

The Needs Guide

A resource for families, facilitators and team members working with the Wraparound process.

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Introduction

Wraparound is a process used to support families by bringing a group of people together as a team for planning and delivering supportive services that build on family strengths, meet identified and the most important needs to accomplish the outcome of keeping families together safely.

Wraparound is a complex process when you put all of the pieces together. Each of the core concepts of Wraparound can be hard to implement. For example, getting a team together to come up with a single plan of care is easier said than done. Staying focused on strengths while struggling with the behavior of a teenager can be a challenge for any Wraparound team. Staying focused on a common outcome can also be challenging. Despite these challenges most individuals associated with Wraparound find that they can manage if not master core Wraparound concepts such as Team, Plan of Care, Strengths or Outcomes. The most difficult Wraparound concept is that of Needs. This Workbook is designed to help all individuals who are working with Wraparound to become comfortable with the concept of needs as used in the Wraparound process. It is also designed to help individuals and teams work better at identifying the underlying needs, reaching agreement about the most important need and staying focused on addressing and meeting those needs.

Wraparound is designed to address needs. In Wraparound, Needs should not be defined as something required, something sought, as an obligation or as steps towards accomplishing a goal. Instead, Needs are defined as underlying conditions or causes. Needs are essential and unbounded and reflect the basic humanness in all of us. If left untended, needs that are unmet will create a gap, tear or void in a person's life. When such a void occurs, behaviors often arise that communicate the unmet need. Unfortunately when such behaviors arise, systems and services are often focused at managing the behavior rather than meeting the need. If the need continues to go unmet, the behavior is likely to escalate resulting in more attempts to contain the behavior.

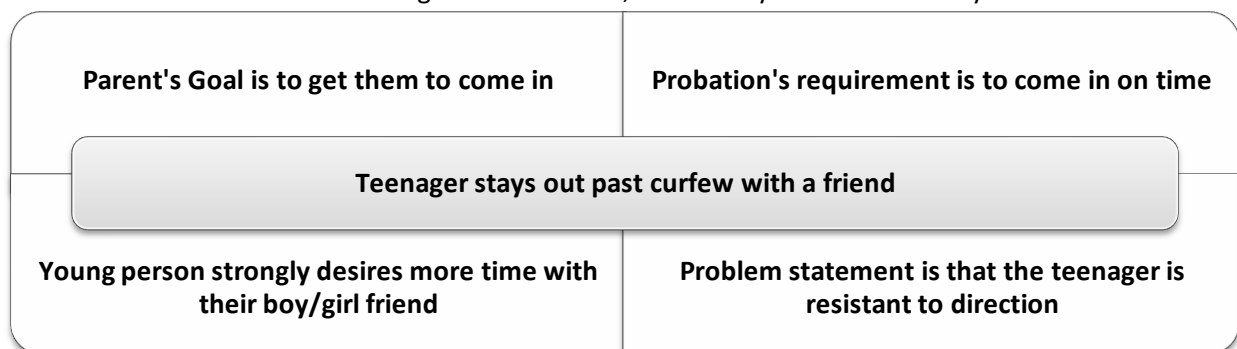
A key assumption in the wraparound process is that families will have better outcomes when they are supported by a disciplined group that shares a common focus on helping those families find and address their critical unmet needs. The search for unmet needs is hard work and requires persistence, trust and an openness to make mistakes together. Families have to face what might be the underlying need without getting distracted by behaviors. Team members are required to consider new options to meet needs. Wraparound staff must bring all of those perspectives together and continually ask "whether this is really an unmet need?" This workbook is designed to help all stakeholders including team members, families and Wraparound staff do a better job of identifying unmet needs.

