

## How could the conference have been improved?

### *Youth*

- ▶ Youth need to be monitored better. No free reign. Don't care for Federation's attitude. Boys were to free with their hands. Not enough supervision!!!!!! Great Concerns
- ▶ Have sessions for younger youth tracks.
- ▶ I think more games for the youth.

### *Simply Fun*

- ▶ The simply fun games at lunch were a big hit! Thanks! Keep keynote speakers like Michael Davis, who truly motivate and lift us and have fun.

### *Keynote Speakers*

- ▶ Different key note speaker. He was boring and slightly offensive. He called SED kids "roasted turkeys" and confused Idaho with Montana.
- ▶ Mr. Davis was a very engaging keynote speaker - and while I know they all can't be great, Mr. Lourie was very hard to listen to even for adults! Maybe he was more geared to professionals - though I would guess that they preferred Mr. Davis also. More parent friendly sessions, maybe shorter sessions with more choices. The rooms were very COLD. It is hard to concentrate when you are freezing. I really liked having the youth present their poetry, etc. during lunch. I also enjoyed the games we played Monday during lunch.
- ▶ I appreciate having youth attend the conference but would structure it somewhat differently for the keynote addresses, so that younger children have something else to do or somewhere else to play, other than at the table, which was distracting to other attendees and to the presenter. Keynotes designed for adults can be anticipated to be uninteresting to young children.
- ▶ Key note speakers... the sound system was not very good and I had to concentrate just to hear what was being said. This could have been better.
- ▶ Select a more energetic and motivational communicator for the opening keynote address.
- ▶ The breakfast lectures were a little long.
- ▶ Improved keynote speakers. The first one was not very engaging. I heard many comments from others to confirm that idea.
- ▶ I suggest that NOT having Ira Lorrie as a keynote speaker. His message is wonderful and important, but his skill in keeping his audience engaged is lacking. Too cerebral. We needed more energy from him!
- ▶ Both keynotes were short on 'real' content.
- ▶ Keynote was difficult to hear between the mic and the people chatting in the lobby.
- ▶ Better Keynotes
- ▶ I invited several people who have never attended conferences before, and some had mental health issues (and their teens). I kept encouraging them to participate as it would be interesting. But the key speaker on the first day, though intelligent, was difficult for these people to sit through. The kids were finding it difficult to sit still as it did not directly relate to them. It was difficult to get them to come the next morning to the key speaker (2 of them did not come) as they did not understand what the first speaker was trying to get across. I would suggest a speaker geared toward kids, especially those with mental illness who can't sit for a long amount of time. Mr. Davis did fine in getting the audience to participate. It might have been better to switch the 2 speakers.
- ▶ The first key note speaker is a great author but the speech was not so good.

### *Keynote Speakers (continued)*

- ▶ The first key-note speaker was dreadfully historical. The breadth of audience makes it very difficult to include information that is relevant to each group. Some professionals were bored by the topics because they were too simple. On the other hand, the "ETHICS" classes assumed educational background outside the exposure of many parents and professionals that weren't social workers.
- ▶ A more dynamic morning speaker

### *Speakers/workshops*

- ▶ The information presented in some workshops was very basic and not very in depth.
- ▶ Most of your presenters were readily geared to politely place blame on the families and gear the presentations toward caregivers. This was the topic with 90% of the families I met and conversed with on breaks, at the hotel, and during meals.
- ▶ I would like to listen to Mike Davis for a longer period of time on the information about the brain and drugs.
- ▶ Some of the presenters brought too much information and were not able to complete their presentations.
- ▶ Some of the tracks were too short. On the other hand, some were too vague in discussion. A little more effort put towards the main objective would have helped.
- ▶ Session on adhd could have been split into two parts
- ▶ Better speakers, with the title of the class being offered actually matching the content in the class.
- ▶ The courses generally were too diluted to be helpful to professionals. It was mostly a repeat of already known information which didn't delve deeply into how professionals can address these issues with families. I would have liked to see more professional track options and more parent track options.
- ▶ Bottled water would be appreciated. Also, Misbehavior for Professionals was not long enough - speaker did a very good job
- ▶ How about not scheduling workshops when a "mental health guru" like Michael Davis is having a session? Several of the presenters (including me!) had low or no turn-out at our workshops because Davis was presenting at the same time and so many people wanted to hear him!
- ▶ It would be very helpful if the conference schedule (at least a description of the sessions) would be provided to attendees ahead of time. It would help attendees choose the sessions they want to attend.
- ▶ Some of the speakers were poor speakers.
- ▶ More dynamic speakers
- ▶ Perhaps less competition for participants between local presenters and national experts.
- ▶ Let us know what each session was going to be about before we went in it. More specific, for example, I didn't know exactly what BAD BOYS was going to be about. Was not a bad session but I was not interested on that. Thanks
- ▶ Shorter sessions. Attention span is less effective after 45 minutes. More ethnic minority speakers
- ▶ Updated data on Idaho assessments. 2002 data.

