

Respite for Idaho Families with Children Experiencing a Serious Emotional Disturbance

December 2015

Introduction

The Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) has provided respite services to children it serves and their families for over 15 years. According to IDAPA 16.07.37 Children's Mental Health Services, respite is defined as "time-limited care provided to children" during "circumstances which require short term, temporary care of a child by a caregiver different from his usual caregiver. The duration of an episode of respite care ranges from one (1) partial day up to fourteen (14) consecutive days."

With the implementation plan of the Children's Mental Health (Jeff D.) settlement agreement underway, and the increased need for respite services for the seriously emotionally disturbed (SED) participants for whom the Division provides clinical management services to, a fresh look at respite services in Idaho and what respite services could and should look like was sought out.

Challenges with Current Respite Model

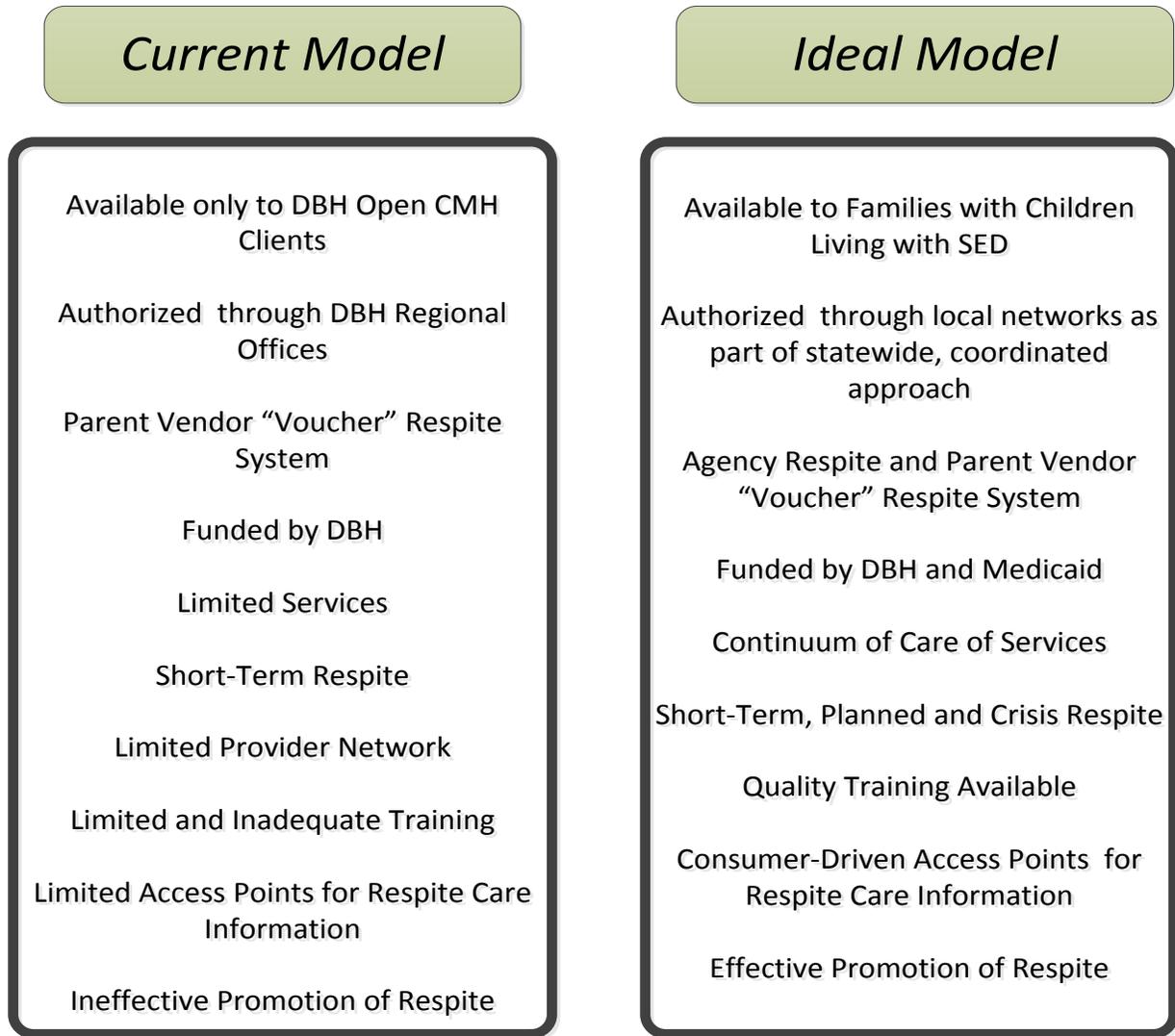
On July 27, 2015, a stakeholder group was convened to identify challenges and opportunities within the current respite model and develop a description of what an ideal Respite Program would look like. The group included DBH children's mental health clinicians and chiefs from around the state, parents, staff from community agencies and central office staff members. Challenges with the current respite model identified by the stakeholder group include:

