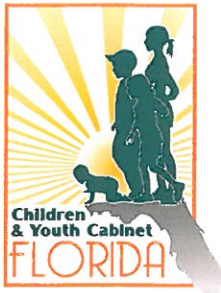


# Florida Children and Youth Cabinet

*2014  
Annual  
Report*







# The Florida Children and Youth Cabinet

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January 30, 2015

To the People, Governor, and Members of the Legislature:

On behalf of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet, I am pleased to present this Annual Report. As directed by Florida Statute 402.56, this report provides an update of the Cabinet's activities including its meetings, workgroups, and initiatives. Throughout 2014, Cabinet members have committed to work diligently together as a team to seek tangible solutions to the challenges facing Florida's children and their families today. As directed in statute, the Cabinet is committed to ensuring that Florida is the first place families consider when asked, "Where would be the best place to raise our children?" As set forth in its mission statement, this Cabinet was established:

*To ensure that the public policy of Florida relating to children and youth promotes interdepartmental collaboration and program implementation in order for services designed for children and youth to be planned, managed, and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the self-sufficiency, safety, economic stability, health, and quality of life of all children and youth in Florida.*

A snapshot of information contained within this Annual Report includes:

- A collection of community highlights that were presented at each Cabinet meeting.
- A status of each of the Cabinet's current workgroups.
- A summary of the efforts and next steps for the Florida Youth Commission.
- Implementation of an interagency agreement to coordinate services for children served by more than one agency.
- Updates on the Cabinet's headline indicators – child well-being measurements.

The Cabinet members' staff and the many stakeholders who participated in workgroup activities are to be commended for their contributions to advance the work of the Cabinet. Our gratitude goes out to Governor Rick Scott, Lieutenant Governor Carlos Lopez-Cantera, Senate President Andy Gardiner, and Speaker of the House Steve Crisafulli for their leadership, support and dedication to the vision that all children in Florida grow up safe, healthy, educated and prepared to meet their full potential.

We are anticipating another productive year and looking forward to making great strides to benefit Florida's children and youth.

Sincerely,

Wansley Walters  
Chair, Florida Children and Youth Cabinet



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## FLORIDA CHILDREN AND YOUTH CABINET



The Florida Legislature found that all state agencies and programs that touch the lives of children and youth must work in a coordinated and comprehensive fashion, with an emphasis on providing a continuum of services that benefit children from prenatal care through programs supporting successful transition to self-sufficient adulthood. As such, the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet (Cabinet) was created and signed into law on July 11, 2007. The Cabinet is codified in Florida Statute 402.56. The statutory charge of the Cabinet is to ensure the public policy of the state relating to children and youth is best aligned for promoting interdepartmental collaboration in program implementation. This collaboration helps to ensure that services designed for children and youth are planned, managed, and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the self-sufficiency, safety, economic stability, health, and quality of life of children across Florida.

### VISION

All children in Florida grow up safe, healthy, educated and prepared to meet their full potential.

### MISSION

To ensure that the public policy of Florida relating to children and youth promotes interdepartmental collaboration and program implementation in order for services designed for children and youth to be planned, managed and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the self-sufficiency, safety, economic stability, health and quality of life of all children and youth in Florida.

The Cabinet created a strategic plan that requires creative and collaborative approaches to initiate action towards facilitating achievement of the following goals:

- Promote increased efficiency and improved service delivery by all governmental agencies that provide services for children, youth, and their families.
- Ensure that all children live in permanent, safe and nurturing environments.
- Ensure that all children in Florida have access to high-quality preventative, primary, specialty, and long-term healthcare.
- Assure high quality, seamless, research-based education and learning opportunities for all children.
- Build, allocate and align sufficient resources and functions to meet the goals set forth by the Children and Youth Cabinet.

Nationally, approximately 27 states have a council or committee dedicated to coordinating services among state agencies. Florida is one of eight states that operate a Children's Cabinet supported by the Governor and participates in the Children's Cabinet Network managed by the Forum for Youth Investment ([www.forumfyi.org/readyby21/childrens-cabinets](http://www.forumfyi.org/readyby21/childrens-cabinets)). In addition, children cabinets and coordinating bodies have been established within communities across Florida and model their efforts after the Cabinet to achieve positive outcomes for children and youth.

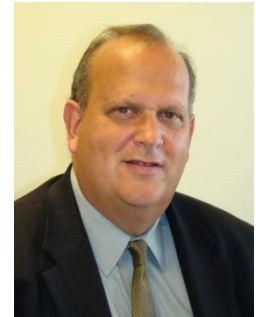
As set forth in Florida Statute 402.56, the Cabinet consists of the following members as of December 2014.

## Florida Children and Youth Cabinet Membership



**Wansley Walters**  
Chairman, Florida Children and Youth Cabinet  
Former Secretary, Department of Juvenile Justice  
Partner, Ballard Partners

**Alan Abramowitz**  
Director  
Guardian ad Litem



**Ellen Anderson**  
State Advocacy Vice President  
Florida Hospital Association  
*Governor Appointee*

**John H. Armstrong, MD**  
Surgeon General and Secretary  
Department of Health







**Michael Carroll**  
Secretary  
Department of Children and Families



**Christina K. Daly**  
Secretary  
Department of Juvenile Justice



**Berthy de la Rosa-Aponte**  
Disabilities Advocate  
*Designee of the Attorney General*



**Elizabeth Dudek**  
Secretary  
Agency for Health Care Administration



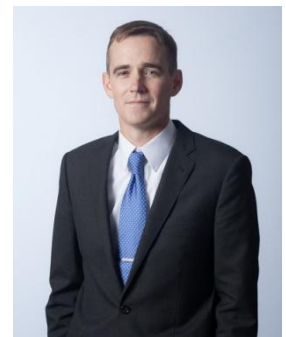
**Zackary Gibson**  
Director and Chief Child Advocate  
Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection

**Representative Gayle Harrell**  
*Designee of the Speaker of the Florida House*



**David Lawrence, Jr.**  
Education and Community Leadership Scholar at the University of Miami's  
School of Education and Human Development  
President, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation  
Chair, The Children's Movement of Florida  
*Governor Appointee*

**Rodney MacKinnon**  
Interim Director  
Office of Early Learning





**Barbara Palmer**  
Director  
Agency for Persons with Disabilities

**Justice Barbara J. Pariente**  
Florida Supreme Court  
*Designee of the Chief Justice*



**Judy Schaechter, MD, MBA**  
Interim Chair, Department of Pediatrics  
Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Division of Adolescent Medicine  
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine  
Chief of Staff, Holtz Children's Hospital, Jackson Health System  
*Governor Appointee*

**Senator Eleanor Sobel**  
*Designee of the Florida Senate President*





**Pam Stewart**  
Commissioner  
Department of Education

**Steven J. Uhfelder, Esquire**  
Uhfelder and Associates  
*Governor Appointee*



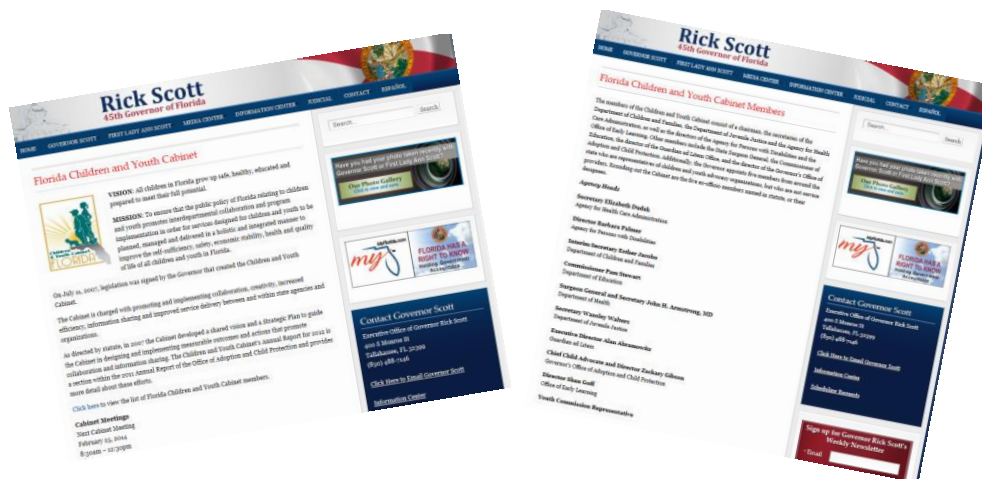
**Victoria Zepp**  
President and CEO  
Clarity1st Consulting, Inc.  
*Designee of the Chief Financial Officer*

## Administrative Support and Service

On June 12, 2007, the bill creating the Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection (Office) was signed into law. The duties and responsibilities of the Office are enshrined in Florida Statute 39.001. The Office was created for the purpose of establishing, implementing, and monitoring a comprehensive, cross-agency approach for the promotion of adoption, the support of adoptive families, and the prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect across the state. The Office is also tasked with providing administrative support and service to the Cabinet, as identified in Florida Statute 402.56.

The Office has worked diligently to advance the efforts of the Cabinet. Throughout 2014, Office personnel included one full-time employee: Christina Pacelle, MSW (Special Projects Manager), and one part-time employee: Frenchie Yon (Program Support), who have provided support through a servant leadership approach. In addition, the Office utilized student interns to assist with many tasks to support the Cabinet throughout the spring, summer, and fall semesters. The Office facilitated and coordinated travel logistics, meals, overnight accommodations, ground transportation, as well as site visits to local community organizations. Additionally, the Office supported the Cabinet through drafting meeting agendas, inviting presenters to speak, and creation of this annual report.

Throughout 2014, the Office maintained the Cabinet website found at: [www.flgov.com/childrens-cabinet](http://www.flgov.com/childrens-cabinet) to allow for ease of user access and navigation. The website can also be found by visiting the Office's main page at [www.flgov.com/child\\_advocacy](http://www.flgov.com/child_advocacy). All Cabinet meetings, as well as Cabinet Workgroup meetings, are noticed on the Office's Meeting Advisory webpage: [http://www.flgov.com/child\\_advocacy\\_meetings](http://www.flgov.com/child_advocacy_meetings).



## 2014 Meetings

In compliance with state law, Cabinet meetings were held in different regions of the state including: Tallahassee, Orlando, and Pensacola. All meetings were published in the Florida Administrative Register, and the public was provided opportunities to address the Cabinet at every meeting. When feasible, Cabinet meetings were also co-located with other related conferences and workshops around the state to encourage public attendance and participation. When available, meetings were documented by the Florida Channel and news organizations including Florida Public Radio. In order to ensure the public has complete access and up-to-date information, materials were uploaded on the Cabinet's website, which contains information about the Cabinet, its members, activities, work products, workgroups, and meeting information.

Through the leadership of the Cabinet, six workgroups and three initiatives have been identified that are led by Cabinet members with support from agency staff and the Office.

## Community Highlights

The Cabinet recognizes and values the many organizations that provide programs and services which positively impact the lives of children and youth across the state. To increase awareness of these local programs and services, the Cabinet invited representatives from some of these organizations to present an overview of their program(s) or service(s).

The following organizations presented information to the Cabinet during scheduled meetings in 2014.

**Whole Child Leon** – Ms. Courtney Atkins, Executive Director of Whole Child Leon, provided the Cabinet a brief overview of Whole Child Leon at the February 25th, 2014, meeting in Tallahassee. Whole Child Leon partners with over 20 community organizations throughout the county to improve outcomes for children and youth. Whole Child Florida supports the local Whole Child communities, and seeks to expand the number of Whole Child communities. The Cabinet discussed promoting best practice programs that work in one community and mirroring it across the state.



**Lively Technical Center** – Student Case Specialist Cleon “Coach” McFarlane provided information on Lively Technical Center to the Cabinet at the February 25th, 2014, meeting in Tallahassee. Mr. McFarlane works with young adults ages 18 – 22 who have graduated high school with a special degree and need support transitioning to become self sufficient – through work, household chores, self care, etc. Director Barbara Palmer, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, informed the Cabinet that she had previously visited the program and was very impressed with their high success rate. It was suggested to Mr. McFarlane that the students in the program should also be reminded of their additional educational options (ex. obtaining a GED).

**Healthy Start Program** – Ms. Linda Sutherland, Executive Director of the Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County, presented to the Cabinet a brief overview of her healthy start program at the May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting in Orlando. Healthy Start is a public-private partnership focused on early intervention, child protection, and school readiness. Clients are identified through risk screenings at prenatal appointments and birth for poor birth outcomes, child developmental delays, or unsafe environments. They also provide education on childbirth, breastfeeding, parenting, and mental health. Of the 15,000 pregnant women in Orange County in 2013, Healthy Start served over 7,000 pregnant women and 5,000 children.



**Community Coordinated Care for Children (4C)** – Chief Executive Officer Patricia Frank, of Community Coordinated Care for Children (4C), presented to the Cabinet at the May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting in Orlando. For more than 40 years, 4C has served Central Florida, currently contracting with the Office of Early Learning for Orange and Osceola as the single point of entry for Voluntary Prekindergarten. Since July 2013, 4C has enrolled over 20,000 children into early learning programs however funding availability is a challenge with over 7,000 children on the wait list. As a Head Start/Early Head Start grantee, we also serve over 750 children with the potential to serve more infants and toddlers through a federal grant opportunity soon to be announced.

**Carver Community Center** – Ms. Marilyn Robinson, Director, Carver Community Center provided the Cabinet members an overview of the Center at the July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting in Pensacola. The Center provides a safe place for children to go after school and throughout the summer months. The children also receive daily meals and tutoring services.








**Pathways for Change** – Executive Director Connie Bookman, LCSW provided a brief presentation to the Children and Youth Cabinet on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Pathways for Change provides a summer camp and afterschool program for middle school students. Pathways for Change partners with elderly neighbors inviting them to volunteer as a tutor, mentor, childcare, librarians, etc.

### **First Quarterly Meeting**

The first meeting of the Cabinet in 2014 was held on February 25, 2014 at House Office Building in Tallahassee, Florida. Below are highlights of the meeting.



