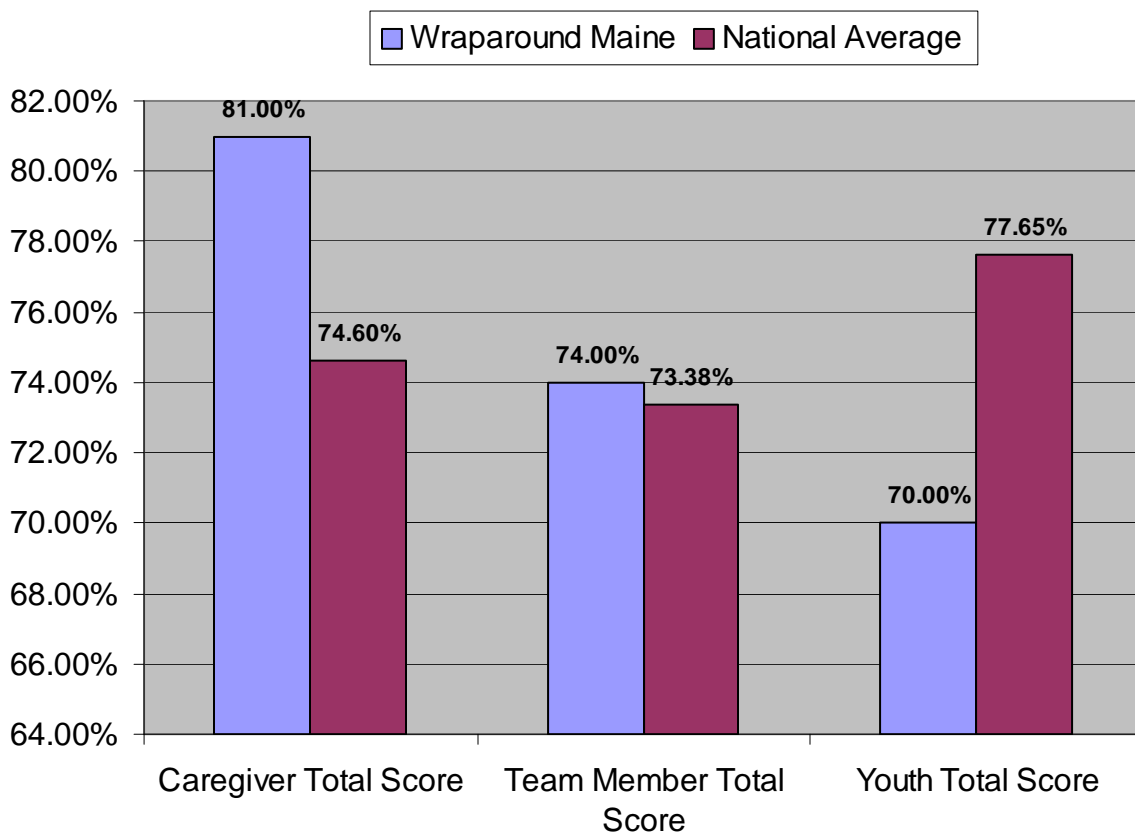


Figure 3: Perceived Level of Commitment to each Wraparound Principle by Caregivers

