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Welcome to the first issue of MWIN Quarterly, the MS Wraparound Initiative e-Newsletter.

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What is Wraparound?

Wraparound is an ecologically based process and approach to care planning that builds on the collective action of a committed group of family, friends, community, professional, and cross-system supports mobilizing resources and talents from a variety of sources resulting in the creation of a plan of care that is the best fit between the family vision and story, team mission, strengths, needs, and strategies.


Who is MWI?

The Mississippi Wraparound Initiative represents the collaboration between the Department of Mental Health, Division of Medicaid and The University of Southern Mississippi's School of Social Work to train, support and sustain high-fidelity Wraparound in Mississippi.
Meet the Coaches

MWI has a diverse group of coaches well versed in the Wraparound model. These coaches have been nationally certified or are completing national certification through NWIC, the National Wraparound Implementation Center.

Pictured (l. to r.) Natalie Richey, Vanessa Huston,
Elizabeth McDowell

Elizabeth McDowell, LMSW, is currently employed as the State Wraparound Coordinator at The University of Southern Mississippi, School of Social Work. Although she has worked in various mental health settings, she was first exposed to high-fidelity Wraparound while working as a MYPAC therapist. She later became a MYPAC Supervisor and started working towards national certification as a trainer and coach. She received certification in September of 2014 through the National Wraparound Implementation Center (NWIC). Her favorite thing about Wraparound is that it encourages teams to be as creative as possible while tailoring services, supports and interventions to a specific family which makes the process meaningful and worthwhile.

Vanessa Huston

Vanessa Huston is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Board Qualified Supervisor in the state of Mississippi. Vanessa has worked in the mental health field for over 15 years in supervisory and front-line positions across outpatient, crisis, residential and day treatment settings with children, families and adults in Illinois, California and Mississippi.

She recently joined the Mississippi Wraparound Initiative at The University of Southern Mississippi where she has been excited to work in partnership with DOM and DMH to implement Wraparound across the state. Vanessa has been certified as a Wraparound trainer and coach through the National Wraparound Implementation Center since September of 2014. Vanessa is passionate about Wraparound because it truly empowers youth and families and brings hope to people that may have been looking for solutions for a long time. She says that “the strength and potential of the families that we partner with is incredible and Wraparound gives us the tools and the opportunity to support them in getting where they want to go!”

LaQuita Brown

LaQuita Brown, with Mississippi Children’s Home Services, is a local coaching candidate for Mississippi and is currently working on her national certification.

Elizabeth McDowell, LaQuita Brown, LaKeisha White, Heidi Nelson, and Mona Gauthier. Not pictured: Monica Cunningham.
“I started out as a Wraparound Facilitator and my current role is a Wraparound Coordinator. What I love most about the Wraparound process is seeing families be able to rebuild hope and relationships, and survive in the community after formal services end utilizing the help of their supports who became involved in the process. Our mission in Wraparound is to meet families where they are. I love this value because this helps bring about trust and build relationships with families as you grow to care about their success as a whole. Another thing I love about Wraparound is being able to view individuals from a strengths perspective and remind them of their strength’s to help shift their outlook.”

Monica Cunningham

Monica Cunningham is an avid runner with 2 miniature schnauzers and a husband. She is the Regional Care Coordination Supervisor for Youth Villages, a graduate of the Mississippi University for Women and is currently working on a MSW at the University of Alabama. Monica loves Wraparound because it provides hope for families and builds off of the family's strengths.

Mona Gauthier

Mona Gauthier is the Director of Child & Adolescent Services for Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources in Hattiesburg.

“My favorite thing about Wraparound is that it helps each family and youth to envision what they want their family to look like and develop realistic strategies to reach their vision. It’s a different way of partnering with families and youth ….a way that provides hope for everyone involved in the partnership.”

Heidi Nelson

Heidi Nelson, MS, NCC, LPC-S is studying for certification to train and coach Wraparound. Heidi loves Wraparound because it encourages families to lead the process in choosing their supports and celebrate their success with a team. Heidi has nine years of experience in the implementation of Wraparound and other evidence based practices. Heidi served as the Project Director for commUNITY cares, the state’s federally funded 2006-2012 SAMHSA system of care grant initiative. In her current role, she is a Children’s Department Administrator and
Regional MAP Team Coordinator at Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources. Heidi is a native of Louisiana and a graduate of Dillard University and Southern Miss.

Natalie Richey

Natalie Richey has been working for Youth Villages for nine years and for almost three of those years as the Wraparound Coach for the whole state.

"I fell in love with the Wraparound because of its creativeness, appreciation for what works for the family and what they want, and works to empower them to reach their vision for their family."

