



Strategic Plan Progress

June 12, 2020

...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.
- 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.
- 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

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS 2019-20

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 2020
<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) has continued to support the workforce in Miami-Dade during the pandemic, have established flexible agreements with IHEs and vendors to provide virtual trainings, and have awarded over 450 educator scholarships since March 17, 2020. The ELCC team continues to provide advisement, resources, webinar information and updates related to Covid-19 guidelines in the county. Additionally the team has been very involved in attending webinars to get information on county/state guidelines and re-opening plans are currently in the planning stages. The ELCC continues to plan for fall semester trainings and maintains open lines of communications with institutions and vendors as it relates to future professional development plans. Our goal is to maintain safety guidelines in addition to maintaining the safety of the community being served.</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"> • T.E.A.C.H. has been unable to display or present at any conference this quarter due to the Covid-19 situation. We have tried to post more information for our scholars including tools to deal with the

Objectives	April - June 2020
	<p>current crisis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● T.E.A.C.H. has sought and received permission to reimburse scholars for computers up to \$500.00 as an essential tool for distance learning. The computers will be processed as a book claim. To date we have been able to reimburse 148 scholars. ● We have spent 86% of our scholarship dollars. <p>Current T.E.A.C.H. data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4,291 current active scholars ● 364 current pending scholars ● 5,150 applications have been received since July 1, 2019 ● 6,958 web hits for May, 2020
<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: 56 Initial applications Miami Dade: 41 business accounts</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 Gold Seal Designations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Large Family Child Care Homes(LFCCH): 68 ● Family Day Care Home(FDCH): 72 ● Child Care Facilities: 1,736 <p>Total: 1,876 Programs with a Gold Seal Designation.</p>

Objectives	April - June 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 15 Accrediting Associations approved as a Gold Seal Agency. <p>Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 33 FCCPC training sites ● Pasco Hernando State College is now an approved FCCPC training program. ● 1 program is currently inactive at this time
Develop and deliver high quality training through summits, workshops, conferences, etc..	Planning for Child Care Director’s Executive Leadership training. Projected pilot with 5-10 local directors late Summer/early Fall.
Maintain the Forum’s status as an authorized provider for International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET).	IACET Accreditation remains active. A HighScope training through the ELCC (Miami office) was completed and 24 participants earned CEUs. Certificates mailed to participants in April 2020.

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 2020
Disseminate relevant research studies and policy briefs to various audiences to include practitioners and policy makers to inform the field and improve practices.	The Forum continues to share appropriate research to various audiences to include social media outlets and via email distributions through newsletters and websites.

Objectives	April - June 2020
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.	All of the Forum's projects have an evaluation to ensure that the strategies employed are effective. The most recent Workforce Study for Miami-Dade County shows that the strategies through the Thrive By Five, Early Learning Career Center are making a positive difference for the workforce and the children they serve.

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

Objectives	April - June 2020
Facilitate, participate, and serve on various local, state, and national level leadership initiatives to promote effective public policy and best practice.	<p>Many Forum staff participated in the T.E.A.C.H./WAGE\$ National 2020 Professional Development Virtual Forum (April 16 - April 27). The F2F conference typically held in Chapel Hill NC was cancelled due to COVID19.</p> <p>The Higher Education Barriers workgroup continues to address state-level needs related to access and support to post-secondary institutions. Given the COVID19 pandemic, the goals of the project shifted to focus primarily on supporting EC educators who transitioned (on short notice) to online learning platforms.</p> <p>Work on EC standards and career planning continues with the Forum collaborating with the University of North Florida on the Professional Development Specialization planning project. Phase two of the PD Specialization project will focus on implementation of the plan and will begin in July 2020.</p>
Engage in advocacy efforts that promote the philosophy of the organization following applicable guidelines under state and federal regulations.	The Forum participated in a sign-on letter at the federal level regarding the racial inequities and policing issues that impact families of color. We continue to advocate for Help Me Grow, T.E.A.C.H., and other issues impacting young children, particularly during this pandemic.

Objectives	April - June 2020
Present and display at local, state, and national conferences on relevant topics demonstrating the expertise of Forum staff and value of programs administered.	Numerous ECE conferences in which T.E.A.C.H. and/or INCENTIVE\$ as well as the Miami QIS (ELCC) and Assessment and Coaching Services Unit were set to attend have been cancelled due the COVID19 pandemic, including Florida Family Child Care Home Association (June), One Goal, and QRIS BUILD. These programs remain committed to outreach in these communities by sending printed materials and promotional items as requested from conference and event organizers.
Support the board of director's priority to effectively engage business leaders in early childhood policy in Florida.	The Forum continues to serve on the Early Learning Consortium. The Forum has also recently signed on to the letter written by the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights to promote policy and practices that address issues of racism and police accountability.
Maintain and expand shared services agreements with partners such as FHSA.	Have negotiated to serve as the FAN fiscal sponsor effective October 2020. Continuing to serve as the fiscal agent for FHSA.

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 2020
Assess the needs of the field and secure funding to support the mission of the organization on an ongoing basis.	The Children's Forum, in collaboration with UNF, submitted a Letter of Intent to apply for the Early Educators Investment Collaborative (EEIC). We are waiting to hear if we are invited to submit a full application (notification expected June 12, 2020).
Write and promote news, stories, and op-eds in various media throughout the state.	We have primarily used social media and the Forum's newsletters to promote news, stories, and updates to the field.
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 e-blasts.

