

## 2013 Annual Report for Circuit 12

### Reporting Period: January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013

(While recognizing information for the annual report will be submitted by October 15, 2013, Local Planning Teams are encouraged to include projected activities that will occur in November and December 2013)

### Summary of Plan Activities

Please provide a summary of five-year plan activities for the five-year prevention and permanency plan. For each activity, please identify how they support/promote the Protective Factors.

**It is the intent of the Circuit 12 Five Year Prevention and Permanency Plan to prevent child abuse, neglect, and abandonment before it ever occurs through the provision of a continuum of programs that are necessary for a comprehensive approach to prevention-focused strategies. All of the five-year plan activities support and promote the Protective Factors: to build Parental Emotional Resilience, increase Social Connections, increase Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, provide Concrete Supports in Times of Need, and encourage Nurturing and Attachment.**

### Community Development:

- Adoption Competency Training provided to several therapists and clinicians in Circuit 12
- Presley Ridge training provided to licensed Therapeutic Foster Parents
- Sarasota Behavioral Stakeholder's Workgroup led efforts to adopt a county ordinance to provide oversight of the Pain Management Clinics in the County in collaboration with multiple community organizations. These efforts have had a direct impact on the reduction in the number of children being sheltered in Sarasota County, reduced the number of deaths attributed to accidental deaths, and increased community awareness of the negative impact of Prescription Drugs misuse on the vulnerable children in our communities.
- A Methadone Maintenance Workgroup was formed in Sarasota and Manatee counties to address the unique needs of pregnant women and new Mothers served by Operation PAR. The committee has developed several new processes to ensure adequate and ongoing communication between the Methadone clinics, the clients, and the Child Welfare system of care.
- All Children's Hospital in Sarasota received a research grant to provide a NAS clinic to assist Mothers and their infants who were substance-exposed at birth.
- Mental Health First Aid training was provided to approximately 40 community members to increase their knowledge of working with individuals who may have been exposed to trauma due to a multitude of possible events. These individuals will train other members of the community to build a solid cadre of individuals who can support children and families in the time of a disaster or other crisis situation.

### Community Support for Families:

- Healthy Families has increased the number of families served in all three counties in Circuit 12.
- Manatee Children's Summit – "Our Children Safe from the Start" provided vision and hearing screenings, flu shots, and multiple informational booths
- Sarasota Success for Six
- National Night Out events
- Foster Care Awareness Walk sponsored by Bridge of Life (faith-based initiative)
- Faith-Based Homeless Prevention Initiative – Trinity without Borders
- SPARCC is now offering individual and group counseling for persons who have been Sexually assaulted in DeSoto County.
- Manatee County Healthy Families is offering "Save My Life Program" for mothers with newborns.

**Family Supportive Programs/Services:**

- Manatee Glens Children Action Team provides intensive wrap-around services for children identified with mental health issues in Manatee County. Services have been expanded this year to provide services in Sarasota and DeSoto counties.
- Project Rainbow provides in-home parenting services for parents of children with disabilities through the local Easter Seals programs.
- Expansion of Subsidized Child Care funded by Manatee County to assist Grandparents and Relatives caring for children.
- Manatee Glens Parent Aide Program – in-home supports to assist parents to gain basic life skills such as budgeting, parenting, coping mechanisms, etc.
- Florida Baptist Children’s Home opened two new family homes in Manatee County to allow siblings to stay together if they are sheltered into licensed care
- All Children’s Hospital in Sarasota County offers free classes for new parents as well as for parents of children with behavioral issues.

**Public Awareness and Education Campaigns:**

- Sleep Right Sleep Tight DVD provided to local Methadone Clinics and community providers to educate on proper sleeping position and techniques for newborns and infants.
- Expansion of North Port Drug-Free Youth to DeSoto County and multiple locations in Sarasota County
- Children Services Advisory Board in Manatee County provided funds for pregnancy prevention and education to female and male students, “It’s Your Choice” is a pregnancy prevention program offered through the School District.
- Educational trainings have been offered to Court staff on issues of child abuse and family violence.
- Multiple public awareness campaigns on the dangers of co-sleeping and shaken baby syndrome.

**Progress**

Please describe your circuit’s progress towards achieving each objective outlined in the five-year plan for Prevention, Adoption Promotion, and Support of Adoptive Families. (Please see Planned Objectives and Strategies document) (If your objective focuses on the State Fiscal Year, please report accordingly. If not, report information based on the 2013 calendar year.)

