



Strategic Plan Progress

June 19, 2021

...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 is not tolerated. 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***

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS 2020-21

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	April - June 2021
<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 Career Center continues to provide professional development supports to the childcare programs in Miami Dade County with the support of each Professional Development Specialist, who facilitate Career advisement and professional development plans. The Center continues to work with community partners to establish new trainings and will have the pleasure of providing Infant Mental Health endorsements this fall. This will be the first of its kind in our QIS system and it is very much the desire of our funder to bring about this innovative endorsement for those who serve infants. The Center is also projected to comply with its spending deliverable of reaching \$1.1 million in investments for professional development. With continued collaboration and dedication, the Career Center looks forward to continuing in its support of the Early Learning community in Miami Dade County.</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. Program Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the copay requirements for T.E.A.C.H. scholars and sponsors for Fiscal Year 2020/2021. T.E.A.C.H. staff made adjustments to each account to reflect that change. ➤ We have now reimbursed for more than 980 computers. ➤ The COVID-19 crisis has had an impact on our numbers, but we continue robust outreach to the field. ➤ We have spent 92% of our scholarship dollars. The Office of Early Learning has allowed us to waive

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	<p>Current T.E.A.C.H. data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2762 current active scholars ➤ 257 current pending scholars ➤ 4,247 applications have been received since July 1, 2020 (this represents an 18% drop in applications) ➤ 4,515 web hits for May, 2021
<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: 76 Applications Processed Miami-Dade Registry: Approximately 300 centers are completing the online portal process for Thrive by 5.</p>
<p>Provide services under contract with the Department of Children and Families 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>Gold Seal Quality Care Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility: 1765 • Family Daycare Homes(FDCH): 76 • Large Family Child Care Home(LFDCH): 69 <p>Total: 1,910 Programs with a Gold Seal Designation.</p> <p>Gold Seal Associations Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 Accrediting Associations approved for Gold Seal • Gold Seal will be moving to DOE/DEL effective July 1, 2021 <p>Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34 FCCPC training sites

Objectives	April - June 2021
Develop and deliver high quality training through summits, workshops, conferences, etc..	The Forum coordinated the registration, e-hosting, and promotion of three regional Florida Office of Early Learning Transition to Kindergarten Summits in April (April 20-21, April 27-28), and May 4-5. The Summits included keynote speakers and breakout sessions. Between 250-300 early educators registered for each of the Summits. The Forum also provided social media and email support for the summits as well as follow up CEU and program evaluation surveys to attendees. T.E.A.C.H. Counselors participated virtually in various Zoom presentations as requested by Miami-Dade County (March & April = 2 presentations / 55 participants) and CCEI (May = 3 presentations / 75 participants). They shared information and resources for utilizing the program with potential schoalrs.
Maintain the Forum's status as an Accredited Provider (AP) for International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET).	The IACET page on the Forum website has been updated to reflect that we are engaged in internal training only. The Forum continues its active status as an IACET AP.

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

Objectives	April - June 2021
Disseminate relevant research studies and policy briefs to various audiences to include practitioners and policy makers to inform the field and improve practices.	Shared documents regarding Advancing Equity with the Florida Office of Early Learning to disseminate to broader networks.
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.	Each of our programs contain quality assurance feedback loops. Where possible, data are gathered for research to evaluate strategies to ensure success in all of our major programs.

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

families.

Objectives	April - June 2021
Facilitate, participate, and serve on various local, state, and national level leadership initiatives to promote effective public policy and best practice.	Forum staff continue to serve on the Florida Afterschool Network Quality Committee, Florida’s HEROS Stakeholder Committee (<i>Recognizing Healthy Environments for Reducing Obesity in FL</i>).
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 coordinated and hosted five Avenues to Advocacy webinars and additional webinars for three of our partners.
Present and display at local, state, and national conferences on relevant topics demonstrating the expertise of Forum staff and value of programs administered.	In-person conferences are slowly beginning to return. The Forum attended the ELC of Hillsborough County ECE Conference on behalf of T.E.A.C.H. and INCENTIVE\$ in May. The Forum will be attending the FFCCHA Conference in June to represent T.E.A.C.H. and INCENTIVE\$ as well. We will also attend the One Goal Summer Conference in July and will represent the Forum, Children’s Week, T.E.A.C.H. INCENTIVE\$, Help Me Grow, FAN, and CLASS.
Support the board of director’s priority to effectively engage business leaders in early childhood policy in Florida.	Bob Buesing, Forum Board Chair, and Mark Wilson, President and CEO of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, both of whom are recognized as statewide business leaders, played key roles in the Children’s Week Advocacy Reception and Awards Ceremony.
Maintain and expand shared services agreements with partners such as FHSA.	There have been no new agreements since the last board meeting. Those agreements still in place include Ladies Learning to Lead and the Florida Head Start Association (in addition to FAN as a part of the Forum’s portfolio of programs)