## Topics

- ▶ Most of your presenters were readily geared to politely place blame on the families and gear the presentations toward caregivers. This was the topic with 90% of the families I met and conversed with on breaks, at the hotel, and during meals.
- ▶ Maybe hub venues to reduce expense and engage more local families and communities and to move to sustainability
- ▶ One suggestion I have is to allow some time for formal regional networking so that participants from each region could meet and identify who is there from their area and would have the opportunity to share their role with members. I attended the Wraparound focus group and the set-up was good. Also as a professional from DHW who need to have one training a year by SED parents, I was looking forward to the presentations by SED parents, and chose the Father's Panel which was canceled Tuesday afternoon. I have really enjoyed those sessions in past conferences.
- ▶ More physical movement trainings, on-hands experiences, internet access and printing of materials, I had troubles getting on the internet, when I found out about the services it was too late. (Presenter)
- ▶ Some of the classes were too generalized for professionals.
- ▶ Focus on the parents and children at the conference and warn the professionals that if they choose to go, the focus is on the family's not the professionals.
- ▶ It was great, maybe more information on risks and interventions with those with mental illness and how to prepare or such risks and interventions.
- ▶ Decide if aiming at laymen or professional
- ▶ Some of the workshops were too basic - maybe have more at the LCSW level
- ▶ I feel there needs to be a clear difference between the workshops designed for the parents versus the professionals. The speakers need to develop material for the audience that they are speaking to. Sometimes the focus of the workshops suffered because the focus was not clear.
- ▶ Sessions not always equally applicable to parents, provides, partners in care. Perhaps a distinction could be made for whom the session is primarily directed.
- ▶ It would be nice if the presentations were clearly marked who they were intended for. some of the presentations were great for professionals, while some were great for parents. A few were good at integrating both (e.g.. advocacy model by Decker Sanders & Cynthia) it'd be nice to rate the level of depth of information on each presentation. e.g.. Michael Davis provides really good basic information, while Dr. Laurie was somewhat more in depth for professionals and parents very involved in the system.
- ▶ I would like to see programs or presentations on adoption and dealing with the impact of drug exposed children (in fetus) on families who adopt.
- ▶ Some of the sessions were too similar. I felt that if I attended one I had little reason to attend a different one of a similar topic.
- ▶ If you invite person's to speak about Medicaid-reimbursed programs (programs that are only funded by Medicaid, such as IBI and PSR), a representative from Medicaid should be present because a private provider may convey that mis-information.

## Food/Facilities

- ▶ Provide bottled water & diet drinks
- ▶ Better food
- ▶ BSU has horrible parking facilities.
- ▶ The microphone for the keynote speaker on day 1 was terrible. He could not be heard.
- ▶ More diet drinks and low carb snacks.

### *Food/Facilities (continued)*

- ▶ Ice cream
- ▶ Parking was a problem. If people got there later in the morning, they could be seen circling the parking lot, looking for a nonexistent parking space.
- ▶ Lunches were not that great. If you do box lunches have the mayo and condiments on the side not all on the sandwiches! Snacks were good and soda available at all times was fabulous.
- ▶ The rooms were all very cold. Otherwise it was very good.

### *Networking*

- ▶ More networking activities.
- ▶ More networking opportunities.
- ▶ I would have liked more networking because I didn't really get a chance to meet any other people from Health and Welfare or others in my field. Maybe more time set aside to get to know other.

### *Culturally Oriented*

- ▶ More focus on cultural aspects of competence from the viewpoint of presenters from various cultures (Hispanic, Asian, Native American, etc).
- ▶ Professional cultural competency approach
- ▶ There were a couple sessions in which the presenters did not seem prepared and were downright offensive at times (i.e. A Day in the Life).

