



**GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES**



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COORDINATING COUNCIL 2024 FISCAL YEAR REPORT

**SUBMITTED BY
KEVIN TANNER, CHAIR**

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Georgia's Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (Council or BHCC) was established in 2009 under Georgia law, following the reorganization of the state's health and human services agencies and the creation of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. The Council, created by O.C.G.A. § 37-2-4, is administratively attached to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-4-3.

Council Authority, Powers, and Purpose ♦

BHCC supports Georgia's behavioral health-serving agencies and partners by establishing strategic goals, monitoring and evaluating the progress toward the goals, and recommending measures to enhance the efficiency and access to services. The Council is tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Recommend funding, practice changes, and policy to address systemic barriers to the delivery of behavioral health services;
- Focus on specific goals designed to resolve issues related to the coordination of care for individuals receiving services from at least two-member agencies;
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of established goals; and
- Establish common outcome measures.

Council Composition ♦

By statute, the Council is composed of the following members:

- Commissioner of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
- Commissioner of Early Care and Learning
- Commissioner of the Department of Community Health
- Commissioner of the Department of Public Health
- Commissioner of the Department of Human Services
- Commissioner of the Department of Juvenile Justice
- Commissioner of the Department of Corrections
- Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Service
- Commissioner of the Department of Community Supervision
- Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs
- Commissioner of the Department of the Technical College System of Georgia
- Commissioner of the Department of Labor
- State School Superintendent
- Chair of the State Board of Pardons and Paroles
- A behavioral health expert employed by the University System of Georgia
- Two members appointed by the governor
- Ombudsman of the State Disability Services
- Child Advocate for the Protection of Children

- An expert on early childhood mental health
- An expert on child and adolescent health
- A pediatrician
- An adult consumer of public behavioral health services
- A family member of a consumer of public behavioral health services
- A parent of a child receiving public behavioral health services
- A member of the Georgia House of Representatives
- A member of the Georgia State Senate

COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

Chair:

Commissioner Kevin Tanner
Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Vice Chair:

Vacant *as of June 30, 2023

Secretary:

Stanley Jones, Esq.
Family member of a consumer of public behavioral health services

Members:

Commissioner Kevin Tanner,
Department of Behavioral Health and
Developmental Disabilities

Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs,
Department of Early Care and Learning

Commissioner Dean Burke,
Department of Community Health

Commissioner Kathleen Toomey, M.D.,
Department of Public Health

Commissioner Candice Broce,
Department of Human Services

Commissioner Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb,
Department of Juvenile Justice

Commissioner Tyrone Oliver,
Department of Corrections

Commissioner Patricia Ross,
Department of Veterans Service

Commissioner Michael Nail,
Department of Community Supervision

Commissioner Christopher Nunn,
Department of Community Affairs

Commissioner Greg Dozier,
Technical College System of Georgia

Commissioner Barbara Holmes,
Department of Labor

State School Superintendent Richard Woods,
Department of Education

Chairman Terry E. Barnard,
State Board of Pardons and Parole

Ombudsman Jacquice Stone,
Office of Disability Services Ombudsman

Nathan Call, Ph.D., BCBA-D,
Expert on child, and adolescent health

Veda Johnson, M.D., FAAP,
Pediatrician

Alexia Jones,
Adult consumer of public health services

Stanley Jones,
A family member of consumer of public behavioral
health services

State Representative Katie Dempsey,
Georgia House of Representatives

State Senator Kay Kirkpatrick,
Georgia Senate

Council Executive Committee ♦

The BHCC is led by an executive committee comprised of a chair, vice chair, secretary, and two members-at-large. The commissioner of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities serves as the chair of the executive committee. The vice chair and secretary are elected by the members of the council and serve two-year terms; they may succeed themselves.

Commissioner Kevin Tanner, Chair

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Vacant *As of June 30, 2023, Vice Chair

Stanley Jones, Esq., Secretary

Family Representative

Commissioner Candice Broce

Department of Human Services

Jacquice Stone

Office of Disability Services Ombudsman

COUNCIL MEETINGS

In 2024, council meetings were held virtually, on the Webex video conferencing platform, and in person; the meetings were open to the public and attended by a variety of stakeholders. The Council meeting agendas, meeting minutes, presentations, and additional supporting documents were posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act (O.C.G.A. § 5-18-70 et. seq.) and can be found on Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities' website at: <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/organization/be-informed/dbhdd-board-councils/georgia-behavioral-health-coordinating-council>.



COUNCIL INITIATIVES

A photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair and a young girl with long dark hair, both laughing heartily. They are outdoors, with a blurred green background suggesting trees or foliage. The woman is wearing a white lace-trimmed top, and the girl is wearing a white long-sleeved top. The overall mood is joyful and positive.

MINDWORKS GEORGIA

ANNUAL REPORT
2024

mindworks
GEORGIA

THRIVING
OUTCOMES
START HERE

INTRODUCTION

During the 2024 program year, Mindworks Georgia advanced children’s behavioral health policy, funding, and service improvements across Georgia’s child and adolescent behavioral health system, also known as the Georgia System of Care. As a collaborative, Mindworks connects the dots across the behavioral health system to improve access and outcomes for youth aged 0–26. By aligning people, policy, and practice, Mindworks designs, manages, and adapts a system of care framework tailored to Georgia’s families.

Mindworks envisions a thriving community that embraces prevention and supports long-term mental health and substance use recovery. Together with partners, Mindworks acts to realize this vision by promoting evidence-based policies and practices for prevention, intervention, and treatment that are innovative, person-centered, well-coordinated, and easy to navigate for children, young adults, and families.

MINDWORKS LEADERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP

Mindworks is led by the executive director and the Executive Committee. It is supported by general members who collaborate as an active working body. They inform policy and practice, make strategic recommendations, share critical information, and serve as a leading statewide partner advancing children’s behavioral health. Together, they embody Mindworks’ vision of connecting people, policy, and practice to build a responsive, coordinated, and effective System of Care for Georgia’s children and adolescents.

Renee Johnson, Executive Director — The executive director provides overall strategic vision and operational leadership for Mindworks Georgia. This role ensures alignment between policy, practice, and partnerships, while representing Mindworks at the state and national levels. The executive director also convenes partners, secures funding, and steers the collaborative toward measurable improvements in children’s behavioral health.

MINDWORKS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee supports the executive director in guiding priorities, shaping policy recommendations, and ensuring accountability to the collaborative’s mission. Members bring diverse expertise from across Georgia’s behavioral health ecosystem, ensuring that multiple perspectives inform strategy and action. The Executive Committee also supports bidirectional communication between the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council and the Mindworks collaborative.