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	April - June 2021
Assess the needs of the field and secure funding to support the mission of the organization on an ongoing basis.	The Forum submitted recommendations to the Florida Office of Early Learning for the use of the ARP funding from federal resources and continue to have conversations. We are also in communication with two CSCs regarding establishing a Registry to track and monitor progress for the early childhood workforce investments.
Write and promote news, stories, and op-eds in various media throughout the state.	Winners of the Chiles Advocacy Award and Youth Advocate Award were featured in the Tampa Bay Times and Gainesville Sun. A discussion on Children’s Week was also featured on iHeartMedia and Celebration of the Hands was featured on WTXL (Tallahassee ABC affiliate). A partnership with iHeartMedia provided \$30,000 of on-air commercials promoting Children’s Week statewide.
Promote advocacy, effective policies and practices through the Forum communications.	Advocacy and other policies are promoted on the Forum’s social media pages, e-newsletter, and through e-blasts. T.E.A.C.H. collaborated with Matyk Media consultants to develop two professional advocacy videos. These videos can be viewed on the Children’s Forum YouTube channel, the Forum website, and the T.E.A.C.H. website. They were also shared broadly through social media platforms.
Engage the field through the Forum’s membership program.	We continue to provide affordable and 3 year 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. Members receive the Forum’s e-newsletter and email

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	<p>regarding advocacy, legislative news, program participant features, etc. Additionally, members receive a copy of the Forum's printed annual report. Members are also able to access their membership details and certificates through the Forum's Portal.</p> <p>From April 1 through June 8, 2021, 158 people became members of or renewed their membership with the Children's Forum.</p>
<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.</p>	<p>Help Me Grow Florida continued to promote the statewide system through social media platforms, including topics such as how HMG works, child development, a call to action (visit HMGF website or call 2-1-1), etc.</p> <p>As of June 9, the Forum's social media pages include the following:</p> <p>Facebook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children's Forum: 3,547 followers ● T.E.A.C.H.: 3,178 followers ● INCENTIVES\$: 508 followers ● Early Learning Career Center: 703 followers ● Children's Week: 2,310 ● Help Me Grow: 1,945 followers <p>Twitter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children's Forum: 5,663 followers ● Children's Week: 1,160 followers ● Help Me Grow: 538 followers <p>Instagram:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children's Forum: 574 followers ● Children's Week: 537 followers ● T.E.A.C.H.: 69 followers

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help Me Grow: 1,737 followers <p>The Forum's YouTube channel has 108 subscribers. The Children's Week YouTube channel has 31 subscribers</p>
Write and disseminate a quarterly newsletter to promote collaboration among providers of services for young children.	A Summer edition of the Forum's newsletter is planned for distribution the week of June 7.
Promote and expand professional development systems throughout the state to provide career pathways for early childhood and afterschool educators.	<p>The Forum has participated in several webinars with other states that are interested in implementing Secondary ECE Career Pathways. This pathway includes students who have earned National CDA and are moving to the workforce or to further post-secondary education. The Forum has been a leader in this initiative and is actively engaged with key stakeholders throughout Florida.</p> <p>The Florida Afterschool Network launched a new initiative focused on expanding the entrepreneurial mindset of Florida's youth. This initiative will provide afterschool, summer and expanded learning programs direct access to resources, including evidence-based curricula, training and technical assistance to help students build workforce ready skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow. Our goal is to support local efforts to teach students how to recognize opportunities, take risks and innovate in the face of challenges so they are better prepared to participate in the workforce. FAN has expanded capacity through a grant from the C.S. Mott Foundation and brought on Jennifer Smith, Youth Entrepreneurship Specialist.</p>
Bring positive recognition to the Forum for the quality and excellence of the work.	The work the Forum did to promote Children's Week 2021 has solicited a great deal of positive recognition across the state and with key stakeholders. We hosted a hybrid Children's Week Advocacy Awards reception in April and three webinars for our partners. Although the

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	Capitol was closed to the public, we were able to leave the Celebration of the Hands display up at the TCC Center for Innovation (across the street from the Capitol and connected to a busy coffee shop) through April 30, 2021.
The Forum will serve as the organizing partner for Children’s Week to increase awareness and needs of children and youth in Florida.	Save the Date promotions on Children’s Week 2022 were sent via email and social media in May (January 30-February 4). Event planning for Children’s Week 2022 is underway with development of the partner packet and a new website. Promotional items are being designed for outreach and statewide distribution.

