



## **Strategic Plan Progress**

**April 1, 2022**

***...because kids can't wait!***

**Vision:** Connected and engaged communities supporting children for lifelong success.

**Mission:** The Forum collaboratively builds and supports systems to promote positive experiences and outcomes for young children.

**Guiding Principles:** Good public policy is informed by research. The use of sound research to increase awareness and advocacy on children's issues and the field of child care and early learning is fundamental. Our guiding principles, therefore, are informed by research and best practices:

- Parents are the primary educators of their children; yet some parents face barriers that seriously limit their ability to be effective parents. Proven programs and adequate resources must be available to assist parents in achieving the best possible outcomes for their children.
- The foundation for physical, social and emotional capabilities is largely set during children's first few years of life and is essential to their future cognitive and academic success as well as their ability to function well in society. Indeed, society is the eventual beneficiary of a strong foundation or the victim of a weak one.
- Children have the right to warm, responsive, and nurturing care from their parents and caregivers.
- Children are entitled to high quality early learning experiences including before and after school enrichment provided not only by their parents but by compassionate, knowledgeable, and trained practitioners as well.
- Families of children with disabilities and special health care needs have unique challenges and should have access to services and adequate resources designed to meet their needs and assistance to navigate systems that can help support them.
- Formal education and ongoing professional development for practitioners are critical to the optimum development of children given the correlation between practitioner knowledge, skills, and practices and improved child outcomes for later success.
- Compensation parity for early childhood and afterschool practitioners must be promoted to positively impact recruitment, retention, quality and commitment to the field.
- Collaboration with other local, state, and national organizations/agencies is the most effective strategy for supporting children, families, and practitioners to achieve shared goals.
- Racism in any form is antithetical to the Forum's vision, mission, and values and not tolerated. Diversity, equity, and inclusion will be promoted. Respect for all individuals is paramount as evidenced in organizational policies, practices, and delivery of services to children, families, and the early learning & afterschool workforce.
- Professionalism, accountability, honesty, respect, integrity and excellence are minimum expectations for Forum staff and members of the board of directors.

*Adopted as edited by the board of directors, October 2010 Reviewed and affirmed by the board of directors, December 2012, March 2014, October 2014, December 2016, March 2017, September 2019, September 2020, March 2021, June 2021, April 2022.*

**Goal 1:** The Forum will provide support, professional development, and innovative and responsive assistance to educators, stakeholders, and families at the local, state, and national levels.

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
<p>Serve as the hub to provide responsive guidance, professional development support, outreach, resources, technical and scholarship assistance to programs and educators in Miami-Dade County through the Early Learning Career Center.</p>	<p>The Early Learning Career Center (ELCC) continues to serve as the hub to provide guidance, professional development supports, resources, and collaborate with system partners to enhance skills &amp; knowledge of the workforce in Miami-Dade County. With collaboration with Miami Dade College the ELCC is proud to support the ongoing efforts to embed equity into the quality improvement system by providing resilience and socially just childhood education training to eligible educators. The ELCC continues to engage with partners to conduct outreach sessions to inform the community of the supports available. In addition, we have hired a new Professional Development Specialist to fill one of the two vacancies currently available. The new hire will begin March 14 and will continue to seek qualified candidates to fill the current vacancy. Continuing the equity work will be a priority to ensure that all of Miami’s workforce is supported and represented.</p>
<p>Provide scholarships to improve compensation, education, and retention in the field of early care and education through the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program. The results will be reported to policymakers and funders.</p>	<p>T.E.A.C.H. continues its outreach to potential scholars across the state through email, website, and social media. Program Counselors are available to present (in-person or virtual) and/or host an exhibit table at local events upon request. Printed materials and resources are also available to share with stakeholders and policymakers as needed.</p> <p>We have spent 51% of our scholarship dollars and we have reimbursed for 1,361 computers.</p> <p>We have been working with DEL to complete our annual monitoring.</p>

