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Doing Whatever It Takes:

Building Responsive Service Systems for Children and Youth in Complex Service Situations

CMHO/OACAS Joint Conference

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Who We Are

- ❑ **Lydia Sai-Chew**, M.S.W., R.S.W., Manager, Community/Family Support Services, Griffin Centre, Toronto
- ❑ **Sandra Kidd**, M.S.W., R.S.W., Social Worker, WIT Program, East Metro Youth Services, Toronto
- ❑ **Rahat Pye**, M.S.W., R.S.W., Social Worker, WIT Program, Griffin Centre, Toronto





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Service System Challenges

- ❑ Lack of coordination and communication
- ❑ The needs of the child/youth exceeds the capacity of any one agency or service sector
- ❑ Complex or unclear diagnoses that do not meet the mandate of any one organization
- ❑ Times of transition
- ❑ “Silo-ing” of services
- ❑ Reluctance to change





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Whatever It Takes (WIT)

- ❑ Facilitates the development of shared solutions for children/youth in complex service situations
- ❑ Complex clinical profiles
- ❑ Unclear and/or confusing mental health diagnosis
- ❑ Needs of child/youth are such that multiple agency/sector involvement is necessary



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How WIT Can Help

- ❑ Enhance the continuum of support and service
- ❑ Offer interim intensive case management
- ❑ Develop partnerships that facilitate access to specialized assessments and services
- ❑ Generate collaborative service responses
- ❑ Identify service system gaps and needs



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WIT's Vision

- ❑ Access to mental health system
- ❑ Easy navigation through the service system
- ❑ Seamless transitions
- ❑ Collaboration and coordination among organizations and sectors
- ❑ Service system is perceived as welcoming and inclusive
- ❑ Building of capacity in the service system
- ❑ Shared responsibility that is based on mutual trust and collaboration between partnerships





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Literature Supports that:

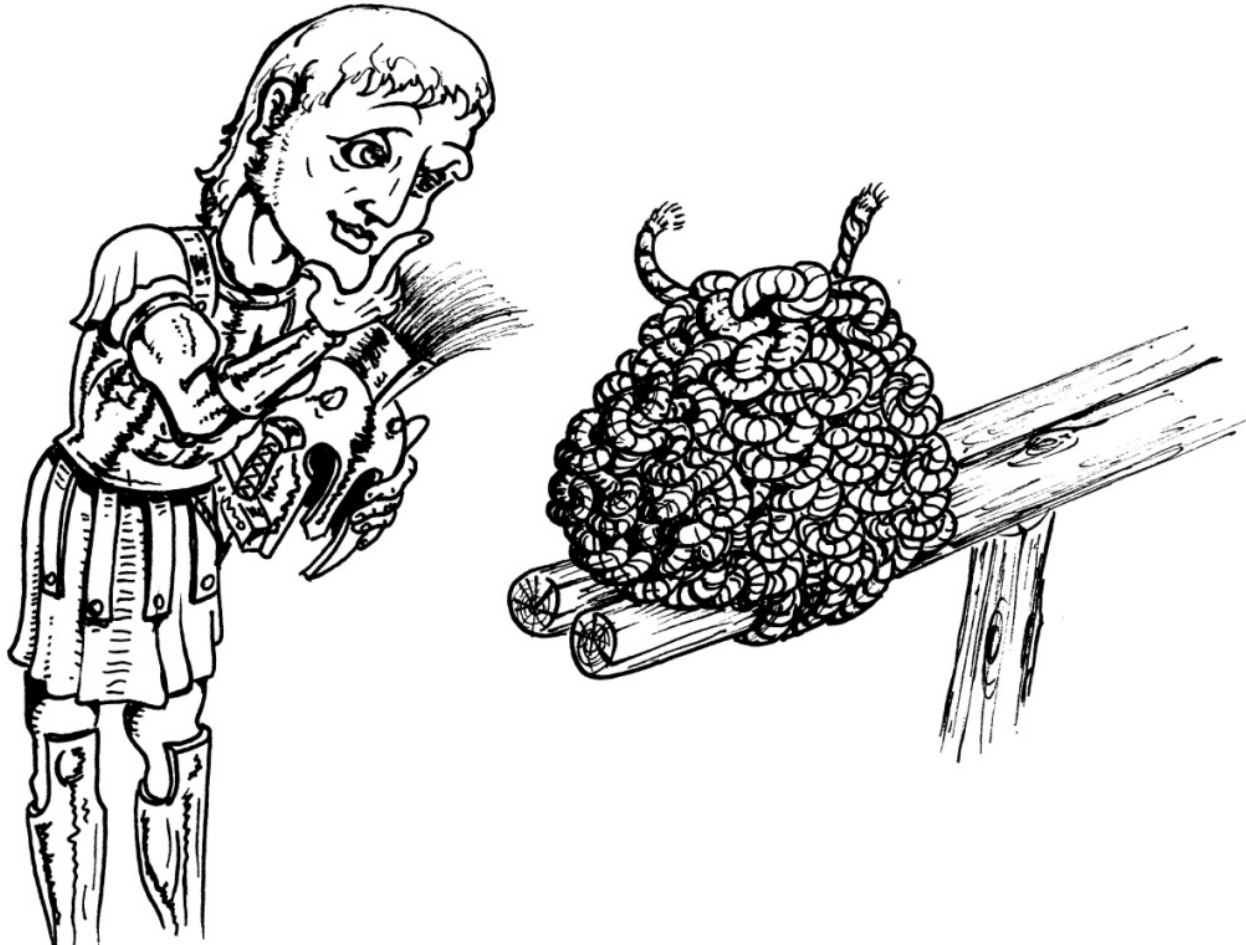
- ❑ To be effective, service planning and delivery must be coordinated at individual, program, and system levels
- ❑ Better outcomes are achieved by utilizing a community based partnership approach
- ❑ An ideal model of services and supports is one that does not create artificial barriers and gaps
- ❑ Sound evaluation practices be put in place to inform stakeholders of what is working





