



## **Strategic Plan Progress**

**Sept 24, 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 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.*

**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	July - Sept 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 Early Learning Career Center (ELCC) continues to provide support to the workforce in Miami through personalized career advising and development of career plans in the ECE field. We have secured a one of a kind partnership with the Florida Association for Infant Mental Health (FAIMH) to bring opportunities for educators that work with children 0-3 years old, obtain Infant Mental Health training and endorsement. This Endorsement will be the first in the state of Florida where a local CSC funds this type of PD opportunity. The ELCC is also engaged with FAIMH through a workgroup whose objective is to bring about discussions and efforts in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. The ELCC will finalize its fiscal year on Sept 30th and will be engaged in finalizing scholarship expenditures. The ELCC will continue to focus on providing support to the ECE workforce and provide guidance as needed.</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"> <li>▪ T.E.A.C.H. is about to roll out a new and improved online application process. We expect to be up and running on October 4<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>▪ The COVID-19 crisis has had a continuing impact on our numbers, and we are utilizing robust outreach to keep the field engaged.</li> <li>▪ We have now reimbursed for more than 1,146 computers.</li> <li>▪ We have spent 10% of our scholarship dollars.</li> </ul>

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Current T.E.A.C.H. data:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2346 current active scholars</li> <li>○ 277 current pending scholars</li> <li>○ 711 applications have been received since July 1, 2021</li> <li>○ 5,173 web hits for August, 2021</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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><b>Palm Beach Registry:</b> 104 Applications Processed  <b>Miami-Dade Registry:</b> Approximately 293 centers will begin the online renewal portal process for Thrive by 5 this Fall.</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>Effective July 1, 2021, the Gold Seal Quality Care Program was transferred to the Department of Education (DOE) from the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The DOE’s Division of Early Learning is currently working in collaboration with DCF and the Children’s Forum to ensure a smooth transition.</p> <p><b>Gold Seal Quality Care Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facility: 1,773</li> <li>▪ Large Family Child Care Homes (LFCCH): 73</li> <li>▪ Licensed Family Day Care Homes (LFDCH): 77</li> </ul> <p>Total: 1,923 Programs with a Gold Seal Designation (Reports are currently not available in CARES, so the above Gold Seal numbers are based on a report pulled on 7/19/2021)</p> <p><b>Gold Seal Associations Updates:</b>  18 Accrediting Associations approved for Gold Seal  <b>Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC)</b>  34 FCCPC training sites</p>
Develop and deliver high quality training through summits, workshops, conferences, etc..	<p>Virtual T.E.A.C.H. meetings/presentations are administered as requested. Presentations in the past quarter (method and # of participants) included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ July 15: Tallahassee Community College students (Zoom - 17 attendees)</li> <li>▪ July 21: Directors Network Meeting hosted by ELC of</li> </ul>

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
	<p>Sarasota (Zoom - 17 attendees)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ July 20 - 23: One Goal Summer Conference (in-person / exhibit table for all Forum programs - 500 total conference attendees &amp; presentations for T.E.A.C.H./INCENTIVE\$ - 26 attendees )</li> <li>▪ Aug. 4: CTE Coordinators Meeting hosted by Dept. of Education (Zoom - 36 attendees)</li> </ul> <p>Help Me Grow FLorida hosted a Joint Referral Collaboration Summit with the Children's Forum on behalf of the Division of Early Learning for referral agency staff and care coordinators. Referral staff from statewide organizations and agencies participated to discuss best practices and ways to improve referral processes locally.</p>
<p>Maintain the Forum's status as an Accredited Provider (AP) for International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET).</p>	<p>The Forum's IACET A.P. status must be renewed annually by October 31. Due to the lack of IACET approved training developed and hosted by the Forum over the past two years and lack of revenue being generated to help cover the \$1,000+ renewal fee, we have decided to not move forward with renewing at this time. We have notified IACET of this decision as of Aug. 2021.</p>

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

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
<p>Disseminate relevant research studies and policy briefs to various audiences to include practitioners and policy makers to inform the field and improve practices.</p>	<p>The 2021 Miami-Dade Quality Improvement System Workforce Study was drafted and submitted to the funder (The Children's Trust) for review and approval. Once approved, this annual report is typically disseminated to wide audiences and the local and state levels.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>The Children's Forum was awarded the DEL Early Education and Care Workforce Study project to examine the demographic, employment, and training characteristics of the</p>

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
proposals.	workforce as well as the impacts of turnover and COVID on the workforce. The one-year contract (\$225,268) is anticipated to start September 2021.