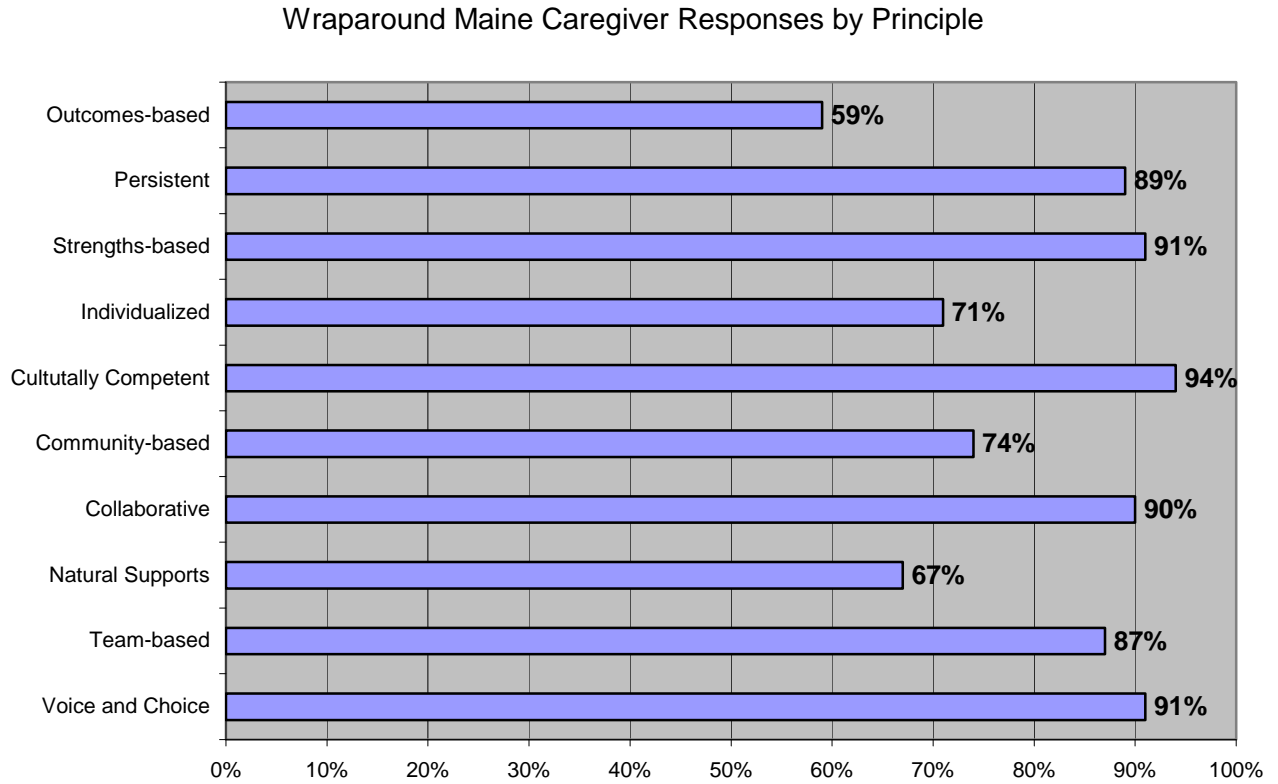


Figure 4: Perceived Level of Commitment to each Wraparound Principle by Team Members