***Outcome***

All families and communities ensure that children are safe and nurtured and live in stable environments that promote well-being.

***Circuit 12 Goal 1***

Children and teenagers are free from abuse, abandonment, and neglect and have safe, loving and permanent homes as measured by a reduction in the circuit-level child abuse rate from the fiscal year 2008-09 of 14.85 to a rate of 12.25 per 1,000 children by 30 June 2015.

***Manatee County \_\_\_ Goal 1.1***

Children and teenagers are free from abuse, abandonment, and neglect and have safe, loving and permanent homes as measured by a reduction in the county-level child abuse rate from the fiscal year 2008-09 of 16.61 to a rate of 13.50 per 1,000 children by 30 June 2015.

***Sarasota County \_\_\_ Goal 1.2***

Children and teenagers are free from abuse, abandonment, and neglect and have safe, loving and permanent homes as measured by a reduction in the county-level child abuse rate from the fiscal year 2008-09 of 12.63 to a rate of 11.00 per 1,000 children by 30 June 2015.

***Desoto County \_\_\_ Goal 1.3***

Children and teenagers are free from abuse, abandonment, and neglect and have safe, loving and permanent homes as measured by a reduction in the county-level child abuse rate from the fiscal year 2008-09 of 17.84 to a rate of 14.50 per 1,000 children by 30 June 2015.

***Strategy 1:*** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will support the statewide efforts to increase the availability and capacity of Healthy Families Florida to provide home visitation for families at high risk of abuse and neglect and in need of parenting education and support over the five year period from July 2010 – June 2015

**Objective 1.1:** Continue, enhance and expand Healthy Families Florida in all 3 counties.

- Healthy Families Manatee continues to attend the Parent Education Coalition meetings and Early Childhood Community meetings to educate community partners on the services and benefits that Healthy Families offers.
- Healthy Families request to receive additional funding added to their budget was selected as a priority at the Sarasota Legislative Breakfast.
- Healthy Families continues to work on gaining more media coverage in all three counties in Circuit 12 to increase awareness of the positive outcomes for children and families they serve.

***Strategy 2:*** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will support the statewide efforts with regard to developing and enhancing current resource directories in order to establish within communities and throughout the state a system for identification of prevention services and interventions.

**Objective 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3:** Sarasota County to explore expansion efforts of current resource cataloging system. Manatee County to expand current Whole Child Project to include programs up to age 18 years; and to explore expansion efforts of current resource cataloging system. Desoto County to research and explore resource directory.

- United Way 211 has developed a warm line for easier access to services.
- Whole Child in Manatee County holds bi-monthly meetings where local providers come together and share new programs, event news, and other happenings.
- Believers Against Abuse and Neglect of Kids (BAANK) founder and director has been engaging numerous faiths to catalogue current and needed services that can be provided through individual churches in our circuit.
- BAANK continues to expand its role into Manatee and Desoto counties by building a data base of over 400 churches and synagogues.
- DeSoto County Stakeholder's Consortium developed a Resource Directory of services in partnership with community partners and supported by Central Florida Behavioral Health Network. The Directory provides information on a wide variety of supports and services available to the DeSoto County communities.

***Strategy 3:*** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will enhance and expand upon current child abuse prevention initiatives and programs within the community.

**Objectives 3.1 and 3.2:** Development of Media/Educational Committee

Advocate and support continued efforts of agencies and programs that are already involved with prevention and educational programs.

- Trauma Informed Care Work Group continues as a Circuit wide group, with Central Florida Behavioral Health Network as the lead.
- There has been a relationship developed with the local media outlets in the community. They provide us with PSA's for local events and support at events. Several articles featuring foster families and recruitment were featured in the Northport Sun and the Sarasota Herald Tribune. The Safe Children Coalition has appeared and is scheduled to appear again on the Kayo Keen Talk Radio Show in Desoto County.
- The Safe Children Coalition has attended multiple recruitment events since January 2013 through those various events the inquiry line for recruitment has received numerous inquiries.
- Marketing materials for recruitment are being updated and changed to meet the changes within the communities the Safe Children Coalition provides services.
- The Safe Children Coalition hired one full time staff person to be able to focus on targeted recruitment and other events.
- Development of a relationship with educational communities has allowed the Local Planning Team to work with local schools and has strengthened the partnership through participation in different events. The Inter Agency Educational Agreement has opened doors to various programs and events within the school system to be able to educate students, parents, and educators on child abuse prevention efforts..
- DFY – Drug Free Youth Program is working on obtaining a non profit status. Currently in the South County of Sarasota they are serving 1600 kids in the North Port community. DFY chapters are being organized in DeSoto County and several communities within Sarasota County.