2024 Members:

Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta

Dr. John Constantino, Chief, Behavioral and Mental Health

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Adrian Johnson, Deputy Director, Division of Behavioral Health

Georgia Department of Community Health

Brian Dowd, Deputy Executive Director, Policy, Compliance, and Operations Office
Maxine Elliot, Deputy Executive Director, Service Delivery and Administration
Medical Assistance Plans Division (May 2024)

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Susan Adams, Deputy Commissioner
Laura Lucas, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Director (April 2024)

Georgia Department of Education

Mary Lauren Salvatore, Assistant Director, Office of Whole Child Supports

Georgia Department of Human Services

LaMarva Ivory, Deputy Commissioner — External Affairs

Shaun Johnson, Caregiver and Well-Being Coordination Section Director (April 2024)

Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice

Lisa Mantz, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Treatment and Care

Governor's Office of Health Strategy and Coordination

Elizabeth Holcomb, Executive Director (August 2024)

Jessie Williams Parker Foundation

Bonnie Hardage, Executive Director (April 2024)

Voices for Georgia's Children

Melissa Haberlen DeWolf, Research and Policy Director

Judy Fitzgerald, Executive Director (April 2024)

Robert W. Woodruff Foundation

Dahlia Bell Brown, Program Officer

In 2024, the Executive Committee prioritized improving data-sharing efforts to reduce service duplication by beginning an analysis of Georgia's existing data platforms. The Data Crosswalk Project examined the following entities:

- Georgia Health Information Network (GaHIN);
- Georgia's Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS);
- Georgia Data Analytics Center (GDAC);
- Find Help Georgia;
- Unite Us;
- All Payer Claims Database (APCD); and
- Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement (ARCHI).

The project explored what data is available, who is currently using the platforms, and their capacity to support integration. The goal was to determine which systems are best positioned to advance cross-agency data sharing, streamline services, and inform statewide behavioral health planning.

2024 Executive Committee Key Priorities

- Expanding access to public data to better identify who, where, and what services children are receiving.
- Identifying state policies and regulations that create barriers to data-sharing and integration, and recommending solutions.
- Learning from other states' successes in building functional data warehouses (staffing and technology).
- Bridging relationships with key stakeholders (e.g., Cross Agency Child Data System and Georgia Data Analytics Center) to leverage existing resources and avoid duplication of

MINDWORKS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

Mindworks convenes subject matter experts to coordinate, collaborate, and communicate across Georgia's behavioral health system. Together, members set objectives, identify challenges, uncover opportunities, and share data and best practices. Through streamlined workflows, solutions are surfaced to illuminate pathways to progress.

The collaborative advances children's behavioral health through working meetings, policy development, specialized workgroups, and resource sharing. Mindworks provides a trusted platform for partnership development and the implementation of shared strategic objectives for the Georgia System of Care.

Georgia State Agencies

- Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)
- Dept. of Community Health (DCH)
- Dept. of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)
- Dept. of Education (GaDOE)
- Dept. of Human Services Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS)
- Dept. of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
- Dept. of Public Health (DPH)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA)

Federal Partner

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Partner Organizations

- Amerigroup Community Care
- Anthem
- CareSource
- Centene
- Center for Leadership in Disability Georgia State University (GSU/CLD)
- Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health & Wellbeing, Georgia State University (COE/GSU)
- Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA)
- Council of Juvenile Court Judges of Georgia
- Georgia Alliance of Therapeutic Services for Children and Families (GATS)
- Georgia Appleseed
- Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (GA-AAP)
- Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS)
- Georgia Family Connection Partnership
- Georgia Parent Support Network (GPSN)
- Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority
- Jesse Parker Williams Foundation
- Lookout Mountain Community Services
- Mental Health America, Georgia (MHA-GA)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Georgia
- Peach State Health Plan
- Resilient Georgia
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Silence the Shame
- Strategic Healthcare Partners: Healthcare Consulting Services
- The Carter Center
- Together Georgia

- United Way of Greater Atlanta (UWGA)
- View Point Health Care Management Entity (View Point)
- Voices for Georgia's Children (Voices)
- WellCare
- WinGeorgia Care Management Entity (WinGeorgia)

MINDWORKS GEORGIA: YEAR IN REVIEW

The 2024 program year was marked by growth, collaboration, and impact for Mindworks Georgia. Key milestones included the pursuit of new funding opportunities, agency and team transitions, and strategic planning anchored by the launch of the new state plan.

Mindworks' visibility expanded significantly, with greater recognition of its statewide efforts at local and statewide conferences, agency meetings, and government presentations. While the collaborative continued to meet virtually throughout much of the year, leadership emphasized the importance of in-person connection by hosting quarterly in-person gatherings.

A highlight of the year was the December Leadership Meeting at Zoo Atlanta's Savanna Hall, which brought together members and partners to reflect on 2024 achievements and prepare for 2025. The event featured leadership recognition, workgroup updates, a collaborative working session, and a celebration of the year in review.

HONORING LEADERSHIP AND LEGACY

- *Visionary Leadership Award*: Presented to **Dante' McKay** (Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities [DBHDD]) in recognition of his impactful leadership, advocacy, and commitment to advancing Georgia's System of Care.
- *Lifetime Achievement & Retirement Award*: Presented to **Wendy White-Tiegreen** (DBHDD) for her decades of dedication to children and families through the development and expansion of Georgia's System of Care. Her contributions to the peer support movement — including the creation of billing codes, training programs, and national visibility — leave a legacy.

The December gathering served as a capstone to a year defined by children's behavioral health policy advancements, funding initiatives, and strong agency and stakeholder collaboration, while laying the groundwork for continued momentum in 2025.



SYSTEM OF CARE STRATEGIC PLAN

In partnership with statewide collaborators, Mindworks developed the new [2024–2026 Strategic Plan](#) to guide the Georgia System of Care. Building on the successes of the prior plan, the 11 workgroups were streamlined into five, allowing for a more focused and coordinated approach.

Grounded in policy and evaluation insights, these workgroups will address pressing community challenges and develop sustainable solutions. Recognizing that systems change requires a collective mindset, Mindworks emphasizes partnership, community voice, and shared accountability. Together, Georgia is laying the foundation for a future where children, youth, and families can access the care they need — supported by a responsive, coordinated network that addresses behavioral health needs across the life span.

Priority One - Equitable Access

Goal: Mindworks is committed to advancing behavioral health equity by elevating evidence-based policies that address disparities, increasing access to services, and working to ensure that every individual can be healthy.