- **Accessibility**
 - Must be involved with Department's CMH services
 - Vouchers are issued by Regional BH Clinics CMH programs
 - Limited access points (incarceration/hospitalization to get respite)
 - Need for emergency respite
- **Workforce**
 - Not nearly enough respite providers throughout the state
 - Training is quite basic and not comprehensive
 - No oversight of providers and outcomes
- **Awareness**
 - Families and agencies, as well as payers, are not aware of what respite is and how it can help
 - Strengthen families and lower placement rates outside the home
- **Services don't meet needs**

Need for specialty care and individualized respite which meets the core principles of the Jeff D settlement agreements (e.g. strengths-based, family driven, youth directed, culturally and linguistically competent, individualized, recovery oriented and community based).

An Ideal Program for Idaho

Limited eligibility, lack of access points, limited services reimbursed, limited workforce have resulted in underuse of needed respite care and an inability to expend funds effectively. A transformation of the current respite system is necessary to provide respite care for Idaho families desperately needed



Available to Families with Children Living with SED

Respite services are provided statewide to families who have a child experience a serious emotional disturbance who lives with them. Requests for respite service may be made by the

family member, caretaker, or guardian with whom the child resides. The respite program is able to receive referrals for respite from all participants in the local service delivery system: mental health, social and rehabilitation services, medical services, public schools and families.

Authorized through local networks as part of statewide, coordinated approach

Respite care and services are managed through a Respite Program contract funded by the Department. The Respite Care Program may be administered through a statewide contract, regional/hub contract or a mix of both.

The Respite Program contractor is responsible for:

1. Reviewing applications and determining eligibility
2. Authorizing services
 - Based on established rates and service limits
3. Matching and linking families to Respite Providers
 - Offers families opportunity to utilize their own choice of respite provider or choose from a list of available respite providers
4. Maintaining a Respite Provider network. Includes recruitment, training, monitoring and retention.
5. Billing and reimbursement system
6. Family caregiver, client and respite provider surveys

Agency Respite and Parent Vendor “Voucher” Respite System

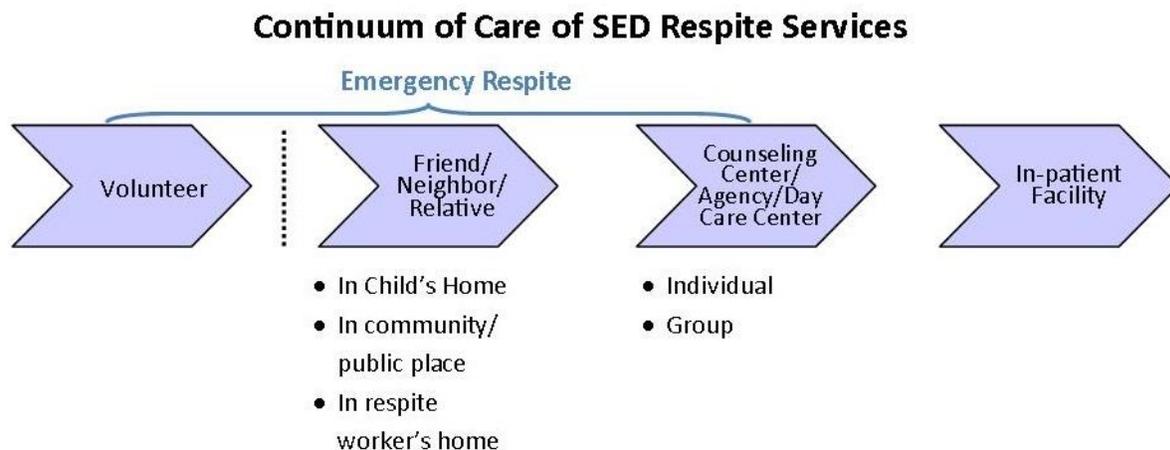
Voucher respite provided in this manner offers a family the flexibility to use respite when the need arises, and it allows them to hire friends or family members as long as they do not reside in the home and they are at least 18 years old. This allows the family caregiver to hire someone who is familiar with the family and may be already equipped to handle the specific situation. Families that do not have available friend or family members may be linked to an Agency Respite provider in the Respite Program Network.

Funded by DBH and Medicaid

The Division of Behavioral Health will continue to provide support for the administration of a Respite Program with Block Grant funds. Initial funding of respite services would be available through the Division using state general and block grant funds with the goal that Medicaid will increase the availability of funding for respite care for Medicaid eligible children with SED under their HCBS Waiver Program.