**Strategy 4:** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will support the statewide initiative to identify and seek informal support systems of support within the community, specifically related to the faith based communities.

**Objective 4.1:** Engagement of Faith Based communities regarding current services that are offered to community at large.

- “Ministering to a Hurting World – A Trauma-Informed Care Workshop” was held on September 28, 2013 at the Grace Church in Sarasota. The workshop was coordinated by BAANK (Believers Against the Abuse and Neglect of Kids) and was supported by multiple community partners. The workshop was focused on engaging the faith-based community to increase their awareness and to build skills to assist and support persons that have experienced trauma.
- Sarasota County Jail continues to offer faith based programs for women who are incarcerated. Programs currently being offered are parenting, stress management, and anger management. These classes have now become recognized by the court system.
- One Church One Child, in collaboration with the Safe Children Coalition, are developing a mentoring program. This program would be set up to link families in the churches with minority children available for adoption. The church members would provide mentoring and other forms of support with a focus of bringing the children to the church and provide them with faith based support and guidance. This may also open up opportunities for the child to match to a forever family.
- New Life Assembly of Venice in collaboration with the Safe Children Coalition held a recruitment event at the church on Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup>.
- The Source Church of Bradenton has partnered with the Safe Children Coalition to offer tutoring and obtaining barbers in the community to provide free haircuts to children in out of home care. They have also opened their thrift shop to 18+ young adults who may need furniture, clothing, or various other items.

- A new initiative is under way to begin a volunteer based Supervised Visitation Program that will be known as Quality Time Supervised Visitation Program. The program will allow parents to visit more often and for longer periods with their children.
- The Safe Children Coalition participated in the 2013 Missions Conference at the Manatee County Fairgrounds in February 2013, along with the 20 Manatee County Churches and Ministries who coordinated the conference.
- Bridge a Life is a faith based organization offering programs such as Hammer Time, Stew Crew, Operation Relaxation, Walk a Thon for awareness.
- Bethel Community Church offers respite care for Everyday Blessings, a residential provider who maintains siblings together while in foster care.
- Florida Baptist Church opened two new homes in Palmetto. These homes are being funded through the Southwest Guardian Angels. The homes will be available to take sibling groups or at least up to six foster children.
- BAANK has a new initiative, Families Mountain Initiative. This new initiative will research systematic issues that affect families and then try and see how the church can assist.

### **Part 3: PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE PROMOTION OF ADOPTION**

#### ***Vision***

Florida's highest priority is that children are raised in healthy, safe, stable, and nurturing families.

#### ***Mission***

To serve as a blueprint that will be implemented to provide for the care, safety, and protection of all of Florida's children in an environment that fosters healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development.

#### ***Outcome***

All families and communities ensure that children are safe and nurtured and live in stable environments that promote well-being.

#### ***Manatee County \_\_\_ Goal 1.1***

The percent of children adopted within 12 months of becoming legally free for adoption will increase from the fiscal year 2008-09 rate of 56 percent to 79 percent by 30 June 2015.

#### ***Sarasota County \_\_\_ Goal 1.2***

The percent of children adopted within 12 months of becoming legally free for adoption will increase from the fiscal year 2008-09 rate of 48 percent to 75 percent by 30 June 2015.

#### ***Desoto County \_\_\_ Goal 1.3***

The percent of children adopted within 12 months of becoming legally free for adoption will increase from the fiscal year 2008-09 rate of 73 percent to 75 percent by 30 June 2015.

#### ***Manatee County \_\_\_ Goal 2.1***

The percent of children legally free for adoption who have been waiting for adoption since the date of termination of parental rights (TPR) for more than 12 months will be reduced from the June 2009 rate of 43.3 percent to 20.8 percent by 30 June 2015.

#### ***Sarasota County \_\_\_ Goal 2.2***

The percent of children legally free for adoption who have been waiting for adoption since the date of termination of parental rights (TPR) for more than 12 months will be reduced from the June 2009 rate of 51.1 percent to 20.5 percent by 30 June 2015.

***Desoto County \_\_\_ Goal 2.3***

The percent of children legally free for adoption who have been waiting for adoption since the date of termination of parental rights (TPR) for more than 12 months will be reduced from the June 2009 rate of 26.7 percent to 20.3 percent by 30 June 2015.