Defining the Underlying Need

The first step in defining the underlying need is to start by getting consensus about what a need is and how it will be used in Wraparound. As stated earlier, need is about underlying causes or conditions rather than the expression of behavior. Consider the following descriptions of what a needs statement is not:

- A need statement is not a goal. A good need statement expresses why something is or isn't happening. A solid goal statement will identify what you hope to accomplish. A need statement is compelling while a goal statement is ambitious.
- A need statement is not a requirement. Individuals who receive or provide services often hear what they need to do rather than hearing what is needed to make things work better. Good needs statements will empower and energize everyone on the team to see a situation differently. This empowers everyone to behave in new and imaginative ways
- A need statement is not necessarily something that is missing and is important to health. People may be hungry or about to get evicted but that doesn't mean housing or food is the unmet need statement. You can feed the individual but if you can't figure out what caused the situation in the first place you may end up as frustrated as when you began.
- A need statement is not necessarily something strongly desired. Parents, young people, family members and professionals often have strong opinions about what they want to have happen and when. Those opinions aren't the same as a need statement in Wraparound. What is wanted is very different than why it's wanted. Good needs statements address the "why" of situation not the "what" of it.
- A need statement is different than a problem statement. A problem statement labels and categorizes a situation while a need statement explains it. Categorization can be helpful as a starting place and in some situations this categorization can actually be enough to find a solution. This might be true for a person who frequently loses consciousness when they haven't eaten for a long period. After testing it may become clear that the person has diabetes which is the categorization or problem statement. This problem statement can lead to providing the individual with insulin which keeps the person conscious. In this way the problem statement led to a solution that resulted in a changed state. Unfortunately, many of the concerns that lead people to wraparound are not that easily resolved.

Consider the following situation. In the center box the behavior is described and a chain of events are outlined in the other boxes. Looking at this situation, where do you think it is likely to end?



It is often helpful to consider challenging behaviors as messages or signals of unmet needs. Considering the previous example, finding an unmet need would ask each individual to consider what the message being sent might be. This will look different from each individual’s vantage point. An orientation to unmet need leads an individual to ask the question of why does this person need to behave rather than asking why he does that. This allows individuals to consider the message behind the behavior and leads people to begin discussion of the unmet need. Review the possible scenarios from a variety of Wraparound perspectives below

Why would anyone need to behave this way from various perspectives?			
Behavior	Parent	Young Person	Team Member (Probation Officer)
Teenager stays out past curfew with a friend	He needs to do this because he’s trying to let me know who is boss	I need to do this because I love my girl/boy friend and they love me	He needs to do this because he’s not used to hearing the word “no”

Wraparound is a process that helps people think through the possibilities behind the need. This focus on underlying cause can assist teams in becoming more focused and more outcomes oriented. The table above reflects a range of different possibilities in answering the “why” question associated with the behavior. Two more steps involve identifying the theme of the opinion and then making it individual and relevant for the person with the unmet need. This is illustrated below:

Working Through Opinions to Generate Needs Statements			
Behavior	Parent	Young Person	Team Member (Probation Officer)
Teenager stays out past curfew with a friend	He needs to do this because he’s trying to let me know who is boss	I need to do this because I love my girl/boy friend and they love me	He needs to do this because he’s not used to hearing no
What might the driving force be?	Control	Acceptance	Structure
Possible Unmet Need Statement as reflected for this unique teenager	To feel confident that he can be in charge	To feel loved even when he’s not lovable	To see adults as competent
Why is this important for this young person	As the parent has told their story s/he has talked about past relationships that have been abusive as witnessed by the young person.	His parents split up when he was young after several years of loud arguments witnessed by the young person.	This teenager can do pretty well in high structured settings such as detention but tends to “lose it” in settings that are more relationship based.

The items in the third row above that are shaded and listed in bold reflect the types of needs statements that should be brought the Wraparound Team meeting. The gathered team should then focus on meeting one of the needs they select rather than focusing on trying to “make him come home on time.”

The theory behind Wraparound is that if you meet the need, behavior change will follow. In the example above if the teenager were confident that he could be in charge he might be able to demonstrate more reasonable choices including coming home on time.

