

**Van Buren  
Community Mental Health Authority**

**Ends Monitoring Report**

**April 2022**

**SUBJECT: Children with Developmental Disabilities & Serious Emotional Disturbances**

**POLICY: There will be improved functioning in children and their families whose functioning is impaired by developmental disability or a mental/emotional condition.**

For children there will be improvement in their:

- a. **Functioning**
- b. **School performance**
- c. **Participation in their community**
- d. **Overall family functioning**

This is the thirteenth year of monitoring reports on the Children's End cited above and the interpretation of the end cited below. This is the second part of a two-part monitoring report on this End.

The current report provides data collected by Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) using the Youth Services Survey (YSS). (In March 2022, results from other outcome data collected for youth served was reported.) The current report provides evidence of meeting the portions of the statements highlighted in yellow.

***CEO Interpretation: (Portions addressed in current report are highlighted in yellow)***

***Improved functioning*** means that families of children served will indicate the child has improved functioning and outcomes as indicated by a validated instrument.

***Improved school performance*** means that children served in intensive programs will demonstrate improvement in grades and school attendance according to school records. Families of children served will indicate improved school performance.

***Improved participation in their community*** means that families and children served will indicate higher levels of social connection in their community. Additionally, children served in intensive programs will increase the number of community activities in which they participate.

***Improved overall family functioning*** means that families served will indicate satisfaction with family life, and having social and family supports. Additionally, families served in intensive services will have fewer substantiated abuse and neglect issues.

***Monitoring report***

***Youth Services Survey***

The Youth Services Survey (YSS) developed by the Mental Health Statistics Improvement Program was the instrument used to determine improvement in the areas of outcomes, improved functioning and social connectedness and family life. The YSS was chosen because it has been validated as a meaningful instrument; it is in the public domain and thus free to use; and it is recommended by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency. VBCMh administered the survey to families served annually from 2009-2014. From 2015-present, SWMBH utilized the YSS and completed it with customers for all CMHs in the region. SWMBH's administration includes more domains such as the satisfaction with

services domain of the YSS. SWMBH randomly selected a sample of youth who received services at VBCMh. In some years, the number of VBCMh served families surveyed was few and VBCMh implemented its own survey utilizing the relevant portions of the YSS with families on paper, turned in anonymously. However, in both 2020 and 2021, this methodology was not feasible and the decision was made to utilize the SWMBH results. SWMBH did increase the number of VBCMh served families in the survey conducted in December 2020 however, the number of participants dropped in the most recent survey. The number of participants is less than half the number surveyed when VBCMh was able to conduct its own survey. The survey conducted by SWMBH does use a large enough regional sample to have confidence that the survey results represent the total population of families served throughout the region, however was low for all participant CMHs and thus SWMBH’s report does not break out results by CMH as it has in the past.)

**Regional data**

The YSS survey administered through SWMBH included four additional domains but omits the scores for the Functioning domain. SWMBH reported an overall drop in scores on the YSS and in particular on the Outcomes and Social Participation domains. This is also seen nationally and in VBCMh’s data.

	Access	Participation into treatment	Cultural Sensitivity	Appropriateness of treatment	Outcomes	Social Connectedness
SWMBH 2020/201	92	94	95	85	83	91
SWMBH 2021/2022	91	95	98	83	77	85

SWMBH’s scores are reported as simple percentages of those who agree or strongly agree and SWMBH only provides the data set to VBCMh for VBCMh served families so additional analyses of regional data beyond what is reported above cannot be performed.

SWMBH did conduct a focus group to obtain qualitative data that may help explain the drop in scores. The focus group pointed to impacts of COVID pandemic causing more stress on families contributed as well as difficulties accessing services due to staff changes, illnesses (in both staff and the families).

