

Florida Faith-Based Community-Based Advisory Council Initiatives

Annual Conference Workgroup

The Annual Conference Workgroup, led by Patricia “Pat” Smith, will engage Advisory Council members to provide suggestions and recommendations of speakers, presenters, break-out sessions, and activities to enhance the work of the state agency team responsible for the annual Faith Symposium. The workgroup will identify opportunities and strategies to recognize high performing/contributing faith-based and community-based organizations at the Faith Symposium and other venues. In addition, the workgroup will coordinate with other Advisory Council workgroups and provide recommendations to refine, improve, and strengthen policies and legislation affecting faith-based and community-based organizations. Should regional or local forums/meetings be needed to further facilitate connections with state government agencies, the workgroup will assist in planning and coordinating activities.

Child Welfare Workgroup

The Child Welfare Workgroup, led by Dr. Jerry Haag, will focus on advancing efforts to enhance and improve the welfare of children through the identification of best practices and innovative programs and services on topics to include prevention of child maltreatment, foster care, adoption, independent living, human trafficking, health and well-being, youth with disabilities, and education. The workgroup will bring together state agency liaisons and various faith-based and community-based organizations to identify needs, gaps in services, and proposed solutions in order to facilitate a more collaborative and coordinated approach to working with state government agencies. In addition, the workgroup will coordinate with other Advisory Council workgroups and work to provide recommendations to refine, improve, and strengthen policies and legislation governing child welfare issues and affecting faith-based and community-based organizations.

Criminal Justice Workgroup

The Criminal Justice Workgroup, led by Dr. Gretchen Kerr, will focus on advancing efforts to enhance and improve programs and services through the identification of best practices and innovation on topics to include prevention, early intervention, diversion and re-entry or reintegration of adults and juveniles from jail and juvenile facilities, substance abuse, mental health, and persons with disabilities. The workgroup will bring together state agency liaisons and various faith-based and community-based organizations to identify needs, gaps in services, and proposed solutions in order to facilitate a more collaborative and coordinated approach to working with state government agencies. In addition, the workgroup will coordinate with other Advisory Council workgroups and provide recommendations to refine, improve, and strengthen policies and legislation governing criminal justice issues and affecting faith-based and community-based organizations.

Disaster Planning Workgroup

The Disaster Planning Workgroup, led by Sam Sipes, will work to further engage faith-based and community-based organizations and groups in the state’s efforts to effectively prepare, respond, and recover from natural and man-made disasters. The workgroup will assist in facilitating connections of organizations and groups to existing state/regional/local teams and networks to enable communities to come together before and after disasters. In addition, the workgroup will coordinate with other Advisory Council workgroups and provide recommendations to refine, improve, and strengthen policies and legislation affecting faith-based and community-based organizations.

Family Initiatives Workgroup

The Family Initiatives Workgroup, led by Richard Albertson, will focus on advancing efforts to enhance and improve programs and services through the identification of best practices and innovation on topics to include family preservation, healthy marriage, fatherhood, single parent families, and other family related issues such as employment and homelessness. The workgroup will bring together state agency liaisons and various faith-based and community-based organizations to identify needs, gaps in services, and proposed solutions in order to facilitate a more collaborative and coordinated approach to strengthening families. In addition, the workgroup will coordinate with other Advisory Council workgroups and provide recommendations to refine, improve, and strengthen policies and legislation governing family initiatives and affecting faith-based and community-based organizations.

Legislative Workgroup

The Legislative Workgroup, led by Sheila Hopkins, will work closely with all Advisory Council workgroups to research and identify recommendations to refine, improve, and strengthen policies and legislation affecting Advisory Council workgroup areas of focus and faith-based and community-based organizations. A summary of all policy and legislative recommendations will be provided to the Governor and Legislature for consideration as part of the Florida Faith-Based and Community-Based Advisory Council’s annual report.