Priority Two - Sustainable Workforce

Goal: Mindworks will advance the development of resources, policies, and innovative solutions to recruit, develop, retain, and diversify Georgia’s behavioral health workforce.

Priority Three - Whole-Person Health

Goal: Mindworks is committed to endeavors that fundamentally restructure how care is delivered to support better outcomes and experiences to provide quality behavioral health services.

Priority Four - Purposeful Funding

Goal: Mindworks will target opportunities to diversify funding and generate new revenue, including leveraging Medicaid programs to innovate behavioral health coverage, delivery, and payment models.

Priority Five - System Evaluation

Goal: Mindworks is committed to advancing evidence-based decision-making and ongoing evaluation to enhance the Georgia System of Care services and supports.

WORKGROUP ENGAGEMENT AND HIGHLIGHTS

Following approval of the 2024–2026 Strategic Plan by the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council, Mindworks partners joined workgroups aligned with their professional expertise and interests. Each member contributed to developing targeted action items and strategies to advance the plan’s goals.

Highlights of 2024 Workgroup Achievements:

- **Resource Modernization** — Updated the *Little Green Book* and launched efforts to make it digitally accessible for wider use.
- **Workforce Development** — Created the Georgia Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Workforce Brief to inform planning and investment.

- **Policy Awareness** — Increased visibility of Mindworks among state policy leaders, strengthening recognition of the collaborative’s role.
- **Leadership Expansion** — Convened key leaders to broaden and strengthen the Mindworks Executive Committee.

Through these efforts, the workgroups have played a critical role in advancing shared objectives, strengthening system capacity, and ensuring Georgia’s children, youth, and families receive responsive behavioral health support.

Figure 1: Mindworks Georgia Strategic Plan: Our Path to Informed Impact

OUR UNIQUE APPROACH

As a collaborative, Mindworks exists to connect the dots of the behavioral health system to improve access and outcomes. In our role, we are well positioned to provide a platform that aligns people, policy, and practice. This structure allows us to design, manage, and



Beyond our mandate, we have developed a set of optimizing filters through which services are delivered across the system. These principles create an alignment lens for all



PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission

Since its inception, the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission, specifically the Children and Adolescent Behavioral Health Subcommittee, has released many recommendations that align with Mindworks’ priority areas. In 2024, the Children and Adolescent subcommittee focused its recommendations on addressing children with developmental disabilities and multiple needs, network adequacy and parity, increasing access to mental health services at the community level, improving youth mental health

systems, infant and maternal mental health, psychological services for Medicaid children and families, school-based behavioral health, and addressing gaps in therapeutic care for children and adolescents. In 2024, Mindworks created a report connecting Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission recommendations to Mindworks' priorities. The Mindworks executive director presented this report at the February 2025 Behavioral Health Coordinating Council meeting. The presentation can be found [here](#).

Multi-Agency Treatment for Children

Mindworks continued to work closely with the Multi-Agency Treatment for Children (MATCH) initiative throughout the year. Established through the Mental Health Parity Act (House Bill 1013), the MATCH initiative facilitates collaboration across state agencies, providers, and stakeholders to improve the coordination and availability of services for youth with complex behavioral health needs. In 2024, MATCH helped more than 100 Georgia youth with complex needs and their families connect with services and supports to address unmet needs and challenges. The State MATCH Committee partnered with the DBHDD MATCH staff and the Mindworks evaluation team to develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to inform strategy and implementation. These efforts have resulted in the refinement of MATCH eligibility criteria and processes, and the formation of several pilot projects designed to fortify and enhance Georgia's System of Care. Information on the MATCH initiative is available [here](#).

Disaster Behavioral Health Readiness Assessment

In 2024, DBHDD commissioned a readiness assessment of Georgia's disaster behavioral health response following a mass casualty incident. Mindworks executed a multiphased analysis to (1) evaluate and map the readiness of Georgia's state agencies to respond to the behavioral health needs of individuals and communities impacted during a disaster or mass casualty incident, (2) identify strengths and barriers across Georgia, and (3) provide recommendations to improve response readiness across the state. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Disaster Behavioral Health Capacity Assessment Tool was used as the framework for key informant interviews and electronic surveys to document disaster behavioral health planning, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts across Georgia. Key findings and recommendations from the readiness assessment are summarized in the [executive summary](#).

Unite Us

There has been a collaborative effort to streamline children's behavioral health information sharing, service coordination, referral tracking, and outcomes. DBHDD contracted with Unite Us, a closed-loop online platform that will be used for statewide behavioral health care coordination. The Division of Family and Children Services contracted with Unite Us, and DBHDD is aligning with their strategic outreach while working with Unite Us staff. In its initial launch, it will be used by the MATCH state and clinical team to make and track service referrals for youth with complex behavioral health needs, collaborate with local organizations and state agencies, and check the ongoing implementation of MATCH pilot projects. Looking ahead, the MATCH service referral process will inform the potential and ease of broader use of Local Interagency Planning Teams (LIPTs).

Georgia Court Improvement Program

Through the lens of the Guiding Principles in Georgia's State Strategic Plan — including the use of blended and braided funding — Mindworks has committed to training judges on behavioral health topics. This effort recognizes the unique role the legal system plays in engaging individuals and families struggling with behavioral health challenges. Judges and court staff must be equipped with the skills and knowledge to make informed, comprehensive decisions about treatment, rehabilitation, and justice.

In partnership with the Georgia Court Improvement Program, Mindworks surveyed judges and court staff to gather input on priority training topics. Proposed offerings include:

- Systems thinking and adaptive leadership;
- Conversational capacity;
- Long-term impacts of adverse childhood experiences;
- Recognizing risk factors and warning signs of mental health issues;
- Addressing secondary traumatic stress; and
- Strategies for suicide and violence prevention.

These training courses will be provided in 2025 through Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) -funded Mindworks programs, expanding the capacity of courts to respond effectively to behavioral health needs.

Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance

Mindworks also partnered with the Court Improvement Program to submit the Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP) application, a national initiative designed to assess and improve child welfare court practice. JCAMP provides court, judicial, and attorney performance measures to strengthen accountability and outcomes for children and families.

The work of selecting and prioritizing JCAMP measures in Georgia will begin in April 2025 with the support of a multidisciplinary team that includes the Court Improvement Program, Division of Family and Children Services staff, child welfare attorneys, juvenile court judges, state agencies, Georgia THRIVE, youth, and parents with lived experience in the child welfare system.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

In 2024, Mindworks built on its momentum with continued successes and a growing impact on Georgia's children and families. The year's efforts centered on:

- **Federal Funding Opportunities** — Proposal writing and strategic applications to secure sustained investment;
- **External Engagement** — Meetings with policy- and decision-makers, conference presentations, and partner convenings to increase statewide visibility; and
- **Strategic State Planning** — Coordinated efforts to reduce duplication across focus areas, conserve resources, and increase overall system capacity.