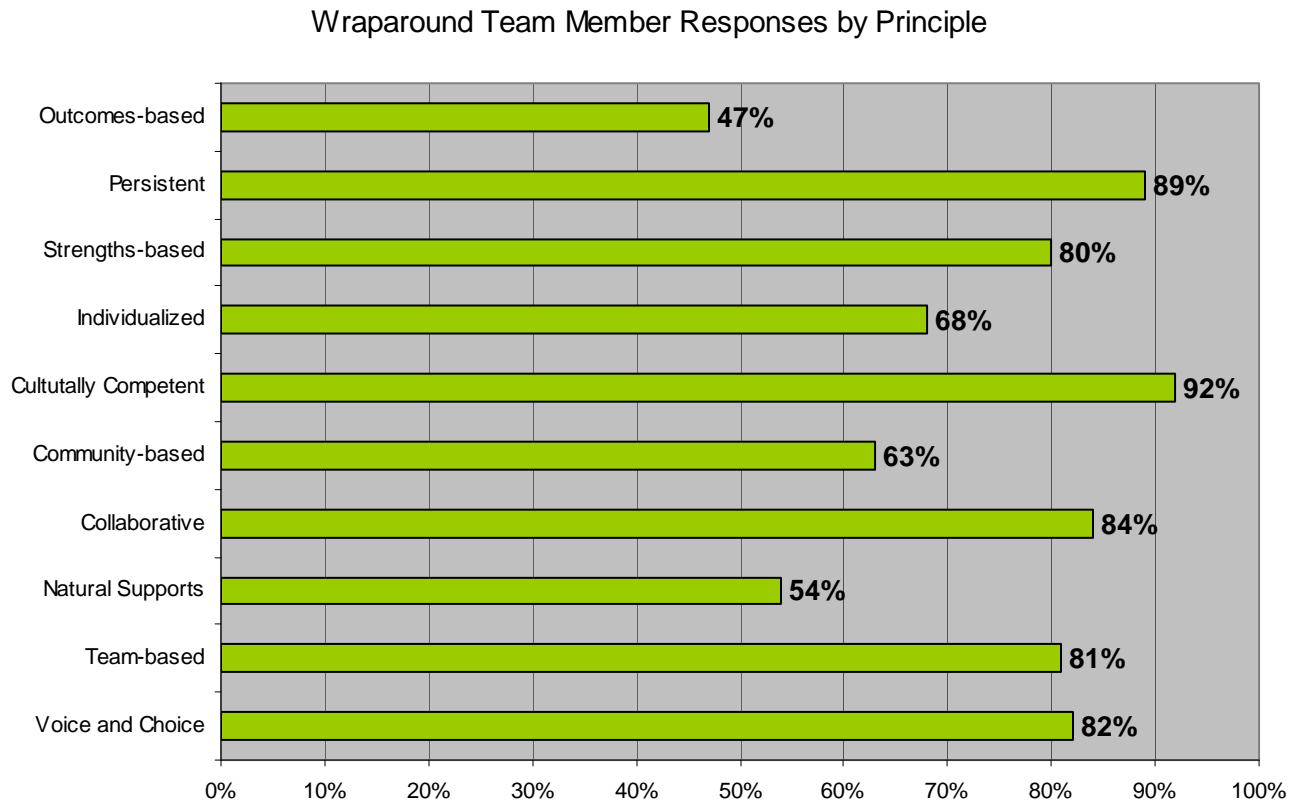
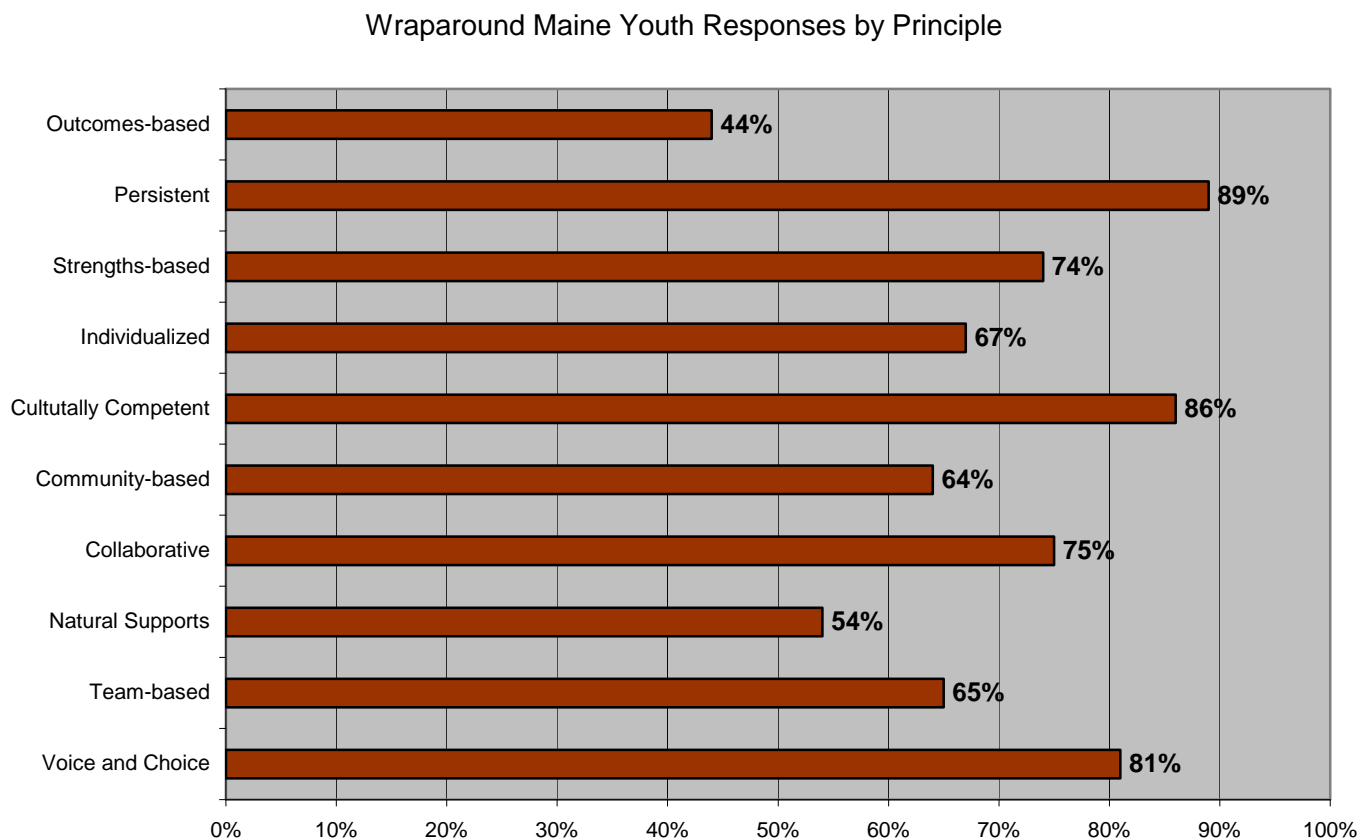