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
	<p><b>Current T.E.A.C.H. Data:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2521 active scholars</li> <li>• 216 pending scholars</li> <li>• 2553 applications received since 7/1/21</li> <li>• 4,888 web hits for February 2022</li> </ul>
<p>Operate and manage the Palm Beach Registry Services for the Children’s Services Council and the Miami-Dade Registry for The Children’s Trust.</p>	<p>Palm Beach Registry: Applications processed from December 2021-February 2022: 69  Miami-Dade Registry: Approximately 300 renewal centers are currently completing the online portal process.</p>
<p>Provide services under contract with the Department of Children and Families and Department of Education/Division of Early Learning by (1) evaluating applications of recognized accreditation associations for inclusion in the state’s Gold Seal Quality Care program and maintain the Gold Seal database, and (2) evaluating applications of early childhood training providers for eligibility as Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) training program providers.</p>	<p><b>Gold Seal Quality Care Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility: 1,790</li> <li>• Large Family Child Care Homes (LFCCH): 71</li> <li>• Licensed Family Day Care Homes (LFDCH): 71</li> </ul> <p>Total: 1,932 Programs with a Gold Seal Designation</p> <p><b>Gold Seal Associations Updates:</b>  17 Accrediting Associations approved for Gold Seal  <b>Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC)</b>  35 FCCPC training sites.  Florida State College @Jacksonville approved January 9, 2022 to offer Birth-Five FCCPC training</p>
<p>Develop and deliver high quality training through summits, workshops, conferences, etc..</p>	<p>T.E.A.C.H. participated virtually and shared information at 6 online events, which reached over 200 participants.</p> <p>Various CF programs will attend and/or present at large conference events this spring and summer (ex. T.E.A.C.H. National, One Goal, FLAEYC)</p>

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
Maintain the Forum's status as an Accredited Provider (AP) for International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET).	Request to revise the strategic plan to remove IACET certification. It is no longer advantageous for the Forum to hold this distinction due to changes in IACET.

**Goal 2: The Forum will generate and disseminate valid, reliable and current best practices, data, and research informing decision-making and measuring outcomes.**

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
Disseminate relevant research studies and policy briefs to various audiences to include practitioners and policy makers to inform the field and improve practices.	Statewide ECE workforce study is currently underway and slated to be finalized and released in Fall 2022.
Include research and evaluation components to test efficacy of proposed strategies and measure outcomes for early childhood educators and ultimately the children they serve in grant proposals.	We are currently participating in a research study of two curriculum models in the Orlando area. We have two staff who are providing coaching for selected programs where the curriculums are being tested. This is part of a national research study and the challenge will be how COVID is impacting the results!

**Goal 3: The Forum will provide collaborative leadership to promote effective policy advocacy for children and families.**

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
Facilitate, participate, and serve on various local, state, and national level leadership initiatives to promote effective public policy and best practice.	VP of Research serves on the ALICE National Research Advisory Committee which is currently reviewing final drafts of the ALICE report to be released in April.
Engage in advocacy efforts that promote the philosophy of the organization following applicable guidelines under state and federal regulations.	As the organizing partner of Children's Week, the Forum facilitated advocacy efforts for the 2022 in-person events January 30-February 4. These events included setup for Celebration of the Hands, the Advocacy Dinner and Awards

	Ceremony, and Children’s Day at the Capitol.
Present and display at local, state, and national conferences on relevant topics demonstrating the expertise of Forum staff and value of programs administered.	Children’s Week Florida has registered and will host an exhibit table at the Museum of Florida History’s 39th Annual Children’s Day on Apr 16. (upcoming)  We are continuing to work with our Statewide Ambassadors to promote T.E.A.C.H. at the local and regional level.
Support the board of director’s priority to effectively engage business leaders in early childhood policy in Florida.	The Forum is generally supportive but the board has not engaged in specific strategies around this goal. Should this be deleted?
Maintain and expand shared services agreements with partners such as FHSA.	The Forum continues to support FHSA’s bookkeeping services needs, space needs for Ladies Learning 2 Lead, Children’s Movement, and administrative support for the Florida Afterschool Network. The Children’s Movement is reciprocating by allowing us to use their space for our Miami office as we are reducing expenses there. This will begin July 1st.