Through these efforts, Mindworks successfully managed existing federal investments while also receiving new funding to expand impact. HRSA provided significant support through the following investments, which are driving initiatives to strengthen the Georgia System of Care:

Georgia Mental Health Access in Pediatrics

HRSA funding was awarded in 2021 and continues through 2026, facilitated by a partnership among the Office of Children, Young Adults & Families at DBHDD, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, the Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (in collaboration with Augusta University, Medical College of Georgia, Children's Hospital of Georgia, and Mindworks. Georgia Mental Health Access in Pediatrics (GMAP) aims to enhance the capacity of pediatric clinicians in Georgia serving children and youth aged 0–21.

GMAP offers teleconsultation services, allowing pediatric providers to consult with child and adolescent psychiatrists or advanced practice mental health specialists about cases. Additionally, GMAP partners manage a resource directory that lists behavioral health specialists by county. Providers using the consultation line receive guidance on screening, diagnosis, and medication management, and resources to share with families. GMAP expanded access to behavioral health education through Project ECHO, an interactive telementoring approach that connects behavioral health experts with pediatric providers. Covered topics include autism, anxiety and depression, substance use disorders, and suicidality. Mindworks serves as the advisory board for the GMAP program, providing strategic advice and technical expertise to ensure successful implementation and sustainability.

In 2024, the GMAP program published its inaugural impact report, created in collaboration with program partners. This visual report highlights the accomplishments and progress made during the first two years of implementation, highlighting the significant impact of efforts. It also outlines the next steps for ensuring the program's long-term sustainability, including strategic mapping sessions focused on integrating behavioral health into primary care settings and expanding statewide. Upon entering the fourth year of the program, the aim is to broaden the reach to include family practice physicians and increase capacity among other professionals who work with children and families. In 2025, GMAP will offer training and learning opportunities for a wide range of child-serving professionals.

Georgia THRIVE (HRSA Infant-Toddler Court Program)

The Infant-Toddler Court Program (ITCP), known in Georgia as Georgia THRIVE, moved into its third year of program implementation. The program uses the evidence-based Safe Babies Court Team Approach, which reduces time spent in foster care and the likelihood of reentering foster care for infants and toddlers (0–3). As of September 2024, Georgia THRIVE selected three local sites for implementation in Athens-Clarke, Troup, and Gwinnett counties. Athens-Clarke is in its second year of implementation as an intervention site, and Troup and Gwinnett were selected from a competitive applications process as both intervention and prevention sites. To support Georgia THRIVE's prevention model, the Mindworks team at the Center for Excellence applied to the Opioid Abatement Fund to provide substance abuse recovery resources to participants and aid program sustainability.

Opioid Abatement

Opioid Abatement Funds support the Georgia THRIVE prevention model. This funding is for two years and a total of \$980,000 and will address the challenges of the opioid crisis by using an established triage system to provide screening and assessment for each child and family referred into the program, reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect, provide substance use treatment, and ensure positive outcomes for children and families. The model includes a community engagement hub (GoMo), Resilient Families THRIVE, Strengthening Families Protective Factors, enhanced home visiting, peer support/parent partners, clinical services such as substance use and mental health treatment, medication-assisted treatment, and other supportive services, including First Steps and Plans of Safe Care. The model supports and protects each family member to ensure they are healthy and thriving.

Service Area (Counties): Clayton (full implementation) with components of Georgia THRIVE in Athens-Clarke, Muscogee, Glynn, Chattahoochee, Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Harris, Macon, Marion, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, and Webster counties.

Healthy Start Initiative: Georgia Strong Families Program

In April 2024, Mindworks was awarded \$1,008,333 per year for five years from HRSA as part of the Healthy Start Initiative: Eliminating Disparities in Perinatal Health. Mindworks is one of only six sites funded in Georgia.

In collaboration with the West Central Public Health District 7 in Columbus, Ga., the initiative launched with a focus on improving family well-being by addressing disparities in infant mortality, enhancing perinatal outcomes, and promoting behavioral and mental health across the family unit. This work builds on Mindworks' mission to strengthen the system of care and improve equity in outcomes.

The Georgia Strong Families Project complements this effort, with a focus on improving child and family outcomes through community-based public health and early childhood systems. The Georgia Strong Families Project has two primary goals:

1. Improve coordination of services for children and families at both the state and local levels; and
2. Deliver comprehensive services to families in rural communities to improve outcomes across their life span.

The project area covers Crisp, Clay, Dooly, Muscogee, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, and Taylor counties — most of which are rural and face significant disparities. Major components of the Georgia Strong Families Project include:

- **Home Visiting** — Providing direct family support and linkage to services;
- **Fatherhood Involvement** — Strengthening the role of fathers in family well-being;
- **Community Consortium** — Building capacity through cross-sector collaboration; and
- **Clinical Services** — Expanding access to behavioral health and maternal health supports.

STRATEGIC PLANNING ACTIVITIES

In 2024, staff and partners committed to strategic planning meetings to ensure sustainability, continued growth, and alignment with other child-serving initiatives. During the programming year, Mindworks staff facilitated meetings with partners, stakeholders, and funders for specific projects and initiatives, including Mindworks/DBHDD, GMAP, and Georgia THRIVE.

In February, the Mindworks and DBHDD Office of Children, Young Adults & Families staff (including MATCH) met to discuss the strategic planning of System of Care and the status of the local System of Care LIPTs. The outcome of the meeting was the beginning development of a survey to assess other multidisciplinary teams and collaborative teams or groups like LIPTs, and the foundations of a policy brief. In addition, the meeting participants discussed upcoming opportunities with the Unite Us platform and opportunities for continuous quality improvement with the MATCH work. Following the meeting, the internal Mindworks team continued meeting and developing the survey and what became The Unrealized Potential of Local Interagency Planning Teams brief. The brief provided key recommendations for policy and decision-makers to support the improvement and growth of the LIPTs, including investing in a centralized data portal, piloting LIPT evaluation, strategy development for LIPT chairperson compensation, strengthening partnerships with care management organizations, and updating the Georgia code language. LIPT chairs were surveyed to assess their awareness of and participation in local multidisciplinary teams. The survey results will be used to reduce duplication of local service coordination and inform opportunities to partner and cross-train. The group decided to routinely check in and continue meeting and planning as strategic developments continue.

