What is a Family Support and Strengthening Network?

- Two or more Family Resource Centers working together to ensure coordinated quality support for families
- The backbone entity that leverages and coordinates the collective impact[1] of its members

Network Training on the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

What are the most common Network functions?[2]

- Increasing connectedness, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration amongst members
- Providing training and technical assistance
- Working on advocacy, policy, and legislation
- Providing and maintaining a shared data tracking system

What are the types of Networks?

- Volunteer-Coordinated - Led by Family Resource Center (FRC) Directors in voluntary leadership positions, without paid Network staff.
- Funder-Coordinated - Facilitated by a public department or private foundation that both funds and convenes FRCs.
- Independent Non-Profit - Functions as a membership association and typically has paid staff. It may serve as an intermediary to raise and distribute funds to its members.

What are the typical stages of Network developement?

- Emerging (0-3 years) - Network is getting started, determining who will be at the table and their initial focus areas.
- Evolving (3-5 years) - Network has more structure and capacity, may hire a contractor or first staff.
- Established (5+ years) - Network has staffing and a track record of accomplishments. Members have weathered challenges and chosen to continue working together.

NATIONAL Family Support NETWORK

www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org

Key research findings about Family Support and Strengthening Networks[3]

- Strong Networks tend to have formal structures with dedicated staff and resources to support Network-level efforts
- Networks play a critical role in the professional development of the Family Support workforce
- Networks support member organizations to provide high quality services

Georgia Family Support Network planning meeting

What positive impacts do Networks have?[4]

- Strengthened support for families through partnership building
- Increased capacity for Family Resource Centers and staff to effectively support families
- Increased access to services for families
- Legislation and policies enacted to support families
- Increased public and private funding for Family Resource Centers

Did you know?

- Although there is no dedicated federal funding for Family Support and Strengthening Networks, they exist in 31 states and the District of Columbia.
- The largest Network is the California Family Support Network, which is comprised of county, regional, and state Networks representing more than 1,000 programs.
- The second-largest Network is Kentucky's, with 856 school-based Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Service Centers.

Sources:
[1] Stanford Social Innovation Review. (2011). Collective Impact.
[2-4] OMNI Institute. (2016). Advancing the Family Support & Strengthening Field Project Survey Results.

NATIONAL Family Support NETWORK

www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org