**Parent/Family Mandates**

1. We the Parents/Family love our children and will work to keep them safe.

2. We the Parents/Family have our children’s health, wellbeing and safety at the forefront of our concerns.

3. We as the Parents/Family do the best we can, but we are not perfect, but are willing to learn.

4. We the Parents/Family cannot provide the therapeutic home 24/7 and we should not be expected to.

5. We the Parents/Family know our children and families better than anyone and our perspectives should be heard and respected.

6. We the Parents/Family and youth feel it is necessary for early and appropriate transition services.

7. We the Parents/Family believe that any and all barriers that still exist in the system need to be torn down.

8. We the Parents/Family believe that all systems should be able to inform parents and families about all programs and natural supports available and communicate the information and support the choices of the parent and family.

9. We the Parents/Family should be supported in our decisions and not be shunned if our child needs to leave our home whether that be temporary or permanently.

10. Post Secondary Education should be seen as an option and encouraged; we the Parents/Family do not want our children to be under-educated, underemployed, and unemployable.

11. We the Parents/Family need to have our children’s physical health seen as an equal component when assessing our children for strengths, needs and concerns. Obesity and dental care being just two examples that system partners need to have information and resources available to provide to parents and families.

12. System partners need to adapt to the family culture. System partner should not force families to adapt to system culture. Do not be afraid to ask us about our culture and beliefs and be willing to provide access to resources, which are dedicated to serving the family interest and culture.

13. We the Parents/Family live with guilt, we do not need our system partners to re-enforce the guilt.

14. Parents/Family supported transition services for our children into the adult population are a requirement for successful living. We want our children to be productive members of the community.

15.Systemic wide MH/BHRS services, as well as OCYF, JJ and D/A that are state mandated and consistent from county to county (hassle free services), are needed for efficient, successful outcomes.

16. We the Parents/Family realize that early intervention is an absolute in order to stop the flow of our children into Children Youth and Family Services, Juvenile Probation and Drug and Alcohol.

17. We the Parents/Family are at the table for every decision regarding our children to bring about transparency so that we are embedded into the decision making process.

18. We the Parents/Families need to be at the table embedded in the system at all levels of the decision making process (county and state) establishing transparency in the system from theory to budget.

19. We the Parents/Family need access to services during times that are not normal business hours.

20. We the Parents/Family should be treated with respect from all levels of our system partners.

21. We the Parents/Family need to have freedom of fear of retaliation from any and all system partners.

22. Parents/Families know that respite care is a prevention and intervention. It needs to be provided on a routine basis.

23. We the Parents/Family should not have to struggle with education. There should be respect and follow through with 504 or the IEP process.

24. We the Parents/Family should not be hindered in finding available treatment for our children because of a lack of transportation.

25. Parents/Families need family peer and educational advocates who can accompany and support us at all meetings.

26. We the Parents/Family believe that our children are entitled to community integration (all aspects).

27. Parents/Families are equal members of their children’s team; all discussions of the team should be approached from a position of common interests and strength.

28. We the Parents/Families need effective parenting programs, such as realistic evidence based education on parenting children with behavioral challenges.

29. We the Parents/Family feel accountability is a requirement of all.

30. We the Parents/Family need and welcome high quality evidence based services/processes for our children; we usually are not clinicians or experts.

31. We the Parents/Family expect improvements after a reasonable period of time with a system partner. If not, we will seek another system partner.

32. We the Parents/Family expect equality of treatment no matter what our income, culture, race, religion, sexual orientation, or insurance.

33. We the Parents/Family expect full disclosure of valuable information from all team members.

34. We the Parents/Family need to know our rights, including what they are when attempting to manage a child or teen exhibiting difficult behaviors.

35. We the Parents/Family need to understand our legal rights in every system.

36. We the Parents/Family expect systems to coordinate services (a single plan).

37. Parents/Family does not choose to have children with mental health problems. We did not cause this but are doing our best to raise our children.

38. We the Parent/Family want to eliminate the stigma of children and families with behavioral health problems.

39. Adoptive Parents or Foster Parents need ongoing support. It could take years for the family system to be stressed to the point of fracture

40. We the Parent/Family should be included in cross system trainings or trainings available to our system partners.

41. We the Parents/Families feel childhood is a precious time of life and that our children also deserve a happy childhood. We feel a unique sense of loss and urgency, our children are placed in a holding pattern as a matter of habit, we know that the earlier the intervention the better the outcome for our children and families.

PA Families Inc. would like to thank the parents and families that participated in the creation of these the PA Family Mandates.

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