The GMAP program, in collaboration with the Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health & Wellbeing and Mindworks, brought together leaders from Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, the Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Department of Public Health, the DBHDD OCYF, Augusta University, and the Medical College of Georgia for a strategic-planning session focused on the program’s long-term sustainability. A consultant guided these partners through a formal planning process using the Results-Based Accountability framework. This session provided an opportunity to brainstorm and discuss strategies for sustaining the program, emphasizing the collaborative effort to strengthen the capacity of clinicians serving children and youth in Georgia, while ensuring families receive high-quality care.

With support from Mindworks and the Infant-Toddler Court Program National Resource Center, the Georgia THRIVE State Leadership Team engaged in six strategic-planning sessions during the program year. Using the Results-Based Accountability framework, the group focused on identifying and prioritizing growth areas and brainstorming strategies to enhance support for families with young children in the child welfare system. From these sessions, a state action plan was created and will serve as a living document, guiding the ongoing implementation and adaptation of Georgia ITCP.

Mindworks collaborated with the West Central Health District to lead a strategic-planning process to guide the evolution of the Georgia Strong Families Healthy Start program, addressing key social determinants of health and strengthening community collaboration. Members representing eight counties (Crisp, Clay, Dooly, Muscogee, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, and Taylor) were chosen as a part of an ad hoc collaborative to serve and address the most pressing needs of their respective communities.

Through consortium meetings, stakeholder engagement, small group discussions, and resource mining, priorities were refined, local resources were uncovered, and partnerships were reinforced. This resulted in a comprehensive action plan shaped by community data, referral trends, and stakeholder insights. The Healthy Start program is committed to community-driven solutions, ensuring families, partners, and service providers actively contribute to sustainable maternal and child health initiatives.

In December, the Georgia Health Policy Center, in collaboration with the Department of Community Health and the Morehouse School of Medicine, submitted a letter of intent to apply for a grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). The following month, the Mindworks team with Georgia Health Policy Center staff held a five-hour, in-person strategic-planning session to review key aspects of the AHRQ grant proposal. This meeting fostered productive discussions and ultimately led to the proposal of the Building Bridges initiative, which includes building out the health information exchange system.

SUSTAINING THE WORK

In addition to training opportunities, the Mindworks team collaborated with the Athens-Clarke County LIPT, the Georgia Association for Infant Mental Health (GA-AIMH), Babies Can’t Wait, and an infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) consultant to apply for a two-year Community Transformation grant from the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). If awarded, the \$125,000 in funding will be used to support Circle of Security training, expansion of LIPT-IECMH coordination, and additional support for children aged 0–3 and their families.

The Mindworks team also partnered with the Clayton County Health District to submit a DECAL proposal for a pilot grant to provide career coaching and support services to parents of children aged 0–8. The program will help parents access career opportunities, workforce development, and educational resources to enhance family well-being. Key activities include

hiring a part-time career navigator, creating and distributing helpful resources, outreach to parents, and enrolling families in one-on-one career coaching and workforce development sessions. The program's goal is to empower parents to secure better job opportunities and ensure effective support for their families. When families are well-supported, they can thrive.

Following the in-person strategic planning meeting for the AHRQ funding opportunity, Mindworks collaborated with the Department of Community Health to apply for federal funding to support the Building Bridges initiative. The Department of Community Health and Mindworks are poised to lead the multisector Building Bridges initiative to capitalize on the successes of school-based behavioral health programs and IECMH initiatives across the state. Building Bridges will build on existing infrastructures to build a patient-centered, whole-child, and whole-family health care system connecting elementary schools, behavioral health providers, primary care providers, and social service providers to bridge the gaps that prevent Georgia's children from thriving.

Building Bridges will leverage the successes of two state-funded school-based initiatives to provide behavioral health services across public elementary schools in Georgia. This innovative approach requires an integrated health information exchange system that will support individual-level data sharing between schools and behavioral health, primary care, and social service providers. It also requires coordinated training and technical assistance on how primary care providers can identify and support behavioral health needs, best practices for partnering with and engaging families to support their child's behavioral health needs, and how to utilize the health information exchange. Building Bridges will build upon existing infrastructure to bridge knowledge gaps, including GMAP, various parent engagement and whole-family efforts led by DBHDD, and the extensive experience in primary care engagement of partners such as the Morehouse School of Medicine.

In January, Mindworks was unsuccessful in its attempt to secure Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) funding through the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services. The funding would have supported efforts to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect by implementing evidence-based prevention and early intervention techniques to ensure positive outcomes for children and families. Mindworks' proposal included utilizing the protective factors to address family challenges in prepregnancy and prenatal stages of development, as identified in the Five-Point Intervention Framework. The Mindworks team will reapply for funding in 2025.

INCREASED VISIBILITY OF MINDWORKS GEORGIA

In June, Mindworks staff contributed to the 17th Annual System of Care Academy Conference, hosted by DBHDD. The three-day conference brought together providers, clinicians, partners, and families to share knowledge, participate in peer learning, and strengthen coordination around children's behavioral health services. Mindworks presentations included "Mindworks Georgia: Thriving Outcomes for Children and Families Through the Georgia System of Care" by Renee Johnson, La'Keidra Mitchell, and Laura Lucas (DECAL) and "Cultivate Care: Navigating Cultural Responsiveness, Readiness, and Competency in Service Delivery" by Dr. Josephine Mhende, Kaleb Whitfield, and Dr. LaKeisha Gantt. Through its active participation, Mindworks elevated its role as a thought leader and partner in shaping innovative, equitable approaches to children's behavioral health.

In October, Georgia's children's behavioral health efforts were highlighted nationally at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting and Expo in Minneapolis. Representing Mindworks Georgia, La'Keidra Mitchell joined partners from Vox Atlanta and Voices for Georgia's Children to present "Georgia's Local System of Care: Mental and Behavioral Health Service Coordination for Youth and Families" as part of the special session Cultivating Change: Prioritizing Black Youth Voices in Mental Health Policy Initiatives. The well-attended session provided a meaningful opportunity to showcase the impactful work happening in Georgia, both through Mindworks' leadership and collaborative statewide efforts.

In 2024, Georgia THRIVE elevated its presence by presenting at numerous conferences and agencies, including the Georgia Family Connections Conference, GA-AIMH: Birth to Five Conference, Communities Joined in Action Conference, and Fulton County Juvenile Court. A major milestone was the inaugural Georgia THRIVE Conference in October at Great Wolf Lodge in LaGrange, which convened grantees, IECMH partners, and stakeholders for a court tour, specialized training, and two panel discussions — one highlighting the Safe Babies Court Team Approach and the other centering the voices of parents supported by Safe Babies Court Team as they navigated the child welfare system. Over the next two years, Mindworks will continue to advise and support the implementation, advancing prevention and intervention efforts for families as the official advisory board for Georgia's ITCP.