- Chair Walters requested that each Cabinet Workgroup lead provide a one page update in advance of the next meeting on the status of the workgroup as well as their planned accomplishments for 2014.
  - Upcoming events discussed, included:
    - Circuit 2 Trauma Informed Care Conference in Tallahassee
    - Pinwheels for Prevention across Florida
    - Children’s Week in Tallahassee
    - Florida Association of Infant Mental Health Conference in Orlando
    - Florida Juvenile Justice 2014 Adolescent Conference in Orlando
    - Guardian ad Litem Conference in Orlando
- The 2013 Annual Report was discussed, including a review of headline indicators.
- Chair Walters announced that beginning in 2014, the Florida Youth Commission will be led by the Department of Juvenile Justice. Blake Maier, Youth Commissioner, provided the Cabinet an update on his work as a Youth Commissioner as well as the overall Youth Commission.
- Chair Walters led a brief discussion of legislative and budget priorities in advance of the 2014 Legislative Session.
- Director Gibson provided the Cabinet members a follow up on the Trauma and Toxic Stress initiative.
- *Department of Health Initiatives:*
  - Surgeon General John Armstrong, M.D., FACS, and Secretary, Department of Health provided the Cabinet members an update on the Department of Health’s Healthiest Weight Florida initiative. The Department of Health is working to align resources across common goals to promote cultural change to make the healthiest choice the easiest choice. The Department of Health is looking for results as they continue to roll out this initiative – bending the weight curve 5% over two years, and to be the number one healthiest weight state in the nation. Surgeon General Armstrong stated that weight is the largest health issue in Florida – for adults as well as children and youth. Recently, Florida jumped from a ranking of 19 to 12.
- *Department of Education Initiatives:*
  - Commissioner Pam Stewart, Department of Education presented to the Cabinet the Department of Education’s initiatives for 2014. Commissioner Stewart discussed the status of the education system in Florida, teacher evaluations, and data security. The Department of Education will be reflecting and revisiting the FCAT measures to improve student outcomes. The Department of Education is working to raise the level of expectation for all students, and Florida has improved student outcomes over the years.



- Presentations were provided on the following topics:
  - *School Justice Partnership* – The Honorable Barbara J. Pariente, Florida Supreme Court provided a presentation to the Cabinet on the School Justice Partnership. This initiative works across agencies to improve outcomes for youth in the schools. The partnership is developing and encouraging promising practices to assist youth to stay in school (avoid suspensions and expulsions). 
  - *Breaking the Barriers to Support Caregiving Youth* – Dr. Connie Siskowski, RN, Founder and President, American Association of Caregiving Youth presented to the Cabinet the work she does in Palm Beach County – working with youth in 6<sup>th</sup> grade – high school graduation providing the youth who care for a parent or grandparent support for themselves as well as their families. Over 750 families connected to eight middle schools are a part of the association. Dr. Siskowski estimates that there are hundreds of thousands of caregiving youth in Florida, as there are over 10,000 in Palm Beach County. 
  - *Bridging the Gap for Florida's Children by Linking Research to Practice for Early Detection, Early Intervention and Prevention* – A presentation was then provided by Ms. Amy M. Wetherby, Ph.D., Distinguished Research Professor and Laurel Schendel Professor of Communication Disorders, and Director, Autism Institute, College of Medicine, Florida State University on the Autism Navigator. Dr. Wetherby presented to the Cabinet that the lifetime society cost of a child with autism is \$3.2 million. If a child is screened early in their lifetime (18 – 36 months), the cost will be significantly reduced due to the early intervention and support provided to the family. The Cabinet discussed that early assessment is taboo in current culture, and potentially should be mandatory for all children served by the Department of Children and Families. Dr. Wetherby told the Cabinet she was willing to work together to further advance the work. 

### Second Quarterly Meeting

The second meeting of the Children and Youth Cabinet was held on held on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at the Orange County Parks and Recreation Division, Barnett Park Administration, in Orlando, Florida. Highlights of the meeting are provided below.

- After calling the meeting to order, the following upcoming events were briefly discussed:
  - National Foster Care Month in May
  - National Conference for America's Children in Jacksonville
  - Guardian ad Litem Disabilities Conference in Orlando
- *Agency for Health Care Administration Initiatives:*
  - Secretary Elizabeth Dudek, Agency for Health Care Administration shared with the Cabinet one initiative that her agency is in the process of implementing, the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program. 
  - Significant legislation was passed in 2011 that directed the majority of Medicaid recipients be moved to managed care. 



- *Department Juvenile Justice Initiatives:*

- Secretary Wansley Walters, Department of Juvenile Justice shared several highlights and initiatives from the Department of Juvenile Justice.
- Over the last 3 ½ years the Department of Juvenile Justice has been focused on reforming the agency.
- In 2012 the agency had a draft reform document called Roadmap to Systems Excellence, and held town hall and stakeholder meetings throughout Florida requesting input and advice from interested parties.
- The rewrite was proposed during the 2014 Legislative Session, and was passed unanimously by every committee as well as the House and Senate without controversy.
- The foundation of the rewrite and the agency is prevention – prevention from the youth from coming into the system, prevention of a youth from going further into the system, and prevention of the youth “graduating” to the adult correctional system.
- The department has also seen a 23% reduction in juvenile arrests, a 27% reduction in school arrests, a 36% reduction in children sent to adult prisons, a 28% reduction in felony drug arrests, and a 20% reduction in battery arrests. Chair Walters is appreciative of Governor Scott and the Legislature’s support of the department.



- *Workgroup Updates:*

- The Children and Youth Collaboration Services Workgroup is looking at opportunities for the Performance Partnership Pilot identified by Federal Appropriation Act of 2014.
- The Early Learning Workgroup is working on collaborating with the Department of Education to reconstitute workgroup members and workgroup initiatives.
- The Prevention Investment Strategy Workgroup would like to focus its efforts on a process map of all agencies entry and exit points as well as how the money flows through the system, to better understand the system.

- *2014 Legislative Session Updates:*

- Each agency and legislative members provided the Cabinet with a brief update on their 2014 Legislative Session.
- Director Barbara Palmer, Agency for Persons with Disabilities discussed the \$20 million the agency received to take individuals off the waitlist to receive services. All 3,000 critical or close to crisis clients will be removed from the waitlist and served.
- Surgeon General Armstrong stated that a newborn screening for hearing impairment can now be administered at one month old. The Surgeon General then reported that the Child Protection Teams received additional funding for their services.
- Director Alan Abramowitz, Guardian ad Litem announced that the legislature approved the funding for Guardian ad Litem to represent 90% of children in foster care. Next, Director Abramowitz discussed the expanded representation for children needing attorneys. The groups of children include: children in nursing homes, children who refuse to take psychotropic medications, children in residential facilities, victims of human trafficking, and children on the Agency for Persons with Disabilities waitlist.
- Director Shan Goff, Office of Early Learning discussed the office’s desire to increase health and safety standards as well as training components. The office received an increase in the base allocation for children in Voluntary Prekindergarten by \$54 per child, as well as an increase in school readiness.
- Deputy Secretary Pete Digre, Department of Children and Families presented on behalf of Interim Secretary Mike Carroll. Mr. Digre reported that the department had the best session in decades – the legislature added 270 Child Protective Investigators and supervisors, reducing the ratio from 14:1 to 10:1.
- The Department of Children and Families also received an additional \$2 million to do predictive analytics.

- Senator Eleanor Sobel, Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Chair presented on Senate Bill 1666. The bill emphasizes the importance of the best interests and safety of the child in dependency proceedings. The bill establishes a “Critical Incident Rapid Response Team” to quickly investigate child abuse deaths where the child was known to the child welfare system
- *Focus on Children 0 – 4 Years Old*
  - *Early Learning in Florida* – Director Shan Goff, Office of Early Learning provided the Cabinet with a presentation regarding what Florida is doing for the education of children ages 0 – 4 on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Orlando, Florida. The Office of Early Learning’s main focus is to increase accountability and transparency at the state and local levels to deliver a quality comprehensive early learning system of services.
  - *Women, Infants, and Children Program* – Debbie Eibeck, M.S., R.D., L.D., Chief, Bureau of WIC Program Services provided the presentation on the Department of Health’s Women, Infants and Children program. The program exists to teach healthy nutrition to parents so that their children pick it up and adopt it into their lifestyle. Ms. Eibeck provided the Cabinet an overview of the program including its goals, services, eligibility, and participants. Ms. Eibeck also discussed education and counseling, types of foods included, referrals, the health benefits, the EBT implementation and its’ benefits, Women, Infants, and Children vendors, and fraud prevention.



**May Site Visit**

Sponsored by Sanctuary Church Orlando, Conway Learning Center is a faith based center located south of the downtown area. It is one of the larger VPK programs in Orange County. The Center’s mission is to provide a safe, nurturing, Christian, educational environment where all children can learn, play and feel secure and at home. Conway Learning Center’s goal is to provide our children the opportunity to grow spiritually, physically, cognitively, emotionally and socially through creative and structured learning activities. Conway Learning Center recognizes each child as an individual created by God with different learning abilities and styles and will adopt learning experiences as necessary. The Learning center preschool provides a Christian environment that offers a safe, loving and nurturing atmosphere where all children can grow and learn equally. This unique program is designed to teach children Christian values enhancing academic learning experiences and build self-esteem.



**Third Quarterly Meeting**

The third meeting of the Cabinet was held on July 24, 2014 at the West Florida Public Library in Pensacola, Florida.



- It was announced that Ms. Wansley Walters will continue her role as Chair of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet following her retirement as Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice.
- Ms. Christy Daly was recently appointed as Interim Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice and is the newest member to the Cabinet.
- Mr. David Lawrence was recognized for being honored as Florida Citizen of the Year by the Bob Graham Center for Public Service.
- Upcoming statewide events were shared with the Cabinet members.
- *Agency for Persons with Disabilities Initiatives:*
  - Director Barbara Palmer, Agency for Persons with Disabilities provided the Cabinet an overview of the Agency. The mission of the Agency for Persons with



- Disabilities is to support persons with developmental disabilities in living, learning, and working in their communities.
- The Agency serves persons diagnosed with autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, intellectual disability, prader-willi syndrome, and spina bifida.
  - Goals and priorities of the Agency are to increase employment, improve access to community based services, improve management and oversight of agency and provider services and manage agency budget within fiscal allocation.
- *Baby Friendly Hospitals*
    - Ms. Ellen Anderson, Vice President of State Advocacy with the Florida Hospital Association gave the Cabinet an update on hospitals that were Baby Friendly, or those working to become Baby Friendly.
    - Initial results from the survey indicate that most hospitals are engaging in some form of the breastfeeding initiative. For bonding many have moved to “chest to chest” holding of babies.
- 
- *Trauma Informed Baby Court Teams: Ending Intergenerational Maltreatment*
    - Dr. Mimi Graham, Director, Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Policy, Florida State University provided the Cabinet with a presentation on the Trauma Informed Baby Court Teams.
    - Ninety percent of children known to the foster care system have been exposed to trauma. Infants are the largest age group in Florida’s child welfare; 54% age 5 or younger.
    - The desired outcomes for Trauma Informed Baby Court Teams are to heal trauma and stop intergenerational transmission; accelerate permanency; enhance child well-being; improve relationships in child’s life and to reduce reoccurrence of maltreatment.
- 

### ***July Site Visit***

At the Escambia County Courthouse in honorable Judge Duncan’s court room, Cabinet members were provided the opportunity to observe baby court in action. From the multi-disciplinary approach that brought together all involved stakeholders in the family’s case, Cabinet members observed the court facilitator lead a discussion on the family’s needs, issues and future action that can position them to be reunified with their child. With this approach occurring prior to the start of the court case, it allowed the judge to be better prepared on the needs and issues of the family and to provide praise and encouragement for tasks completed, and targeted feedback on areas needing improvement. At the conclusion of the court case, Cabinet members were able to ask questions regarding the process to the judge and court facilitator and left with a renewed appreciation of the court process and of the opportunity baby courts can have on determining parents ability to be reunified with their child(ren).

### **Fourth Quarterly Meeting**

The final meeting of 2014 for the Cabinet was held on November 18, 2014 in the Governor’s Large Conference Room in Tallahassee, Florida. The meeting also served as a strategic planning meeting for the Cabinet.

- Chair Walters began the meeting by highlighting several accomplishments the Cabinet has seen in recent years.
- Mosaica Partners Founder and CEO, Laura Kolkman and Bob Brown, Vice President of Professional Services, facilitated the strategic planning session for the Cabinet.
- The Cabinet had a robust conversation about the Cabinet’s current Strategic Plan (created in 2007), and the legislation that defines what the Cabinet will do.

- Cabinet members agreed to go back to the original intent of the statute to plan the course of action for 2015.
- The Cabinet members voted to create a new workgroup, including all of the agencies Communications Directors to raise awareness of the Cabinet as well as the cross-agency collaboration and statewide campaigns supported by the Cabinet and its agencies.
- The Cabinet members also renewed their interest in creating a process map that is inclusive of all agencies that are represented on the Cabinet. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities will lead the efforts for the Cabinet, with support from the other agencies.
- The Cabinet members agreed to take the next few meetings into 2015 and continue the conversation.
- Cabinet members thought that having a webinar from Dr. Patricia Babcock, LCSW, Interim Director, Florida Institute for Child Welfare, would be beneficial in understanding what the Institute’s plans are and how the Cabinet could partner with the Institute. The webinar will be scheduled prior to Legislative Session and the next Cabinet meeting.

## Workgroups of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet

### Bullying Workgroup

Building off the presentation on “*The State of Bullying – What the research is telling us*”, Bullying Workgroup Co-Chairs Secretary Elizabeth Dudek and Dr. Judy Schechter proposed a scope of activities for the workgroup to focus on at the May 2014 Cabinet meeting in Orlando, Florida. Included in the scope are:



- Work with State Agencies, Local School Districts, child-serving organizations, and other key stakeholders to conduct a statewide bullying awareness campaign during the month of October (Bullying Prevention Month). Consider focusing on a positive message such as “Positive Character Development”.
- Explore statewide/regional forums to bring school/organizational personnel together to share effective reporting and response strategies, review data and trends, and review legal cases resulting from incidents of bullying.
- Explore public service announcements addressing bullying/promoting positive character development that target youth and adults. Consider messages developed by youth.
- Explore state agency policies related to bullying and make necessary recommendations for policies, staff training, and programs for children and families.

With no objections from the Cabinet members, members of the Bullying Workgroup, with representation from the Agency for Health Care Administration, the Department of Education and the Governor’s Office of Adoption and Child Protection, convened to plan implementation activities for a statewide bullying awareness campaign. Throughout the planning efforts of the workgroup, additional partners were identified to include the Department of State’s Division of Library Services, the Monique Burr Foundation and Healthy Kids Florida.

Highlights of the October 2014 statewide bullying awareness campaign include:

- Development of electronic posters with positive character development messages for dissemination to schools and stakeholders statewide. Access to posters was provided through the Cabinet’s Bullying Workgroup webpage.