Figure 5: Perceived Level of Commitment to each Wraparound Principle by Youth



There were similar findings across the groups of caregivers, team members, and youth participating in Wraparound Maine. All participants consistently reported that the process was weakest in its ability to generate natural supports and encourage activity that is community-based. These findings were also echoed by community collaborative members working in Wraparound Maine communities in a previous survey conducted by the University of Southern Maine (Pukstas, 2008). This finding could also explain why wraparound plans and meetings were not viewed as being sufficiently individualized for the participating families. Additionally, participants consistently reported that Maine's wraparound process could become more focused on outcomes. In verification of this finding, the launch of the Wraparound Maine evaluation plan did lag behind the implementation of other programmatic activities and participation in evaluation activities continues to be a challenge for many wraparound sites.

Caregivers, team members, and youth were also consistent in their perceptions of the strengths of Wraparound Maine's provision of care. After three months of service, caregivers, team members, and youth endorsed providers as being highly persistent toward meeting the team's goals. The process was found to be culturally-competent which in turn supports the inclusion of the family's voice and choice. The combination of high marks for both cultural-competence and family voice and choice provide strong evidence that providers are conveying respect for family values and incorporating those values into their work with families.

Site Specific Findings

Scores calculated from the caregiver responses on the WFI-4 were further examined by location and then compared to national averages. Caregiver responses were chosen for these analyses because caregivers had the highest overall response rate from any stakeholder group in Wraparound Maine. Even so, results for York and Knox/Waldo could not be reported due to insufficient sample sizes.

Scores for each Wraparound Maine community were compared to the national averages provided by the National Wraparound Initiative (refer to: www.rtc.pdx.edu/nwi). Based on the distribution of scores in the national sample, it was possible to determine if Wraparound Maine scores were significantly higher (indicating a relative strength) or lower (indicating a relative weakness) than the national averages for each item. A summary of those results can be found in Tables 4 – 8.

As stated in the previous section, the availability of national averages allows Wraparound Maine to compare its process against the larger population of sites that are attempting to adhere to the same principles. However, national estimates include sites that may not be comparable to Wraparound Maine and caution should be used in the interpretation of results.

Overall, Wraparound Maine performed well against the national averages and each site was shown to be relatively strong on several items. On the majority of items on the caregiver surveys, Wraparound Maine performed within the expected range or even better than average. The majority of wraparound sites (3 out of 5) were found to be relatively strong in three areas:

1. Allowing caregivers to select members of the wraparound team
2. Creating a crisis plan that includes ways to *prevent* a crisis
3. Including friends/advocates of the family on the wraparound team

Some sites were found to be struggling in certain areas. For example, caregivers in one site found it difficult to get team members to attend team meetings when they were needed. However, most areas needing improvement were clustered in the final phase of the wraparound process known as “transition”. While transition should be an early focus and goal of wraparound, it is possible that caregivers had not been thoroughly prepared for transition after only three months of service. These sites may be continuing to work on the transition stage with families after three months so that caregiver responses may have improved over time. Nonetheless, there were still some areas indicated where caregivers could be better prepared for transition.

