

**Vermont Act 264 Advisory Board  
Recommendations on Priorities  
for the 2017 System of Care**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

***1. Demonstrate strong commitment to develop and implement an Integrating Family Services (IFS) approach for Children and Family programs and services across the state.***

- a) Implement IFS long-term vision and goals.
- b) Ramp up efforts to transition communities to an IFS funding model.
- c) Support health care payment reform efforts to move away from 'fee for service' payment frameworks to accountability funding based on performance outcomes.
- d) Communicate and coordinate with the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) to support prevention services and reimbursement rates sufficient to ensure statewide availability of needed services.

***2. Ensure all Agency of Human Services and Agency of Education Departments are coordinating and implementing system-wide changes that advance an IFS approach; explore and align areas of service overlap within and beyond AHS and AOE.***

- a) Continue work to develop clear, written guidelines and expectations for the State Interagency Team (SIT) and Local Interagency Teams (LITs), including roles, accountability, authority, management, deliverables, and interactions with the Act 264 Advisory Board.
- b) Establish guidelines across all agencies and departments to assist linking children and families to needed basic services (e.g., housing, food, skills training, etc.), especially for children whose parents are involved with Corrections.
- c) Require that information on all applicable resources and services be made available to families involved in kinship placements.
- d) Ongoing training for families and employees in regards to the Act 264 entitlement and process.
- e) Support court decision makers with a goal of identifying the training, consultation, and coordination process with AHS departments to improve outcomes of court decisions that recognize current best-practice child development thinking and principles, including trauma informed issues and services.
- f) Provide links to the Act 264 Advisory Board on the DCF and AOE, VDH, Corrections, DAIL websites.

***3. Promote inclusion of family members and youth as full partners in the development and implementation of policies and programs that affect them.***

- a) Promote participation on state and regional IFS advisory groups and work groups.
- b) Ensure all state Agencies and Departments carry out practices for capturing and incorporating family and youth voice.

***4. Ensure appropriate peer support is available for families and youth.***

- a) Ensure there is a Parent Representative on every LIT, and families have knowledge of and access to Parent Representatives' services. Also, ensure Parent Representatives have access to technical support and orientation for their role.
- b) Make a financial commitment to a Peer Support and Peer Navigation statewide system to help families and youth access and participate in services.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

### Per Title 33: Human Services

#### Chapter 043: Children and Adolescents with Severe Emotional Disturbance

There are legislative requirements that are part of Act 264. The Act 264 Advisory Board encourages continued support of the intent and fulfillment of these requirements.

Current statutory language can be found at the following link:

<http://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/fullchapter/33/043>

Title 33: Human Services; Chapter 043: Children and Adolescents with Severe Emotional Disturbance.

Sections in this link include:

§4301. Definitions

§4302. State interagency team

§4303. Local interagency teams

§4304. Repealed. 1987, No. 264 (Adj. Sess.), {17, eff. Jan. 15, 1992}

§4304a. Advisory Board

§4305. Coordinated system of care

1. **Per 33 V.S.A. § 4302** State Interagency Team (SIT) shall “submit an **annual report** to the Commissioners of Mental Health and for Children and Families and the Secretary of Education on the status of programs for children and adolescents with a severe emotional disturbance which **shall include a system of care plan.**”

2. **Per 33. V.S.A. § 4305** “The Commissioners of Mental Health and for Children and Families and the Secretary of Education shall jointly submit to the General Assembly a **report** on the status of programs for children and adolescents with a severe emotional disturbance and their families which **shall include a system of care plan.** The report shall be submitted together **with the general appropriation bill** provided for by 32 V.S.A. § 701.”

#### Background on Act 264 and the Act 264 Advisory Board

In 1988 the Vermont Legislature passed Act 264.

The original language of the legislation states its purpose as “intended to develop and implement a coordinated system of care so that children and adolescents with a severe emotional disturbance and their families will receive appropriate educational, residential, mental health and other treatment services in accordance with an individual plan. The commissioners of mental health, of education, and of social and rehabilitation services shall coordinate the provision of services in accordance with an individual plan. The act establishes a means by which to improve the delivery of services by determining who is in charge of the services, and to mandate participation in the process by the three departments.”

## INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT

In 2005, the Vermont Agency of Human Services and the Department of Education signed an interagency agreement as part of federal legislative requirements under the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In Vermont’s agreement, the scope of interagency collaboration under Act 264 was extended to children and adolescents in all fourteen disability categories under state and federal special education law. This includes the role of the Advisory Board.

## ADVISORY BOARD

**Per 33 V.S.A. § 4304a** (a) An Advisory Board is created to advise the Secretary of Education and

the Commissioners of Mental Health and for Children and Families about children and adolescents with a severe emotional disturbance and their families. (b) The Advisory Board shall also advise the Secretary and the Commissioners on the development of the system of care plan described in subsection 4305(c) of this title. This Governor-appointed Advisory Board consists of nine members, including three parents, three advocates, and three service providers. Should you need additional information on the Act 264 Advisory Board, please contact Jessica Bernard by phone (802) 241-0412 or email [Jessica.Bernard@vermont.gov](mailto:Jessica.Bernard@vermont.gov) for assistance.

#### **ACT 264 ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS**

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