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The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread Explores Systems of Care
Experts weigh in on mental health care model through Inspiring Solutions dialogue

RACINE, Wis. (February 3, 2014) – Today The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread unveiled its latest [Inspiring Solutions](#) dialogue on the system of care approach, a collaborative health care framework enhancing coordination among agencies, families, and youth with mental health disorders.

“Many times, children and families are confronted with systemic challenges due to services and resources being fragmented amongst various functions and areas of expertise,” said Ashley Staeck, Senior Community Program Associate at The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread. “The system of care approach provides a much needed, integrated and holistic network of services for children and their families to gain access to care.”

Inspiring Solutions is an online platform the Foundation uses to expand important dialogue beyond the walls of Wingspread. Respected experts and leading authorities are asked one question about their field, which revolves around the work the Foundation is doing. Their answers are presented as short essays, which present that individual’s view of the issue at hand. This format allows for a robust exchange of ideas and builds on the Foundation’s longstanding tradition of providing a place of neutrality and trust – whether at the Foundation in Racine or online.

Contributors were invited to explore and offer insight as to how they have been personally impacted by the shift to a system of care model of health care provision and where they see the movement heading. Recognizing the diversity within the system of care model, contributors to the dialogue include: Jim Wotring from the Georgetown University National Technical Assistance Center for Children’s Mental Health; Sue Smith with Georgia’s Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health; Bruce Kamradt, Director at Wraparound Milwaukee; Jonathan Delagrave of Racine County Human Services; Rebecca Sommerfield, Youth Peer Specialist for Wraparound Milwaukee; and Brett Davis, Medicaid Director at Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

“Inspiring Solutions is a true representation of what The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread is – a place to convene, share ideas and find innovative solutions with sustained impact,” said Staeck. “Bringing these diverse perspectives together is vital to tackling the challenges we face in addressing the mental health needs of our community and of our nation.”

The dialogue is a continuation of a convening sponsored by The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread, the Milwaukee County Wraparound Program and the Georgetown University National Technical Assistance Center for Children’s Mental Health on operationalizing system of care concepts. The conference included 25 representatives from eight states to discuss implementing effective, community-based systems of care for children, youth and young adults with mental health challenges and their families.

This installment of Inspiring Solutions aligns with the Foundation's work with Racine Collaborative for Children's Mental Health, a local community initiative first convened by the Foundation in September 2012 to bring together a group of individuals representing a broad spectrum of the Racine community to identify the challenges and find pathways forward to deliver quality, coordinated and comprehensive support services for children's mental health. The work of the Collaborative is informed and guided by a research project undertaken by The Johnson Foundation in 2011 on the issue of children's mental health, which culminated in a Foundation report titled: "[Top of Mind: Children's Mental Health in Racine – Highlighting facts and uncovering urgent needs.](#)"

To learn more about *Inspiring Solutions* or the Racine Collaborative for Children's Mental Health, visit: www.johnsonfdn.org.

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The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread is dedicated to serving as a catalyst for change by bringing together leading thinkers and inspiring new solutions on major environmental and regional issues. For additional information or to learn more about The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread, please visit www.johnsonfdn.org.