**Goal 4: The Forum will maintain a sustainable marketing and outreach plan to educate stakeholders and the public about the value of high quality early learning, school age, and early intervention services.**

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
Assess the needs of the field and secure funding to support the mission of the organization on an ongoing basis.	We are fortunate to be the recipients of an advocacy grant from the Bainum Family Foundation for \$160K. We are one of several organizations chosen in Florida – the Early Learning Consortium members are the primary recipients. We are excited for this opportunity.
Write and promote news, stories, and op-eds in various media throughout the state.	Children’s Week Florida was featured in a number of publications including the following: Capitol News Service: <a href="https://www.flanews.com/2022/02/01/childrens-week-at-the-capitol/">https://www.flanews.com/2022/02/01/childrens-week-at-the-capitol/</a>

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
	<p>WTVL <a href="https://www.wtvl.com/news/local-news/storybook-village-is-bringing-childrens-book-to-life-through-dance-music-and-more">https://www.wtvl.com/news/local-news/storybook-village-is-bringing-childrens-book-to-life-through-dance-music-and-more</a>            Florida Politics/Sunburn  <a href="https://floridapolitics.com/archives/491600-sunburn-the-morning-read-of-whats-hot-in-florida-politics-2-1-22/">https://floridapolitics.com/archives/491600-sunburn-the-morning-read-of-whats-hot-in-florida-politics-2-1-22/</a>  <a href="https://floridapolitics.com/archives/489633-sunburn-the-morning-read-of-whats-hot-in-florida-politics-1-26-22/">https://floridapolitics.com/archives/489633-sunburn-the-morning-read-of-whats-hot-in-florida-politics-1-26-22/</a>            Tallahassee Democrat  <a href="https://www.tallahassee.com/story/news/2022/02/01/legislation-aims-expand-free-breakfast-more-children-florida/9288628002/">https://www.tallahassee.com/story/news/2022/02/01/legislation-aims-expand-free-breakfast-more-children-florida/9288628002/</a>.            WFSU Public Media Perspectives  <a href="https://news.wfsu.org/show/perspectives/2022-02-03/childrens-week-award-winners">https://news.wfsu.org/show/perspectives/2022-02-03/childrens-week-award-winners</a>            Capital Soup <a href="https://capitalsoup.com/2022/01/26/longtime-childrens-advocate-doug-sessions-named-2022-recipient-of-childrens-advocacy-award/">https://capitalsoup.com/2022/01/26/longtime-childrens-advocate-doug-sessions-named-2022-recipient-of-childrens-advocacy-award/</a>            Live! In Tallahassee <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SKv2gvh3YE&amp;">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SKv2gvh3YE&amp;</a>            Children's Week also hosted a press conference on February 1 at Children's Day.</p>
<p>Promote advocacy, effective policies and practices through the Forum communications.</p>	<p>Advocacy and other policies are promoted on the Forum's social media pages, e-newsletter, and through e-blasts. We recently implemented the following hashtags to share on social media:            #MotivationMonday: includes inspirational quotes, stories, and info related to children.            #ForumFriday: includes details on Forum programs and fun info on staff who are willing to be featured            #TEACHTuesdays: includes T.E.A.C.H. program details, facts, upcoming deadlines, and spotlights on T.E.A.C.H. staff            #MoneyMondays: includes INCENTIVE\$-specific details, funder information and spotlights on their staff</p>

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
Engage the field through the Forum's membership program.	<p>We continue to provide affordable membership options for early educators. A Forum membership fulfills the proof of membership requirement for the renewal of staff credentials. We also assist directors with fulfilling their Professional Contribution Requirement (PCR) for the renewal of their Director Credential.</p> <p>From Jan 1 - March 11: 187 people became members of or renewed their membership with the Children's Forum.</p>
Maintain a presence on social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube) to increase partnerships, build awareness of programs/services and receive online donations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Instagram account for INCENTIVE\$ was created in Mar. 2022, with the goal to better reach participants and potential funders.</li> <li>• Help Me Grow Florida social media platforms are active and receive engagement from followers. HMG has 1761 likes/2096 followers on Facebook, 1847 followers on Instagram, and 570 followers on Twitter.</li> </ul> <p>As of March 11, the Forum's social media pages include the following:</p> <p>Facebook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Forum: 3,062 likes and 3,602 followers</li> <li>• T.E.A.C.H.: 2,920 likes and 3,221 followers</li> <li>• INCENTIVE\$: 479 likes and 535 followers</li> <li>• Early Learning Career Center: 630 likes and 709 followers</li> <li>• Children's Week: 2,027 likes and 2,449 followers</li> </ul> <p>Twitter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Forum: 5,658 followers</li> <li>• Children's Week: 1,212 followers</li> </ul>



Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instagram:</li> <li>• Children’s Forum: 600 followers</li> <li>• Children’s Week: 652 followers</li> <li>• T.E.A.C.H.: 135 followers</li> </ul> <p>YouTube:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children’s Forum: 126 followers</li> <li>• Children’s Week: 31 followers</li> </ul> <p>LinkedIn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children’s Forum: 222 followers</li> </ul>
Write and disseminate a quarterly newsletter to promote collaboration among providers of services for young children.	A Spring newsletter was distributed the week of March 21.
Promote and expand professional development systems throughout the state to provide career pathways for early childhood and afterschool educators.	We continue to promote the availability of professional development resources through social media and the Forum’s supported partner work.
Bring positive recognition to the Forum for the quality and excellence of the work.	The Forum is responsible for facilitating conferences such as the JRC Summit April 18-20 (opportunity through Division of Early Learning and previously facilitated a virtual Summit), the Department of Children and Families Licensing and Training Meeting May 15-20, and the annual Help Me Grow National Meeting later this year.
The Forum will serve as the organizing partner for Children’s Week to increase awareness and needs of children and youth in Florida.	Children’s Week Florida hosted its 27th annual event, Jan. 30 - Feb. 4. Across the week, this in-person event touched an estimated 1,300 individuals including young children/students, Partners, Capitol staff, and volunteers. <i>Note:</i> The 2023 event application was submitted to the Dept. of Management Services (Capitol DMS) on Feb. 14. The second part of the application (to the Senate) was submitted on Mar. 14 when the submission window opened.

**Goal 5: The Forum will increase awareness of compensation disparities for the early care and education workforce.**

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
<p>Provide wage and salary stipends through the successful implementation of the Early Childhood Educator INCENTIVE\$ Florida Program.</p>	<p>Participating Counties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Broward</li> <li>o Hillsborough</li> <li>o Miami-Dade</li> </ul> <p>Total participants: 1,781 Total child care programs/homes: 786</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 367 financial incentive payments were issued during this time period</li> <li>• Average six-month incentive payment: 784.00, the average six-month incentive is equivalent to at least \$.75 cent an hour</li> </ul> <p><u>Program news/updates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hillsborough County increased funding to expand services to VPK teachers and directors.</li> <li>• Osceola County may be joining INCENTIVE\$</li> <li>• The Miami contract will be ending 9/30/2022</li> </ul>
<p>Maintain an active website and other communications strategies for the public on the salary and compensation issues of the ECE workforce.</p>	<p>As of March 2022, website updates for T.E.A.C.H. and updated printed outreach materials for INCENTIVE\$ are in process.</p>

**Goal 6: The Forum will provide collaborative leadership to improve systems of care, education, and healthy development for children.**

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
<p>Enhance the Professional Development Registry to serve as a resource for training and scholarship management, and to inform decision-making.</p>	<p>Updates and revisions to the Registry/Portal continue, with recent updates (December to now) to the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship process.</p>