- Development of a Twitter hashtag: #LetsFaceBullyingFL to encourage positive message towards ending bullying and cyber bullying. The hashtag was included on all posters as well as a web banner sent to all Cabinet agencies and offices for use and dissemination.
- Letters were sent by the Chair of the Cabinet to all 67 School District Superintendents to partner with and support the schools and families within their district on efforts to end bullying and cyber bullying. Within the letter, information was provided on:
  - The Florida Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2013 regarding school safety,
  - The Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey 2013,
  - Acknowledgement of the negative impact bullying and cyber bullying can cause on a school's *Positive School Climate* and the healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of children, and
  - Recognition that issues related to bullying and cyber bullying can lead to unhealthy choices, at-risk behaviors and chronic health issues.
- Supported by the Department of Education, a listing was posted of activities/events sponsored by schools within each school district. Posts included pictures which captured the spirit and commitment of children, teachers, and staff to end bullying and cyber bullying.
- Conducted a webinar presentation on National Bullying Awareness Month to all public libraries throughout the state.
- Disseminated lesson plans focusing on bullying awareness and prevention to elementary schools within all 67 school districts.
- Communicated with Faith and Community-Based Liaisons within Cabinet agencies and offices to disseminate information posters to their contacts to assist with awareness efforts.



A follow-up meeting occurred at the end of National Bullying Awareness Month to assess activities and implementation efforts. Ongoing planning to determine future activities, engagement of partners and stakeholders, and targeted timelines will occur to continue efforts to end bullying and cyber bullying in Florida.



### Collaboration Services Workgroup

The Children and Youth Cabinet established the Collaboration Services Workgroup that is focused on improving coordination of planning for the well-being of children and youth with the goal of achieving cost and administrative efficiencies in local program service delivery.

This work is inclusive of local and state recommendations for identifying and addressing potential barriers to collaboration and coordination of services. By examining eligibility requirements of programs, the limitations on blending/braiding funding, and planning documents required to receive funds and provide services, Florida has the opportunity to create efficiencies in planning and coordination in service delivery. Coordinating processes association with programs and services will improve and expand services to children and families.

The established goals of this effort include are to create locally developed pilot projects that include:

- the Cabinet indicators to be addressed
- a clear framework identifying the measurable outcomes to achieve the stated indicators
- the design of the service delivery system
- the process by which services will be delivered and how the pilot will set forth measurable outcomes to be achieved to provide for the effective, cost-efficient and appropriate services for children and youth
- the documentation of assurances for the proper accounting and expenditure of public funds
- any necessary waivers to reduce duplication by suspending certain reporting requirements and/or rules, and of certain funding restrictions
- determination if legislation would be needed to authorize waivers of certain reporting and funding requirements, establishing a framework for an alternative service delivery system, providing for monitoring for which the waiver is granted.

The workgroup continues to support the effort of the Children's Services Council of Broward County (CSC) to launch a pilot project through the Performance Partnership Pilot. Currently, the CSC of Broward team is working with the staff and members of the Children and Youth Cabinet and the Forum for Youth Investment (based in Washington, DC) to pilot enhanced services for "disconnected youth" by blending Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) funding in order to create a more holistic and developmentally appropriate program design. 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds would be used to provide academic enrichment activities with individualized tutoring and remediation services, while WIA funds would be used to provide focused employability skills training and career exploration activities. As a result of this blended funding, students would receive enriched project-based learning opportunities that would help them gain employability skills and to successfully transition to post-secondary education and employment.

### **Crossover Children Workgroup**

Representative Gayle Harrell recommended that a separate workgroup on crossover youth be created. In 2015 the Department of Children and Families will be pulling together an interagency workgroup focused on this population. The workgroup will review current data associated with youth entering foster care through the Department of Juvenile Justice or lockout reasons and identify concrete service and funding recommendations to best serve the population. The workgroup will include staff from the Department of Children and Families, Department of Juvenile Justice, Agency for Health Care Administration, Community-Based Care Lead Agencies, Case Managing Organizations, Managing Entities, and others.

### **Early Learning Workgroup**

The Early Learning Workgroup continued with their established central focus to guide their efforts towards one simple question "What is best for the child?" Being mindful of the challenges that may arise from recommendations that would probably involve statutory changes as well as additional dollars, the workgroup focused on a handful of recommendations.

Their work centered around four basic themes:

1) Alignment for college and career – Understanding that what happens with and for children in the earliest years can lead to excellence throughout their school experience.

Florida's Office of Early Learning's Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK) was ranked the highest in the nation for access to prekindergarten programs in the National Institute for Early Education Research's annual report. The Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener shows that almost 82 percent of children

who completed VPK were ready for kindergarten, while only about 53 percent of children who didn't attend VPK were kindergarten ready.

2) Quality control – real quality leads to excellent outcomes for children.

The Office of Early Learning (OEL) promulgated Rule 6M-4.620, Florida Administrative Code, Health and Safety Checklists, effective July 1, 2014. This rule requires license-exempt providers to annually complete a health and safety checklist and post the checklist on its premises in plain sight for visitors and parents.

The *It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget* provided \$396.1 million for VPK, an increase of \$54 per student—the first increase in the base student allocation in four years. The *It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget* also provided \$555.5 million for school readiness, including an increase of \$3 million to expand services.

During the 2013-2014 fiscal year, OEL worked with groups across the state to create a coordinated statewide structure—a framework—for professional development and prioritize how to implement the framework over the next two to four years.

3) Access for the most disadvantaged children and children with special needs and disabilities –

There are more than 224,000 children in school readiness programs. This program helps struggling, low-income families who need temporary public assistance gain access to child care so they can work or attend training/education programs. Having child care enables family members to secure training or the education they need to become part of the work force.

4) Provides parents training, information and opportunities for families to increase parenting skills and become engaged in the learning environments of their children.

The Office of Early Learning will continue to communicate the Protective Factors parenting training through Florida's 30 Early Learning Coalitions. OEL staff have participated in training on the Protective Factors as well hosted a webinar on the Protective Factors for Coalition staff. The Protective Factors have been incorporated into the Family Guide which is disseminated to all families requesting assistance from early learning coalitions. OEL plans to continue promoting these important elements to the early learning community.

Based on a 2009 study that identified gaps in screening and referrals in Florida, the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet recommended establishing a comprehensive developmental screening system for children birth to age 5 that would give parents and caregivers up-to-date information about caring for and raising their children. In 2011, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council funded a three-year project to implement the recommendations, sponsoring the Child Development Screening Initiative to convene stakeholders and develop a system for screening children from birth through age 8. The result was a decision to adopt the nationally recognized, proven Help Me Grow model, which many states are using to identify children birth through age 5 at risk for developmental or behavioral challenges and connect their families with community-based services and programs. In 2012 Florida became a state affiliate of Help Me Grow (HMG), and two local chapters launched in Hillsborough and Miami-Dade counties. The funds in Specific Appropriation 87 from the General Revenue Fund are provided to the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council to expand the HMG Florida Network. A \$2 million appropriation for fiscal year 2014 will allow funding to establish HMG operations in additional counties as well as the establishment and staffing of a statewide HMG parent support and education coordinating center. The Office of Early Learning has submitted a legislative budget request of \$4 million to enhance and expand the new Help Me Grow initiative that identifies children birth through 8 at risk for developmental or behavioral challenges and connects their family with information and community-based resources for the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

### Multi-System Children and Youth Workgroup

The Interagency Agreement to Coordinate Services for Children Served by More than One Agency continues to provide support and infrastructure to help resolve challenging cases across the state. The Review Teams serve to ensure that difficult cases involving multiple agencies are quickly escalated to the region or state level if additional assistance is needed to assist in resolution. The Agreement, now completing its second year of operation, is fully implemented, with Local and Regional Review Teams running smoothly across the state and immediate assistance provided from the State Review Team when requested. The participating agencies continue to have active involvement at all levels, and team participants have expressed positive results in regard to information sharing and case resolution. During months where there are no cases referred at the local or regional level in a particular area of the state, Review Teams report using the time to share information regarding legislative issues and agency updates and initiatives.

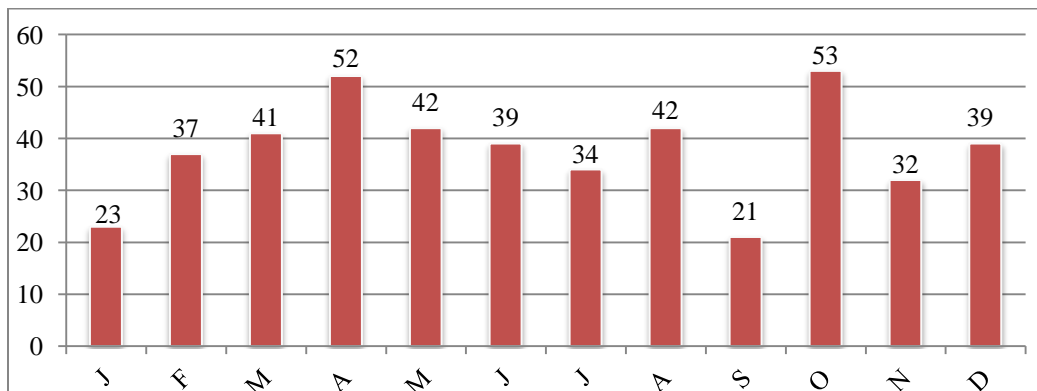
*Monthly Reporting:* Each Regional Review Team submits data monthly on referrals and resolution of cases at the local and regional levels, as well as information on agency involvement in those cases. The reports also provide confirmation that monthly meetings are taking place in all regions. The State Review Team, though required by the Agreement to meet quarterly, instead regularly meets monthly as members find these meetings to be beneficial. The greatest benefit is the ongoing development of relationships among members representing all agencies, resulting in excellent working relationships and collaboration. This is especially valuable in the resolution of difficult cases in very quick timeframes.

*Updates to Attachment 1 of the Interagency Agreement:* Included in the 2012 Agreement is Attachment 1, a matrix outlining each agency’s eligibility requirements, list of services, and cost sharing principles for both community and residential services. The State Review Team is presently reviewing this matrix for updates and accuracy and will make recommended changes early in 2015.

*Host Agency:* The Department of Children and Families has served as the lead agency for implementation and reporting since the agreement’s inception in 2012, and will continue to serve as host agency for the remainder of the current fiscal year. This responsibility includes convening monthly meetings at the local, region and state levels, as well as ensuring that data is gathered and submitted as required.

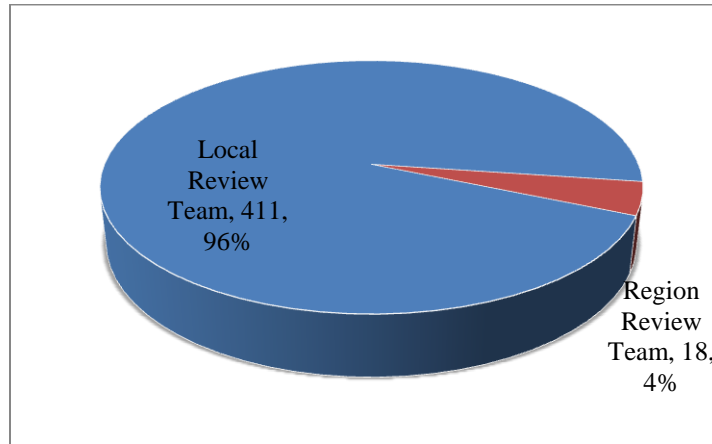
*Case Referrals to Review Teams:* An average of 38 cases per month were referred for discussion at the Local Review Team level across the state during 2014. Of these, 96% were resolved at the local level, with another 4% referred to and resolved at the regional level. State Review Team members continue to be contacted for guidance and advice on the resolution of cases on an ad hoc basis, often from sources other than Regional Review Teams.