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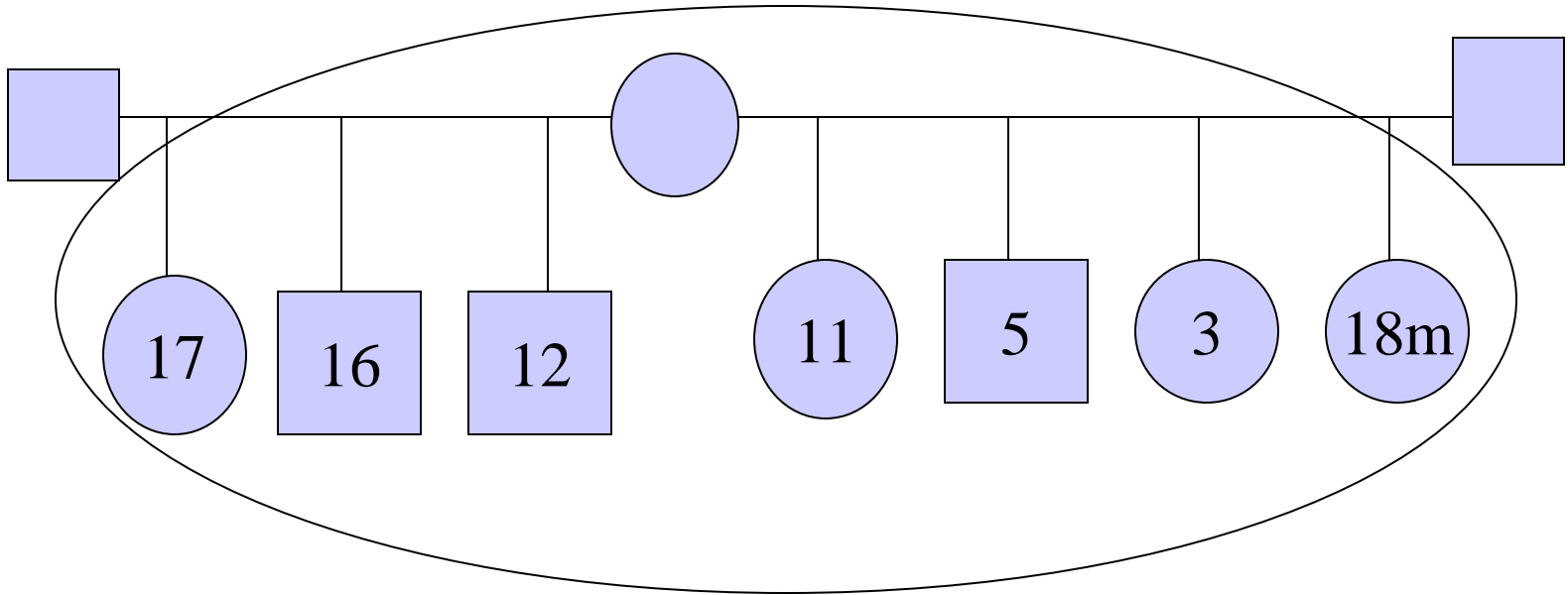
What makes a service situation complex?



What makes a service situation complex?

- ❑ Lack of clinical formulation
- ❑ Many service providers are involved and each have their own perspective
- ❑ Time limited nature of services
- ❑ Specific mandates of service providers
- ❑ Lack of resources
- ❑ Complex clinical profile of child/youth/family
- ❑ Communication between agencies and/or sectors

Case Presentation





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Family Profile

- ❑ Single mother
- ❑ 7 children, ages 18 months – 17 years
- ❑ Experienced violence in home country
- ❑ Each child has identified needs, such as autism, developmental disability, depression, conflict with the law, drug and alcohol use
- ❑ Mother is illiterate
- ❑ Mother has medical issues



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Referral Request

- ❑ Referral initiated from community hospital requesting long term case management
- ❑ No agency has been able to assume service coordination for the entire family
- ❑ Multiple agencies are involved but all have time limited and specific mandates

What do we do?





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How to Identify Gaps in Service

- ❑ Use our own clinical experience/formulation
- ❑ Speak to all involved parties ie service providers and family members
- ❑ Consult with internal agency team
- ❑ Consult with relevant community services
- ❑ Psychiatric or psychological consultation
- ❑ Systems approach
- ❑ Strengths based



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Challenges

- ❑ Intra- and inter-agency politics
- ❑ Investment in one perspective
- ❑ Length of time of involvement
- ❑ Burn out
- ❑ Lack of resources
- ❑ Lack of clarity re clinical profile
- ❑ Fear, feelings of incompetence
- ❑ Perceived lack of flexibility

Community Meeting

- What is it?
 - Bring to the table all involved parties and any other party that can offer a new perspective/resource/relevant knowledge/etc.
- Why have it?
 - Generate solutions
 - Facilitate shared responsibility
 - Create and develop partnerships
 - Find innovative ways to work together

How do we know when our work is done?

- ❑ Shared clinical formulation
- ❑ Development of collaborative service plan with clear goals
- ❑ Focus for interventions is the service plan



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Contact us

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