Objectives	April - June 2020
Engage the field through the Forum's membership program.	<p>We continue to provide reduced pricing 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 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. From April 1-June 3, 101 people became members of or renewed their membership with the Children's Forum.</p> <p>We are in the process of producing a membership video to include on social media and in an e-blast.</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>The Forum has social media sites on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.</p> <p>As of June 3, the Forum's social media pages include the following:</p> <p>Facebook pages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children's Forum: 2,786 followers ● T.E.A.C.H.: 2,567 followers ● INCENTIVE\$: 358 followers ● Early Learning Career Center: 603 followers <p>The Forum's Twitter page has 5,737 followers The Forum's Instagram page has 374 followers The Forum's YouTube channel has 67 subscribers</p>
Write and disseminate a quarterly newsletter to promote collaboration among providers of services for young children.	<p>We are in the process of developing the Summer edition of the Children's Forum newsletter. It will include the Forum's move to our new building, the early educator video we produced, T.E.A.C.H. providing computers to scholars/resources for additional discounts, an INCENTIVE\$ spotlight, and a welcome to FAN coming in-house to the Forum.</p>
Promote and expand professional development systems	<p>As referenced in Goal 3, the Forum is collaborating with the University of</p>

Objectives	April - June 2020
throughout the state to provide career pathways for early childhood and afterschool educators.	North Florida on the Professional Development Specialization planning project. Phase two of the PD Specialization project will focus on implementation of the plan and will begin in July 2020.
Bring positive recognition to the Forum for the quality and excellence of the work.	The Forum produced a video on the importance of early educators as an essential workforce during these challenging times. The video also thanked and honored early educators for the important role they play in the lives of young children. It was one of the most liked and shared social media posts to date. The video was produced in both English and Spanish. We also “boosted” the videos’ posts on Facebook for one week.” The English video received 501 likes, while the Spanish video received 508 likes.

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

Objectives	April - June 2020
Provide wage and salary stipends through the successful implementation of the Early Childhood Educator INCENTIVE\$ Florida Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Active participants: 2,592 ● Participating child care programs: 909 ● 432 INCENTIVE\$ financial payments were issued during this time period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 980 financial payments issued to participants who were unable to work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ● Six-month supplement average: \$471.00, the average six-month incentive is equivalent to at least \$.45 cent an hour
Maintain an active website and other communications strategies for the public on the salary and compensation issues of the ECE workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Due to COVID-19 no conference were attended ● Email blasts, and social media program recruitment

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

Objectives	April - June 2020
Enhance the Professional Development Registry to serve as a resource for training and scholarship management, and to inform decision-making.	Work continues on the Portal link to the Registry. Specifically, building reports to assist Center Directors to track compliance from staff in submissions and meeting licensing requirements, as well as general education levels of staff.
Maintain websites that will serve as the information and resource hub for the early learning field.	Creation of “Scholarship Supports” page on T.E.A.C.H. website to showcase partnerships and options for other financial assistance for scholars. New page went live 05/19/20. Website development is underway for the Assessment and Coaching Services Unite (CLASS).
Provide leadership and administration of the Help Me Grow Florida project to increase the access and availability of services for children and families.	Hosted webinar to train Reach Out and Read staff on Help Me Grow to further partnership, continue pilot project, and reach more families and children through physician offices. Provided a virtual professional development meeting featuring Dr. Paul Dworkin, founder of HMG National, and the No Small Matter documentary/panel discussion.
Support diversity in the early learning and afterschool workforce.	The ELCC provides career advising and scholarships to a highly diverse population of educators in Miami-Dade County through partnerships with higher education and training institutes that provide bilingual training options. As well, the EEIC LOI submitted in collaboration with UNF included a strong focus on supporting diverse early learning educators and the instructors that provide them professional development around the state.

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 2020
<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>RFQ with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to plan/execute Child Welfare Supervisors Regional Conferences accepted from the Forum in February 2020. However, due to the COVID pandemic, this potential contract was voided with cancellation of the conference events in April. Invoice for a settlement agreement for the work completed by Forum staff was submitted to DCF 06/03/20.</p>
<p>Increase unrestricted revenue.</p>	<p>For the Assessment and Coaching Services Unit, in mid-March, the 10 ELCs we have active POs with asked us to postpone CLASS assessments, per OEL. We are currently awaiting guidance from OEL regarding resuming them, as well as the specifics regarding time completion, etc. We will then be following up with the ELCs with whom we have POs to gather information regarding any changes they have made to their policies, procedures, etc. We have also been devising new safety policies and protocols for our assessors and will be holding a webinar to share this information prior to resuming assessments. In addition, we sent out a CLASS assessment and coaching services marketing flyer to the FHSA who shared it with all of the Head Start grantees. We have had meetings with two grantees who are potentially interested in contracting CLASS assessment and coaching services with the Forum for the Fall. We have also continued to recruit additional assessors and coaches. Furthermore, we are working on a CLASS webpage which will be housed on the Forum website with information for potential customers about our services and for individuals who are interested in becoming assessors/coaches for the Forum, as well as other related resources.</p>

Objectives	April - June 2020
	For Membership, we are in the process of developing a membership video. This video will be featured on our social media pages and in an e-blast. We also plan to boost the video post on our Facebook page. Hopefully, these measures will help to increase revenues from our membership program.
Provide monthly financial reports to the Board ensuring board members are informed on the financial status of the Forum.	This has been our continuing practice.
Maintain positive audit results and monitoring reports that reflect the quality of our work.	The Forum's audits are very good and reflect no management letter comments. Routine monitoring reports may show some areas for needed improvements which the accounting and fiscal department complies with needed changes.
Maintain quality assurance practices to ensure the ongoing quality improvement of services.	All of our programs have evaluation procedures to assure quality and integrity.
Strengthen the internal culture of the Forum through staff recognition and professional development opportunities.	The Forum continues to publish <i>Forum Focus</i> , an internal bi-monthly employee e-newsletter that features a Forum program highlight, as well as employee accomplishments, conferences attended, and other adventures.