Expanding Infant and Early Childhood Coordination and Collaboration

To strengthen the continuum of care for children's mental health, Mindworks, IECMH subject matter experts, and select LIPTs, began meeting in 2024 to identify opportunities for expanding IECMH efforts and cross-training child-serving stakeholders. Recognizing that education and awareness are essential first steps, the team launched targeted learning sessions. In November, La'Keidra Mitchell and Mariam Mahgoub presented Local Interagency Planning Teams: Behavioral Health Service Coordination for Georgia's Youth and Families at the GA-AIMH conference, highlighting Georgia's System of Care infrastructure and the multidisciplinary role of LIPTs. In December, Raynell Washington (GA-AIMH) delivered the workshop Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health: The Foundation for All Development to LIPT members, offering valuable insights on IECMH foundations, policy, and programmatic work in Georgia. There was positive feedback, noting that the training deepened understanding and reinforced opportunities for collaboration and learning.

CHALLENGES AND ADAPTATIONS

As with any collaborative effort, 2024 brought both challenges and shifts. Workforce development emerged as a major concern, with service delivery gaps impacting children and families across the state. In addition, programmatic funding changes, retirements, and leadership transitions at the state level contributed to periods of uncertainty. Some child- and family-serving policies faced setbacks and did not advance as anticipated.

Retention of strategic plan workgroup coleads was also a challenge due to agency and programmatic transitions. Recognizing the importance of consistent leadership, the Mindworks team responded by enhancing support for coleads, introducing new processes to reduce workload strain, and building capacity through accessible tools. Online platforms such as Box and SharePoint, along with the development of templates and communication forms, helped streamline collaboration and ensure continuity.

Despite these challenges, Mindworks demonstrated resilience and adaptability — turning obstacles into opportunities to strengthen infrastructure, build capacity, and recommit to advancing the Georgia System of Care.

LOOKING AHEAD: 2025 AND BEYOND

As Mindworks moves into the next year of strategic planning, the horizon is filled with exciting and innovative initiatives that will expand visibility, strengthen partnerships, and align the Georgia System of Care with national strategies. The focus remains on promoting practices and policies that are collaborative, innovative, and responsive to the needs of children and families.

Expanding Communication and Visibility

To increase awareness of children's behavioral health initiatives across Georgia, the Georgia System of Care website was launched to share agency updates, explain key terms, and highlight programs for youth and families. In 2024, the Mindworks team began strategizing to merge this resource with the Mindworks Georgia website under its new identity: Georgia's System of Care. Scheduled to relaunch in 2025, the redesigned site will serve as a central hub for:

- The 2024–2026 Strategic Plan;
- Industry best practices and innovation;
- LIPT training and county-level information;
- Statewide initiatives and activities;
- National and state policy updates; and
- Behavioral health resources for children, youth, and families.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

The newly adopted 2024–2026 Strategic Plan serves as a road map for Mindworks and its partners. By applying systems thinking, the plan emphasizes streamlined, interconnected solutions that drive sustainable improvements. This approach strengthens Georgia's capacity to build a more responsive, coordinated behavioral health system.

Enhanced Workgroup Support

The Georgia DBHDD will contract with an external vendor to support Mindworks workgroups in implementing the strategic plan. This partnership will provide specialized expertise, resources, and operational support to help advance shared strategic objectives.

Commitment to Growth and Leadership

Mindworks will continue to build capacity, expand visibility, and increase policy influence through intentional partnerships and new funding opportunities. With this growth, Mindworks is positioned to serve as both a centralized portal of information and a thought leader advancing the visibility, sustainability, and impact of Georgia's children's behavioral health system.



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AND OUTCOMES FOR GEORGIA'S CHILDREN.



Georgia
Department of
Behavioral Health
& Developmental
Disabilities



CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & WELLBEING



MATCH 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2025

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Introduction

Children, youth, and young adults with complex behavioral health and other treatment needs often end up in out-of-home placements due to several challenges, including:

- inadequate access to needed services;
- lack of information sharing and care coordination among agencies, providers, support personnel, and caregivers;
- treatment denials by health insurance providers;
- lack of health insurance coverage; and
- inadequate caregiver training, support, respite, and resources.

Such barriers are not only concerning, stressful, and traumatic for families and the young people themselves, but they are also problematic and costly for the care and education systems that serve the individual. Such disarray rarely leads to good outcomes.

The Multi-Agency Treatment for Children (MATCH) committee envisions a comprehensive, aligned system of care in which this population receives timely and appropriate services. During the 2024 program year, MATCH continued to bring together state agencies, providers, and stakeholders to explore resources and solutions for complex and unmet treatment needs for children in Georgia.

MATCH Leadership & Membership

The State MATCH Committee is a working collaborative created to ensure adherence to the HB1013 mandate, guide all MATCH-related work, inform policy and practice, make recommendations, and share opportunities for growth around children, youth, and young adults with complex needs. The committee consists of a Committee Chair, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) MATCH staff, commissioner-appointed members, and members invited by the committee chair. Membership includes state agencies; safety net provider agencies that serve children and youth with complex needs; Local Interagency Planning Team chairs; the Governor's Office; advocacy agencies; and community leaders in complex child, adolescent, and young adult work. The Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health & Wellbeing in the Georgia Health Policy Center at Georgia State University provides backbone, administrative, and evaluation support to the collaborative.

Appointed State Agencies

DBHDD oversees the implementation of MATCH. The State MATCH Committee is composed of representatives from:



Georgia
Department of
Behavioral Health
& Developmental
Disabilities



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
RIGHT FROM THE START



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT
OF COMMUNITY HEALTH



GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**OFFICE of the
CHILD ADVOCATE**

Invited Member Offices and Organizations

- Community Service Boards
- Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health
- Georgia Alliance for Treatment Services
- Georgia Peer Support Network
- Governor's Office of Planning and Budget
- Health Security Dynamics
- Local Interagency Planning Teams
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Office of the Commissioner of Insurance and Safety Fire
- Robert W. Woodruff Foundation
- Voices for Georgia's Children
- Wellroot Family Services

2024 Program Year Overview

The 2024 program year was transformative for MATCH, marked by refined MATCH clinical team policies and practices, improved cross-collaborative communication, multi-dimensional evaluation, and data-informed decision-making. The State MATCH Committee chair, DBHDD MATCH staff, and the Center of Excellence improved processes through streamlined communication, aligned collaboration, and increased awareness and visibility of MATCH services and activities. In addition to the multidisciplinary guidance and individualized recommendations provided by the MATCH clinical team, the information and data tracked through this team identified access barriers experienced by youth with complex needs and their families. MATCH leveraged state and federal funds to expand and develop service arrays to address the identified service gaps and challenges to accessing services. Importantly, the State MATCH Committee also began focusing on the long-term sustainability of the piloted programs and proposed solutions.

