

Wisconsin Community of Practice on Autism Spectrum Disorders and Other Developmental Disabilities

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Community of Practice

“Groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their understanding and knowledge of this area by interacting on an ongoing basis”

A Guide to Managing Knowledge, Cultivating Communities of Practice, Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, William Snyder, 2002, p4



What is a Community of Practice?

- A *mindset*, a *way of working* that promotes shared work and moves away from isolated activity
- **Inclusive framework** for creating dialogue around *who and what is known* as well as *who and what we need to know*
- A **structure** that enables routine *communication*, *learning* and *action* among individuals and groups that agree to meet regularly to improve current practice

Why this approach?

A way of working

Involving those who do shared work

Involving those who share issues

Always asking “who isn’t here?”

A way of learning

Create new knowledge grounded in ‘doing the work’

Involve those who can advocate for and make change



Community of Practice

Real leadership means bringing providers and families into the work as allies

Those who ‘do the work’ have important insights to share

Those that are the ‘intended beneficiaries’ have important goals that must frame the future work



Role of the Community of Practice

- Learning through *Community Building*
 - State-to-Local
 - Local-to-State
 - Local-to-Local
 - State-to-State (National Community of Practice on ASD)
- Focusing on issues *and* relationships
- Moving from single events to *year-round strategies*
- Moving from *separate work* to *shared work*:
 - Working across groups
 - Working across agencies

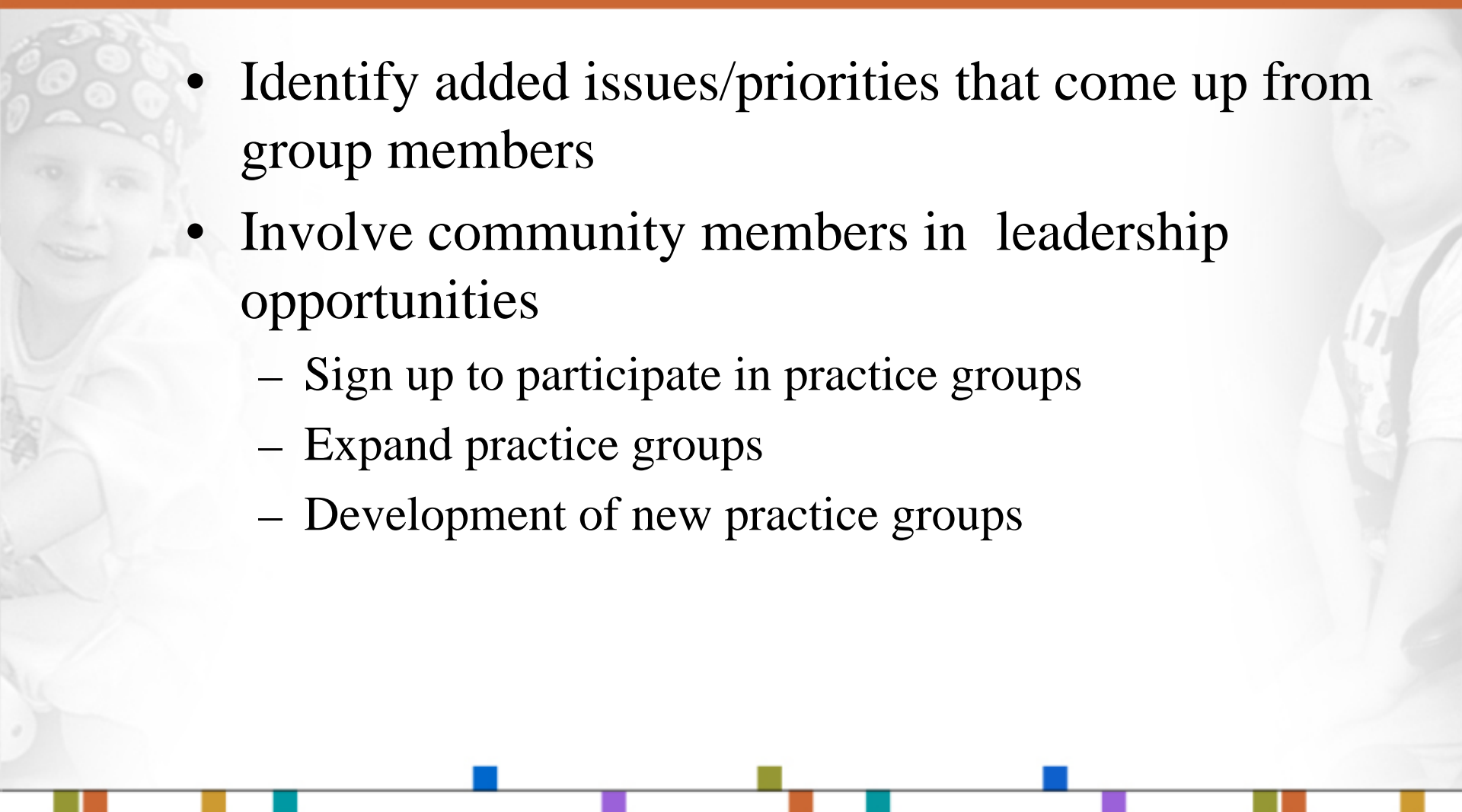
Role of the Practice Groups

- Practice groups are created to;
 - Realize our vision and mission
 - Provide structure and focus for our work as a community
- The community helps the practice group to focus on the big picture; the practice groups keep the community focused on the many dimensions of the issue



Practice Groups

- Identify added issues/priorities that come up from group members
- Involve community members in leadership opportunities
 - Sign up to participate in practice groups
 - Expand practice groups
 - Development of new practice groups



Role of the Steering Team

- Plan the Community of Practice formation
- Assure shared leadership with families and providers
- Support the work of the Practice Groups
- Assure that the Community of Practice's continued development meets emerging needs



Next Steps

- Highlight some of the major initiatives in WI
- Continue to expand and develop the Wisconsin Community of Practice on ASD network
- Meet 3 times in 2009
- Sign up and utilize www.sharedwork.org



Questions

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