**Chart 1. Referrals to Local Review Teams: January – December 2014**



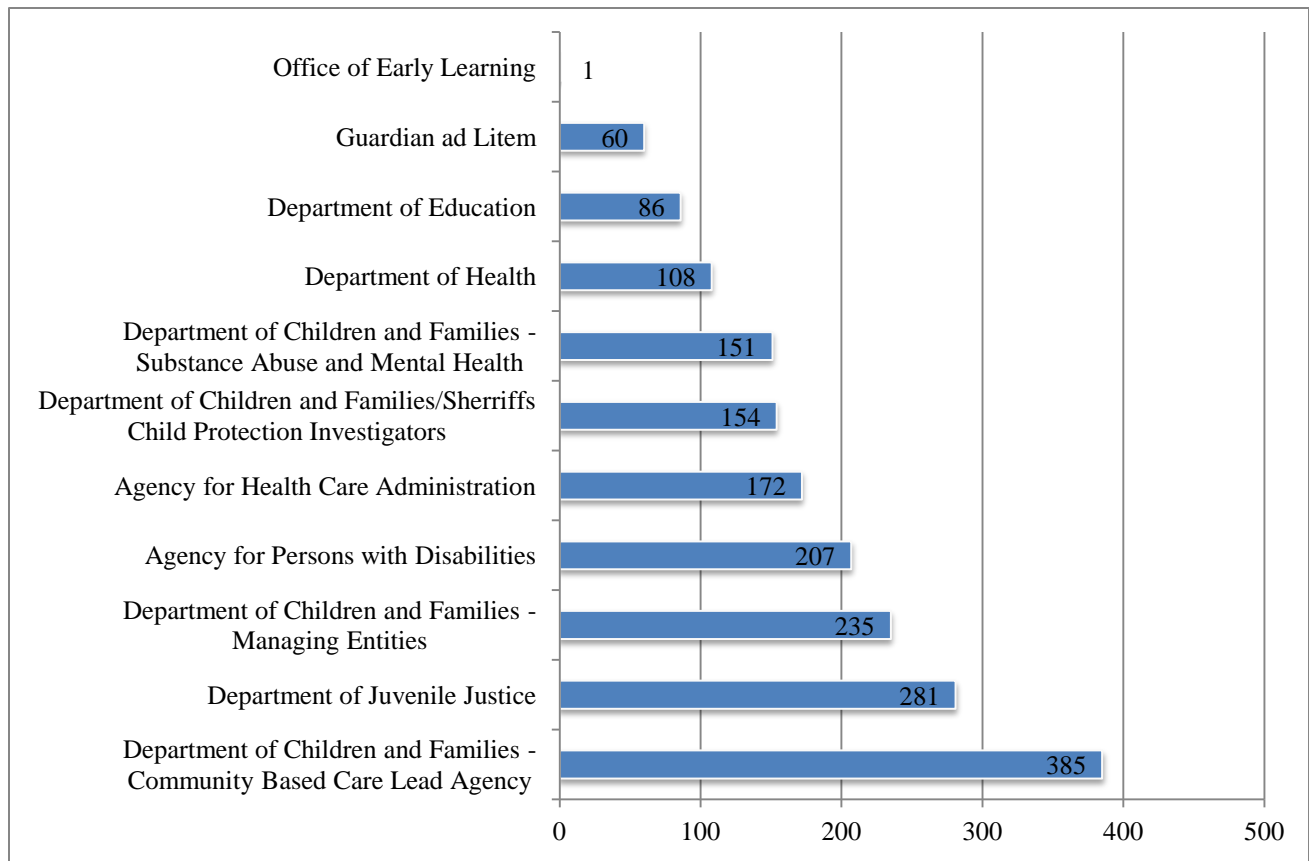


**Chart 2. Cases Resolved by Local and Region Review Teams**

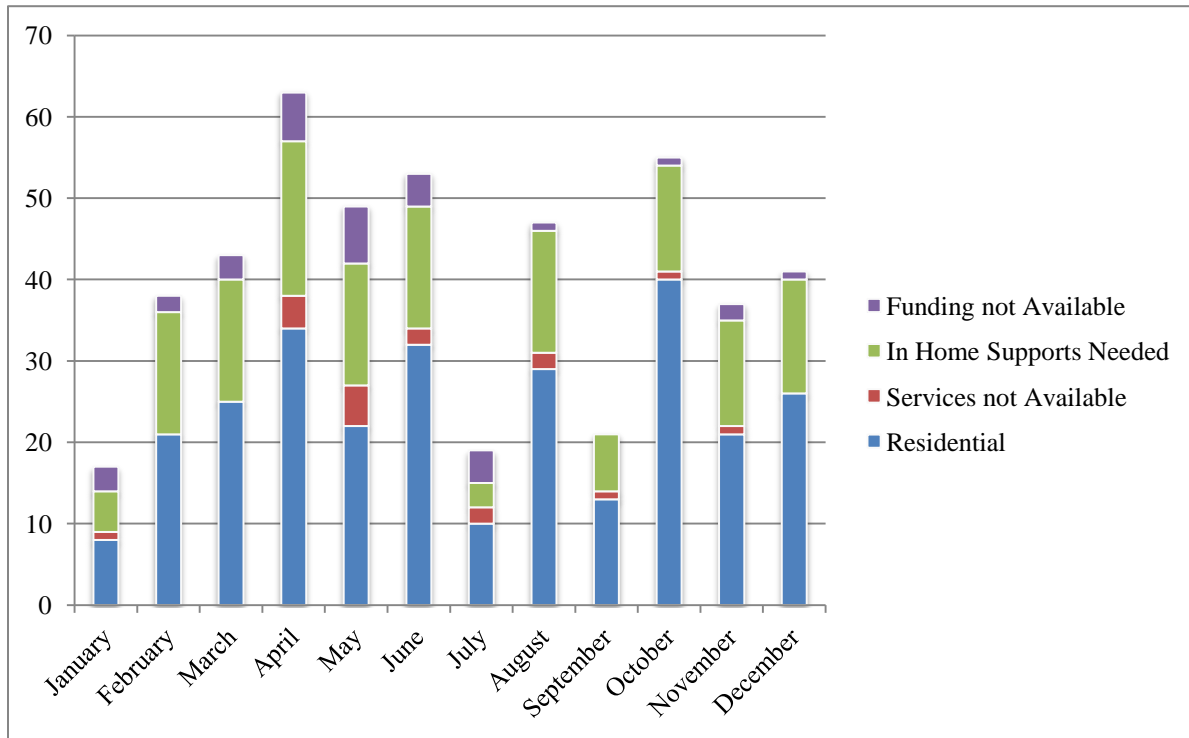


The chart below reflects the specific agencies involved in cases referred to Local Review Teams in 2014. As was the case in 2013, cases continue to most often involve Community Based Care agencies, Department of Juvenile Justice, Managing Entities, and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. These values are listed for cases representing a total of 432 children, and listings are redundant when more than one agency listed a child.

**Chart 3. Agency Involvement in Referred Cases: January – December 2014**



**Chart 4. Issues in Referred Cases: January – December 2014**



**Table 1. Issues in Referred Cases: January – December 2014**

Month	Residential	Services not Available	In Home Supports Needed	Funding not Available
January	8	1	5	3
February	21	0	15	2
March	25	0	15	3
April	34	4	19	6
May	22	5	15	7
June	32	2	15	4
July	10	2	3	4
August	29	2	15	1
September	13	1	7	0
October	40	1	13	1
November	21	1	13	2
December	26	0	14	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>34</b>

**Presenting Issues:** During each month of 2014, residential placement was consistently listed as a presenting issue for referred cases, followed by a need for in-home supports.

### Prevention Investment Strategy Workgroup

The workgroup has been tasked with developing a team of people knowledgeable in their agencies regarding crossover issues. Such a crossover issue might arise, for example, for those individuals that are Dually Diagnosed with both an intellectual or developmental disability (APD) and mental health issues (DCF).

The group will also identify any statutes or rules that impact the services delivered for the crossover population and create a process map to visually connect those points of entry where services cross. The final charge for this group is to develop an action plan to submit to the agency heads which addresses areas of concern or duplication, while also identifying areas of excellence.

The deliverables from this group will be:

- Process map(s) of each agency's entry points
- List of statutes and rules that inform the map
- Action Plan of tasks that will need to be implemented, if any

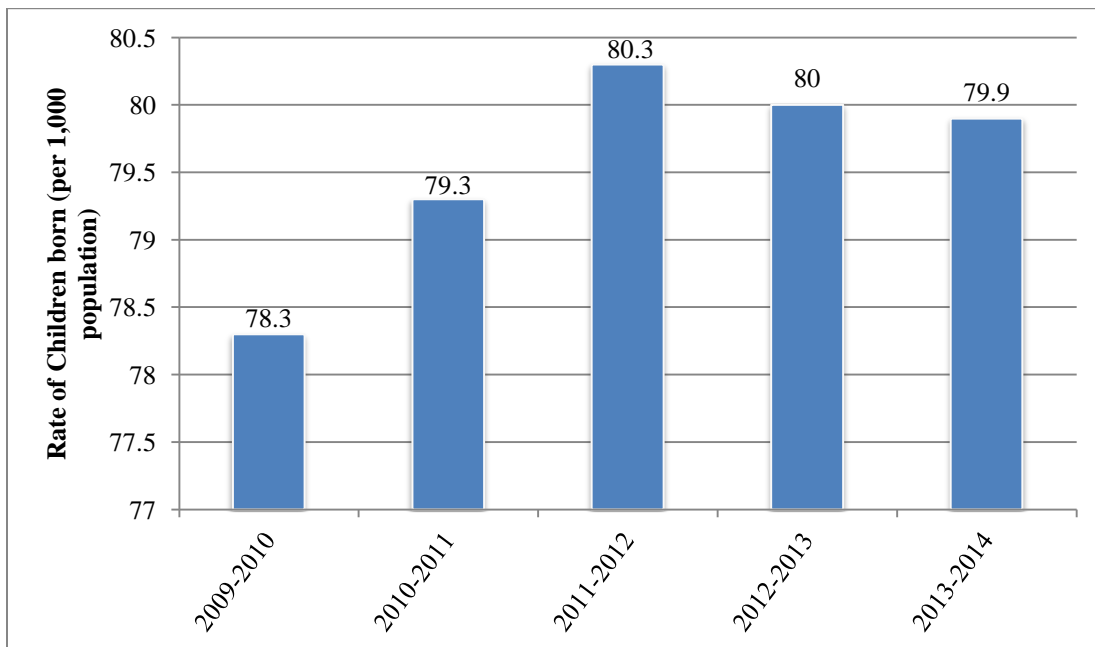
## Initiatives of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet Headline Indicators on Child Well-being

### Area of Focus: Every Florida Child is Healthy

#### *Headline Indicator 1.1: Mothers beginning prenatal care in the first trimester*

*Indicator definition:* Rate of live births with prenatal care beginning in the first trimester per 1,000 population.

**Chart 5. Mothers Beginning Prenatal Care in the First Trimester**

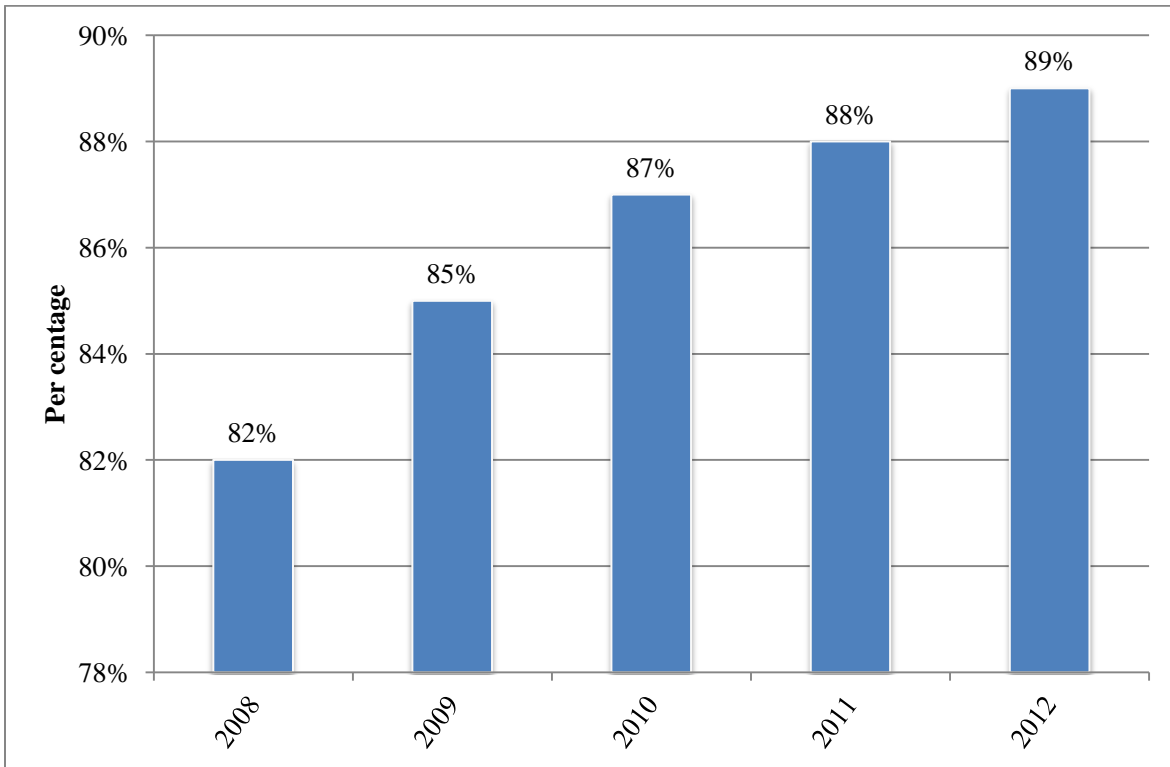


Source: FloridaCHARTS ([www.floridacharts.com](http://www.floridacharts.com))

**Headline Indicator 1.2: Children with Health Insurance**

*Indicator definition:* Children under age 18 that were not covered by health insurance at any point during the year. However, percentages identified were inverted to reflect the percentage with health insurance at any point during the year. Health insurance includes private sector insurance generally provided through work, as well as insurance provided through the public sector, such as Medicare and Medicaid. Children receiving health insurance through a variety of new State Health Insurance Programs (as applicable) are counted as having health insurance.

**Chart 6. Children with Health Insurance**

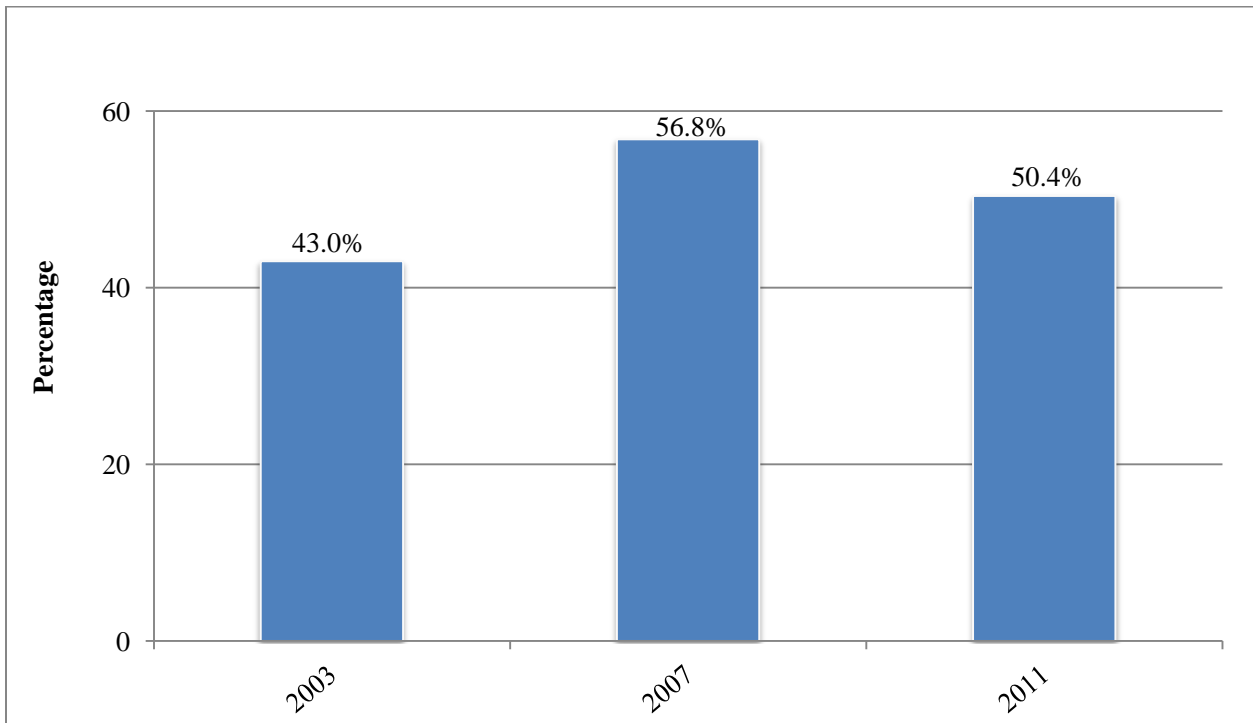


*Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (March supplement) provided by the National KIDSCOUNT ([www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org))*

**Headline Indicator 1.3: Children with a Medical Home**

*Indicator definition:* Percentage of children ages 0-17 who receive health care aligned to the Academy of Pediatrics’ qualities essential to medical home care: accessible, family-centered, continuous, comprehensive, coordinated, compassionate and culturally effective. According to the National Survey of Children’s Health, the following qualifications must be met in order to be qualified as having a medical home: personal doctor or nurse, usual source for care, and family-centered care. Any children who needed referrals or care coordination must also meet criteria for those components in order to qualify as having a medical home.

