



Board of Directors Meeting

March 13, 2008

Board Discussion

Child Welfare Advocate Update

Item V.

Recommended Action:	None
Issue:	Child Welfare System Update
Program:	Child Welfare Advocacy
Budget Impact:	NA
Strategic Plan Goal:	Child Maltreatment

Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) Update

Department of Children and Families (DCF) received proposals from Eckerd Youth Alternatives and Camelot Community Care, both of which are local organizations. The 12-member evaluation team met on Tuesday, February 19, 2008, to receive the submitted proposals and scoring instructions. The evaluation team includes representatives from: Florida's Children First, JWB Children's Services Council of Pinellas, Calvary Chapel, DCF, Pasco Community Alliance, Pasco County Sheriff's Office, Help a Child, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, State Attorney's Office and the Public Defender's Office. The evaluation team presented their scores to DCF on March 3, 2008. The proposals were very close in quality with Camelot Community Care scoring almost two points more than Eckerd Youth Alternatives. DCF will begin negotiations with both applicants on March 12, 2008. The Notice of Intent to Award will be posted on April 8, 2008, with services to begin July 1, 2008. The transition from Sarasota YMCA to the new lead agency will occur between April 8, 2008 and July 1, 2008.

Adoption Promotion & Prevention of Abuse, Abandonment & Neglect Planning Team

Recently passed legislation created the Office of Adoption and Child Protection in the Executive Office of the Governor. Their purpose is three-fold:

- Promote adoption.
- Support adoptive families.
- Prevent child abuse, abandonment and neglect.

Their major initiatives include:

- Adoption Public Awareness Campaign.
- State Plan for Adoption Promotion and the Prevention of Abuse, Abandonment and Neglect.
- Children and Youth Cabinet

The Office of Adoption and Child Protection has charged each Circuit in the state with creating a Local Planning Team responsible for Adoption Promotion and Prevention of Abuse, Abandonment and Neglect. The

Local Planning Team will develop the local plan of action that will be used by the Council to develop the state's 18-month plan that will start in January 2009. An Adoption Sub-Committee Planning Team Meeting was held on February 21, 2008. The Team is presently looking at the existing structure, identifying gaps and making recommendations to assist with the development of the local plan. The next meeting for the full Adoption Promotion & Prevention of Abuse, Abandonment & Neglect Planning Team is scheduled for February 28, 2008 at 1:00 pm at the Mary Grizzle Building.

Domestic Violence Task Force - Intervention with Children Workgroup

The goal of the workgroup is for Pinellas County to have an integrated and effective response that reduces the impact of domestic violence on children and families. In order to accomplish the goal, all responders need to have a better understanding of the various agency roles and limitations. The group has worked for the last six months to develop a curriculum for cross-training on roles, responsibilities, and limitations of the various parts of the system. The modules are being presented at the Domestic Violence Task Force Meetings for review and approval by the Task Force prior to any community presentations. The cross-training will include six separate modules, to allow the most flexibility when presenting the training. The Workgroup will debut the cross training in the community at an event to be held in October, 2008 during Domestic Violence Awareness month. The group is presently working on coordinating the details of the event.

Children's Action Team (CAT)

The Pinellas County Community identified the Children's Action Team (CAT) as the local committee to resolve challenges or issues related to the Child Welfare System. The community partners are still working on the specifics of the structure and implementation. The idea is that there will be sub-committees identified that will focus on specific areas of the system. When an issue is identified, it will be presented to the Children's Action Team for acceptance. Once accepted, the appropriate sub-committee will be convened to discuss the issue and recommend solutions. If an issue is unable to be resolved at the sub-committee level, a request for assistance will be made to the Community Alliance. The next meeting to further discuss the implementation is scheduled on February 25, 2008 at 2:00 pm. at the Mary Grizzle building.

Community Based Care Discussion Project

The Child Welfare Advocacy office is working on finalizing the Child Welfare Best Practices Reference Book. The book will include:

- Pinellas Community-Based Care Community Model (2004)
- Pinellas Community- Based Care Community Model Update (2005)
- December 7, 2007 Status Report
- Input from the December 7, Discussion Meeting
- Applicable State and Federal laws
- Child Welfare System Standards
- Child Welfare Best Practices

The resource book will be presented to Department of Children & Families (DCF), Community Alliance, Children's Cabinet and the identified new Lead Agency for Community Based Care. A copy of the resource book will be placed in the JWB Resource Center. Participants of the December 7, 2007 CBC Discussion will receive an annotated table with web links to the laws, System Standards and Best Practices.