

FCC Connect

SEPTEMBER
2010



FCC ANNUAL CONFERENCE Champions for Children

October 18 - 20

Jacksonville Hyatt Regency Riverfront

Cost: \$119 / Night

Block Name: FCC Annual Conference

Keynote Speaker: Collins Tuohy

Collins shares a famously close bond with her adopted brother, Oher, as chronicled in the book and movie, *The Blind Side*. On the podium, Collins takes audiences through her journey with M... fellow student to close friend, confidant, and ultimately, ad...



HIGHLIGHTS

20 track sessions with multiple CEUs available, Awards Luncheon, Advocacy Training, Research Symposium and more!

Every day we are surrounded by “Champions for Children.” This year’s conference will highlight the “Champions” around us and what they mean to the system of care, the children and families they serve and the organizations that couldn’t do it without them. For every good champion needs to be rejuvenated, inspired and motivated and it is the focus and goal of the Florida Coalition for Children (FCC) to provide the trainings, networking and rewards that will invigorate all. This year the training session have been streamlined into five tracks (Direct Care, Management/Supervisory, Clinical, Program Administration/Systems Technology and Research) with expanded durations for all sessions; they will run 90

minutes to 2 hours. FCC is also excited to add a new track to the lineup this year: Independent Living. This is such a critical and timely subject that a day and half have been dedicated to the topic. We are excited to offer the variety and unique opportunities for every child welfare professional to continue striving for excellence and being a “Champion for Children.”



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LEGISLATIVE DATES

GENERAL ELECTION DAY:
NOVEMBER 2, 2010

ORGANIZATION SESSION:
NOVEMBER 16, 2010

2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION:
MARCH 8 TO MAY 6



LEGISLATIVE
CORNER

Progress Made on IV-E Waiver Extension

It's not exactly a hot news flash that extending Florida's unique-in-the-nation and overwhelmingly successful Title IV-E Child Welfare Demonstration Project – better known as the IV-E Waiver – is one of FCC's top priorities for the coming year.

On July 23rd of this year DCF Secretary Sheldon submitted a letter to the Administration for Children and Families requesting a five year extension of Florida's Waiver which is due to expire on September 30, 2011. Secretary Sheldon requested that ACF extend Florida's Waiver through September 30, 2016 "under the same terms and conditions as the original".

As most of you know, ACF's authority to grant new waivers has expired however it can approve extensions of existing ones. On July 29, 2010 Secretary Sheldon testified before a subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee in support of Florida's Waiver specifically and fundamentally reforming child welfare funding options in general to allow other states to strengthen child welfare without sacrificing federal support.

On September 13, 2010 Florida received the good news that our Waiver will be extended through July 31, 2012 – an additional 10 months. This short term extension will allow ACF to receive the final progress report on Florida's Waiver at which time a final decision will be made on granting the full five year extension. As Assistant DCF Secretary Don Winstead, who has headed up Florida's Waiver extension team, noted "I view this extension as extremely positive news and believe that it sets the stage for a full five year extension".

Child Welfare Community-Based Care: Risk, Liability and Reform

During the September board meeting in Tampa, the Coalition invited William Large of the Florida Justice Reform Institute (FJRI) to present on liability and risk. Mr. Large also provided some insight on the political and constitutional challenges. FCC has been working with FJRI to find relief for both the child welfare lead and service provider agencies around the state. Community Based Care (CBC) child welfare contracts are global risk contracts -- so the lead agency accepts an amount of money fixed by the State and agrees to provide all services required to all children referred regardless of changes in the contract or variables that might cause a negative financial impact. And it does not stop at the lead agency level. Provider agencies hold just as much risk or more. Some of these variables include the number of children referred for services, the severity of problems they have, the amount of services they require, and the cost of the services. Other risks involved in CBC contracts include laws or rules, insurance risk to cover the cost of specialized insurance coverage (e.g. sexual abuse), new services not specified in the contract, infrastructure risk due to extra data demands, and liability lawsuit because of the contract.

There have been incredible successes made in Florida's child welfare system in the past five a danger to a system that has seen the number of adoptions double, the number of dependent children increased the preservation of families in Florida.



KIDS BRIEF

ADOPTIONS OF FOSTER CHILDREN

After two consecutive record years, adoptions of Florida foster children fell by 11 percent in the 2009-10 fiscal year. Despite the decline, state officials highlighted the fact that more than 12,000 children in foster care have been adopted since 2007, which reduced the number of Florida children in foster care by almost 36 percent over that period. A total of 3,368 children were adopted during the most recent fiscal year, down from the record years of 3,777 in 2008-09 and 3,674 the prior year. The number of foster children available on any given day has dropped from about 1,000 to 850 since the Governor's Office launched the "Explore Adoption" public awareness campaign. In 2009, the state was awarded a \$9.7 million federal bonus for outpacing all other states in the number of adoptions of children from foster care.