Needs finding doesn't typically happen in Wraparound Team meetings but instead happens in conversations, reflection and review of what you know and think about a situation. Wraparound uses a family centered approach, which means that needs of everyone can be considered. Consider the example we've been working with and the child's parent. What might the unmet need be for that parent? A process for working through that using the same behavior is listed in the table below.

The Parent's Unmet Need			
Behavior	Parent's Goal	Why is this goal important to the parent?	Possible Unmet Needs Statements for the Parent
Teenager stays out past curfew with a friend	I need to get him to come home and know that I'm in charge	1) I'm worried 2) I'm jealous of his relationship with the girlfriend 3) I'm afraid I'll be judged for his behavior	A. To be reassured that he is able to make the right choices B. To be convinced that even as he grows up they can still be close C. To be recognized for what she's done right

This specific and very concrete example has resulted in six possible needs statements. During the initial phase of Wraparound, staff should consider behaviors, history and patterns in constructing needs statements. They should also encourage and challenge families and specific team members to become acquainted with "needs think". This will create a framework for the Child and Family Team to focus on the right thing in constructing creative plans of care.

Questions to Ask and Reasons for Asking in Developing Needs Statements

Who	What to Ask and Reasons for Asking
Wraparound Staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the behavior that is causing the most emotional reaction? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>The bigger the behavior the larger the emotional response. The higher the emotional response the greater the likelihood that people are reacting to the situation rather than responding to it.</i> 2. Do you know enough about the family's story to answer the "why" question? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>The family is always more important than the process. Unmet needs are usually communicated in one of three ways: behaviorally, historically or verbally. Typically verbal communication about unmet needs is the least frequent way that needs are communicated. If you don't know the family's story you are not likely to develop the right unmet needs statement. This will cause the team to lose focus over time.</i> 3. Have you looked at unmet needs from each family member's perspective? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>A focus on one person is neither family centered nor likely to be effective. One</i>

Who	What to Ask and Reasons for Asking
	<p><i>event can have a variety of results in terms of unmet needs. As a Wraparound staff you would want to get the team to consider an event from a variety of perspectives. This is also helpful to the family in terms of helping family members see how different events can impact the entire family.</i></p> <p>4. Have you communicated with the family and other team members about what a need is or isn't in Wraparound?</p> <p><i>a. Needs are not goals, services, problems or requirements. Communicating that to each and every team member before the first Plan of Care meeting lets team members know what to look for and increases the likelihood that people will come to the first meeting ready to participate rather than waiting to be entertained. Wraparound works best when all team members are engaged around the same concepts and approaches.</i></p>
<p>Family Members</p>	<p>1. Have you shared enough of your story so that Wraparound people can make an educated and reliable guess about unmet need?</p> <p><i>a. Events can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Families take the first risk by sharing enough of their story so that people can begin to consider the underlying causes about events in a way that is open, respectful and empowering. This doesn't mean that you have to share everything right away but it is important that you consider what information would help your Wraparound Team work better as quickly as possible.</i></p> <p>2. Have you worked to get beyond the "here and now" of what you want to have happen to get to underlying causes?</p> <p><i>a. Many families come to the table with some clarity about the "what" or "when" of a solution because of very real situations. For example, a parent may say that they need "respite" on three mornings or a youth may say they really need help getting transportation to a community service program so they can resolve probation requirements. While these requests are real and very urgent they don't speak to the underlying cause of the situation. If the parent simply gets the respite or youth gets the ride you run the risk of taking care of the symptom but not the cause. This may result in always needing respite from a child's misbehavior or increased law violations.</i></p> <p>3. Are you willing to reach agreement with others about the underlying need?</p> <p><i>a. Wraparound is a process that involves a group of people coming together to blend their perspectives, reach agreement about needs and come up with creative ways to meet those needs. While you are the expert of your own family story because you are the only who has lived it, others at the table can bring a variety of perspectives about the underlying need. As a family member you have to ask yourself if you're willing to consider other perspectives and try something different in hopes of finding a solution.</i></p> <p>4. Are you prepared to work with the team about the broadest range of needs statements possible and then choose from that broad list?</p> <p><i>a. Wraparound is a team based process which means that team members should all have a chance to "hear" the unmet needs and have input into which ones are most important. Working with a team of people can be challenging as well as rewarding. Consider what you need to be comfortable working in a team context</i></p>