Increased Visibility

The DBHDD-hosted MATCH website, launched in January 2024, serves as a hub for general information about MATCH services and resources for providers, families, and state agencies. The DBHDD MATCH staff hosted a series of informational sessions throughout 2024 to increase awareness and gather feedback on MATCH processes and procedures among DBHDD safety net providers and other referring organizations. These sessions led to the development of several resources available on the MATCH website, including the MATCH eligibility criteria, MATCH clinical team referral pathway, and a submission portal to contact DBHDD MATCH staff.

2024 Timeline

January 2024

MATCH website launched

Devereux Short-Term Transition Program MATCH pilot program began providing services

March 2024

MATCH eligibility criteria updated

May 2024

MATCH clinical team charter ratified

July 2024

State and federal funds allocated for the implementation of several MATCH pilot programs to address service gaps and service access limitations

August 2024

Hillside urgent care bed MATCH pilot program began providing services

September 2024

Care management organization workgroup convened

View Point Health Care Connection MATCH pilot program began providing services at the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta emergency departments

October 2024

Hillside In-Community dialectical behavioral therapy MATCH pilot program began providing services

November 2024

Murphy-Harpst respite MATCH pilot program began providing services

Aligned Collaboration

Several task-focused workgroups were convened to inform decision-making, support sustainability efforts, and ensure alignment with the principles of Georgia's System of Care.

MATCH Eligibility Criteria Workgroup

The original MATCH eligibility criteria required that youth have an official diagnosis to have their case reviewed by the MATCH clinical team. This requirement presented a barrier to young people with complex, unmet needs getting the treatment and services they needed. In early 2024, the State MATCH Committee chair convened a workgroup to complete a thorough review of the MATCH eligibility criteria. The new eligibility criteria were approved in March of 2024, allowing the MATCH clinical team to expand its reach and impact by helping more young people with complex needs gain access to the necessary services and supports.

MATCH Clinical Team Charter Workgroup

A workgroup was convened to develop a charter to define the structure, function, and guiding principles of the MATCH clinical team. The charter, ratified in May 2024, includes five core principles that set the tone and expectations for all MATCH services:

- Children, youth, and young adults get their needs met.
- Needs are met at the right time, right place, for the correct length of treatment.
- There are no wrong doors to access services.
- Services and supports should occur in the least restrictive setting that is safe.
- Rapid response to children and youth in need is required.

Care Management Organization Workgroup

The first sustainability-focused workgroup was convened in September 2024 to provide coordination pathways between care management organizations (CMOs), the MATCH clinical team, and MATCH-funded pilots. This workgroup has effectively strengthened communication and partnership between CMOs, the Department of Community Health, and MATCH, a critical step in paving the way for sustaining MATCH services beyond the pilot funding.

Youth and Family Voice Workgroup

The State MATCH Committee recognized the opportunity to include youth and family voices as it explores resources and solutions for complex, unmet treatment needs for young people in Georgia. In addition to opening every quarterly meeting with a lived-experience speaker and adding certified peers to the MATCH clinical team, the committee also convened a workgroup to explore opportunities to invite youth with complex needs to share their perspectives on MATCH services, as well as Georgia's strengths and areas for growth. This workgroup will conduct focus groups in 2025.

MATCH Clinical Team Impact

The MATCH clinical team is comprised of individuals from state agencies, clinicians, Certified Peer Specialists, state agency representatives, and DBHDD safety net providers that serve children and youth with complex behavioral health needs. The MATCH clinical team:

- reviews and recommends supports and services for referrals of children and youth whose complex behavioral treatment needs could not be met at the local level, and determines and implements the best course of action to immediately address needs; and
- documents the policies, practices, and gaps in the service continuum that most commonly create barriers to accessing needed services by children, youth, and young adults with complex treatment needs.

In 2024, the MATCH clinical team served **35 young people** with complex, unmet needs. Of the youth served, 30 (86%) presented with mental-health-related challenges such as bipolar disorder, major depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder, with many of those having co-occurring substance use disorders, intellectual or developmental disability (IDD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), medical conditions, or complex needs demonstrated by behaviors without an official diagnosis. The other five individuals served in 2024 had IDD with co-occurring ASD, medical conditions, or behaviors suggesting an undocumented diagnosis. Through the MATCH clinical team, these individuals were connected with MATCH pilot programs or provided an **individualized list of 3-10 recommendations** for the youth and family to address their specific needs.

MATCH Clinical Team by the Numbers

35

Number of young people with complex, unmet needs served by the MATCH clinical team in 2024

7

Average number of factors impacting access to services experienced by the youth and families served by the MATCH clinical team

10

Average number individuals attending each MATCH clinical team meeting

6

Average number of individualized recommendations provided to the youth and families served by the MATCH clinical team

Pilot Program Impact

In July 2024, state and federal funds were allocated for the implementation of MATCH pilot programs to address identified opportunities for growth. With those funds, MATCH has implemented several pilot programs to quickly and effectively address identified opportunities to expand services to meet the needs of youth with complex needs. Through the allocated funds, MATCH pilot programs have begun to address system barriers using evidence-based practices, including increasing community supports, improving coordination in emergency departments, and providing transitional support for youth with complex needs.

Pilot Programs by the Numbers

6

Pilot programs
active in 2024

6

Youth and
families served
by MATCH
access pilots

99

Youth and
families served
by MATCH
community pilots

9

Youth and
families served
by MATCH
residential pilot

Access Pilots

Hillside Urgent Care Beds

Hillside urgent care beds began providing MATCH pilot services in August 2024. This pilot aims to address barriers related to accessing psychiatric residential treatment facilities. MATCH clinical team referrals indicated that individuals were unable to get access to these critical services because they lacked sufficient assessment information required for admission. Hillside has dedicated two beds for individuals ages 5-18 to provide a safe environment for a youth needing further assessment to gain admission to a psychiatric residential treatment facility. Hillside served **3 young people** in their urgent care beds in 2024.

Murphy-Harpst Respite

Murphy-Harpst began providing respite services through MATCH in November 2024. This pilot aims to expand the geographical coverage of respite services and allow access for youth aged 6-18 years not engaged with the Division of Family & Children Services. During the two months of 2024, Murphy-Harpst provided respite services to **3 youth and their families** who would *not* have otherwise had access to these services.