In-Home and Out-Of-Home Services

Services may be provided in the primary caregiver’s home, in the community, at a facility or in the home of the respite care worker. Services are based on the needs of the family and the child. If respite is provided in the respite provider’s home, an appraisal of the environments will take place prior to services being rendered.



Short-Term, Planned and Crisis Respite

The respite program provides interment and regularly scheduled respite, as well as crisis respite services. Intermittent and planned respite are time-limited based on needs of the family. They are all part of the child’s treatment plan which includes a crisis plan.

Quality Training Available

Respite providers are certified based on their background, training or education in working with children experiencing a serious emotional disturbance. Competency and understanding of basic respite principles and service delivery are enhanced through training provided by the Respite Program Network.

Consumer-Driven Access Points for Respite Care Information

Families can readily obtain the information they need regarding respite services. Information is available from case managers, social workers, health care providers, counselors, schools and

multiple internet sites. Instruction and applications can be found online and through any door of service.

Effective Promotion of Respite

Promotion of the Respite Program is expanded to include:

Advocacy with state legislators and public education on the need for respite

Work to secure further funding for respite

Extensive networking across the state to present information of respite and sharing information about respite care resources

Summary

Respite occurs naturally in families that do not have a child with special need. In these families, often time friends, relatives and neighbors do not hesitate to lend a helping hand when it is requested. For families that have a child with SED, respite must be planned and sought out. For these families, the physical, financial and emotional challenges of caring for a child with SED can be overwhelming. The stress this places on families takes its toll over time. Oftentimes, these children need 24-hour care and attention. Despite these difficulties, families want to care for their child at home but need to be able to “recharge their batteries.” Research has consistently shown that respite care drastically reduces the number of costly hospital visits and stays in residential treatment facilities for children with SED. Respite care has also been found to have a very positive impact on families, improving safety and stability and helping to increase a child’s functioning. The short break respite care provides, even if it’s just a few hours or a few days, is essential to help families relieve stress and maintain their own health and well-being. Respite care gives parents a chance to spend time with their other children or their spouse, catch up on work, keep a medical appointment or take care of household chores. Respite care gives siblings a much needed break as well. By giving families a little time-off now and then, respite care allows them to keep their child with them at home. Without the support respite care provides, many families would be forced to admit their child to long-term stays in a hospital or treatment center (at a much higher cost), away from their friends, family and the community. Respite needs to be flexible, fluid, creative and unconditional and families need to play an integral part.

Idaho Respite Program Children's Mental Health

Agency Respite vs. Parent Vendor Respite

	Agency Respite Care	Parent Vendor "Voucher Respite"
Cost to Parent & Caregiver Wages	Free to families for hours authorized through the Respite Program Network. Respite caregivers are employed by the agency. Agency is reimbursed from the Respite Program Network*.	Parents are reimbursed from the Respite Program Network after submitting detailed billing forms regarding care performed the month prior*.
Locating a Qualified Respite Caregiver Provider	Agency sends a qualified employed Respite Provider Caregiver to the family. Family interviews the Caregiver Provider and decides if the Caregiver Provider is a good match for their specific needs.	Family is responsible to recruit and interview Provider
Availability & Scheduling of Caregiver Provider	Family and selected Caregivers Providers set the schedule for respite up to the authorized amount. If Caregiver Provider is unreliable, family calls agency to file complaint and a Agency begins recruiting another Caregiver Provider for the family to interview	Family and selected Caregivers Providers set the schedule for respite up to the authorized amount. If Caregiver Provider is unreliable, family must recruit and hire another person to meet their respite needs
Tracking of Hours	Family and Caregivers Providers are responsible to track all hours. Only hours signed by parents on a timecard are reimbursable	Family is responsible to track all hours. Since they must pay the Caregiver Provider prior to reimbursement by the Respite Program Network, families who do not keep careful track of the hours may exceed their authorized hours and may not be eligible for additional reimbursement
Caregiver Provider Training Need to flush out	Agency provides training – Caregiver Provider may (must??) attend respite care orientation and training offered by Respite Program Network	Parents train and supervise Caregiver Provider. Caregiver Provider must attend respite care orientation and respite training offered by Respite Program Network
Caregiver Provider Injured	Agency is responsible for all work-related injuries through their Worker's Compensation Insurance	Parents are responsible to pay for all work-related injuries.

Commented [HS-C31]: Caregiver is what we called the families in the narrative and it also connotes daycare as well as other types of caregiving. I think we should call this provider to diminish confusion.

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* Based on established reimbursement rate and hours