Who	What to Ask and Reasons for Asking
	<i>and share that with others.</i>
Team Members	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have you sorted the difference between your goals and needs statements? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Unmet needs can only be “held” by the person with the unmet need. Goals can be held by anyone who has a stake in the outcome. Goals identify what you hope to accomplish while unmet needs address why this is important. A focus on unmet need may require the team member to adjust their goal. Are prepared to do that in order to achieve outcomes?</i> 2. Are you prepared to be open to whatever the unmet needs may be? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Wraparound is a process that brings people together to come up with new ideas and strategies. Using a facilitator/care coordinator to bring various perspectives together suggests that no one person has all of the answers. It is important for Team Members to examine their own agendas to assure they come to the process prepared to be open. If you already know what to do you should do it. If you’re willing to consider the idea that you don’t know the solution than Wraparound is a viable alternative.</i> 3. Do you know enough about the facts of the behavior to do “needs” work? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>The bigger the behavior the more likely the misinterpretation. Have you taken the time to gather the facts of the events or have you ended up reacting to the events? Have you spent so much time with the family that you are assigning meaning to events without checking it out first? Finally, are you prepared to assign positive rather than negative intentionality to events as they come up? It is important for each team member to consider their own base of information in preparing to find the cause or underlying reasons behind an event.</i>

Reaching agreement about why this is important

During the Team Preparation and Engagement phase of Wraparound, Wraparound Staff should consider as many needs as possible. During this phase, more needs statements are better than a few quality needs statement. Wraparound staff should be prepared to consider a situation from every perspective and sort those perspectives by strengths and needs. Bringing a wide range of needs statements to the initial Plan of Care development meeting allows team members to consider a situation from a variety of perspectives. This broad point of view may also empower the team to identify surprising and creative strategies. This approach is also a major point in Wraparound; that a group of people working together can do it better than any individual.

A key step in getting a wide range of needs statements to the first plan of care meeting involves reaching agreement with team members, especially families about bringing those unmet needs statements forward. This doesn’t mean that prior to the meeting Wraparound staff have to go over each and every possible need statements with all team members. It does mean that Wraparound staff should be prepared to create a compelling reason about why a need is important and how they came to the conclusion that this was the unmet need. This happens within the first Plan of Care meeting. Wraparound staff should be prepared to invite questions and even challenges about the needs

statements they are bringing to this first meeting for consideration. The steps below suggest a process for reaching agreement about needs statements.

Step	How
Describe the facts as you know them	Describe what you know about the situation in terms of where, when and what happened along with who was reported to be involved. Avoid describing your emotional reaction to the event. If you heard it from the person start by describing what you were told rather than acting as if you were there.
Verbally Assume Positive Intent & Normalize the unmet need	Be clear that you genuinely believe the person is doing the best they can. Manage the team to keep them from moving to judgment. Remind team members that we are working together to deepen our collective understanding so that we can come up with better solutions. Finally, explain that anyone in this situation could easily end up with an unmet need. All of us do have unmet needs but not all of us end up in Wraparound.
Acknowledge their concern	Communicate that any concern raised is legitimate by saying so. Additionally, communicate your willingness to pay attention behaviorally through maintaining an interested posture, eye contact and an open stance.
Invite alternatives	Without communicating that you are willing to forgo your own perspective of the needs statements seek feedback from the person about other alternatives. This may involve making a list and posting it or asking team members to help the person to find an acceptable needs statement either as an alternative or as an enhancement of what staff are bringing to the meeting.
Negotiate best scenarios	From the list, begin to rank or reorder options. As you work through these steps, be prepared to speak to the person's self interest about why one option may be better than the others. Invite the person to question your rationale and be prepared to discard your option if you can't provide a reason why it's important to the person.

