

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK AND NEXT STEPS FOR FLORIDA CHILDREN AND YOUTH CABINET

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.

PRIMARY ROLES

Definition of these roles serves to guide the action the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet (Cabinet) will take in its official capacity.

Advisory

- Cabinet will serve as a forum for gathering data and information around identified gaps in services, inefficiencies and/or barriers that exist across multiple agencies/systems, which negatively impact the state's ability to deliver services to children and youth
- Cabinet will serve as a collective voice in making recommendations that help to improve overall service delivery
- Cabinet may seek advice and guidance from representatives of children and youth advocacy organizations, as well as state and local experts

Collaborator/Coordinator/Integrator

- Serve as the collaborative agent between state agencies
- Serve as the collaborative agent between state agencies and community providers
- Serve as the collaborative agent among members of the executive branch, elected officials, community providers and the public regarding services and best practices for children
- Identify opportunities to improve service delivery through better coordination or integration

Communicator/Promoter

- Create greater awareness of the services and successes of state agencies and organizations that serve children and youth
- Facilitate improved information sharing among agencies in order to avoid duplication of services and maximize resources
- Publicize and cross market awareness and education campaigns of Cabinet agencies and organizations
- Establish greater presence at local, state and national events focused on priority Children and Youth Cabinet issues

It is not the Cabinet's role to develop new programs or to review existing programs and measure outcomes. Each agency already does that. Rather, it is the role of the Cabinet to:

- Share information between agencies
- Encourage open/shared communication
- Provide an open forum for the public to present issues and ideas for resolving problems
- Consider new initiatives to recommend to the Executive Branch as policy directions
- Serve as a clearinghouse for new ideas and share them with the broadest audience
- Encourage and support new programs if they are within the three primary goals of the Cabinet

Primary Goals of the Cabinet in 2015 as proposed by Chair Walters: The following goals are intended to direct the focus of the Cabinet on particular issues or programs. The Cabinet has limited staff resources and Cabinet members have time constraints.

1. The Cabinet will provide a venue for presenting a united voice on how to address issues affecting the health and well-being of Florida's children and youth.

The Cabinet is the place for state agencies and the child advocacy community to speak with one voice in realizing the vision of the statute, which is to develop a long-term commitment to children and youth issues and align all public resources to serve those children and families. As part of this united voice, the members of the Cabinet and community partners should be able to communicate with each other regularly and easily to eliminate duplicative efforts and to collaborate on the long-term goals of the Cabinet.

2. The Cabinet will work to galvanize the State of Florida, all agencies and service providers to shift the context of the provision of services from reactive to preventive.

Cabinet members have a great interest in moving toward a comprehensive prevention approach to service delivery and reducing the practice of reactive service delivery. Our community partners are essential in developing a support system for children and their families that reduces the need for (or reliance on) state services. Florida's state agencies are key partners in the prevention movement by helping (at local, state and federal levels) to eliminate barriers, close service gaps and identify opportunities for improved service delivery.

3. The Cabinet should explore new and different funding mechanisms that could provide greater coordination among agencies and better delivery of appropriate services to the children and youth being served. This should be done without dipping into current sources of funding and thereby depleting one at the expense of another.

With the expertise that is currently on the Cabinet, together with community partners that can be reached by Cabinet members, it is possible that new collaborations can be forged to find sufficient resources to service the children and families of our state.

Duties of Cabinet Members

- Attend all Cabinet meetings. Join and actively participate in a committee.
- If unable to participate on a committee, appoint someone with decision-making authority to participate in committee work
- In fact, it would be helpful for each agency head that is on the cabinet to also name another person who will partner with them in the work.

Standing Committees of the Cabinet

Committees should directly support the mission and goals set forth by the Cabinet. Committees should be broad enough to allow for specific projects to be developed or reviewed throughout the year(s). Chair Walters would appoint a Chair or sponsor for each committee. Composition of the committees could include Cabinet members or their designee, as well as agency staff, field experts and stakeholders (depending on the subject).

Policy Impact: Supports Cabinet goal to present a united voice on issues affecting the health and well-being of Florida's children and youth.

Once an issue is identified by the Cabinet as something to weigh in on, this committee would work with the appropriate people and organizations to develop a framework or policy impact statement for how to address it. The proposed framework or policy impact statement would be presented to the full Cabinet through the committee for review and decision to endorse as a policy recommendation.

Best Practices: Covers programs provided by all state agencies and community care organizations, both for profit and non-profit. This would include services that cover a continuum for all ages from the youngest to those aging out of the system.

It would also include services to families that are not in custody of the state, but have children with special needs.

Communication: This is one of the primary areas of the Cabinet's work.

Sharing information about projects regarding interdepartmental communications, such as updates on new programs, public awareness initiatives, barriers experienced, new areas of concern and how to address those issues (e.g., trafficking of youth – and how each agency is handling this and is there a better way)

Share information received from stakeholders and the public on new programs or ideas. Whether the Cabinet would take any action to promote these new programs or support them would be measured against the three main goals of 2015 for the Cabinet.

Leverage the resources of state agency communications offices to cross-promote major Cabinet and agency initiatives. Includes communication directly to stakeholders and the public about the Cabinet, its members and the work they do.

Explore technology options for creating a more interactive website, including links to the agencies on the Cabinet. The committee could also explore social media options, such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc. Each agency has staff with the experience and skills to develop a plan for development and ongoing maintenance.

Finance: 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.

Is there duplication of funds spent on programs or services?

Are there additional sources of funds that would help to shift this state's work for children and families to one of prevention?

Delivery of Services: Are the programs that exist accomplishing their stated purpose?

The current Multisystem Collaboration Technical Assistance grant with Georgetown is a good example of work that could be done under this committee.

This could include the policy impact committee – measured again against our three main goals.

Technology:

The committee could serve as a venue for finding better ways to share information across agencies (e.g., identifying and eliminating barriers to data sharing, executing multi-agency data sharing agreements, etc.)

Liaisons to the Cabinet: The Cabinet should identify key groups that could have liaisons to the Cabinet or advisory roles with the Cabinet. Examples include:

- Office of the Governor and Legislature
- Office of Policy and Budget, OPPAGA
- Children's Services Councils
- Local Children's Cabinets (e.g., Orange County)
- Associations (e.g., Florida General Justice Assn, Florida Bar, Pediatric Society, etc.)
- Family/Juvenile court judges
- University educators – Children's law clinics, study groups on youth trauma, early development of children