CYBER SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

With the start of another school year, state Attorney General Bill McCollum reminded parents, teachers, guidance counselors and school administrators to keep students "cybersafe." McCollum urged concerned adults to request CyberSafety presentations for their schools. The presentations, which are offered by the Attorney General's Office, have already reached more than a half-million students in more than 1,400 middle and high schools throughout the state. The 50-minute interactive program teaches students about safe use of the internet, including tactics predators often use to identify and lure victims and ways to tell when another student may be in danger online. Victim advocates, school resource officers and volunteers from the Attorney General's Office have been presenting the information to schools for the past three years. State officials prepared for the August 1 effective date of an important new protection law for vulnerable Floridians, developing new enhanced background screening procedures and launching a website providing information on the new requirements. Both the Department of Children & Families and the Agency for Health Care Administration developed web pages to help associations and care providers understand the procedures associated with the new background check requirements. The legislation requires employees to pass both a state

and federal fingerprint screening, equivalent to a level 2 background check, before they can work with elders, children and persons with disabilities in certain care settings. Health care employees working in residential or home care settings must have a level 2 screening before having contact with clients or having access to client property, funds or living areas. The new procedures arose out of a South Florida newspaper investigation that found that a number of convicted criminals were working in jobs that put them in direct contact with vulnerable Floridians, and in some cases those vulnerable individuals were victimized by the care workers.

HELPING JUVENILE PROBATIONERS WITH SCHOOL

Hoping to slow the high number of juvenile arrests in the heart of one of Florida's largest cities, state and local officials held a "Back-to-School Extravaganza" intended to prepare local juvenile probationers for a successful school year. More than 100 Fort Lauderdale area youths were given free school supplies, most of it donated by probation employees in Broward County. The fast-paced program included guest speakers, prize raffles and workshops on topics including teen health, vocational/job training, teen dating and school readiness.

YOUTH DELEGATES

The Florida League of Cities hosted more than 60 young delegates from Florida's municipal youth councils at the organization's 84th annual conference in Hollywood. The occasion marked the third year that youth delegates attended the League's annual conference, where city officials from across the state hoped to educate, train and inspire the young delegates to become the state's leaders of the future. The young attendees participated in several youth-oriented discussions on such themes as "So You Want to Be a Leader?" and "Making Communities in the Cyber Age."

RACE TO THE TOP

FUNDING Florida educators and education officials turned the heartbreak of a few months ago into a victory celebration when the state was selected to receive as much as \$870 million in

education funding to improve the state's lowest performing schools. The state was edged out of the first phase of the program, part of the \$4.35 billion education reform competition among the states, but in late August learned that it was part of the winning group of states in Phase 2. A few days later, Governor Charlie Crist announced that Florida was among states that would receive an additional \$170 million. Crist hosted a celebration at his alma mater, St. Petersburg High School, where he was joined by local school officials and state and local teacher union officials. The state's partnership with teacher unions is largely credited for Florida success in the second round of the funding competition.



IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE...IT'S HUNDREDS OF FALLING GOLF BALLS!

Nearly 300 golf balls fell from the sky June 26 at the climax of United for Families' newest community event, the Chopper Dropper and Mini Golf Tournament. The event was held at 76 Golf World, in Stuart, and featured a putt-putt tournament and helicopter golf-ball drop. Numbered golf balls assigned to participants were dropped onto a driving range from a helicopter. The four closest balls to the pin won cash prizes totaling \$1,000. Proceeds from the event will help fund the Road to Success program, a United for Families signature program that prepares foster teens for adulthood by teaching independent living skills.



NEW 2011 HEART GALLERY OPENS IN CENTRAL FLORIDA

Family Services of Metro Orlando unveiled the all-new 2011 Heart Gallery on September 15 -- designed by the International Academy of Design and Technology, and furnished by IKEA. "Along with the Central Florida community, we recently celebrated our 1,000th adoption from foster care," said Greg Kurth, CEO of Family Services of Metro Orlando. Last year, 229 foster children were adopted in Orange and Osceola counties -- a sixth consecutive record. More than 120 Central Florida children remain in need of the love of a family.

AWARDS ASSIST CHILDREN AFFECTED BY OIL SPILL

Lutheran Services Florida received financial support from Lutheran agencies and churches across the U.S. for Camp Beyond the Horizon.

The Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation awarded \$15,000 in grants to Camp Beyond the Horizon. LCMS World Relief and Human Care awarded a \$5,000 emergency grant. Lutheran Disaster Response donated \$5,000 to the camps. And Ascension Lutheran Day School in Thousand Oaks, California, designated \$2,000 for services to children attending the camps.