Common Barriers & Solutions that Interfere with Reaching Agreement about Moving Forward with Needs

Common Barrier	Response
<p>Parent says “this about my son or daughter not me. I don’t have any needs.”</p> <p>Team Member says “I don’t care about this unmet need stuff, this child NEEDS to(go to school, follow through, comply with probation, be respectful etc.).</p>	<p>SED (or Mental or Behavioral Health) impacts the whole family. Besides, every parent has had an unmet need at some time or another.</p> <p>Well in Wraparound we believe that if we don’t figure out why he needs to (i.e. miss school, not follow through, blow off probation, or communicate disrespect) we’ll never be able to solve the problem.</p>
<p>Young person says “I don’t agree with what you’re saying no matter what you say”</p>	<p>I’m not sure that it’s necessary for you to agree but do you understand why I came up with this?</p>
<p>Family member says “well I really need a certain type of service”.</p>	<p>I have three questions about that so I can figure out the best way to make sure you get that service. The first is why do you think you need that? The second is what do you hope will be accomplished through that service? Finally how will you know when it’s been effective?</p>
<p>Someone says, “He does this because he chooses to and someone needs to put a stop to it.”</p>	<p>It is possible that he does this because he chooses to but my question would be what does he get out of it? If you can answer that then that might be the need statement that we should be focused on.</p>
<p>Team member says “well until he gets treatment then all of this needs stuff is just a waste of time. He needs to be treated first.”</p>	<p>In Wraparound we believe that if we’re creative enough and can come to agreement about the unmet need then this person can have treatment and have their needs met too.</p>
<p>Someone says “the youth’s real need is for structure like he would get in residential. I think we ought to place in residential.”</p>	<p>Placement for a short time could be an option but first how do you think the team should mobilize to deal with his attachment needs while he is in placement?</p>

Team Meetings: Brainstorming and Selecting the Best Options and Setting Benchmarks

Once a wide range of needs have been generated by Wraparound staff, for each family member across life domains the team is ready for a Plan of Care Meeting. The needs list should be significant because all family members are being considered as well as all life domains. It is not unusual for a Care Coordinator to bring 40 to 60 needs statements to the initial plan of care meeting for review by the team. While this may seem daunting, consider that in the example in the first chapter (misses curfew) we were able to generate six different needs statements by considering both the young person and caregiver as well as what each team member would say. Good needs statements should be:

- Clear, Concise and brief
- Individualized (the need statement should be tied to an individual not a family as a whole)
- Not a goal
- Not a service (more than one way to meet it)
- Enduring (avoid the quick fix approach but really recognize underlying conditions)

Wraparound staff should bring a range of needs statements to the initial Plan of Care meeting and assist the group in finding a fair way to select needs for focus. That fair way must include providing families with the primary say or voice in choosing those needs selected for action. This assures that the Wraparound process is something done with families rather than to families.

Consider the situation that involved a young person staying out past curfew. In the table below the needs statements are identified and sorted by family member. The team would consider all needs found and select from that list. Typically there are only three active needs at a time within any Wraparound Plan of Care. The method for selecting needs for action begins with the team mission statement which should have been decided before needs were introduced. The Team Mission is a simple sentence that describes what the team is committed to working towards. It is sometimes helpful to think about the Team Mission as the destination or product that everyone on the team is moving towards. After needs are presented the team is asked what needs, if met, would lead to an accomplished mission. Team members are not asked where they want to start, or what area they want to work on first. Anchoring needs statements to the Team Mission is one way to assure that the process stays focused.

