

Success in School

Addressing a Critical Issue—At intake, the Mountain State Family Alliance evaluation study families reported three times more school detentions (56.3%) than children with serious emotional and behavioral disorders (SED) in the national study (17%). *CMHS Data Profile Report, December 2003.*

- 79% of children assigned to Intensive Care Coordination have school problems.
- Untreated children with emotional and behavioral disorders are less likely to complete the 12th grade, reports the Federal Center for Mental Health Services. *System of Care Brief, June 2004*
- 19.35% of the total school age population in WV (2002-2003) was served in special education. *System of Care Brief, June 2004*
- Approximately \$3 million is spent annually for special education services out of state

Mountain State Family Alliance Is Providing Greater Stability—Through a coordinated strength-based process that partners with educators; services and community supports are provided to ensure the opportunity for success. Data from the MSFA evaluation study indicates:

- The number of unexcused absences decreased by 80%
- The number of school suspensions decreased by 92%
- 72.7% reported school grades and attendance remain stable or improved
- 71.7% of the children had an Individual Education Plan after one year, up from 47.4% at intake

What a West Virginia teacher has to say:

"I think the services provided through Mountain State Family Alliance are extremely important and vital to the success of special needs children in the public school system. I have had the opportunity to work with MSFA for two children in my classroom in the past two years. The services, and more importantly, the support MSFA has provided, help the transition from home to school for these children. Representatives from MSFA are consistently at meetings for the children to provide suggestions and help in getting the appropriate services."

*- Sara Dean, Teacher
Bridgeview Elementary*

No Child Left Behind: MSFA as a tool to help accomplish goals

With the passing of federal legislation WV Department of Education, Office of Special Education, is working to implement this new legislation as it influences the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. The core beliefs in this process are strongly connected to the key values and principles of a System of Care, which are: parents as active partners, staff understanding of disability, and respect for the needs of students with exceptionalities.

MSFA is impacting these goals by providing...

- Cross-system learning opportunities within local communities
- Information, education, and support to parents of children with SED
- Assistance and coordination for the development of the service/individual education plan
- Resources for children transitioning from out of state placement that require an IEP. This could only happen due to the strong commitment and support from the Office of Special Education.

The vision of the Mountain State Family Alliance is a comprehensive and integrated system of care where children with serious emotional disturbances and their families can choose and receive timely services within their communities that are strength based and culturally sensitive.