***Strategy 1:*** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will have provided training to key Leads, Partners, Champions, and Case Management Organizations in Family Finders, Family Centered Practice, and Family Team Conferencing in an effort to ensure all are operating from the same knowledge base, using the same language, and working towards achieving the adoption promotion goals.

**Objective 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3:** Train key Leads, Partners, Champions, and Case Management Organizations in Family Finders.

- The Family Finder Program has expanded to two full time employees who have been trained on the Family Finder model. They, in turn, work with the Case Management agencies, to identify and locate family connections. The Family Finder employees continue to provide training to all Safe Children Coalition staff, as well as the Child Legal Services and Judges.
- Family Centered Practice is an ongoing training and is embedded in the new Family Safety Decision Making Methodology training offered to all existing and new staff in Child Protective Services and Case Management agencies. Family Centered Practice has been added to Pre-Service as well as trained by job coaches and mentors as best practice.
- Community Based Care Organizations have implemented and continue to use the family team conferencing in their work. Family Team meetings are held with all families who receive voluntary services through non-judicial in-home services.

***Strategy 2:*** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will work with key Leads, Partners, Champions, and Case Management Organizations to put into practice the evidence based models of permanency (Family Finders and Family Centered Practice) with a philosophy of family and community connections.

**Objective 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3:** Implement and put into practice the Family Finders modality. Implement and put into practice the Family Centered Practice modality. Implement the use of the Targeted Recruitment tools to target TPR cases with no identified placement.

- In Fiscal Year 2012-2013, the Family Finders program received 357 requests to locate family members with 272 successful connections made and 148 actual placements from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013..
- Since July 1, 2013 there have been 79 requests to locate family members, with 42 placements completed and 53 successful connections with family members.
- Family Centered Practice is an ongoing training and is embedded in the new Family Safety Decision Making Methodology training offered to all existing and new staff in Child Protective Services and Case Management agencies. Family Centered Practice has been added to Pre-Service as well as trained by job coaches and mentors as best practice.

***Strategy 3:*** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will support the statewide initiatives to identify and seek support systems within the community, specifically related to the faith based communities, for our challenging

population of children awaiting identified adoptive homes and in efforts of enhancing and maintaining sibling relationships within the community.

**Objective 3.1:** Engage the faith based community and build a strong working relationship.

- Certified faith-based parenting classes are available and are being offered to families at-risk of entering child welfare system and families currently receiving court ordered case planning services. The classes are held throughout the community in multiple locations such as the jail, Jane Po Garden, South Florida Community Church, and a daycare setting.
- Presentations have been conducted on child welfare and adoptions at several Ministerial Associations and we have identified churches in the community of different denominations interested in working with the SCC to serve children and families.

#### **Part 4: PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE SUPPORT OF ADOPTIVE FAMILIES**

*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*

##### ***Vision***

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##### ***Mission***

To serve as a blueprint that will be implemented to provide for the care, safety, and protection of all of Florida's children in an environment that fosters healthy social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development.

##### ***Outcome***

All families and communities ensure that children are safe and nurtured and live in stable environments that promote well-being.

##### ***Goal 1***

The number of adopted children who were returned to foster care (regardless of when the adoption was finalized) in the circuit will be reduced from 5 during the 2008-2009 fiscal year to less than 1 during the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

***Strategy 1:*** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will expand the number of providers that are trained in the Adoption Competency model and expand the training opportunities available to adoptive parents.

**Objective 1.1 and 1.2:** Train and implement the Adoption Competency model in an effort to increase the number of providers trained and able to work with adoptive families in this model. Expand the training opportunities for adoptive parents through partnering with the Foster Parent Associations, making PAIRS training more accessible, and increasing the number of adoptive parents attending DCF/CBC adoption focused conferences.

- Adoption Competency Training has been provided to several therapists and clinicians in Circuit 12.

- The Safe Children Coalition continues to utilize Facebook page and yahoo sites with new information and materials on Adoption.
- The adoption resource guide was enhanced and updated and is available through the Safe Children Coalition website.
- The post adoption handbook is also available through the Safe Children Coalition website and is also provided to each adoptive family.
- Adoptive families continue to receive adoption related materials and supports through child welfare topics provided through tips of the week (completed twice per month), quarterly Adoption Newsletters and through speakers at local area adoption support groups.
- Training calendars are sent out to all foster parents.
- Quality Parenting Initiative is established and running under the direction SCC.

**Strategy 2:** By 30 June 2015, Circuit 12 will develop a committee, to include formal and informal participants, who will focus on issues affecting adoptive families and identifying needs/solutions to gaps in services.