Table 4: Comparison of Wraparound Maine Sites to National Wraparound Initiative on WFI-4 Engagement Items

WFI- 4 Caregiver Items (Phase 1: Engagement)	National Average* (n=606)	Wraparound Maine (n=75)	Aroostook (n=21)	Cumberland (n=14)	Knox/Waldo (n=4)	Penobscot (n=25)	Sagadahoc (n=8)	York (n = 3)
CG1.1 - When you first met wraparound facilitator, were you given time to talk about strengths *and* Did this process help you appreciate?	1.65	1.79	1.90	1.57	unavailable ⁺	1.84	missing ^ϕ	unavailable
CG1.2 - Before your 1st team meeting, did your wraparound facilitator fully explain the wraparound process and the choices you could make?	1.68	1.85	1.95	1.79	unavailable	1.84	missing	unavailable
CG1.3 - At beginning of wraparound process, did you have a chance to tell your facilitator what things have worked in the past?	1.75	1.94	1.95	1.86	unavailable	1.96	missing	unavailable
CG1.4 - Did you select the people who would be on your wraparound team?	0.86	1.80	1.76	1.83	unavailable	1.76	missing	unavailable
CG1.5 - Is it difficult to get team members to attend team meetings when they are needed?	1.57	1.45	1.29	<i>0.91</i>	unavailable	1.72	missing	unavailable
CG1.6 - Before your 1st wraparound team meeting, did you go through a process of identifying what leads to crises for child and family?	1.52	1.75	1.95	1.42	unavailable	1.76	missing	unavailable

- Numbers in **bold** indicate a relative strength in that location.
- Numbers in *italics* indicate a relative weakness in that location.

* Statistics provided by the National Wraparound Initiative, 2008, refer to: <http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/nwi/index.php>

⁺ Unavailable – There has not yet been enough data collected from this site to calculate valid estimates.

^ϕ Missing – Items were not completed/missing on the WFI-4 form.

Table 5: Comparison of Wraparound Maine Sites to National Wraparound Initiative on WFI-4 Planning Items

WFI- 4 Caregiver Items (Phase 2: Planning)	National Average* (n=606)	Wraparound Maine (n=75)	Aroostook (n=21)	Cumberland (n=14)	Knox/Waldo (n=4)	Penobscot (n=25)	Sagadahoc (n=8)	York (n = 3)
CG2.1 - Did you and your team create a written plan that describes how the team will meet your child's needs? *and* Do you have a copy?	1.64	1.80	1.90	1.64	unavailable ⁺	1.84	1.62	unavailable
CG2.2 - Did the team develop any kind of written statement about what it is working on with your child and family? *and* Can you describe what your team mission says?	1.56	1.69	1.74	1.40	unavailable	1.67	1.71	unavailable
CG2.3 - Does your wraparound plan include mostly professional services?	0.61	0.86	0.60	0.91	unavailable	1.04	0.62	unavailable
CG2.4 - Are the supports and services in your wraparound plan connected to the strengths and abilities of your child and family?	1.74	1.91	1.95	1.80	unavailable	1.88	2.00	unavailable
CG2.5 - Does the wraparound plan include strategies for helping your child get involved w/ activities in his/her community?	1.24	1.46	1.59	1.00	unavailable	1.65	1.38	unavailable
CG2.6 - Are there members of your wraparound team who do not have a role in implementing your plan?	1.67	1.75	1.75	1.73	unavailable	1.84	<i>1.25</i>	unavailable
CG2.7 - Does your team brainstorm many strategies to address your family's needs before selecting one?	1.73	1.92	2.00	1.82	unavailable	1.96	1.88	unavailable
CG2.8 - Is there a crisis plan? *and* does this plan specify how to prevent crisis?	1.43	1.72	1.95	1.80	unavailable	1.58	1.83	unavailable
CG2.9 - Do you feel confident that, in crisis your team can keep your child in the community?	1.5	1.45	1.56	1.33	unavailable	1.32	1.86	unavailable
CG2.10 - Do you feel like other people on your team have higher priority than you in designing your wraparound plan?	1.53	1.83	1.90	1.64	unavailable	2.00	1.62	unavailable
CG2.11 - During planning process, did team make enough time to understand values? *and* Is your wraparound plan in tune w/ family's values?	1.73	1.91	1.85	1.90	unavailable	2.00	1.75	unavailable