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

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
Facilitate, participate, and serve on various local, state, and national level leadership initiatives to promote effective public policy and best practice.	The ELCC Director serves on the national (QRIS BUID) and local (FAIMH) equity and diversity workgroups.
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 is busy planning efforts for the 2022 event set for January 30-February 4 .
Present and display at local, state, and national conferences on relevant topics demonstrating the expertise of Forum staff and value of programs administered.	July 20 - 23: One Goal Summer Conference (in-person / exhibit table & presentations including the Children’s Forum, T.E.A.C.H., INCENTIVE\$, Children’s Week, FAN, CLASS, and HMG - 500 total attendees)
Support the board of director’s priority to effectively engage business leaders in early childhood policy in Florida.	No activity this quarter.
Maintain and expand shared services agreements with partners such as FHSA.	Agreements continue with FHSA and FAN.

**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	July - Sept 2021
Assess the needs of the field and secure funding to support the mission of the organization on an ongoing basis.	Responded to an RFP to conduct a statewide workforce study and have won the bid. We are currently awaiting an executed contract.

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
Write and promote news, stories, and op-eds in various media throughout the state.	No stories or op-eds this quarter
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.
Engage the field through the Forum's membership program.	<p>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 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 July 11 through September 8, 2021, 154 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.	<p>As of September 8, the Forum's social media pages include the following:</p> <p>Facebook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Children's Forum: 3,527 followers</li> <li>▪ T.E.A.C.H.: 3,190 followers</li> <li>▪ INCENTIVE\$: 514 followers</li> <li>▪ Early Learning Career Center: 706 followers</li> <li>▪ Children's Week: 2,305</li> <li>▪ Help Me Grow:</li> </ul> <p>Twitter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Children's Forum: 5,659 followers</li> <li>▪ Children's Week: 1,169 followers</li> <li>▪ Help Me Grow:</li> </ul>

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
	<p>Instagram:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Children's Forum: 582 followers</li> <li>▪ Children's Week: 566 followers</li> <li>▪ T.E.A.C.H.: 84 followers</li> <li>▪ Help Me Grow:</li> <li>▪ The Forum's YouTube channel has 108 subscribers.</li> <li>▪ The Children's Week YouTube channel has 31 subscribers</li> </ul>
Write and disseminate a quarterly newsletter to promote collaboration among providers of services for young children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A Fall edition of the Forum's newsletter is planned for distribution in late September or early October.</li> </ul>
Promote and expand professional development systems throughout the state to provide career pathways for early childhood and afterschool educators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are working with DEL and other advocates to expand availability and access to the Career Pathway and competencies.</li> </ul>
Bring positive recognition to the Forum for the quality and excellence of the work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Forum leadership team met with the new Early Learning Chancellor, Matt Mears, to share the work of the Forum. It went very well.</li> <li>▪ Children's Week continues to bring recognition to the Forum.</li> </ul>
The Forum will serve as the organizing partner for Children's Week to increase awareness and needs of children and youth in Florida.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The CWFL website has been revamped into a more user-friendly and accessible version as of July/Aug 2021.</li> <li>▪ The call for returning Partners was sent on Aug. 20. From this initial call, the Florida Kiwanis, United Healthcare, and Sunshine Health/CMS have expressed interest in 2022 participation. Follow-up calls with UHC (as Awards Partner) and Sunshine (possible Featured Partnership - Celebration of the Hands) pending scheduling with their teams.</li> <li>▪ Announcement of 2022 event (promo video) and Advocacy Award nominations sent Sept. 1</li> <li>▪ Call for new partners sent Sept. 8</li> <li>▪ Continual social media updates/info shared to keep audiences engaged</li> </ul>



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

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
Provide wage and salary stipends through the successful implementation of the Early Childhood Educator INCENTIVE\$ Florida Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participating counties: Broward, Hillsborough and Miami-Dade</li> <li>▪ Total participants: 2,034</li> <li>▪ Total child care programs/homes: 842</li> <li>▪ Average six-month payment: \$704, equivalent to .67 cents per hour</li> </ul>
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"> <li>▪ New INCENTIVE\$ scale, aligned to Florida’s early learning and afterschool career pathway with higher incentive amounts</li> <li>▪ One Goal Summer Conference July 2021- Exhibit table and presentation</li> </ul>

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

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
Enhance the Professional Development Registry to serve as a resource for training and scholarship management, and to inform decision-making.	Currently working on developing and finishing the portal.
Maintain websites that will serve as the information and resource hub for the early learning field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A website banner to promote the partnership between Help Me Grow Florida and ParentEducate.com was added to the Children’s Forum website.</li> </ul>