**Chart 7. Children with a Medical Home**



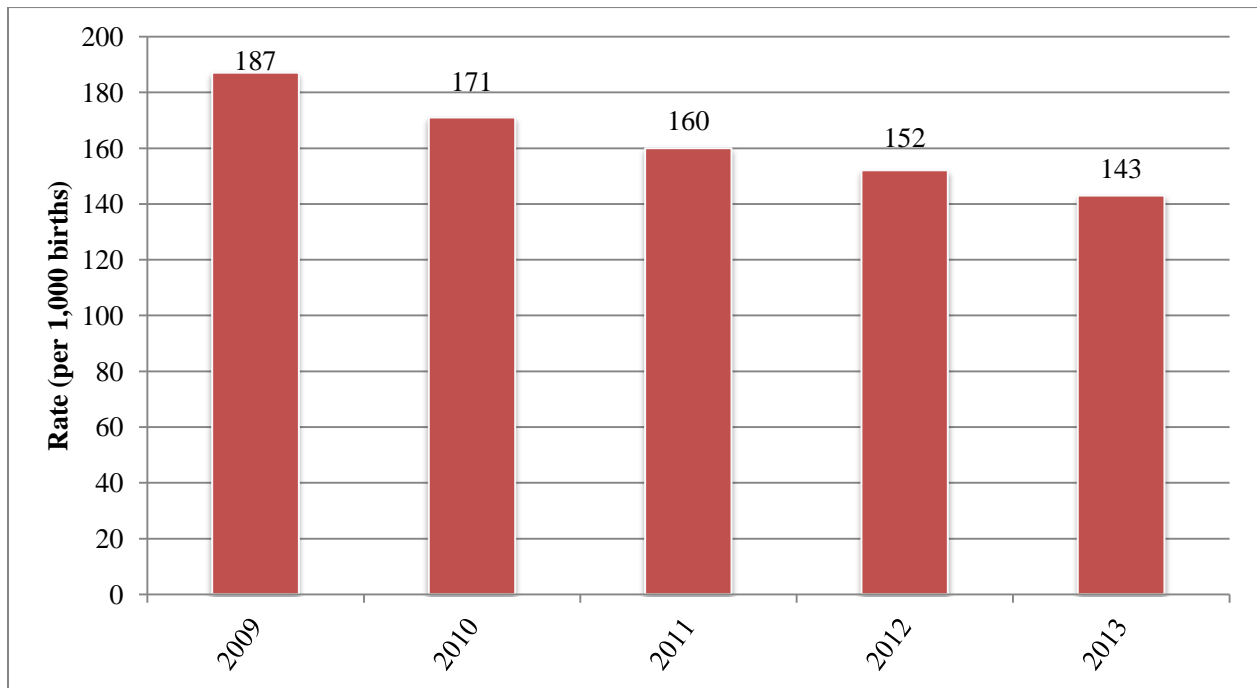
*Source: 2003, 2007 and 2011/12 National Survey of Children’s Health (<http://childhealthdata.org>)*

**Area of Focus: Every Florida Child is Ready to Learn and Succeed**

**Headline Indicator 2.1: Birth to Women with Fewer than 12 years of Education**

*Indicator definition:* Rate of births to mothers without a high school education per 1,000 births.

**Chart 8. Birth to Women with Fewer than 12 years of Education**

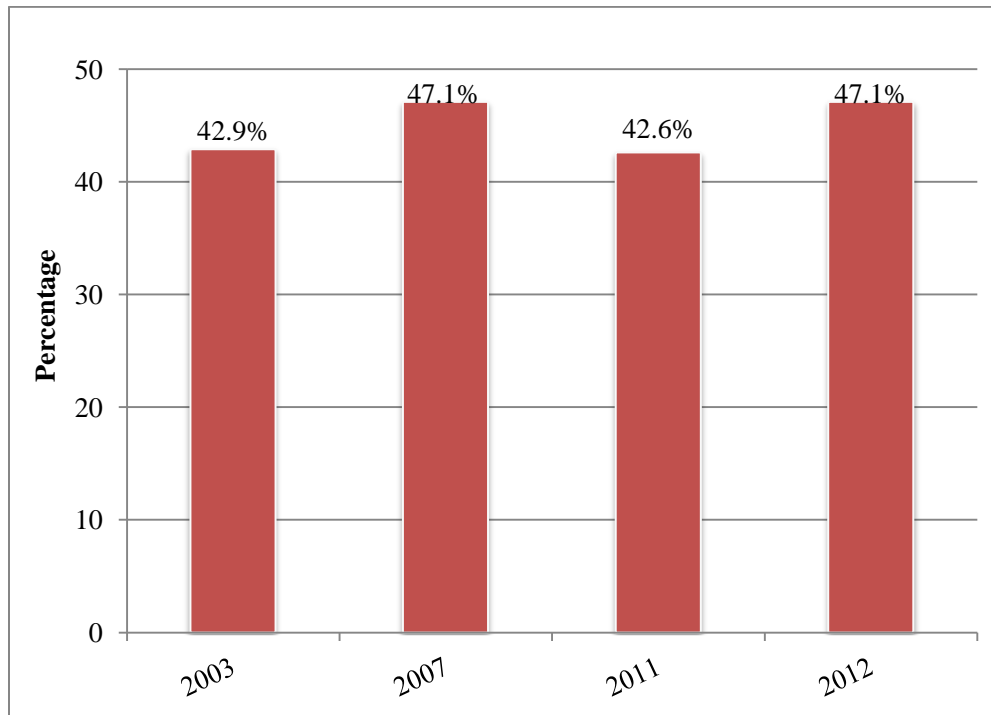


*Source: FloridaCHARTS (www.floridacharts.com)*

**Headline Indicator 2.2: Children who are Read to by their Parents or Relative Caregivers**

*Indicator definition:* Percentage of children ages 0-5 whose family members read stories to them on a daily basis.

**Chart 9. Children who are Read to by their Parents or Relative Caregivers**

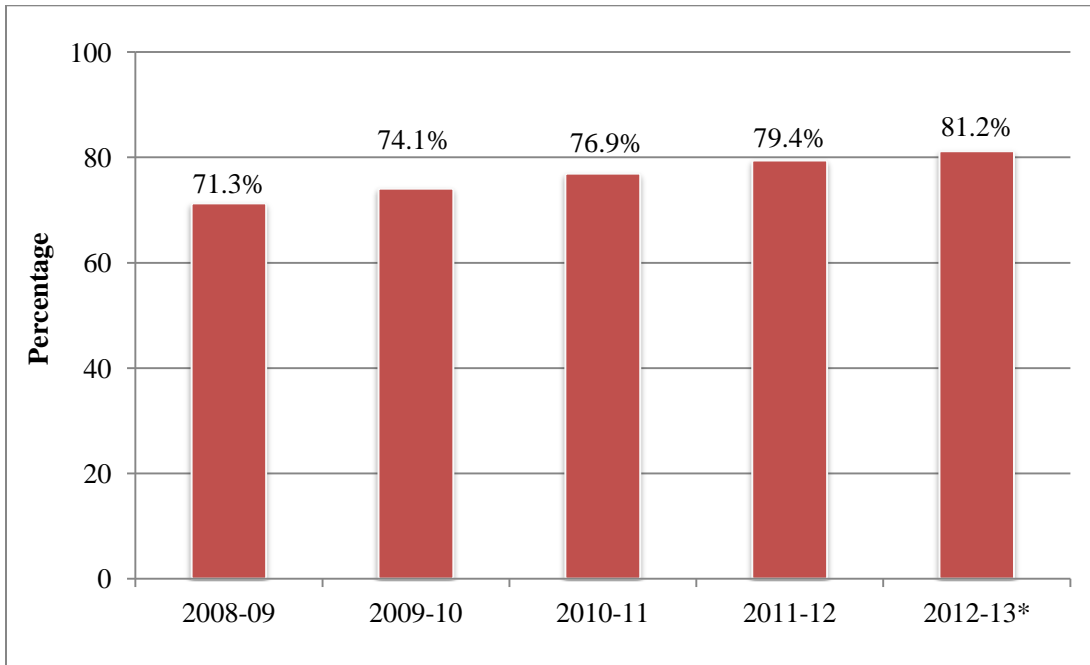


*Source:* 2003, 2007 and 2011/12 National Survey of Children's Health (<http://childhealthdata.org>)

**Headline Indicator 2.3: Children whose Kindergarten Entry Assessment Scores Show they are Ready for School**

*Indicator definition:* Includes only children who are VPK Completers that completed 70% or more of their enrolled program and were scored on both the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) and the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR).

**Chart 10. Children whose Kindergarten Entry Assessment Scores Show they are Ready for School**



*Note: 2012-13 reflects Preliminary Data*

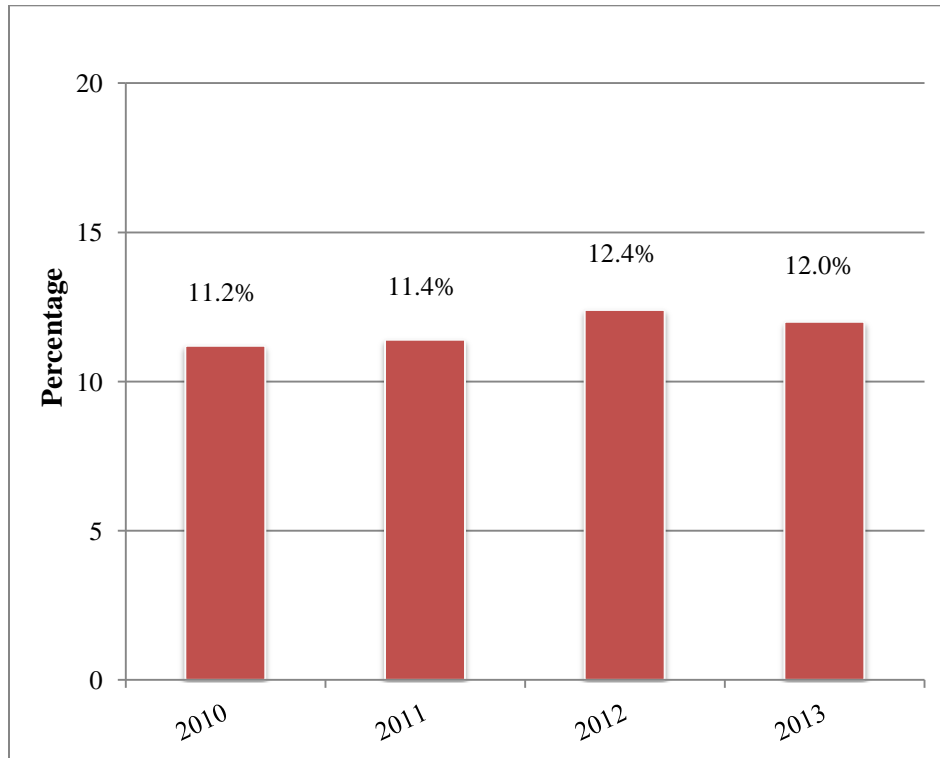
*Source: Florida Office of Early Learning, VPK Readiness Rate data*



**Headline Indicator 2.4: Early Childhood Staff with Bachelor's Degrees**

*Indicator definition:* Percentage of early childhood staff with a bachelor's degree (Based on data collected by the Department of Children and Families for the facilities they regulate statewide, which represents 68.5 %. The calculation does not include those staff who work with mixed age groups or staff who work with children 5+ years of age).

**Chart 11. Early Childhood Staff with Bachelor's Degrees**



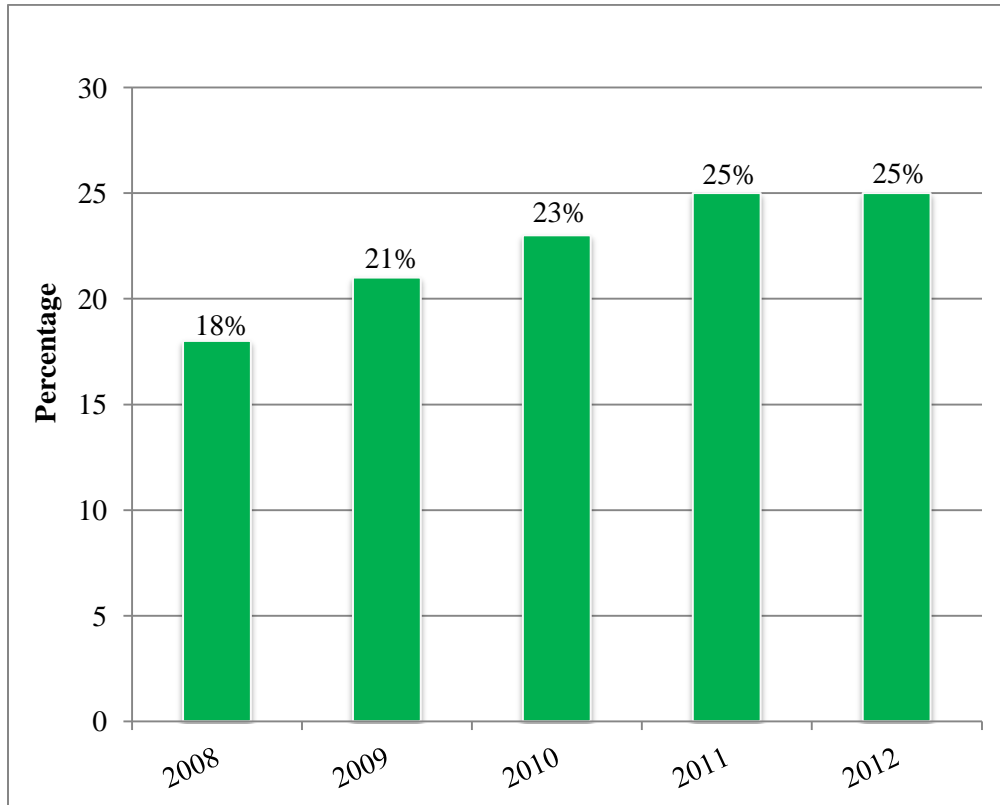
*Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, Office of Child Care Regulation and Background Screening*

## Area of Focus: Every Florida Child Lives in a Stable and Nurturing Family

### Headline Indicator 3.1: Children in Poverty

*Indicator definition:* Percentage of children under age 18 who live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level. In calendar year 2012, a family of two adults and two children fell in the “poverty” category if their annual income fell below \$23,283. This amount is higher than the annual income amount of \$21,758 identified in 2009.