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
<p>Maintain websites that will serve as the information and resource hub for the early learning field.</p>	<p>Maintenance and support of the Forum and client websites continues</p>
<p>Provide leadership and administration of the Help Me Grow Florida project to increase the access and availability of services for children and families.</p>	<p><i>Help Me Grow Florida State Coordinating Office (SCO)</i> activities to promote the work of the Children’s Forum, support local <i>Help Me Grow Florida</i> affiliates, and advocate for the children and families in Florida this quarter, included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Onboarding a new HMG affiliate for expansion into Alachua county. HMGF services will be provided in Alachua county through the Children’s Home Society of Florida, funded by the Children’s Trust of Alachua county.</li> <li>○ Provided technical assistance to United Way of Lee, Hendry Glades/Healthy Start of Southwest Florida to expand their existing HMG services to Collier county</li> <li>○ Hosted a Partner and Affiliate County Team (PACT) call meeting to provide SCO updates and discussion between affiliates</li> <li>○ Hosted the HMGF Annual Meeting (FY21-22) for all affiliates and stakeholders with professional development opportunities and breakout discussions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Updates from Dr. Paul Dworkin at the HMG National Center</li> <li>- Presentation from Talethia Edwards (“Promoting Racial Equity”)</li> <li>- Presentation from Stephanie Walchenbach (“HMG Supporting a Child’s Developmental Picture”)</li> <li>- A brief overview of Annual Meeting cohosting affiliates’ (Early Learning Coalitions of Lake and Marion counties) local structure, services, and outreach activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Project implementation from the affiliates for the Act Early/COVID-19 Response Teams Grant, beginning 1/4/2022</li> </ul>

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
	<p><b>Data Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Received <b>3,640</b> calls (7/1/21-1/31/22- receive call data monthly)</li> <li>○ Served <b>3,418</b> new children (7/1/21-3/11/22)</li> <li>○ Served <b>3,175</b> new families (7/1/21-3/11/22)</li> <li>○ Conducted <b>5,410</b> screenings (7/1/21-3/11/22)</li> <li>○ Made <b>2,432</b> referrals (7/1/21-3/11/22)</li> <li>○ Held <b>556</b> family and community outreach activities (7/1/21-3/11/22)</li> <li>○ Held <b>1,405</b> healthcare provider outreach activities (7/1/21-3/11/22)</li> </ul> <p>The <i>Help Me Grow Statewide Director</i> resigned her position to accept one at the Florida Healthy Start Coalitions. Interviews for that position are in progress.</p>
Support diversity in the early learning and afterschool workforce.	The Forum will launch the Early Childhood Policy WORKS Institute to recruit a diverse group of Policy Fellows for intensive advocacy experiences for the year, funded through the Bainum Foundation.
The Florida Afterschool Network will provide collaborative leadership, policy advocacy, and awareness of needs affecting the afterschool population throughout the state.	The Florida Afterschool Network hired the new executive director, Lili Murphy, who is working to expand resources and investigate other strategic alliances to support the out-of-school time programming in Florida. The Network has applied for additional funding to support the Youth Entrepreneurship initiative in Florida through the Mott Foundation. The Network is also exploring additional funding opportunities through local children services councils to expand resources and create communities of practice in the OST field.

- **Goal 7: The Forum will be administered in a cost effective and efficient manner ensuring adequate resources are available to carry out the mission of the organization.**

Objectives	Jan - Mar 2022
Respond to relevant Invitations to Negotiate or Request for	We continue to research opportunities that align with our mission.

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Jan - Mar 2022</b>
Proposals that are consistent with the strategic plan goals. Assure that the potential revenue, social capital and/or return on investment justifies the allocation of resources	The Forum is currently in the process of conducting the Workforce Study for the Division of Early Learning.
Increase unrestricted revenue.	The Forum is serving as the event planners for the Joint Referral Summits. Any revenue after expenses left will be contributed to the bottom line. This is also true of the Workforce Study.
Provide monthly financial reports to the Board ensuring board members are informed on the financial status of the Forum.	Completed monthly.
Maintain positive audit results and monitoring reports that reflect the quality of our work.	The Division of Early Learning monitoring was just completed. The final report will show no audit findings!
Maintain quality assurance practices to ensure the ongoing quality improvement of services.	Evaluation practices are embedded into all of the programs that the Forum administers. Results inform program improvement strategies.
Strengthen the internal culture of the Forum through staff recognition and professional development opportunities.	Snacks and sweet treats provided on Valentine's Day (Feb. 4) and recognition of Employee Appreciation Day (Mar. 4) with Krispy Kreme donuts. Took and shared group photo via Forum's social media in honor of International Women's Day (Mar 8)