**Objectives 2.1:** Establish a committee that will include formal and informal participants that will focus on issues affecting adoptive families and identify needs/solutions to gaps in services.

- Manatee County continues to offer a designated Adoptions Program, with the therapist assigned to work with the child and the Prospective Adoptive Family at time of the match.
- During transition of medically needy children to adoptive placements a nurse case manager from the CBC funded Westcoast Access to Children's Health program continue to provide oversight and assistance to the child and prospective adoptive parents.
- Operation Relaxation (Respite Care for Foster Parents) is now hosted by three churches (Central Church of Christ, Sarasota Christian Church and Bayside Community Church).
- Adoption Support Services are provided through a multitude of providers and resources: Suncoast Adoptive Parents Online Support Group.<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/suncoastadopt>; Facebook at Florida Suncoast Adoptive Parents; [www.safechildrencoalition.org](http://www.safechildrencoalition.org); [www.qpiflorida.org](http://www.qpiflorida.org); <http://www.nacac.org/postadopt/resources.html>.
- During national adoption month the Safe Children Coalition hosts an annual Adoptions Picnic where over 100 children are able to come out and enjoy the day.
- National Adoption Day will be held at the Manatee County Courthouse in November with several adoption finalizations scheduled to occur.
- The SCC adoption goal for fiscal year 2012-2013 was to finalize 129 adoptions, 144 children found their forever family through adoption. Since July 1, 2013, 31 children have had their adoptions finalized.

Please identify the percentage of achievement of the five-year prevention plan you think your circuit has achieved, and describe why.

Circuit 12 has completed approximately 75% of the five year prevention plan with success in building strong partnerships with local community providers in all three counties, the ongoing growth of relationships with BAANK and other faith-based community partners, increased public awareness of the effects of Prescription Drug misuse on our community, and the continued development of in-home and community resources to address the needs of children and families in our community. The economic downturn had a great impact on families most in need of services and the ability of local providers to meet the increased need for services and supports. In 2011 and 2012, the SCC served an average of 200 more children in the child welfare system than in prior years. Areas that are still challenges include engaging local media outlets such as newspapers, radio and television stations in increasing community awareness of the child abuse prevention efforts.

Please identify the percentage of achievement of the five-year permanency plan you think your circuit has achieved, and describe why.

Circuit 12 has completed approximately 85% of the five year prevention plan with success in the finalization of hundreds of adoptions, the strong relationships with our faith-based community partners, and the continued development of in-home and community resources to address the needs of children and families in our community as they move towards permanency. The economic downturn had a great impact on families most in need of services and the ability of local providers to meet the increased need for services and supports. In 2011 and 2012, the SCC served an average of 200 more children in the child welfare system than in prior years. Areas that are still challenges include engaging local media outlets such as newspapers, radio and television stations in increasing community awareness of the need for forever families for children awaiting adoption.

Do you think your circuit is on target to accomplishing your four target goals by June 2015? Why or why not?

Circuit 12 is on target to accomplish meeting the four objectives in our plan by June 2015. The local planning team has determined it would be better served to have county-specific teams to address the unique needs of each county with a focus on the indicators identified in county-specific data. This will enable the local teams to better engage community partners and the media in completing the action plans and strategies outlined in the five year plan for both the prevention of child abuse and to continue the success of the promotion of adoptions.

### **Highlights and Accomplishments**

Please describe any highlights and accomplishments connected to your circuit's five-year plan.

#### **Community Development:**

- Adoption Competency Training provided to several therapists and clinicians in Circuit 12
- Presley Ridge training provided to licensed Therapeutic Foster Parents
- Sarasota Behavioral Stakeholder's Workgroup led efforts to adopt a county ordinance to provide oversight of the Pain Management Clinics in the County in collaboration with multiple community organizations. These efforts have had a direct impact on the reduction in the number of children being sheltered in Sarasota County, reduced the number of deaths attributed to accidental deaths, and increased community awareness of the negative impact of Prescription Drugs misuse on the vulnerable children in our communities.
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- Educational trainings have been offered to Court staff on issues of child abuse and family violence.
- Multiple public awareness campaigns on the dangers of co-sleeping and shaken baby syndrome

**Next Steps**

Please identify what your circuit’s proposed next steps are for 2014 related to the five-year plan.

- Strengthen local planning efforts in each of the counties in Circuit 12. Reviewing the county-specific data to identify priority areas to focus efforts.
- Increase the support of local media outlets to increase community awareness of child abuse prevention and the promotion of adoption.