### *Conference Logistics*

- ▶ It was excellent - no suggestions
- ▶ Keep it as is.
- ▶ All things can be improved on but at this time I can't think of what it would be.
- ▶ Reduce the length of seminars to 60 minutes.
- ▶ Better seating for the panels.
- ▶ Make less session but longer.
- ▶ I think overall it was good.
- ▶ Keep up the good job
- ▶ It was good overall.
- ▶ The speakers could have addressed the participants who distracted from the speaker by talking during the speaker's presentation.
- ▶ Most of the sessions that I attended seemed to be very watered down. In the past I came away from the training feeling like I got something, but this year I was a little disappointed.
- ▶ Shorter hours, 3 days
- ▶ The workshops could be rated for content as far as "helpful to families" "helpful to professionals" "helpful to youth" "helpful to all". Some of the trainings such as the ADD/ADHD was way too basic for professionals and probably most parents.
- ▶ Longer session times and a three day conference for more opportunities to participate in more sessions.
- ▶ Liked it the way it was presented
- ▶ Particular sessions just for parents.
- ▶ CEU's could have been approved for other licensure, e.g. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists.
- ▶ Have sessions start earlier and presentation/speakers afterwards. I am also wondering why the participants in the conference seem to be reducing each year instead of getting larger ????

## Conference Logistics (continued)

- ▶ It would have been better if it would have been on the weekend so I didn't have to worry about leaving my kids. All the topics were great and I wish I could of participated in more of them. Maybe more days, or multiple conference instead of one big one.
- ▶ It was difficult to hear the first keynote speaker and lots of background noise from people coming and going.
- ▶ Perhaps some activities or some way to engage younger children who must come with parents if they were not able to find childcare?
- ▶ Put the Farnsworth room on the map. Wanted to attend the Fathers panel, was scheduled for 2 times but was canceled on the second time. I heard it was really good.
- ▶ Schedule a little more clear-for example if a workshop is presented more than one time, (1) (2) should be listed on the schedule. I had to do a lot of time consuming cross referencing.
- ▶ Hold it on a weekend so as to not miss work and school.
- ▶ The registration process. I applied with a coworker (faxed it in) and he was registered but I was not. He received a confirmation letter but I did not ( I didn't know I was supposed to get one of those!) I almost did not get to attend even though I had registered in time. Because I brought the faxed letter and confirmation sheet that shows I faxed it, I got in.
- ▶ It was great, maybe more information on risks and interventions with those with mental illness and how to prepare or such risks and interventions.
- ▶ Less talk from uninformed patrons, no cell phones what so ever, and a broader choice of sections.
- ▶ Next year I think lunch should be a time of break. There was too much going on and it was tiresome. I also wonder about having more 2 part breakout sessions even if it means less presenters if we get more useful information from the one session.
- ▶ I don't know, maybe a session where families could share with each other about strategies that have worked for them. Since I didn't get a chance to attend the "forums" I don't know if that was their intent.
- ▶ A little more time for each class.
- ▶ Longer
- ▶ Daycare could have been provided. SOC is suppose to be family based. Some families could not attend due to having young children.
- ▶ I was only there for 15 minutes, did you have sign ups for area support groups for parents and for children with mental challenges and other disabilities?
- ▶ Better coordination around notifying when the conference was approved. I did not receive my notice until the first day was almost over. The general support team at the registration table was not there when needed.
- ▶ More space for more people to attend.
- ▶ Twice a year??
- ▶ When writing up the brief introduction to the class, you should include the objectives. Most of the classes I took really were not explained very well as to what they were about.
- ▶ Possibly making it a day or two longer. I truly learned and enjoyed attending
- ▶ More time with classes.
- ▶ Lengthen to 3 days, a lot of good training. I would have liked to attend more sessions.
- ▶ With a better sound system. I am hard of hearing. We need more time for questions in the sessions.
- ▶ Awards banquet poorly attended. Do it at lunchtime.

## Other

- ▶ Make the iccmh participate and key agency staffs, legislators, etc.
- ▶ There is always room for improvement but I can't think of where it would be.
- ▶ Can't think of anything
- ▶ That is tough because it was so good.
- ▶ Doing fine!!
- ▶ No suggestions, I thought it was great.
- ▶ I think it was great
- ▶ It was great!
- ▶ No problems that I noticed. Went pretty smooth.
- ▶ I really can't think of one thing that could improve the conference. It ran smoothly, the presenters were top notch and the food was great!
- ▶ Honestly, it was as good as can be expected considering budget and other restrictions. Jason Bradfish CMH clinician.
- ▶ Not sure
- ▶ Your choices of presenters was well rounded, keep up the good work!
- ▶ Don't change anything.
- ▶ It was great
- ▶ Great
- ▶ I thought it was well done
- ▶ Better speakers, with the title of the class being offered actually matching the content in the class.
- ▶ It was really pretty good
- ▶ I'm not sure.
- ▶ Further agency support i.e. DHW and other attendees besides families /youth and Federation, staying for the dinner and awards portion.
- ▶ No suggestions. An excellent conference.
- ▶ I can't think of any way to improve it.
- ▶ Not sure
- ▶ Good job.
- ▶ Could have been in Idaho Falls - just kidding.