In partnership with the Florida Department of Children and Families and other local sponsors, LSF provided a free therapeutic camp experience for more than 150 children from kindergarten through sixth grade in areas of Florida affected by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The weeklong camps, held during July and August in the Pensacola area, were developed to help children deal with their emotions concerning the disaster.

Thrivent Financial is a Fortune 500 financial services membership organization. LCMS World Relief and Human Care is the mercy arm of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Lutheran Disaster Response is a collaborative ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Lutheran Services Florida is a statewide, nonprofit human services agency dedicated to helping all people in need regardless of religious affiliation, age or national origin. Headquartered in Tampa, the agency has more than 60 programs located throughout Florida. Since it was established in 1982, LSF has helped more than 800,000 children and families. LSF's mission is to bring God's healing, hope and help to people in need.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Children's Movement - Milk Party Rallies

Sept. 6 - Sept. 30
Throughout the State
www.ChildrensMovementFlorida.org

The Children's Cabinet

Sept. 30, 1- 5 pm
Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County
2300 High Ridge Road
Boynton Beach



Kids Golf Tournament

Oct. 11, 10 am - 5:30 pm
Black Diamond Quarry Course
2600 W. Black Diamond Circle
Lecanto, FL
Danielle.Damato@KidsCentralinc.org

Children's Network of South West Florida's 5th Annual Walk to Prevent Child Abuse

October 16, 7:30 am
Pelican Preserve
Ft. Myers
info@childnetSWFL.org

TEEN DRIVING

FATALITIES While teen drivers continue to have the highest rate of involvement in motor vehicle crashes, the number of deaths among drivers and passengers ages 15 to 19 fell by more than 20 percent from 2008 to 2009, according to the latest figures from the state's motor vehicle agency. In its 2009-2010 annual report, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles said fatalities in that age group fell from 193 to 153. However, teen drivers continue to be overrepresented in terms of crash frequency, showing the highest rate of crash involvement of any age group – 381 per 10,000 licensed drivers. The department said the positive gains can be attributed at least in part to Florida's 2009 primary seat belt law, numerous education and awareness campaigns, strategic law enforcement initiatives and improvements in vehicle safety. The department also established a new "Drive with CARE" website for teen drivers and their parents, at www.flhsmv.gov/teens. The agency's full annual report is available at www.flhsmv.gov/html/AgencyAnnualReport2010.pdf.

NEW POPULATION STATISTICS TOOL

Parents, educators, pediatricians – and anyone else who provides age-based services – may benefit from a new tool available on the state Department of Health's website. The new population query system is designed for those working with population-based health or health-related services, making it easy to obtain population demographic information for the state or any county, and can be customized to produce statistics for specific age groups or even individual ages. The site includes several standard reports but also gives users the ability to query the population figures to tailor their own reports. In addition, the new system will serve as the model for birth and death query systems to be available soon. The standard reports already available on the new query system include population figures based on year, age groups, sex and race, broken down by county. The population query system is available online at www.floridacharts.com/FLQuery/Population/PopulationRpt.aspx.

HEALTHIER EATING FOR KIDS

In an effort to promote more healthy eating and combat obesity among Florida children, students at more than 130 elementary schools in 26 Florida counties will be provided a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables as snack options through a U.S. Department of Agriculture program. The schools applied to participate in the

program, which is available to elementary schools where at least half the students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. The funds provided to each participating school depends on how many days per week fresh fruits and vegetables are offered to the children. Decisions on what to serve and where to purchase the fresh food will be made locally. More information about the program is available at www.fldoe.org/FNM/ffvp.

READ FOR THE RECORD

Education officials are hoping to set a new reading record, all part of a promotion to provide free books to children in need. On October 7, tens of thousands of Florida school children are expected to participate in the Read for the Record campaign, through which the Pearson Foundation will donate brand-new books to children in need when the book is read online. Everyone who reads Ezra Jack Keats' classic book *The Snowy Day* at www.wegivebooks.org is automatically registered toward setting a potential new world's record for group reading. More information is available at www.readfortherecord.org.

DROPOUT PREVENTION

Educators and others who work to keep Florida children in school will gather for the 2010 Dropout Prevention Institute/School Attendance Symposium in Lake Buena Vista. The gathering, which will be held October 4-7, will offer more than 80 workshops on topics of interest to public and private school administrators, teachers, school social workers, faith- and community-based leaders, attendance specialists and others who provide services to students who are truant or at risk of not graduating from high school. More information about the conference is available at www.dropoutprevention.org/conferences.

