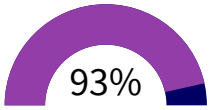
Cross-System Strategies to Support Children with Complex Behavioral Health Conditions Policy Academy/Learning Community 2026 Evaluation Summary

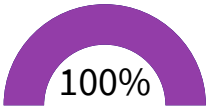
CMHIS hosted a **six-session, virtual policy academy/learning community** from June-August 2026 in partnership with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS), and the Link Center. The policy academy focused on cross-system strategies to support children with complex behavioral health conditions. It builds on a recently published report by Nancy Thaler, with contributions from Stacy L. Nonnemacher, PhD, that explores how systems can better support children with complex behavioral health needs who often receive services across several state agencies.

- The policy academy reconvened leaders from the nine states that participated in last year's Children's Summit and contributed to the Link Center report: **Colorado, Delaware, Kentucky, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Utah**.
- The state teams were encouraged to include staff from **Behavioral Health, Child Welfare, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), Brain Injury, and Medicaid** agencies.
- Through the course of the policy academy, participants **revisited the Link Center report's conclusions**, **reviewed evidence-based treatments** for children with complex needs, **applied implementation principles** to advance key findings in their states, and **exchanged strategies with peers**.
- The policy academy also helped each state team develop **tangible goals** informed by the publication.
- An anonymous feedback survey was distributed at the end of the series, and 15 out of 52 participants (29%) completed the survey. This brief report summarizes the responses.

OVERALL SATISFACTION



Very Satisfied/Satisfied with the overall quality of the policy academy

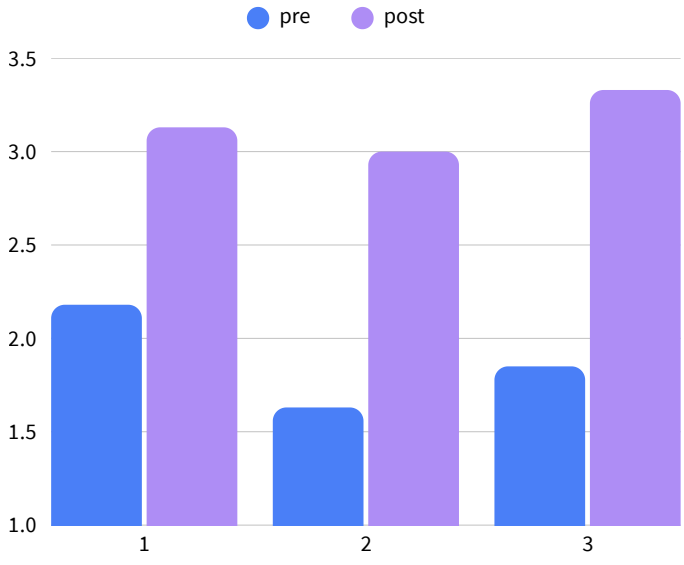


Would recommend this policy academy to a friend/colleague

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Rating scale: *1 - Not Confident to 4 - Very Confident*

Participants reported ***increased confidence*** across learning objectives from pre- to post-policy academy.



How confident are you in your ability to:

1. Explain how neurodevelopmental conditions, trauma, and adolescence intersect to cause dysregulated behavior, and how brain plasticity enables recovery and positive change.
2. Summarize the foundations and benefits of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Neurofeedback, and Somatic Therapy for children with complex conditions.
3. Identify the core components of the evidence-based practices (delivery, workforce needs, state policies that facilitate delivery).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

% Responded *Completely Agree* or *Agree*

The policy academy enhanced my knowledge.



The policy academy enhanced my skills.



I am confident in my ability to apply the knowledge and skills that I learned in my work.



IMPACT OF THE POLICY ACADEMY

Most participants (86.7%) said they plan to put what they learned into practice. Some examples of how they plan to do this are:

- Informing policy discussions
- Workforce development
- Establishing new partnerships with community providers
- Sharing content and resources with colleagues
- Convening with other state agencies to discuss next steps

STRENGTHS/OPPORTUNITIES

"Braiding very complex systems and services is an incredible challenge that was explained in a very practical way that could be implemented."

What about this policy academy was most useful to you?

Breakout discussions & peer sharing
"The opportunity to hear from other states and guided conversations."

Presenter expertise
"Hearing from a wide variety of experts regarding innovative ways to better meet the needs of children/youth with complex needs."

Session content and resources
"Sharing links and resources."

How could this policy academy be improved?

More participation from state agencies
"I wish more agencies from my state had joined."

Case examples
"More specific examples for states that have implemented these services."

Advanced preparation for breakout discussions
"Group discussions could have members better prepped by sending out topics beforehand."

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