Consider this statement that begins with the statement the Team is committed to accomplishing this reality for the family:

- **Learn, Love and Live together peacefully**

The team should be directed to select needs from the list that would address or create movement towards this Team Mission Statement. Consider the table of needs listed on the next page.

Son	Parent
To feel confident that I can be in charge	To be reassured that my son is able to make the right choices
To feel loved even when I'm not lovable	To be convinced that even as my son grows up we can still be close
To see adults as competent	To be recognized for what I've done right

The challenge for the team is select a need that if addressed and met would lead to that mission. Wraparound staff should help team members stay focused and disciplined in moving in this direction. Take a few minutes, consider the Team mission and select a need from the list that fits with that mission. Consider why you chose that need and how it fits with the overall mission. Can you explain why that need and not another?

Brainstorming options is the next step towards creative plan of care development. Brainstorming involves challenging teams to consider a wide range of options rather than focusing on one or two. Typically brainstorming involves generating at least ten options and then choosing the one that addresses the need, will produce the outcome and builds on the family's strengths. Forcing people to consider creative options can be quite uncomfortable. Over time, however, as teams become accustomed to the creative process members can become more skilled at the process.

The chart below identifies the selected need and ten brainstormed options.

Mission	Need	Options
Learn, Love and Live together peacefully	To be convinced that even as my son grows up we can still be close	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He could come home at night 2. Family Therapy 3. Hire a mentor to take him out 4. Get him involved in after school activities 5. ART services 6. Get involved in some hobbies (parent) 7. Text message when out late 8. Plan a trip together 9. Invite girlfriend to house once per week 10. Find an "empty nesters" support group

After needs are presented and selected, and options brainstormed, benchmarks should be selected for measurement. Once a need statement has been chosen for action, the goal statement should be drawn directly from that statement. That goal statement should answer the question **"if this need were met, the behavior we would see would be ____."** The behavior or anchor goal should be framed in positive rather than negative terms even though it may be easier to count a reduction of negatives. Any needs statements could be selected from the example we've been using and paired with an increase in the

number of nights that he was home with his family. Notice that this goal is framed as increasing the number of nights home rather than reducing curfew violations.

Once the desired benchmark or anchor goal has been established, the Care Coordinator should work with the team to identify how the information will be gathered as well as the frequency of review. In the example below the Care Coordinator has generated the Benchmark/Anchor Goal (He will be home on time) and the indicator (number of nights at home). The team can be engaged first in approving or ratifying that benchmark and then helping select the process for knowing. In the example below, three options include having the mother report, review probation filings or having the young person keep a calendar. Once the process has been selected then the frequency of gathering information is identified. This reflects how often a Team Member will gather information about progress on the benchmark. Gathering information is different than review, which should also be negotiated. In the sample below the Team may elect to use the Mother’s report as the indicator by which information is gathered. They would plan for the Care Coordinator to get this information from the mother each week. However, the team would plan on reviewing the results every three months and plan for the Care Coordinator to ask weekly but decide that the team should review quarterly. Care Coordinators should empower teams to use easy counts as a placeholder for progress. An easy count is one that can be summarized simply and avoids getting caught up too much detail to make sense.

Sample Benchmarking Process					
Mission	Need	Benchmark Anchor Goal	How You Will Know? Choose One?	How Often Will You Ask?	How Often you Will Review?
Learn, Love and Live together peacefully	To be convinced that even as my son grows up we can still be close	If this need were met he would be home on time. Indicator becomes the number of nights home on time.	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother’s report (verbal) <input type="checkbox"/> Probation Violations for Curfew <input type="checkbox"/> Youth calendar	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly

The Child and Family Team should review Benchmarks or Anchor Goals regularly to determine whether the team’s efforts are producing the desired outcomes. If improvement isn’t noted then new strategies should be sought or structured rather than changing needs statements. This concentration on results with regular measurement and reviews helps everyone on the team stay focused on a positive target while holding all team members accountable for working together over time to meet needs.