



## **ADVANCING THE CHILDREN'S AGENDA**

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### ***ADEQUATELY FUND AND IMPROVE EARLY CHILDHOOD/AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS***

**PROMOTE increased funding** for children birth-12 in early learning and school age care to ensure children's access to educational, enrichment programs that support working families. **SUPPORT adequate levels of funding per child** for Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) to ensure children have the academic, executive and social skills for kindergarten.

**AMEND the early learning statute for School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten** to include explicit **standards for the health, safety and well-being of children** in all publicly funded programs.

**AMEND the School Readiness statute to establish benchmarks and education based performance standards** for early learning to prepare children for school success, enhance the private business model of early learning, and to ensure accountability of public funds.

**ENSURE full eligibility of school-age children with adequate funding and quality standards** to make certain school-age children participating in School Readiness programs benefit from enriching environments that support grade-level reading.

### ***ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE***

**PROVIDE and PRESERVE health insurance coverage for all federally eligible children. ENSURE all children and parents who are newly eligible for Medicaid** under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act **are extended coverage** under Florida law.

**ENSURE access to maternal child health services** including continuity of health care coverage for women and infants, services for substance exposed newborns, and supports related to maternal depression, substance abuse, and other mental health services.

### ***CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS***

**PROMOTE increased funding for the Early Steps** intervention system that offers services to eligible infants and toddlers with significant delays or pre-existing conditions.

**PROMOTE increased funding and coordination of Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS)** services in order to make sure children receive timely services.

**SUPPORT universal developmental screenings, assessments, and access to appropriate interventions.**

**ENSURE that children with developmental disabilities** in state custody continue to **receive priority status** for services from the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.

## ***SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES***

**PROMOTE increased funding for evidence-based programs** to prevent child abuse and neglect.

**ADEQUATELY fund Community Based Care programs, adoption subsidies and child protective services. PROVIDE increased state funding for training** for case workers and for reduced case loads.

**PROMOTE full utilization of Title IV-E Foster Care funding** to maximize resources and services for children in the foster care system.

**PROMOTE increased funding for kinship care and for young adults leaving foster care** through appropriate Road to Independence program support.

## ***YOUTH SERVICES***

**PROMOTE prevention and diversion funding**, including that for Juvenile Assessment Centers (JACs) in areas of high utilization, and **evidence based practices** for programs such as Children in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS) and effective girls' programs.

**ENSURE that juvenile records are not sold for commercial purposes. ENSURE juvenile records are automatically expunged** when a juvenile turns 19 or 21 (when juvenile court jurisdiction ends), if the juvenile has no pending juvenile or criminal cases, and is not serving a sentence, thereby removing barriers to higher education and employment.

**SUPPORT the Department of Juvenile Justice's recommended Roadmap to System Excellence** reforms that reduce the number of children held in detention and promote adequate afterschool programming and increased opportunities for career and technical education in the juvenile justice system.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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### FAMILY CENTERED/COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMS

**PROMOTE** the funding of programs and services that are family centered, community-based and proven to work.

### LOCAL FLEXIBILITY

**OPPOSE** any effort to impose restrictions on the ability of local communities to determine the use of their local resources to develop, implement and administer programs that address the needs of children and families.

### QUALITY PROGRAMMING

**SUPPORT** appropriate levels of funding for evidence-based policies and programs that incorporate best practice models in order to ensure healthy children, stable families and safe and supportive communities.

### ADEQUATE & EQUITABLE FUNDING

**SUPPORT** funding formulas and streams for programs affecting children and families that are adequate and equitable, and that respect regional economic differences.

### MAXIMIXING & LEVERAGING REVENUE

**SUPPORT** efforts to increase Florida's revenue streams. **ENSURE** that available federal, local and private dollars for children's programs are fully maximized.

### UNFUNDED MANDATES

**OPPOSE** legislation requiring local jurisdictions to perform services or to fund programs not approved by local jurisdictions.

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