**Chart 12. Children in Poverty**

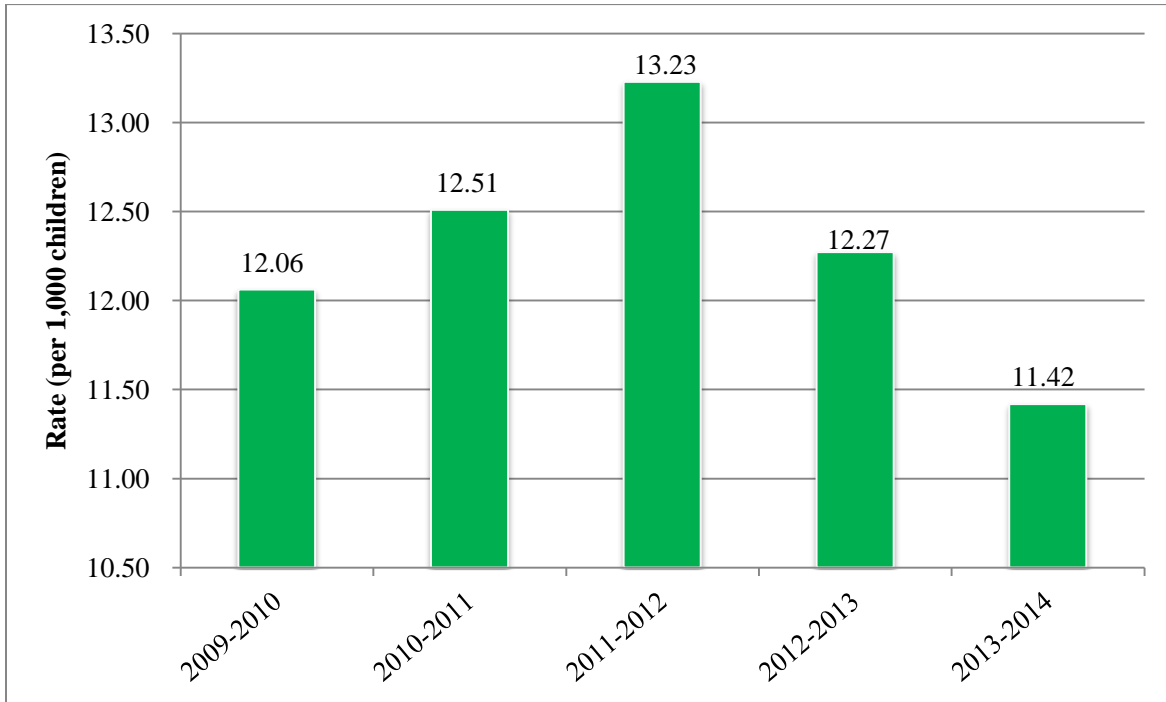


*Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Supplementary Survey, 2001 Supplementary Survey, 2002 through 2012 American Community Survey provided by the National KIDSCOUNT ([www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org))*

**Headline Indicator 3.2: Children who are Maltreated**

*Indicator definition:* Rate of children with verified maltreatment per 1,000 children.

**Chart 13. Children who are Maltreated**

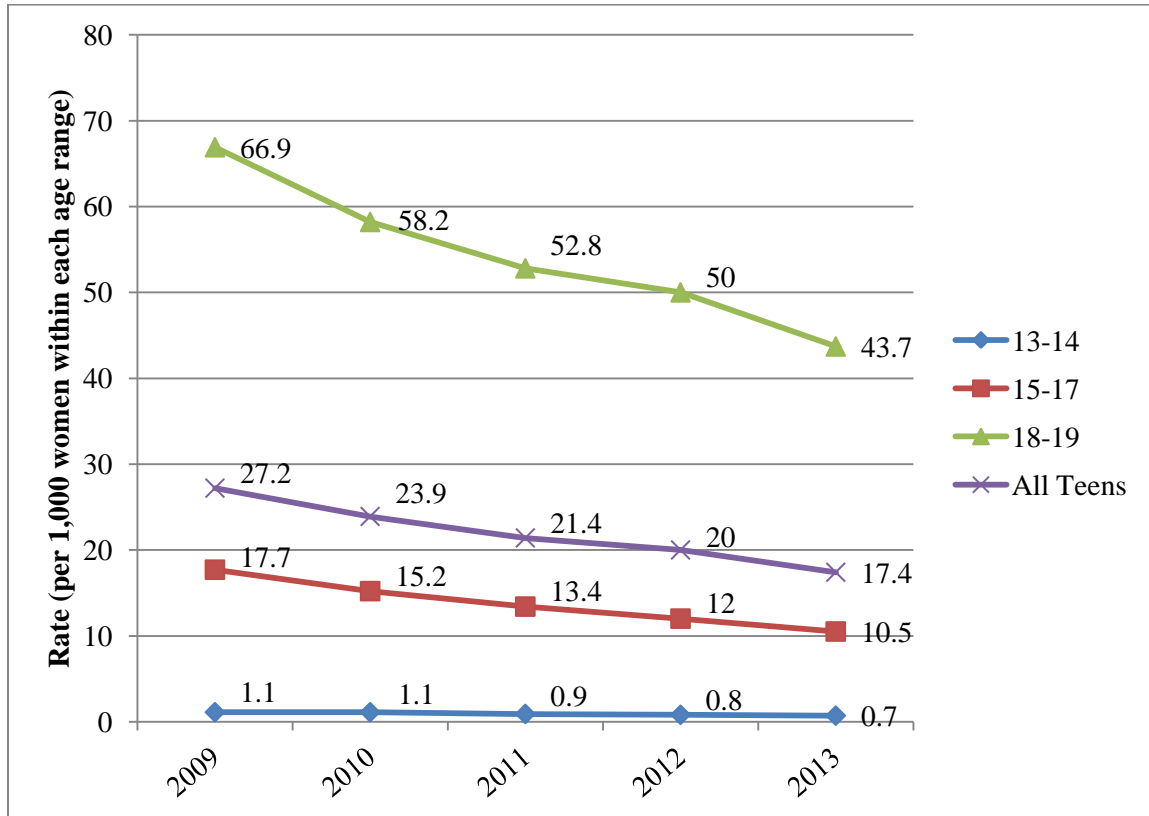


*Source: Florida Department of Children and Families*

**Headline Indicator 3.3: Teen Births**

*Indicator definition:* Rate of birth to teenagers by age group. Rate is per 1,000 females in each age group. Data reflects the mother's place of residence, rather than the child's place of the birth.

**Chart 14. Teen Births**



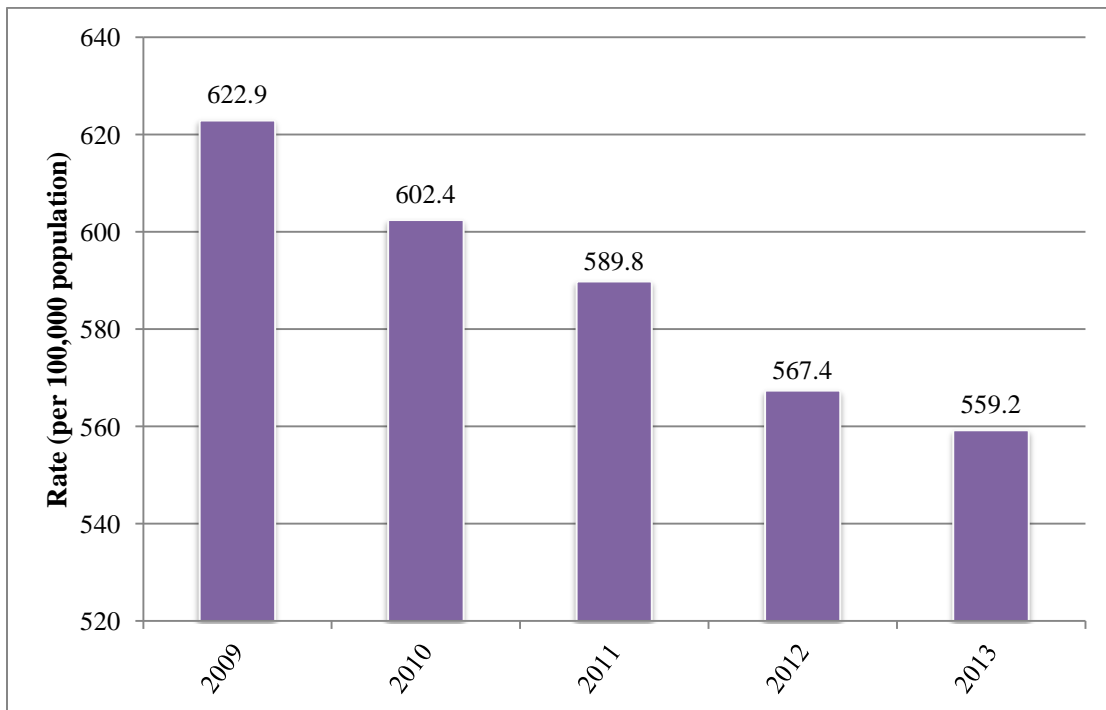
Source: FloridaCHARTS ([www.floridacharts.com](http://www.floridacharts.com))

## Area of Focus: Every Florida Child Lives in a Safe and Supportive Community

### Headline Indicator 4.1: Domestic Violence

*Indicator definition:* Rate per 100,000 population of statewide reported domestic violence offenses in Florida, 1992 – 2013. Offenses include murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, forcible sodomy, forcible fondling, aggravated assault, aggravated stalking, simple assault, threat/intimidation, and simple stalking.

**Chart 15. Domestic Violence**

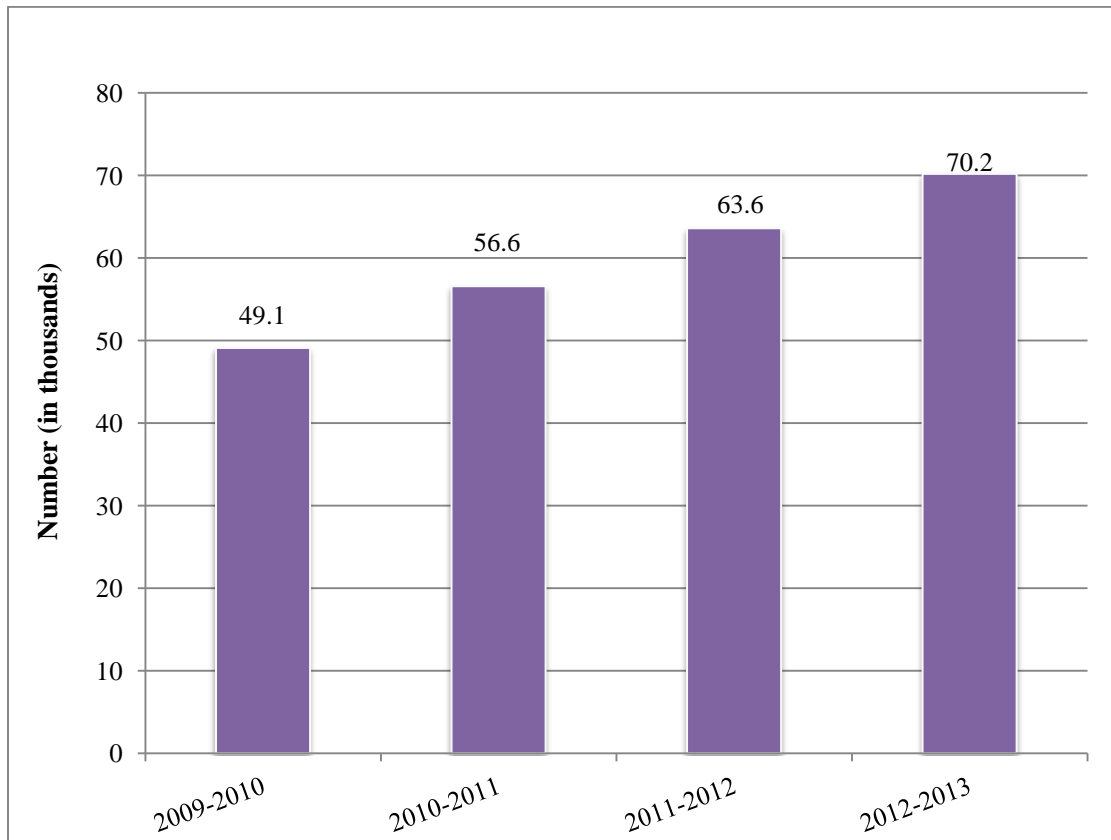


*Source: Florida Statistical Analysis Center: FDLE (2008 – 2013). Crime in Florida, Florida uniform crime report ([www.fdle.state.fl.us](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us))*

**Headline Indicator 4.2: Homeless Children**

*Indicator definition:* Number (in thousands) of homeless students reported in Florida public schools in each school year.

**Chart 16. Homeless Children**

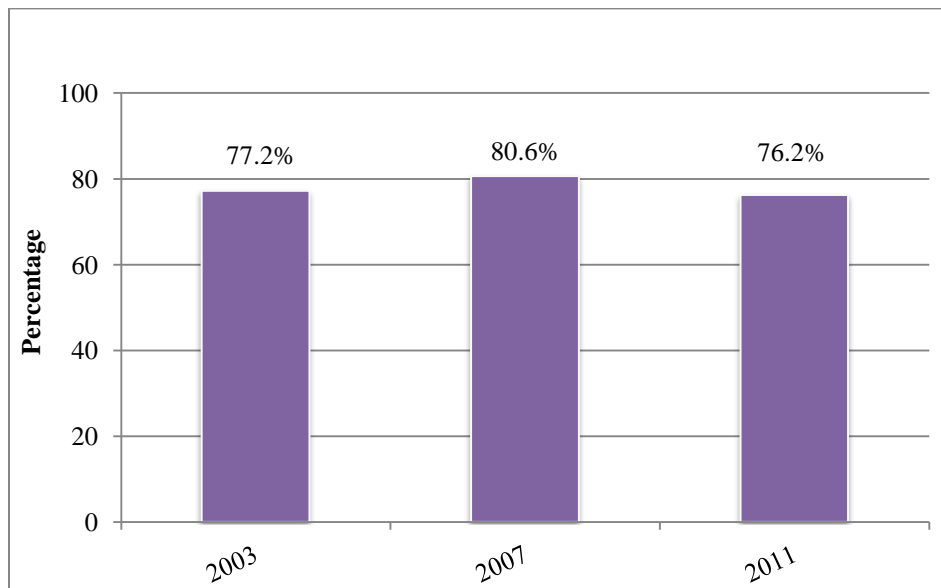


*Source: 2009 – 2013 Survey 5 Final Homeless Counts, Florida Department of Education (<http://www.fldoe.org/bsa/title1/titlex.asp>)*

### **Headline Indicator 4.3: Children in Supportive Neighborhoods**

*Indicator definition:* Percentage of children age 0 – 17 who are living in supportive neighborhoods derived from responses (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree) to four statements: 1) People in my neighborhood help each other out; 2) We watch out for each other’s children in this neighborhood; 3) There are people I can count on in this neighborhood; and 4) If my child were outside playing and got hurt or scared, there are adults nearby who I trust to help my child. Valid responses on at least three items are included. To score this indicator, item responses were assigned values (1-4) and an average was calculated for eligible cases. The threshold for living in a supportive neighborhood is a mean score of 2.25 or higher, indicating that no more than one item responses was one of the "disagree" options.

