



## STEP 3: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER ANALYZING THE NEEDS & GAPS

### *Analyzing the Gaps Overview*

The last step of the needs assessment and environmental scanning process is to assess gaps in services and infrastructure. In this important step, grantees indicate where and how services related to the shared indicators can be created or enhanced. With the gaps analysis, grantees will need to assess what types of systems or infrastructure developments are needed to address the shared indicators. After the needs assessment and environmental scanning process have been completed, grantees should be well-positioned for critical, strategic analysis. During this analysis phase, grantees will be guided in how to use the SS/HS Framework to review and consider any conclusions that may be drawn as well as how those conclusions can inform plans or move forward. These conclusions will inform the development of a comprehensive plan that is based on a strong understanding of where the project began. To analyze the data and identify next steps in the development of a comprehensive plan, the following questions should be considered:

- What needs of children and youth are going unmet;
- What available programs, supports, and services are designed to meet these needs;
- Are there any major problems not being addressed by a service, program, or activity;
- Are the children and youth at greatest risk receiving prevention programs, services, and supports? If not, why not;
- Are there duplicative services, programs, and supports attempting to address the same problem? If so, which are more effective and which are less so;
- Are those who are implementing the separate programs coordinating their efforts in any way;
- Are there documented policies and procedures for addressing behavioral health disparities; and
- Is there a blending of funding across these various programs and efforts?

In addition to the questions above, consider what is needed at a broader level (e.g., from state, community agencies, task forces, or interagency work groups) to support comprehensive planning, implementation, work force development efforts, and systems-change efforts. Other considerations include:

- Community-level coordination issues, including changes in state policies and regulations that can facilitate the blending of funding;
- Regional and/or statewide work force development issues; and
- Mechanisms available to share lessons learned with others in the state and across communities.

Addressing these concerns will help you organize the data from the needs assessment and environmental scan. Having a more complete understanding of both the needs and the resources at both the state and community level will lead to greater clarity about where the gaps and the most critical unmet needs exist. In addition, this process will highlight ways in which service delivery, policies, and funding structures can be improved. The CMT then works together to create a comprehensive work plan a direct response to address the highest priority needs and gaps.

Adapted from Safe Schools / Healthy Students Needs Assessment & Environmental Scan Guidance - SAMHSA 2013