

POLICY

The DADS Adult System of Care adopts a philosophy of the “Learning Organization.” This philosophy is briefly described below and weaves a pattern throughout every action that the System takes. This philosophy is adopted in an effort to be responsive to the changing needs of our customers; the idea is to be able to identify, assess and respond to changing needs on a continuous, real-time basis in an atmosphere of learning experimentation. It requires an open communication system with a continuous feedback loop so that timely adjustments can be made to innovative adaptations for the client and the system.

The process of learning is central to the “Learning Organization” philosophy. The people in a “Learning Organization” are expected to experiment. Innovation is the norm. Mistakes are viewed as learning experiences.

There are “five guiding principles”* at the core of a “Learning Organization:”

1. “Personal Mastery: Learning to expand our personal capacity to create the results we most desire.”
2. “Mental Models: Reflecting upon, continually clarifying and improving the internal picture of the World.”
3. “Shared Vision: Building a sense of commitment in a group by developing shared images of the future we seek to create.”
4. “Team Learning: Transforming conversational and collective thinking skills.”
5. “System Thinking: The language for describing and understanding the forces and interrelationships that shapes the behaviors of the system.”

The Department of Alcohol and Drug Services believes that in order to thrive, the organization must commit to self-reflection. If something we are doing is not working, it should be dropped in favor of something that does work. Such a system must be flexible and open to change – not as part of an annual review, but as part of an ongoing, constant process of self-review, analysis and action.

(Information for this policy was derived from the Managed Care Plan, Phase II and from The Fifth Discipline Field book: Strategies and tools for building a learning organization, by Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross and Smith*)