**Chart 17. Children in Supportive Neighborhoods**



*Source: 2003, 2007, and 2011/12 National Survey of Children’s Health (<http://childhealthdata.org>)*

### **Social Work Consortium**

#### ***Purpose:***

To explore opportunities for collaboration and partnership with state agencies and community organizations to increase the utilization of social work workforce, education, and research in Florida.

#### **Workforce for Professional Social Work in Florida:**

A professional social worker is defined by Florida statutes as a person with a bachelor’s degree (BSW), a master’s degree (MSW), or PhD degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). There are fourteen CSWE accredited programs in Florida, enrolling 4,800 students and graduating 1,600 annually. Florida statutes provide licensing for an MSW with a clinical social work education known as Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). In 2012, there were 7,869 LCSWs and 2,849 under supervision for licensure, for a total of 10,718. There are approximately 6,000

non-clinical BSWs and MSWs working in Florida. The total workforce for professional social workers in Florida is approximately 20,000.

**Consortium benefits and value as established by the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet:**

1. To explore how job classification of state agencies could best use the skills, knowledge, education, experience, and ethical base of professional social workers in Florida.
2. To develop linkages between the state agencies and the 14 schools of social work in Florida.
3. To review training requirements of state agencies in relationship to using social workers to maintain a professional workforce.

***Membership:***

The Consortium has 53 members representing state agencies, accredited schools of social work, the National Association of Social Workers Florida Chapter (NASW-FL), other statewide social work organizations, and community agencies. The Consortium met three times, once in 2013 and twice in 2014. The Consortium meets in Orlando and is sponsored by NASW-FL.

***Consortium Activities:***

1. Consortium members were very active in supporting the passage of Senate Bill 1666 (SB 1666) which provides a 50% increase in social workers serving as case managers, child protective investigators, and supervisors. SB 1666 also provided for loan forgiveness and tuition reimbursement to incentivize social workers to work in the Department of Children and Families and community based agencies. The bill will also create a Florida Child Welfare Institute, housed at Florida State University, to serve as a clearinghouse for research and information regarding child welfare in Florida.
2. NASW-FL established four workforce task forces which meet and present at Consortium meetings. The four task forces and their primary purposes are:
  - Child Welfare Task Force – provide leadership and advocacy for the social work profession in child welfare service delivery and legislation in Florida
  - Behavioral Task Force – improve service delivery, service conditions, increase reimbursement rates, and provide both legislative and regulatory advocacy for social workers
  - 491 Social Work Licensure Task Force – continue to advocate for improvements in the licensure of LCSWs and to explore licensure in Florida for all levels of social workers
  - Veterans and Military Families Task Force – the first is to advocate and promote the social work workforce for employment and service in the VA and Military, and the second purpose is to promote education and training to community-based social workers who work with veterans and military families
3. The Consortium and NASW-FL established a Scholars Program to identify qualified social work faculty in Florida's colleges and universities and link them with the profession's needs in the state to produce rigorous and relevant data that informs the profession and the state at large. The chosen scholar will receive an award to conduct a study and disseminate the results, through presentations and publications, to the Florida social work community and beyond. The total award will be \$2,000, and is intended to help cover research costs not limited to participant incentives, data analysis, a student research assistant, and travel to present findings. The first scholar chosen was Jennifer Spaulding-Givens, PhD, University of North Florida. She is doing research on identifying the social work workforce in Florida.

The Consortium will focus on trauma-informed training, child welfare certification programs, and social work and supervision in both state agencies and community organizations in 2015.



## Trauma and Toxic Stress

Since being identified as an initiative of the Cabinet, the Trauma and Toxic Stress effort, led by Dr. Mimi Graham Director of the Florida State University Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Policy, seeks to accomplish the following key strategies based on a convergence of compelling evidence that has linked toxic early childhood adverse experiences with a lifetime trajectory of serious mental and physical health problems:

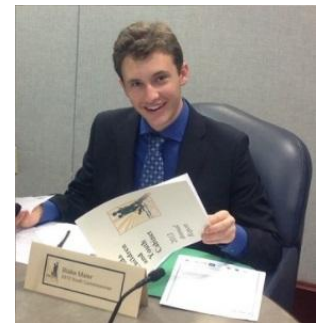
- Widespread education about the impact of trauma,
- Increase trauma screenings, and
- Expand evidence-based treatments.

To strengthen its approach within existing structures, the Trauma and Toxic Stress initiative partnered with the Statewide Trauma Informed Care Workgroup to advance efforts towards achieving key strategies. Throughout 2014, this collaboration performed the following activities:

- Through the support of Director Gibson, provided follow-up information on the initiative to include presenting Cabinet members with a Trauma-Informed Care Wheel developed by the Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET) that provides characteristics of trauma-informed school environments.
- Made various presentations to groups and organizations on the impacts of trauma and toxic stress to include the Circuit 2 Trauma Informed Care Workgroup event, Instilling Hope III in Tallahassee, FL.
- Through collaboration with the statewide Trauma Informed Care Workgroup, a draft website has been created to identify trauma informed approaches across systems to include health, dependency, delinquency, schools and early care and education.
- Increased awareness of Baby Court activities by having Cabinet members witness baby court proceedings in Escambia County, presented information on baby court at the 2014 Dependency Summit, and made presentations on baby court to various judicial circuits.

## Youth Commission

In January 2014, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) began managing the Florida Youth Commission (FYC) in partnership with the Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection. At that time, DJJ, the Governor's Office, and Florida Youth Commission partners sought to improve FYC membership by selecting a more representative, diverse composition of FYC members from the State's youth population. To do so, they increased the number of commissioners from twelve to twenty to reflect the twenty circuits in Florida, with the expectation that a youth from each circuit would serve on the FYC. Also, the GPA requirement was lowered from 3.0 to 2.0. The final twenty members were selected from an applicant pool of over 120 candidates and began serving an August 2014 to May 2015 term that was revised to coincide with the school year.



In February and April, two commissioners from the 2013 – 2014 term represented the FYC at two different events. Chair Blake Maier (above) sat with the Cabinet during the February meeting and discussed the new changes while also providing his input on other issues. Vice-Chair Maya King (left) attended the Children's Week dinner in April, where she spoke about the FYC.



*FYC Commissioners at the inaugural leadership retreat with Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary Christina K. Daly.*

At the inaugural FYC leadership retreat in August, the commissioners interacted with DJJ leadership and FYC partners, including staff from the Governor’s Office, Gubernatorial Fellows Program, Children’s Week, and the Boys and Girls Club, to gain insight regarding the work each does, their synergetic relationship, and their collaborative efforts, including the FYC. They also learned about accomplishments of previous FYCs and opportunities for work that could be accomplished by the current members. As a result, the group identified its initiative for the 2014 – 2015 term:

*“A campaign to motivate Florida’s students to advocate for the opportunity to evaluate proposed state education policies”*

The initiative, which is the cornerstone of their work, aims to encourage students to examine any proposed changes to the education system, analyze the impact of each from their perspective as students, and communicate their evaluative position. Thus, they will be empowered to make their voices heard regarding education policies that affect them, and ultimately, their future.



During the retreat, the Commissioners also formed the Communications, Government Affairs, and Outreach committees and elected committee chairs. All Commissioners participate in the monthly FYC calls that are held during their school’s lunch hour, and the monthly evening committee calls. Florida’s Chief Child Advocate communicated with each Youth Commissioner’s principal to facilitate the school-day monthly calls and ensure support of their student participating on the FYC.



On the final day of the retreat, the commissioners attended a swearing-in ceremony where they took the Oath of Office from Christina K. Daly, Secretary for the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice.



In 2015, the Commission will continue its work on a multitude of projects, such as support for various awareness months related to youth. In October 2014, the FYC supported the Children and Youth Cabinet's Bullying Awareness Month campaign, followed by efforts to raise awareness during November's National Youth Homelessness month and contributions to December's toy drive. Next will be the promotion of February's Ethnic Equality month. Materials for each month's activities are posted to the FYC's social media platforms, where all of the Commissioners like, share, and comment.

Furthermore, the Government Affairs Committee will begin reaching out to local and state leaders to inform them of the FYC initiative and garner support, create an online legislative newsletter that tracks youth and education bills proposed during this legislative session, and develop an online forum for youth to comment on educational issues that affect them. The Outreach Committee plans to maintain and update contact lists in an effort to create partnerships with local and state youth groups, schools, and other potential supporters, and utilize social media platforms to make community involvement more appealing to Florida's youth. The Communications Committee will continue to develop project materials, including designing and developing a pamphlet and filming, editing, and producing a video about the Commission's education policy review initiative and information about the FYC's advocacy campaign.

During conference calls, the Commissioners will continue to formulate and develop committee goals, create project plans, and check on work progress. Additionally, the FYC is utilizing social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, to promote its initiatives, conduct monthly awareness campaigns, and reach out to potential future applicants. Social media has proven to be a critical tool for all aspects of the FYC, along with videography, email and the FYC web site which, with support from the Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection, has been revamped to include frequently asked questions, meeting minutes, general information about the FYC, and commissioners' pictures and biographies.



The Commissioners will return to Tallahassee near the end of their term in April 2015 to attend the PeaceJam SE Annual Conference and Children's Week. The two-day PeaceJam Annual Conference held at Florida State University will bring together 500 – 600 people and will be hosted by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel of Argentina. The Commissioners will have an opportunity to meet the Laureate, listen to his story, and present an overview of Florida Youth Commission activities to conference attendees. Additionally, they will participate in team-building activities, service opportunities, and conduct an advocacy workshop. Following the PeaceJam Conference, the Commission will participate in Children's Week 2015. They will tour the Capitol, host a Town Hall Meeting, and co-host a Youth Advocacy Workshop. Throughout all of these activities, they will be working to positively promote the Florida Youth Commission and recruit future applicants.





**2014-2015 Florida Youth Commission Membership**



**Blake Maier, Chair**  
Communications Committee



**Morgan Denhart**  
Communications Committee, Vice Chair



**Christal Hector, Secretary**  
Communications Committee



**Marilu Duque**  
Communications Committee



**Maya King, Vice Chair**  
Government Affairs Committee



**Elias Rosenfeld**  
Government Affairs Committee, Chair



**Matthew Nadel**  
Communications Committee, Chair



**Kai Prindle**  
Communications Committee



**Nicholas LaFalce**  
Communications Committee



**Salma Abdelrahman**  
Outreach Committee, Chair



**Ella Biggins**  
Government Affairs Committee, Vice Chair



**Cody Jenkins**  
Government Affairs Committee



**Adrianna Williams**  
Government Affairs Committee



**Samuel Vilchez**  
Government Affairs Committee



**Katherine Sims**  
Government Affairs Committee



**Savion Winston**  
Outreach Committee, Vice Chair



**Jaci Caine**  
Outreach Committee



**Lindsey Brown**  
Outreach Committee



**Sierra Anderson**  
Outreach Committee



**Victoria Hernandez**  
Outreach Committee

# Appendix







**Florida Children and Youth Cabinet**  
**Florida Statute 402.56**

- (1) **SHORT TITLE.**—This act may be cited as the “Children and Youth Cabinet Act.”
- (2) **LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.**—
- (a) The Legislature finds that all state agencies and programs that touch the lives of children and youth must work in a coordinated and comprehensive fashion, with an emphasis on providing a continuum of services that benefit children from prenatal care through programs supporting successful transition to self-sufficient adulthood. The Legislature further finds that creating a Children and Youth Cabinet is the best method by which the state might achieve the visions and plans necessary to ensure that this state is the first place families think of when asked, “Where do you want to raise a child?”
  - (b) The Legislature, in collaboration with the Governor, intends to develop and implement a shared vision among the branches of government in order to improve child and family outcomes in this state. By working collaboratively, the Legislature intends to invest in the education and skills of our children and youth, develop a cohesive vision and plan that ensures a long-term commitment to children and youth issues, align public resources serving children and youth to support their healthy growth and development, and promote increased efficiency and improved service delivery by all governmental agencies that provide services for children, youth, and their families.
- (3) **ORGANIZATION.**—There is created the Children and Youth Cabinet, which is a coordinating council as defined in s. 20.03.
- (a) The cabinet shall ensure that the public policy of this state relating to children and youth is developed to promote interdepartmental collaboration and program implementation in order that services designed for children and youth are planned, managed, and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the children’s self-sufficiency, safety, economic stability, health, and quality of life.
  - (b) The cabinet is created in the Executive Office of the Governor, which shall provide administrative support and service to the cabinet.
  - (c) The cabinet shall meet at least four times each year, but no more than six times each year, in different regions of the state in order to solicit input from the public and any other individual offering testimony relevant to the issues considered. Each meeting must include a public comment session.
- (4) **MEMBERS.**—The cabinet shall consist of 14 members including the Governor and the following persons:
- (a)
    - 1. The Secretary of Children and Family Services;
    - 2. The Secretary of Juvenile Justice;
    - 3. The director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities;
    - 4. The director of the Office of Early Learning;
    - 5. The State Surgeon General;
    - 6. The Secretary of Health Care Administration;
    - 7. The Commissioner of Education;

8. The director of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office;
9. The director of the Office of Child Abuse Prevention; and
10. Five members representing children and youth advocacy organizations, who are not service providers and who are appointed by the Governor.

(b) The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General, and the Chief Financial Officer, or their appointed designees, shall serve as ex officio members of the cabinet.

(c) The Governor or the Governor's designee shall serve as the chair of the cabinet.

(d) Nongovernmental members of the cabinet shall serve without compensation, but are entitled to receive per diem and travel expenses in accordance with s. 112.061 while in performance of their duties.

(5) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Children and Youth Cabinet shall:

(a) Develop and implement a shared and cohesive vision using integrated services to improve child, youth, and family outcomes in this state.