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
<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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Received an extension of the Act Early/COVID-19 Response Teams Grant through the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for \$94,000.</li> <li>▪ Worked with the Children's Trust of Alachua to draft an RFP to expand HMG services to Alachua county.</li> <li>▪ Hosted a Joint Referral Collaboration Summit with the Children's Forum on behalf of the Division of Early Learning for referral agency staff and care coordinators.</li> </ul> <p>Data Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Received <b>408</b> calls (7/1/21-7/30/21- receive call data monthly)</li> <li>▪ Served <b>884</b> children (7/1/21-9/8/21)</li> <li>▪ Served <b>818</b> families (7/1/21-9/8/21)</li> <li>▪ Conducted <b>1,239</b> screenings (7/1/21-9/8/21)</li> <li>▪ Made <b>801</b> referrals (7/1/21-9/8/21)</li> <li>▪ Held <b>152</b> family and community events (7/1/21-9/8/21)</li> <li>▪ Held <b>319</b> healthcare provider events (7/1/21-9/8/21)</li> </ul>
<p>Support diversity in the early learning and afterschool workforce.</p>	<p>The ELCC director serves on the QRIS BUILD national ECE equity and diversity workgroup as well as a local equity and diversity workgroup facilitated by FAIMH to bring about discussions and efforts in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.</p>
<p>The Florida Afterschool Network will provide collaborative leadership, policy advocacy, and awareness of needs affecting the afterschool population throughout the state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Florida Afterschool Network hosted the inaugural Public Policy Forum on Friday, August 6. The meeting was well received and the attendees enjoyed the ability to hear, share, and engage with some great speakers from around the state and nation. Below are follow ups and a link to review the meeting program.  <a href="https://files.constantcontact.com/fa1ab2ce701/ccfd4525-fee-489b-9e84-40eaea95136b.pdf">https://files.constantcontact.com/fa1ab2ce701/ccfd4525-fee-489b-9e84-40eaea95136b.pdf</a></li> <li>▪ Attendees represented the entire educational spectrum starting in preschool through high school and beyond.</li> </ul>

Objectives	July - Sept 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A member of the Legislature asked us for help on how they can best partner to advance the Afterschool agenda to best support youth and families.</li> <li>▪ We heard from local programs on their successes and their pain points. We also discovered that there is more that unites us than divides us and we will only achieve the outcomes we want when we break down the silos that divide us.</li> <li>▪ We heard from one of the most knowledgeable Afterschool consultants about how other states address the sustainable funding issue with five "building blocks."</li> <li>▪ We used technology to engage the audience with key questions on how to prioritize our shared agenda. Not surprisingly "increasing access" was first with "sustainable funding" and "supporting quality" a close second.</li> <li>▪ We were inspired by a young Miami-Dade woman who's dream is to be the first, female, Cuban-American President of the United States. We are all now watching for 2040!</li> <li>▪ Next steps include continuing to convene partners and conversations, break down silos, braid and blend funding and convene partnerships to elevate the youth success.</li> <li>▪ Highlights of the event included networking opportunities and the engagements we had with the questions and connections among our partners.</li> </ul>

- **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	▪ July - Sept 2021
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Received notification that The Children's Trust of Alachua intends to contract with the Children's Forum to provide Registry data collection and management services.</li> </ul>

<p>on investment justifies the allocation of resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Submitted and received intent to award notification for DEL Early Education and Care Workforce Study project (one-year fixed-price contract for \$225,268).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase unrestricted revenue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 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 8 ELCs, RCMA, and Head Start agencies for a total of 541 assessments. At least 6 ELCs and Head Start agencies have indicated they plan to submit POs to contract with us for assessments beginning later in FY 21-22. We currently have 54 approved assessors throughout the state and will continue to recruit more assessors, especially those individuals who are bilingual.</li> <li>▪ We signed a contract with MEF Associates to conduct coaching around two different curricula in July/August in the central Florida area for approximately \$97,709 for a 10 month timeframe. We hired two coaches for this study who live in the central Florida area. This is a part of a national study of supports to improve child care quality.</li> </ul>
<p>Provide monthly financial reports to the Board ensuring board members are informed on the financial status of the Forum.</p>	<p>Financial reports have been provided to board members on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>Maintain positive audit results and monitoring reports that reflect the quality of our work.</p>	<p>Audits and monitoring reports have been favorable with no major deficiencies noted.</p>
<p>Maintain quality assurance practices to ensure the ongoing quality improvement of services.</p>	<p>All programs and services have an evaluation component to measure stakeholder satisfaction. Results are used to inform improvement strategies.</p>
<p>Strengthen the internal culture of the Forum through staff recognition and professional development opportunities.</p>	<p>Morale Committee: Staff appreciation mini breakfast (bagel, coffee, and juice) planned for Sept. 21. (i.e. thanks for all you do “round” here)</p>