- Numbers in **bold** indicate a relative strength in that location.
- Numbers in *italics* indicate a relative weakness in that location.

* Statistics provided by the National Wraparound Initiative, 2008, refer to: <http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/nwi/index.php>

⁺ Unavailable – There has not yet been enough data collected from this site to calculate valid estimates.

Table 6: Comparison of Wraparound Maine Sites to National Wraparound Initiative on WFI-4 Implementation Items

WFI- 4 Caregiver Items (Phase 3: Implementation)	National Average* (n=606)	Wraparound Maine (n=75)	Aroostook (n=21)	Cumberland (n=14)	Knox/Waldo (n=4)	Penobscot (n=25)	Sagadahoc (n=8)	York (n = 3)
CG3.1 - Are important decisions made about your child or family when you are not there?	1.64	1.79	1.90	1.55	unavailable ⁺	1.92	1.71	unavailable
CG3.2 - When your wraparound team has a good idea for support, can they find resources or make it happen?	1.7	1.76	1.60	1.91	unavailable	1.88	1.62	unavailable
CG3.3 - Does your wraparound team get your child involved with activities they like and do well?	1.2	1.42	1.45	0.70	unavailable	1.75	1.29	unavailable
CG3.4 - Does the team find ways to increase the support you get from friends & family?	1.22	1.28	1.53	0.91	unavailable	1.22	1.25	unavailable
CG3.5 - Do the members of your team hold each another responsible for doing their part?	1.7	1.75	1.74	1.55	unavailable	1.88	1.57	unavailable
CG3.6 - Is there a friend or advocate of your child or family who actively participates in wraparound team?	0.95	1.45	1.35	2.00	unavailable	1.36	1.25	unavailable
CG3.7 - Does your team come up w/ new ideas? *and* Does your team come with ideas when something's not working?	1.74	1.86	1.74	2.00	unavailable	2.00	1.57	unavailable
CG3.8 - Are the services and supports in your wraparound difficult for you family to access?	1.54	1.57	1.40	1.45	unavailable	1.72	1.57	unavailable

- Numbers in **bold** indicate a relative strength in that location.
- Numbers in *italics* indicate a relative weakness in that location.

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⁺ Unavailable – There has not yet been enough data collected from this site to calculate valid estimates.

Table 7: Comparison of Wraparound Maine Sites to National Wraparound Initiative on WFI-4 Implementation Items (continued)

WFI- 4 Caregiver Items (Phase 3: Implementation)	National Average* (n=606)	Wraparound Maine (n=75)	Aroostook (n=21)	Cumberland (n=14)	Knox/Waldo (n=4)	Penobscot (n=25)	Sagadahoc (n=8)	York (n = 3)
CG3.9 - Does the team assign specific tasks to all team members at end of meeting? *and* Does team review team member's follow-through at next meeting?	1.59	1.57	1.35	1.45	unavailable ⁺	1.84	<i>1.29</i>	unavailable
CG3.10 - Do members of your team always use language you can understand?	1.93	1.92	<i>1.80</i>	2.00	unavailable	1.92	2.00	unavailable
CG3.11 - Does your team create a positive atmosphere around successes and accomplishments at each team meeting?	1.86	1.97	2.00	2.00	unavailable	2.00	1.75	unavailable
CG3.12 - Does your team go out of its way to make sure all members present ideas and participate in decisions?	1.67	1.94	1.90	2.00	unavailable	2.00	1.71	unavailable
CG3.13 - Do you think your wraparound process could be discontinued before you're ready?	1.35	1.36	1.31	1.60	unavailable	1.21	1.43	unavailable
CG3.14 - Do all the members of your team demonstrate respect for you and your family?	1.88	1.91	1.85	1.90	unavailable	2.00	1.87	unavailable
CG3.15 - Does your child have the opportunity to communicate their own ideas when it comes to decisions?	1.71	1.77	1.75	1.89	unavailable	1.64	2.00	unavailable