(b) Develop, no later than December 31, 2007, a strategic plan to achieve the goals of the shared and cohesive vision. The plan shall be centered upon a long-term commitment to children and youth issues and align all public resources to serve children and youth and their families in a manner that supports the healthy growth and development of children. The plan shall prepare the children and youth to be responsible citizens and productive members of the workforce. The plan shall include a continuum of services that will benefit children from prenatal care through services for youth in transition to adulthood.

(c) Develop and implement measurable outcomes for each state department, agency, and program that are consistent with the strategic plan. The cabinet shall establish a baseline measurement for each outcome and regularly report on the progress made toward achieving the desired outcome.

(d) Design and implement actions that will promote collaboration, creativity, increased efficiency, information sharing, and improved service delivery between and within state governmental organizations that provide services for children and youth and their families. In particular, the efforts shall include the long-range planning process mandated by s. 216.013.

(e) Foster public awareness of children and youth issues and develop new partners in the effort to serve children and youth.

(f) Create a children and youth impact statement for evaluating proposed legislation, requested appropriations, and programs. The impact statement shall be shared with the Legislature in their deliberative process.

(g) Identify existing and potential funding streams and resources for children's services, including, but not limited to, public funding, foundation and organization grants, and other forms of private funding opportunities, including public-private partnerships.

- (h) Develop a children-and-youth-based budget structure and nomenclature that includes all relevant departments, funding streams, and programs. The budget shall facilitate improved coordination and efficiency, explore options for and allow maximization of federal financial participation, and implement the state’s vision and strategic plan.
  - (i) Engage in other activities that will implement improved collaboration of agencies in order to create, manage, and promote coordinated policies, programs, and service delivery systems that support children and youth.
- (6) **ADVISORY BOARD.**—The Governor may appoint an advisory board to assist the cabinet in its tasks. The board shall include persons who can provide to the cabinet the best available technical and professional research and assistance. If an advisory board is created, it shall include representatives of children and youth advocacy organizations and youth, wherever practicable, who have been recipients of services and programs operated or funded by state agencies.
- (7) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—The Children and Youth Cabinet shall, by February 1 of each year, provide an annual report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the public concerning its activities and progress towards making this state the first place families think of when asked, “Where do they want to raise their children?” The annual report may include recommendations for needed legislation or rulemaking authority.

History.—s. 1, ch. 2007-151; s. 53, ch. 2008-6; s. 284, ch. 2011-142; s. 61, ch. 2012-96; s. 16, ch. 2012-178.



**Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection**  
**Florida Statute 39.001, Sections 8 – 12**

- (8) **LEGISLATIVE INTENT FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE, ABANDONMENT, AND NEGLECT OF CHILDREN.**—The incidence of known child abuse, abandonment, and neglect has increased rapidly over the past 5 years. The impact that abuse, abandonment, or neglect has on the victimized child, siblings, family structure, and inevitably on all citizens of the state has caused the Legislature to determine that the prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect shall be a priority of this state. To further this end, it is the intent of the Legislature that an Office of Adoption and Child Protection be established.
- (9) **OFFICE OF ADOPTION AND CHILD PROTECTION.**—
- (a) For purposes of establishing a comprehensive statewide approach for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect, the Office of Adoption and Child Protection is created within the Executive Office of the Governor. The Governor shall appoint a Chief Child Advocate for the office.
- (b) The Chief Child Advocate shall:
1. Assist in developing rules pertaining to the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and implementation of child abuse prevention efforts.
  2. Act as the Governor's liaison with state agencies, other state governments, and the public and private sectors on matters that relate to the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and child abuse prevention.
  3. Work to secure funding and other support for the state's promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and child abuse prevention efforts, including, but not limited to, establishing cooperative relationships among state and private agencies.
  4. Develop a strategic program and funding initiative that links the separate jurisdictional activities of state agencies with respect to promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and child abuse prevention. The office may designate lead and contributing agencies to develop such initiatives.
  5. Advise the Governor and the Legislature on statistics related to the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and child abuse prevention trends in this state; the status of current adoption programs and services, current child abuse prevention programs and services, the funding of adoption, support of adoptive families, and child abuse prevention programs and services; and the status of the office with regard to the development and implementation of the state strategy for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and child abuse prevention.
  6. Develop public awareness campaigns to be implemented throughout the state for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and child abuse prevention.
- (c) The office is authorized and directed to:
1. Oversee the preparation and implementation of the state plan established under subsection (10) and revise and update the state plan as necessary.

2. Provide for or make available continuing professional education and training in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
3. Work to secure funding in the form of appropriations, gifts, and grants from the state, the Federal Government, and other public and private sources in order to ensure that sufficient funds are available for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and child abuse prevention efforts.
4. Make recommendations pertaining to agreements or contracts for the establishment and development of:
  - a. Programs and services for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse and neglect.
  - b. Training programs for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
  - c. Multidisciplinary and discipline-specific training programs for professionals with responsibilities affecting children, young adults, and families.
  - d. Efforts to promote adoption.
  - e. Postadoptive services to support adoptive families.
5. Monitor, evaluate, and review the development and quality of local and statewide services and programs for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse and neglect and shall publish and distribute an annual report of its findings on or before January 1 of each year to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, the head of each state agency affected by the report, and the appropriate substantive committees of the Legislature. The report shall include:
  - a. A summary of the activities of the office.
  - b. A summary of the adoption data collected and reported to the federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and the federal Administration for Children and Families.
  - c. A summary of the child abuse prevention data collected and reported to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and the federal Administration for Children and Families.
  - d. A summary detailing the timeliness of the adoption process for children adopted from within the child welfare system.
  - e. Recommendations, by state agency, for the further development and improvement of services and programs for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse and neglect.
  - f. Budget requests, adoption promotion and support needs, and child abuse prevention program needs by state agency.

6. Work with the direct-support organization established under s. 39.0011 to receive financial assistance.

(10) PLAN FOR COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH.—

- (a) The office shall develop a state plan for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of abuse, abandonment, and neglect of children and shall submit the state plan to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Governor no later than December 31, 2008. The Department of Children and Families, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Law Enforcement, and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities shall participate and fully cooperate in the development of the state plan at both the state and local levels. Furthermore, appropriate local agencies and organizations shall be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of the state plan at the local level. Appropriate local groups and organizations shall include, but not be limited to, community mental health centers; guardian ad litem programs for children under the circuit court; the school boards of the local school districts; the Florida local advocacy councils; community-based care lead agencies; private or public organizations or programs with recognized expertise in working with child abuse prevention programs for children and families; private or public organizations or programs with recognized expertise in working with children who are sexually abused, physically abused, emotionally abused, abandoned, or neglected and with expertise in working with the families of such children; private or public programs or organizations with expertise in maternal and infant health care; multidisciplinary child protection teams; child day care centers; law enforcement agencies; and the circuit courts, when guardian ad litem programs are not available in the local area. The state plan to be provided to the Legislature and the Governor shall include, as a minimum, the information required of the various groups in paragraph (b).
- (b) The development of the state plan shall be accomplished in the following manner:
  1. The office shall establish a Child Abuse Prevention and Permanency Advisory Council composed of an adoptive parent who has adopted a child from within the child welfare system and representatives from each state agency and appropriate local agencies and organizations specified in paragraph (a). The advisory council shall serve as the research arm of the office and shall be responsible for:
    - a. Assisting in developing a plan of action for better coordination and integration of the goals, activities, and funding pertaining to the promotion and support of adoption and the prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect conducted by the office in order to maximize staff and resources at the state level. The plan of action shall be included in the state plan.
    - b. Assisting in providing a basic format to be utilized by the districts in the preparation of local plans of action in order to provide for uniformity in the district plans and to provide for greater ease in compiling information for the state plan.
    - c. Providing the districts with technical assistance in the development of local plans of action, if requested.

- d. Assisting in examining the local plans to determine if all the requirements of the local plans have been met and, if they have not, informing the districts of the deficiencies and requesting the additional information needed.
  - e. Assisting in preparing the state plan for submission to the Legislature and the Governor. Such preparation shall include the incorporation into the state plan of information obtained from the local plans, the cooperative plans with the members of the advisory council, and the plan of action for coordination and integration of state departmental activities. The state plan shall include a section reflecting general conditions and needs, an analysis of variations based on population or geographic areas, identified problems, and recommendations for change. In essence, the state plan shall provide an analysis and summary of each element of the local plans to provide a statewide perspective. The state plan shall also include each separate local plan of action.
  - f. Conducting a feasibility study on the establishment of a Children's Cabinet.
  - g. Working with the specified state agency in fulfilling the requirements of subparagraphs 2., 3., 4., and 5.
2. The office, the department, the Department of Education, and the Department of Health shall work together in developing ways to inform and instruct parents of school children and appropriate district school personnel in all school districts in the detection of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect and in the proper action that should be taken in a suspected case of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect, and in caring for a child's needs after a report is made. The plan for accomplishing this end shall be included in the state plan.
  3. The office, the department, the Department of Law Enforcement, and the Department of Health shall work together in developing ways to inform and instruct appropriate local law enforcement personnel in the detection of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect and in the proper action that should be taken in a suspected case of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.
  4. Within existing appropriations, the office shall work with other appropriate public and private agencies to emphasize efforts to educate the general public about the problem of and ways to detect child abuse, abandonment, and neglect and in the proper action that should be taken in a suspected case of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. The plan for accomplishing this end shall be included in the state plan.
  5. The office, the department, the Department of Education, and the Department of Health shall work together on the enhancement or adaptation of curriculum materials to assist instructional personnel in providing instruction through a multidisciplinary approach on the identification, intervention, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect. The curriculum materials shall be geared toward a sequential program of instruction at the four progressional levels, K-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Strategies for encouraging all school districts to utilize the curriculum are to be included in the state plan for the prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect.
  6. Each district of the department shall develop a plan for its specific geographical area. The plan developed at the district level shall be submitted to the advisory council for utilization



in preparing the state plan. The district local plan of action shall be prepared with the involvement and assistance of the local agencies and organizations listed in this paragraph, as well as representatives from those departmental district offices participating in the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and treatment and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect. In order to accomplish this, the office shall establish a task force on the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect. The office shall appoint the members of the task force in accordance with the membership requirements of this section. The office shall ensure that individuals from both urban and rural areas and an adoptive parent who has adopted a child from within the child welfare system are represented on the task force. The task force shall develop a written statement clearly identifying its operating procedures, purpose, overall responsibilities, and method of meeting responsibilities. The district plan of action to be prepared by the task force shall include, but shall not be limited to:

- a. Documentation of the magnitude of the problems of child abuse, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, and emotional abuse, and child abandonment and neglect in its geographical area.
- b. A description of programs currently serving abused, abandoned, and neglected children and their families and a description of programs for the prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect, including information on the impact, cost-effectiveness, and sources of funding of such programs.
- c. Information concerning the number of children within the child welfare system available for adoption who need child-specific adoption promotion efforts.
- d. A description of programs currently promoting and supporting adoptive families, including information on the impact, cost-effectiveness, and sources of funding of such programs.
- e. A description of a comprehensive approach for providing postadoption services. The continuum of services shall include, but not be limited to, sufficient and accessible parent and teen support groups; case management, information, and referral services; and educational advocacy.
- f. A continuum of programs and services necessary for a comprehensive approach to the promotion of adoption and the prevention of all types of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect as well as a brief description of such programs and services.
- g. A description, documentation, and priority ranking of local needs related to the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect based upon the continuum of programs and services.
- h. A plan for steps to be taken in meeting identified needs, including the coordination and integration of services to avoid unnecessary duplication and cost, and for alternative funding strategies for meeting needs through the reallocation of existing resources, utilization of volunteers, contracting with local universities for services, and local government or private agency funding.

- i. A description of barriers to the accomplishment of a comprehensive approach to the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect.
- j. Recommendations for changes that can be accomplished only at the state program level or by legislative action.

(11) FUNDING AND SUBSEQUENT PLANS.—

- (a) All budget requests submitted by the office, the department, the Department of Health, the Department of Education, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Corrections, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, or any other agency to the Legislature for funding of efforts for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect shall be based on the state plan developed pursuant to this section.
- (b) The office and the other agencies and organizations listed in paragraph (10)(a) shall readdress the state plan and make necessary revisions every 5 years, at a minimum. Such revisions shall be submitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate no later than June 30 of each year divisible by 5. At least biennially, the office shall review the state plan and make any necessary revisions based on changing needs and program evaluation results. An annual progress report shall be submitted to update the state plan in the years between the 5-year intervals. In order to avoid duplication of effort, these required plans may be made a part of or merged with other plans required by either the state or Federal Government, so long as the portions of the other state or Federal Government plan that constitute the state plan for the promotion of adoption, support of adoptive families, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect are clearly identified as such and are provided to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate as required under this section.

(12) LIBERAL CONSTRUCTION.—It is the intent of the Legislature that this chapter be liberally interpreted and construed in conformity with its declared purposes.

**History.**—s. 1, ch. 26880, 1951; s. 1, ch. 73-231; s. 1, ch. 78-414; s. 1, ch. 82-62; s. 62, ch. 85-81; s. 1, ch. 85-206; s. 10, ch. 85-248; s. 19, ch. 86-220; s. 1, ch. 90-53; ss. 1, 2, ch. 90-208; s. 2, ch. 90-306; s. 2, ch. 91-33; s. 68, ch. 91-45; s. 13, ch. 91-57; s. 5, ch. 93-156; s. 23, ch. 93-200; s. 19, ch. 93-230; s. 14, ch. 94-134; s. 14, ch. 94-135; ss. 9, 10, ch. 94-209; s. 1332, ch. 95-147; s. 7, ch. 95-152; s. 8, ch. 95-158; ss. 15, 30, ch. 95-228; s. 116, ch. 95-418; s. 1, ch. 96-268; ss. 128, 156, ch. 97-101; s. 69, ch. 97-103; s. 3, ch. 97-237; s. 119, ch. 97-238; s. 8, ch. 98-137; s. 18, ch. 98-403; s. 1, ch. 99-193; s. 13, ch. 2000-139; s. 5, ch. 2000-151; s. 5, ch. 2000-263; s. 34, ch. 2004-267; s. 2, ch. 2006-97; s. 1, ch. 2006-194; s. 2, ch. 2006-227; s. 1, ch. 2007-124; s. 3, ch. 2008-6; s. 1, ch. 2010-114; s. 42, ch. 2011-142; s. 2, ch. 2012-105; s. 19, ch. 2012-116; s. 4, ch. 2013-15; s. 9, ch. 2014-19; s. 2, ch. 2014-224.

**Note.**—Former s. 39.20; subsections (3), (5), and (6) former s. 39.002, s. 409.70, subsections (7)-(9) former s. 415.501.









Florida Children and Youth Cabinet  
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