Community Pilots

Wellroot Functional Family Therapy

Through MATCH pilot funds, Wellroot Family Services began providing alternative intensive in-community treatment via Functional Family Therapy, an evidence-based treatment model. Although Wellroot had previously provided these services for free under their non-profit, they were not able to become an approved vendor for Medicaid because they lacked the required billing history for the services. Beginning in May 2024, Wellroot served **20 youth and their families** who, without access to these in-community services, would have likely required more restrictive inpatient services.

View Point Health Care Connectors

In September 2024, View Point Health began providing MATCH-funded coordination support to youth and families entering the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta emergency departments for behavioral health challenges. In the last quarter of 2024, View Point Health's High Fidelity Wraparound-trained staff provided coordinated care support and outreach to **65 youth and their families**, preventing extended stays in the emergency department or recurring behavioral health emergency department visits.

Hillside In-Community Dialectical Behavioral Therapy

Hillside expanded Georgia's in-community treatment array in October 2024 by providing in-community dialectical behavioral therapy services through a MATCH pilot program. This provider has limited CMO contracts for this service that require fully licensed staff; therefore, DBHDD pilot funding is only being used as a payor of last resort for this service. The Hillside pilot expanded the coverage area and license level of staff, providing this service to **5 youth and their families** in the last quarter of 2024.

MATCH Residential Pilot

Devereux Short-Term Transitional Program

The Devereux Short-Term Transitional Program is the longest-running MATCH pilot, beginning in January 2024. The purpose is to increase community integration, independent living skills, and emotional regulation for young men aged 18-21 with behavioral health challenges and IDD. During 2024, Devereux helped **9 young men** develop the skills needed to live in a sustainable community-based setting. Most of these young men had moderate IDD, and several were dually diagnosed with autism, had significant medical concerns such as seizure disorders or traumatic brain injury, as well as mental health conditions such as bipolar disorder or major depressive disorder, which limited access to services.

A Look Ahead

The State MATCH Committee and its dedicated partners made great strides to improve the system of care for youth with complex, unmet needs and their families in 2024. We will continue to leverage successes, aligned collaboration, and shared values in the coming year. The 2024 program year has identified needs and elucidated additional areas for growth within Georgia's System of Care. Priorities for 2025 include expanding enhanced care coordination services, rigorous evaluation to measure impact, extending MATCH's impact with additional outcomes-focused pilots, and remaining focused on the sustainability of system gains and improvements.

Enhanced and Aligned Care for Youth and Families

The collective work of the State MATCH Committee, the MATCH clinical team, and the MATCH evaluation team revealed strengths and opportunities for growth in the system of care serving youth with complex needs and their families. Some opportunities that will be considered in 2025 include:

- expanding supports for families to aid in the transition from facility to home;
- including Certified Peer Specialists to support families and youth; and
- increasing in-home early childhood support, which is often presented as reactive attachment disorder.

Measuring Impact

The MATCH evaluation team will partner with the State MATCH Committee and pilot partners to build upon the multi-dimensional evaluation strategy established in 2024 to promote continuous improvement, inform decision-making, and monitor MATCH impact. In particular, MATCH evaluation and quality improvement activities will include:

- aggregate and individual-level data from MATCH clinical team and pilots;
- return-on-investment analyses; and
- tracking the impact through testimonials, surveys, and network analyses.

Expanding Impact, Fortifying Georgia's System of Care

In addition to the priorities listed above, the State MATCH Committee will work to address gaps through additional pilot programs and explore long-term solutions to improve access through policy and system-level recommendations.

Paths Toward Sustainability

The State MATCH Committee will continue to convene workgroups to foster collaborative decision-making in continued process improvement and ensure long-term sustainability of effective, evidence-based solutions identified through MATCH. In the coming year, MATCH will also pilot a platform to address and reduce gaps and support closed-loop referral tracking.

COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

BHCC meetings are held at the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (200 Piedmont Avenue, SE West Tower Atlanta, GA 30334 in the 5th floor board room at 2:00 p.m.) and via WebEx.

BHCC Meeting Materials for Fiscal Year 2024 ♦

Dates	Meeting Materials
Tues., August 8, 2023 2:00–3:30 pm	Agenda: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-agenda/bhcc-agenda-august-8pdf/download Summary: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-summary/bhcc-meeting-summary-8823pdf/download Presentation: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-presentation/bhcc-presentation-8823pdf/download Minutes: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-minutes/signed-august-8th-meeting-minutes-bhccpdf/download
Thurs., November 9, 2023 2:00-3:30 pm	Agenda: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/media/22756/download Summary: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-summary/bhcc-meeting-summary-11923pdf/download Presentation: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/reports/bhcc-presentation-11923-finalpdf/download Minutes:
Tues., February 6, 2024 2:00-3:30 pm	Agenda: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-agenda/bhcc-agenda-2624pdf/download Summary: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-summary/bhcc-meeting-summary-8624pdf/download Presentation: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-presentation/bhcc-presentation-2624pdf/download Minutes: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-minutes/signed-bhcc-minutes-2624pdf/download

Dates	Meeting Materials
Thurs., May 2, 2024 2:00-3:30 pm	Agenda: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-agenda/bhcc-agenda-5224pdf/download Summary: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-summary/bhcc-meeting-summary-5224pdf/download Presentation: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-presentation/bhcc-presentation-5224pdf/download Minutes: https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-minutes/signed-bhcc-meeting-minutes-5224pdf/download

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APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADRC	Aging and Disability Resource Connection
BHCC	Behavioral Health Coordinating Council
CASIG	Child and Adolescent State Infrastructure Grant
CHINS	Children in Need of Services
CHIPRA	Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act
COE	Center of Excellence
CSB	Community Service Board
DBHDD	Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
DCA	Department of Community Affairs
DCH	Department of Corrections
DFCS	Division of Family and Children Services (DHS)
DCS	Department of Community Supervision
DHS	Department of Human Services
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
DOC	Department of Corrections
DOE	Department of Education
DOL	Department of Labor
DPH	Department of Public Health
GPSN	Georgia Parent Support Network
GPSTC	Georgia Public Safety Training Center
GSU	Georgia State University
IDT	Interagency Directors Team
NAMI	National Alliance on Mental Illness
PAP	State Board of Pardons and Parole
POST	Peace Officer Standards and Training
RPH	Re-entry Partnership Housing
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SOAR	SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery
SOC	System of Care Academy
SSDI	Social Security Disability Income
SSI	Social Security Income
TAP	Technical Assistance to Providers

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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