Empowering Families with a Road Map to Navigating Service Systems
A Train-the-Trainer Curriculum

Wendy Lowe Besmann
Melton Hill Media LLC/Team Up for Families Project
Keva Clark:
Saginaw Max System of Care

Our itinerary today
• The “New Normal”
• The “Big Picture”
• Five family-tested strategies for getting what you need.
• Info about teaching this curriculum.

Wendy Lowe Besmann
• Parent
• Author of Team Up for Your Child.
• Former Social Marketer/Training Coordinator
• About Road Map

Destination: The New Normal
Finding the New Normal ...means mobilizing the strength and support you need to help your child without getting overwhelmed.

Finding the New Normal
...Can mean learning to work with a team of professionals and systems that may not see “The Big Picture” of your child’s strengths and needs.

I only see your child during a 15-minute medication management visit. Pretty limited view from here!

Sharing the Big Picture
I know a lot about THIS SYSTEM and how it can help your child.

But I'M the one who sees THE BIG PICTURE--what happens everyday--what other providers are doing—and what I want for my child’s future.

Sharing The Big Picture with providers is a family’s most important role!
What do I need most from this system?
What strengths and assets do I bring to the table?
What challenges and barriers do I face?
What’s my role in this system?

What strengths and assets do I bring to the table?

Who’s on your child’s “treatment team?”

Five Routes to Better Services
1. Keep good records—but use shortcuts.
2. Learn key words that open doors.
3. Tell a clear “symptom story.”
4. Ask questions effectively.
5. Help all professionals who serve your child stay informed about treatment progress and life changes.
1. **Keep Good Records— but use shortcuts.**

   I keep paperwork organized and available for appointments, meetings, and phone calls.

   At the end of the year, stick me on the shelf—I'm a convenient annual record of treatment!

2. **Learn key words that open doors.**

   Example: Insurance pays for behavioral health care that is considered **medically necessary** to treat **symptoms of a disorder**.

   Each system has important “key words” that describe the process of gathering information about a problem, making a plan, and providing services.

3. **Tell a Clear Symptom Story**

   A **“Symptom Story”** is a list of the top 1-5 things that concern you about your child’s health, behavior or development. It can help you and the provider decide where to focus first!

**Worksheet:** Five Steps to Describing Your Symptom Story

See pages 10-20: “Five Steps to Describing Your Symptom Story”

See pages 22-25: “Your Child’s Health History”
3. Ask questions effectively.

Ask questions that begin with: Who...What...When...Where...Why... Can you please explain?

Amazing But True: Busy providers pay more attention when you pull out a WRITTEN list!

Remember to ask about NEXT STEPS!

Key Words: Reports, Treatment Plans; and Medications

See page 26: “Making Sense of Reports and Evaluations”

See page 29: “Understanding the Treatment Plan”

See pages 31-34: Getting Medication Facts

See pages 94-98 “Glossary”

Stay alert for common system mistakes!

Do you need me to sign a release form for that?

Make life easier by CHECKING parts of the system where stuff often gets stuck!

Reference: Keeping It All Together

See page 43: “Making the Most of Appointment Time”

See page 41: Important Professional Contacts

See page 48: “Avoiding Medication Mix-Ups”

See page 50: “Keeping a Titration Record”

5. Help all professionals who serve your child stay informed about treatment progress and life changes.

How should I contact you if there is a change...

...Something happened at school last week...The primary doctor prescribed...the youth group leader said...

Worksheets: Tracking Your Child’s Progress

See page 51: “Your Child’s Medication Log”

See page 52: “Medication Side Effects Checklist”

See page 53: “Your Child’s Behavior Log”
Road Map 1: Review

➢ Destination: The New Normal
➢ Your Role: Sharing the Big Picture

➢ FIVE ROUTES TO BETTER SERVICES
  ➢ Keep good records—but use shortcuts.
  ➢ Learn key words that open doors.
  ➢ Tell a clear symptom story.
  ➢ Ask effective questions.
  ➢ Help everyone who serves your child stay informed about treatment progress and life changes.

Families can learn a lot from other families!

Learn more at http://teamupforyourchild.com

Contact Wendy Besmann at wendy@meltonhillmedia.com