



HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION / Children's Services Administration**

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Broward County Board of County Commissioners  
Children's Services Board Needs Assessment Committee Meeting  
Minutes October 4, 2023

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 A.M.

Committee Members in attendance: Robert Mayersohn, and Joel Smith in person. Evan Goldman joined via Teams.

Committee Members absent: Monica King, Brenda Fam, Dan Schevis

Staff members in attendance: Cassandra Evans, Assistant Director of Community Partnerships Division (CPD), Dr. Tiffany Hill-Howard Children Services Administrator (CSA), Sandra Meza Hernandez (CSA).

**II. Approval of minutes**

**Approval of August 2, 2023, Needs Assessment Committee meeting minutes.**

Due to the lack of a quorum no action was taken. The minutes will be submitted for consideration at the next Needs Assessment Committee meeting.

**III. Chair Report**

**Providers presentations:** (refer to attached provider presentations)

**United Community Options (UCO), Respite Advocacy Program presentation by Misty Oliver.**

Questions and answers followed the presentation:

Joel Smith asked if UCO provide transportation, how do families find them and what would they do differently or change. Misty responded that UCO offers transportation for other services, but respite is a home service. Ms. Oliver mentioned that an increase of 50 to 100 additional hours a year for each of the advocacy (30 hours) and respite (168 hours) would be ideal.

Robert (Bob) Mayersohn asked how advocacy services are delivered. Misty responded that UCO advocates meet with the parents in the community, home, or the office; they meet with parents individually. Chair Mayersohn suggested that UCO should have an evidence-based model for their services. Bob questioned Misty about the salary range for advocates. Misty affirmed that

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advocates deserve more based on the services provided to the families. Bob also questioned if there are other funding sources that these families can access for respite. Misty responded that UCO is limited in this area because a sliding scale nor co-payment options are available.

**Parent 2 Parent Family presentation by Wendy Bellack, Director and founder of Family Network on Disabilities of Broward County (agency's new legal name).**

Questions and answers followed the presentation:

Joel Smith asked if there is a gap that exists between educated people and minorities and/or lower income families who do not know how to access help. Wendy Bellack answered that Parent 2Parent has a very diverse base of clients due in part to the outreach efforts in underserved communities and participation in community resource fairs.

Robert Mayersohn asked what are the top three issues/ concerns that your organization advocates for or helps parents to advocate for. Wendy believes that schools are not following the IEP; therapy should start the same day that schools do; too many kids and not enough adults in schools to give quality services. Another issue is a case they have now of a kid who gets hospital and has never been in school; Broward schools do not allow a child to have a live feed on a tv or computer monitor into their home from a classroom.

Joel Smith suggested to invite Diane Eagan from the School Board's Exception Student Education department to one of the NAC meetings to speak with members.

Chair Mayersohn asked Wendy if there are any challenges about the funding for advocates. Wendy stated that her advocates get paid \$20 an hour and no benefits.

**YWCA South Florida presentation by J.B. Arbelo, Director of Education and Jose Filpo, Vice President of Community Programs.**

Questions and answers followed:

Cassandra Evans asked if the KidSpace program was planning to expand at the main courthouse to accommodate children coming in in the other courtroom settings or the satellite locations, Ms. Arbelo responded that it would be wonderful to be able to expand.

Chair Mayersohn asked if they were to expand, which additional program would it be, J.B. said it would be family court.

Joel Smith suggested YWCA to add additional level of benefits providing continued service interventions. Jose Filpo added that the program has other funding streams to continuing services for the supported employment participants .

**IV. Section Administrator's Report**

Dr. Tiffany Hill-Howard, the new Children's Services Administrator introduced herself.

**CSA YTD FY 23 Utilization update.**

Cassandra Evans thanked the three providers for presenting information and addressing their needs.

Ms. Evans presented the utilization report as of August 31<sup>st</sup>. The utilization is 76.18% of the expected 91.67%. The report shows by service categories and kudos to those providers that were 100% utilization. Cassandra answered questions from committee members.

### **Strategic Plan Development 2023 -2029**

Cassandra presented the plan (see presentation) and provided a session recap, with a focus on wellness and wellbeing of the whole child/family. In summary, the presentation covered CPD's vision, the system of care concepts; current funding priorities; recommendations for 2024-2027 funding categories to include 2 new funding categories: "Enrichment" (non-clinical interventions) and "Innovation" (pilots), the concept of "bundled interventions" ; outputs and outcomes; data and information systems; and implementation and updates.

Chair Mayersohn referred to underutilization and suggested to talk to Commissioner Michael Udine to advocate for those pilots' category services and strengthen our case for underutilized funds remained. Members suggested to add predictive analytics.

Bob and Joel congratulated staff for such a great job, as well as the excellent presentation which has a different way of approaching business. Cassandra shared that this work was done in collaboration with the other funders such as Broward Behavioral Health Coalition (BBHC) and Children Services Council (CSC). The next and final step is to present the strategic plan before the Board for a vote.

### **V. Public Comments**

Melissa Bottge, CDTC, thanked NAC members and staff, as she sees a lot of good changes over the years. She learned a lot during this meeting from the providers as well as being able to share information with them.

Joel Smith invited all attendees to the food party that is open on Saturdays at [Nina's Place] in Deerfield Beach.

### **VI. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 11:14 am.

The next Needs Assessment Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 9:00 A.M. at 115 S. Andrews Ave, Room A337, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301