**Comparisons with Oregon**

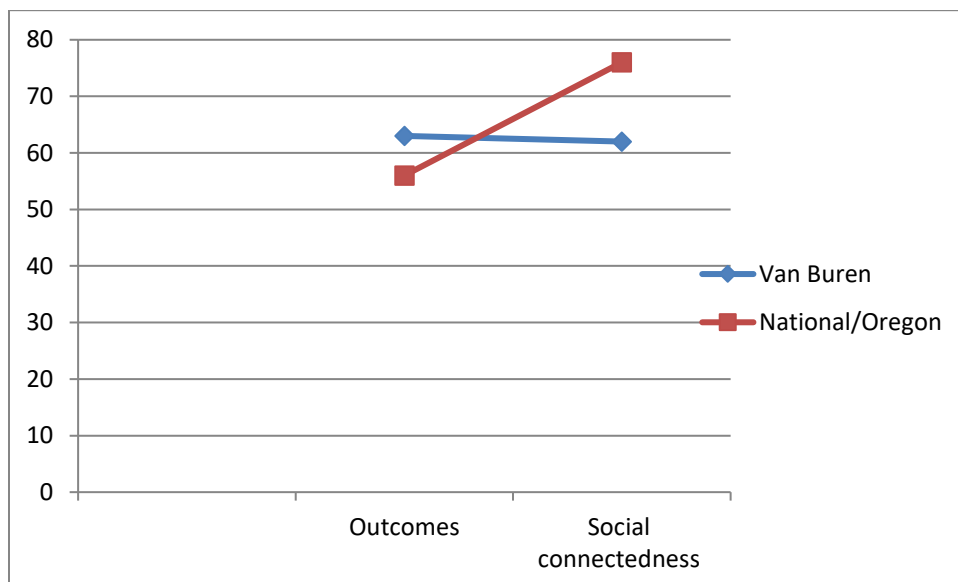
VBCMh survey results were compared to Oregon as the benchmark, as in previous years. In order to compare scores with the State of Oregon, computation of the section scores, called domain scores, were calculated following the same methodology as in Oregon. A domain score that averaged 3.5 or greater was considered positive, and only those scores for persons answering two-thirds of the questions in a section were counted. Domain scores require a consistently positive response to individual items within a section in order to characterize a responder as having positive perceptions of that area. Domain scores are a more robust comparative indicator than the simple in agreement percentages used by SWMBH.

The **Outcomes of Treatment** domain looks for improvement in the quality of life in such areas as handling daily life, satisfaction with family and doing better in school. As noted above, In the past, the **Daily Functioning** domain was also calculated separately, but this year neither SWMBH or Oregon

reported this domain separately from Outcomes. So VBCMh is also blending this into one reported domain. The **Social Connectedness and Family Life** domain looks for the availability of social support for the family and use of community resources outside of mental health services. Some studies indicate that strong Social Connectedness scores are a good predictor of longer-term positive outcomes.

VBCMh scores and Oregon scores also dropped this year. VBCMh scores remained higher than Oregon on the Outcomes domain but fall farther than Oregon on Social Connectedness of Families

	Van Buren	National
<b>Outcomes</b>	63	56
<b>Social connectedness</b>	62	76



**Review of YSS results and End’s interpretation:**

**Improved functioning** means that families of children served will indicate the child has improved functioning and outcomes as indicated by a validated instrument that includes handling of daily life, doing better in school, improved coping skills and being able to participate in activities the child wishes. The interpretive statement on Improved functioning lines up with the YSS domain of Outcomes of Treatment, and as shown above, the scores in this domain are significantly higher than the national baseline data. With the low number of respondents from VBCMh this year, the comparisons are somewhat suspect. However the decrease in scores in the SWMBH region, Oregon and at VBCMh do consistently point to families and youth are continuing to struggle more than prior to the pandemic.

**Improved school performance** means that families of children served will indicate improved school performance.

One item on the YSS inquires about the family's perception that the child is doing better in school. Over the years of using this instrument, a majority of families served by VBCMh and in the national baseline data agreed or strongly agreed that school performance was improved since they started treatment. Last year, VBCMh scores were down slightly on this item but this year they fell to 57% of families agreeing their child was doing better in school. The national sample score also fell dramatically to 52%. VBCMh score is higher but the overall downward trend points as other data also has that youth and families are especially struggling.

***Improved participation in their community*** means that families and children served will indicate higher levels of social connection in their community. Families served by VBCMh and in the national sample saw significant drops in scores in the social connectedness domain. Families served by reported lower satisfaction in this area compared to previous years and to the national sample. Oregon did not break out scores in this report for youth in rural areas. In the past, the rural youth scores have been lower and may serve as a better comparison with VBCMh. Continuing to build in social supports into family life needs to be a focus of our communities that will improve the lives of youth utilizing mental health services.

***Improved overall family functioning*** means that families served will indicate satisfaction with family life and having social and family supports.

The average scores for the items asking about satisfaction with family life, getting along better with family, and having social and family support are part of the social connectedness scale described above are part of the scores that decreased.

### **Comparison with previous years' data**

Comparing scores over the past thirteen years shows the scores for VBCMh as consistently higher than nationally reported data until this year when the social connectedness scale was lower for VBCMh. The drop in scores was true for the entire SWMBH region this year. SWMBH reports that the PIHPs have asked the state to change the instrument utilized for this survey because the length of the survey causes many people to decline to participate. The low participation rate likely contributed to the drop in scores as well. However all of the data reviewed indicates that nationwide families and youth receiving mental health services are especially struggling right now and are in need of continued and increased support.

All of the monitoring data for the Children's End is summarized in the attached table.

### **BOARD PROMPTS**

1. Is the interpretation by the CEO reasonable?
2. Is the evidence relevant and compelling?
3. Does this information lead the Board to believe they need to refine their Ends?