



## “Building on Each Other’s Strengths” Idaho Systems of Care Fact Sheet

**Background:** The goal of the “Building on Each Other’s Strengths” grant is to develop a system of care for families and children affected by serious emotional disturbance (SED). This will be achieved through education of community partners, collaboration of agency partners and families, evaluation, and a statewide anti-stigma campaign.

### **What is a “System of Care?”**

A system of care is a team of caring professionals and citizens working together to support children and families affected by a serious emotional disturbance. Members of the team represent public and private agencies, civic groups, and other community members. These caring citizens, chosen by the family, coordinate services and supports. Services and supports in a system of care focus on the strengths of the child and family, are provided in the local community, and are customized to fit the individual culture of the family.

Our local children’s mental health councils are a vital part of our system of care. Councils empower families to make decisions, coordinate services and supports, and reduce the negative impact of mental health disorders on families. The councils are characterized by community partnerships.

### **What is a serious emotional disturbance?**

Serious emotional disturbance describes a range of emotional and behavioral disorders characterized by decreased functioning at school, home, and in the community.

### **What is stigma?**

Stigma is a negative attitude toward someone. It means “a mark of shame.” In the case of mental health disorders, stigma is a significant barrier to treatment because people may feel ashamed. It can prevent families from getting the help they need.