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

Objectives	April - June 2021
Provide wage and salary stipends through the successful implementation of the Early Childhood Educator INCENTIVE\$ Florida Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participating Counties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Broward ■ Hillsborough ■ Miami-Dade ● Total participants: 2,183 ● Total child care programs: 842 ● 480 INCENTIVE\$ financial payments were issued during this time period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average six-month incentive payment: 510.00, the average six-month incentive is equivalent to at least \$.49 cent an hour
Maintain an active website and other communications strategies for the public on the salary and compensation issues of the ECE workforce.	Policy briefs on Florida Teacher Salaries and the importance of investments in T.E.A.C.H. and INCENTIVE\$ are included on their websites.

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

Objectives	April – June 2021
Enhance the Professional Development Registry to serve as a resource for training and scholarship management, and to inform decision-making.	The Registry will be showcased to two additional counties for consideration (Alachua and Duval)
Maintain websites that will serve as the information and resource hub for the early learning field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help Me Grow Florida added a link to the ParentEducate.com website to promote the partnership between CCEI and the Children's Forum. ● All Forum websites are currently being reviewed and revised.
Provide leadership and administration of the Help Me Grow Florida project to increase the access and availability of services for children and families.	<p>Data Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Received 5,097 calls (7/1/20-4/30/21- receive call data monthly) ● Served 3,653 children (7/1/20-6/8/21) ● Served 3,296 families (7/1/20-6/8/21) ● Conducted 6,463 screenings (7/1/20-6/8/21) ● Made 3,559 referrals (7/1/20-6/8/21) ● Held 453 family and community events (7/1/20-6/8/21) ● Held 1,514 healthcare provider events (7/1/20-6/8/21)
Support diversity in the early learning and afterschool workforce.	The Forum continues to track data to ensure diversity in the delivery of services to match the population. The Forum also has supported internal staff to become trainers for Racial Equity to heighten awareness and educate staff.
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 submitted a proposal/guidance to the Florida DOE on ESSER III/American Rescue Plan Funds for additional support for Afterschool & Summer programs to include funding for professional development, data collection, access for additional programs to be created and the formation of an Out of

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	<p>School Time Council for guidance.</p> <p>The Florida Afterschool Network announced the upcoming Public Policy Forum on August 6, 2021, in Orlando. The goal of the forum is to bring together afterschool and expanded learning leaders, school district administrators, superintendents and school board members, along with policy experts and youth advocates to share research-based information and innovative strategies to more effectively serve students and parents in the afterschool environment. From sessions on advocacy and accelerating learning recovery to discussions on sustainability and meeting the academic, social and emotional needs of students, this collaborative and solution-focused event will explore how our state can increase high-quality afterschool and summer learning opportunities for all.</p>

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	April - June 2021
<p>Respond to relevant Invitations To Negotiate or Request for 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</p>	<p>The Forum has negotiated with the Florida Office of Early Learning to host virtual events to support mutual goals. Transition to Kindergarten Summits (\$12K), and Joint Collaboration Referral Summit planned for July (\$13,500). Additional opportunities are continually being researched.</p>
<p>Increase unrestricted revenue.</p>	<p>The Program Assessment and Coaching Unit has continued to actively conduct CLASS assessments during this quarter. The Forum has received Purchase Orders (POs) this contract year with 15 ELCs, RCMA, and Head Start agencies for a total of 1,417 assessments. At least 6 ELCs and Head Start agencies have indicated they plan to submit POs to contract with us for assessments beginning in July for FY 21-22. In addition, we are also anticipating POs from 6 ELCs who would like to contract with us again for CLASS assessments for FY 21-22. We currently have 54 approved assessors throughout the</p>

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	<p>state and will be continuing to recruit more assessors, especially those individuals who are bilingual. We will be presenting a collaborative session at the One Goal Summer Conference in July with representatives from 2 of the ELCs we have been working with for the past 3 years as well as one of our assessors.</p> <p>We are also anticipating a contract with MEF associates to conduct coaching around two different curricula beginning in August for approximately \$97,709 for a 10-month timeframe. This will be part of a national study of supports improve child care quality.</p>
Provide monthly financial reports to the Board ensuring board members are informed on the financial status of the Forum.	This is accomplished routinely on a monthly basis.
Maintain positive audit results and monitoring reports that reflect the quality of our work.	Recent monitoring reports and audits have yielded positive results in the maintenance of records and compliance with contractual goals.
Maintain quality assurance practices to ensure the ongoing quality improvement of services.	The Forum continues to receive feedback from those served through issuance of surveys to monitor and improve performance in the delivery of services.
Strengthen the internal culture of the Forum through staff recognition and professional development opportunities.	<p>April: Spring Egg Hunt for Forum staff</p> <p>June: Received approval for Summer Kick Off event with a visit from a local ice Cream truck.</p>