The Children’s Mental Health Initiative (CMHI) National Evaluation

For Grants Funded in FY 2015–FY 2017
Background

The National Evaluation of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA’s) Cooperative Agreements for Expansion and Sustainability of the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and their Families Program (also known as the Children’s Mental Health Initiative or CMHI) is intended to:

- **Assess** whether system of care (SOC) services and supports are expanded.
- **Compare** how expansion was implemented to how it was planned.
- **Explain** how expansion changed in response to external barriers or facilitators.
- **Examine** the impact of SOC services on health and behavioral health outcomes, educational attainment, living environment, social connections, and quality of life.
- **Determine** whether expansion and impacts varied by type of award (state or local).
- **Describe** factors that are associated with successful expansion.

National Evaluation Support

Sites are provided with training and technical assistance on all aspects of the National Evaluation. An Evaluation Liaison is assigned to each site as their central point-of-contact. Webinars are hosted regularly to provide training and technical assistance. Questions or concerns can be directed to the National Evaluation Team by email at CMHieval@westat.com.

The National Evaluation Team Leadership

Abram Rosenblatt, Project Director
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The National Evaluation Team

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Expert Advisory Group

Johanna Bergan, Eric Bruns, Allen Daniels, and Debra Rog

Tribal Workgroup

Gary Bess, Holly Echo-Hawk, Candace Fleming, Dan Foster, and Brenda Freeman

What Can You Do to Prepare for the National Evaluation?

- **Assign** one point-of-contact and one back-up contact who will communicate with the National Evaluation Team.
- **Ask** questions and provide feedback to the National Evaluation Team at CMHieval@westat.com.
- **Prepare** your collaborators and partners to participate in the evaluation.
Figure 1 shows the framework that guides the National Evaluation. Specifically, the National Evaluation focuses on how five analytic dimensions relate to the short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes associated with multiple levels of SOC expansion and sustainability efforts. These analytic dimensions are examined at both local and state levels and measured at multiple points to assess and understand change over time.

Figure 1. Framework for the National Evaluation

**Support for SOC Expansion Efforts**

**Strategic Framework**

**Outcomes**

**Analytic Dimensions**
- Policy/Partnerships
- Services and Supports
- Financing
- Training and Workforce
- Strategic Communication

**SOC Principles**

- Expansion of SOC
- Improvements/Increase in Services and Supports
- Improved Child and Family Outcomes
# Planned SOC Expansion Evaluation Tools

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