FOSTER FAMILY RECRUITER HONORED

A Tampa Bay-area woman who has devoted almost three decades to helping children was honored by the Department of Children and Families with its 2010 Excellence in Child Welfare Service Award. Lauralyn Segur, director of licensing and recruitment for the foster care system in Pasco and Pinellas counties, works for Eckerd Community Alternatives, the local community-based care agency that partners with DCRF to provide services to children in foster care. DCF Secretary George Sheldon called Segur "one of the state's most tireless and passionate advocates for children." Segur has worked with children in the private sector, with the old Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, and now Eckerd Community Alternatives. She has four children, including a 24-year-old adopted daughter who spent most of her

childhood in foster care.

"STATE OF THE CHILD" SPEECH

Delivering a "State of the Child" speech at the 2010 Dependency Summit, Department of Children & Families Secretary George Sheldon said Florida has become a national leader in child welfare due to its substantial progress in preserving families and providing safe and permanent homes for children affected by abuse or neglect. Sheldon conceded that Florida may not yet have the best child welfare system in the nation, but said the state is setting an example for the rest of the country in how it works to preserve families and protect children. Sheldon cited several initiatives begun during the Crist Administration, and noted that Florida was the first state allowed to use federal dollars based on the needs of children and not solely on children and foster care. The Dependency Summit brought together about 2,000 participants, ranging from judicial and law enforcement to child advocates and youth in foster care.

Florida Coalition for Children Members

Big Bend CBC
Boys Town - Central FL
Boys Town - North FL
Boys Town - South FL
Brevard Family Partnership
Camelot Community Care
Carlton Manor
Child & Family Connections
ChildNet
Children's Home Society of FL
Children's Network of Southwest FL
CBC of Seminole

Community Partnership for Children
Daniel
Devereux
Eckerd Youth Alternatives
Eckerd Community Alternatives
Families First Network
Family Preservation of FL
Family Services of Metro Orlando
Family Support Services of North Florida
Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches
Florida United Methodist Children's Home
Friends of Children and Families
Gift of Life Adoptions
Gulf Coast Jewish Family

Services
Heartland for Children
Hibiscus Children's Center
Hillsborough Kids Inc.
Human Services Associates
Intervention Services
Kids Central, Inc.
Kids in Distress
Lifestream Behavioral
Lutheran Services Florida
Mental Health Care, Inc.
Neighbor to Family
One Church One Child FL
One Hope United
Partnership for Strong Families
Providence Management
Real Life Children's Ranch

Sarasota Family YMCA
SOS Children's Village
St. Augustine Youth Services
Sunrise Community
The Children's Home
The Haven
United for Families
Villages of Hope
Youth Haven
Youth Villages

CANDIDATES & ELECTED OFFICIALS

Candidates for statewide or legislative office have taken on an awesome task. Becoming familiar with the complexity and diversity of issues facing the 4th largest state in the nation is a huge challenge. That's where you come in. We encourage all of our members to spend the months of September and October meeting with your legislative elected officials and candidates to educate them on child welfare in Florida. FCC has prepared a brief guide you can use. Just go to our website at <https://flchildren.site-ym.com/?PublicLibrary> and click on candidate brochure.

Below are some successes that show privatization's remarkable success story.

Total Number of Children Served

- Before CBC 47,500
- After CBC 73,000

Average Number of Adoptions Annually

- Before CBC 1,500
- After CBC 3,000+

Children with Open Court Case

- Before CBC 47,000
- After CBC 31,800

Number of Older Youth Served

- Before CBC 1,600
- After CBC 3,300

Children Removed from their Home

- Before CBC 29,600
- After CBC 19,800

Monthly Visits Average

- Before CBC 85%
- After CBC 98+%

Children Maintained Safely at Home with Services

- Before CBC 11,600
- After CBC 42,000

Funding

Before CBC - Followed the Service Provider
After CBC - Follows Need of the Child

FCC's FEATURED MEMBERS

These members have just been or will soon be featured on FCC's facebook group page.



Sarasota Family YMCA

Intervention Services

Camelot Community Care

Family Support Services of North Florida

Friends of Children and Families

Gift of Life Adoptions

St. Augustine Youth Services

Youth Villages

Big Bend CBC

Lutheran Services Florida

200 WEST COLLEGE AVENUE
SUITE 113
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301

TEL: 850-561-1102 FAX: 850-222-7117

WWW.FLCHILDREN.ORG

FCC Staff

Mike Cusick
CEO/President

Research Director

Ben Fink
IT & Performance
Analytics Director

Debbie Mortham
Governmental Affairs
Director

Diane DeMark
Statewide Director of
CWPMHP

Milton Burns
Office Manager

Tracy Henningsen
Policy Director

Mary Ann Davenport
CWPMHP Coordinator
Renetta Williams
CWPMHP Coordinator