- Numbers in **bold** indicate a relative strength in that location.
- Numbers in *italics* indicate a relative weakness in that location.

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⁺ Unavailable – There has not yet been enough data collected from this site to calculate valid estimates.

Table 8: Comparison of Wraparound Maine Sites to National Wraparound Initiative on WFI-4 Transition Items

WFI- 4 Caregiver Items (Phase 4: Transition)	National Average* (n=606)	Wraparound Maine (n=75)	Aroostook (n=21)	Cumberland (n=14)	Knox/Waldo (n=4)	Penobscot (n=25)	Sagadahoc (n=8)	York (n = 3)
CG4.1 - Has your team discussed a plan for how wraparound will end *and* Does your team have a plan for when?	0.68	0.35	0.50	<i>0.30</i>	unavailable ⁺	<i>0.28</i>	<i>0.29</i>	unavailable
CG4.2 - Has the wraparound process helped your child develop friendships w/ other youth	1.2	0.93	1.10	<i>0.56</i>	unavailable	1.17	<i>0.43</i>	unavailable
CG4.3 - Has the wraparound process helped your child to solve their own problems?	1.3	1.03	1.15	<i>0.22</i>	unavailable	1.08	1.67	unavailable
CG4.4 - Has your team helped you and your child prepare for major transitions?	1.35	1.28	1.25	<i>0.33</i>	unavailable	1.52	1.62	unavailable
CG4.5 - After formal wraparound ends, do you think the process will be able to be 're-started' if you need it?	1.61	1.83	1.72	2.00	unavailable	1.90	2.00	unavailable
CG4.6 - Has the wraparound process helped your family to develop or strengthen relationships that will support you when wraparound is finished?	1.49	1.66	1.85	1.10	unavailable	1.87	1.29	unavailable
CG4.7 - Do you feel like you and your family will be able to succeed own its own?	1.22	1.46	1.35	1.43	unavailable	1.58	1.43	unavailable
CG4.8 - Will some members of your team be there to support you when formal wraparound is finished?	1.65	1.93	1.95	2.00	unavailable	1.92	1.71	unavailable

- Numbers in **bold** indicate a relative strength in that location.
- Numbers in *italics* indicate a relative weakness in that location.

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⁺ Unavailable – There has not yet been enough data collected from this site to calculate valid estimates.

Next Steps

Stakeholders in Wraparound Maine are encouraged to review these findings to identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of their process. Overall, there is strong indication that Wraparound Maine is adhering to the guiding principles of the wraparound process. Sites should take steps to sustain these efforts and build upon these strengths as necessary. One of the continuous challenges of wraparound is dealing with staffing changes. During this reporting period, several sites lost providers who had been specially trained in wraparound. There is an ongoing need for training to ensure that 1) new hires can provide the wraparound process with fidelity and 2) seasoned staff can maintain fidelity over time.

Across all sites, Wraparound Maine providers can be strengthening their efforts to:

- Develop natural supports for youth and families
- Encourage activities and offering services that are community-based
- Create wraparound plans that are individualized and customized to a family's needs

Additionally, sites can improve the accuracy of their measures of fidelity by increasing the numbers of youth, team members, and caregivers participating in their WFI-4 interviews. The greater the number of participants, the higher the quality of the information collected and reported to sites. For example, of the three stakeholder groups, Wraparound Maine youth appeared to be the least satisfied with the process. However, almost half of the youth participating in Wraparound Maine were never interviewed. These omissions create lingering questions about the quality of the data pertaining to youth and what can be done to improve wraparound from their perspective.

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