LaKeisha White

Lakeisha White is the Central Region Wraparound Coordinator for Mississippi Children’s Home Services. What LaKeisha loves most about Wraparound is "it gives me the opportunity to interact with families in unique and special ways. I can truly focus on the good things that they do and help them to reach their own desired goals instead of me having the responsibility of doing it all by myself! Go WRAPAROUND!!"

Key Element: Grounded in a Strengths Perspective

Wraparound is a strength based process reflecting a basic commitment to strength seeking, strength generating and strength building.

Strengths of the identified youth or family are not the only strengths that are the focus of service delivery and decision making. Strengths of the family, all team members, the service environment and the community are purposefully and transparently used in all decision making and service delivery options.
Anastasia Snow  
Submitted by  
Mississippi Children's Home Services  
North Region

Life has a way of teaching us that the past does not determine your future. Anastasia Snow is an African American female from North MS. Anastasia started the MYPAC program due to being physically aggressive, running away, destroying household items, stealing, and fighting peers. Anastasia had prior treatment at a day treatment facility and a PRTF to help address on-going behavioral issues. Anastasia experienced being molested at an early age. The relationship between Anastasia and her mother, Ms. Snow, was strained by a lack of positive communication; she would use her cell phone to send texts if she needed something from her mother. She was very quiet and did not talk much because she felt very unhappy. Anastasia was not doing well in school because she did not want to attend. Her mom tried helping her daughter with improving good behaviors but, her mom felt like nothing worked. Mom had been running herself down trying to make their life better.

Anastasia never did like to participate in anything concerning her “treatment.” Anastasia and MYPAC staff invited one of her favorite teacher to her wraparound team. Her teacher added a lot of insight on the youth – regarding her family, education, and personality. After this moment, Anastasia started making a 180 in her life. She finally felt heard. Supported. Important to others and to herself. She began to participate more readily in the wraparound process and therapy sessions. She stated that she just needed to feel love and that CFTM showed her that the MYPAC staff and her team members only wanted her to be happy and healthy. Anastasia improved her own treatment process; she shared that she was very creative and liked to draw pictures. Anastasia realized that she can paint a picture of her own life by putting forth an effort to change. With this motivated mindset, Anastasia enrolled in a high school English III class online at Ole Miss to graduate from
school on time. She was very appreciative of her mother and grandmother for providing the financial resources to make taking the class possible. Her awesome teacher also played a part in helping her take classes to graduate on time by auditing her grades with the superintendent. Anastasia has been making good grades and finished this school term with A’s and B’s. This showed her that life can improved despite her past experiences, and that, with the love and support of others and her strong will she has the drive to create her Better Picture.

Anastasia’s mom was determined to makes things better for her family. After her daughter began to become active in Wraparound and therapy, she saw a difference in their communication and daily routine. Anastasia began to show her talents by being the DJ at family events while her mother danced. Ms. Snow and Anastasia started shopping and spending time with each other. Ms. Snow stated their relationship made a huge step with Anastasia wanting to talk with her more often.

Ms. Snow and Anastasia never thought that they would ever talk or share anything together. Ms. Snow verbalized that since MYPAC uses the wraparound approach it has improved her life by building teams and supports in which she had not recognized before. Ms. Snow can now sleep knowing that her child can and does communicate with her. Anastasia feels that MYPAC has taught her to live life to the fullest regardless of what has happened in the past. Anastasia has made plans to finish school next year and attend a trade school for Welding. She transitioned out of wraparound and discharged successfully from MYPAC services on June 26, 2015.

Anastasia was demonstrating how like a butterfly she is- she was no longer a caterpillar in a cocoon, isolating herself away from those who loved and cared for her. With the support and guidance from her team which included MYPAC staff, her mother, and her teacher, she was opening up her wings to fly!

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**Get on Board the Wraparound Training**

Over a course of two years, July 2013 to June 2015, 850 participants have been trained/re-trained in the Wraparound training series.

**Introduction to Wraparound** is the first training offered to front-line Wraparound practitioners, supervisors, and directors as well as community partners who may participate in a child and family team process. In order to...
Technical Assistance

Available technical assistance includes but is not limited to: consultation with leadership/directors of organizations, discussion of strategies for implementation, on-site coaching of supervisors and facilitators, support in preparing for Child & Family Team Meetings, observation of Child & Family Team Meetings with customized feedback, and individualized planning for identified learning needs. Please contact us if you have questions or other specialized requests. We look forward to partnering with you!

Newsletter Submission

We invite you to share your Wraparound highlights. If you would like to submit a story, picture, or information of interest for inclusion in the October newsletter, please let us know what you are up to. We would like to hear from you!

Submit Request
SIGN UP FOR YOUR ACCOUNT

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