



FAMILY CARE COUNCIL FLORIDA

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Family Care Council Florida is to advocate, educate, and empower individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, partnering with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), to bring quality services to individuals for dignity and choice.

FCCF 2014-2015 REPORT

F.S. 393.502 Family Care Council (FCC) Accomplishments Summary

There are 15 FCCs around the state that have as their purpose and primary functions to:

- Advise the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD);
 - Develop a plan for the delivery of family support services within the local area;
 - Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of services and supports;
 - Provide education and outreach to families;
 - Review and make recommendations as to the effectiveness of the delivery of supports and services;
 - Advocate for local community and family needs;
 - Meet and share information with other Family Care Councils.
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- ❖ Through Family Care Council Florida (FCCF), Area FCC representatives met bimonthly fulfilling Section 393.502, F.S. mandate to meet and share information between APD Regional/Area Family Care Councils. Conference calls to update and promote discussions were held in between the bimonthly meetings as issues warranted. FCC members mentor other councils individually and by attending local FCC meetings.
 - ❖ FCCs thanked Florida Legislators and Governor Rick Scott for legislation that supported an additional \$40 million dollars to expand the iBudget Medicaid waiver to help take approximately 2000 individuals off the APD waiting list, \$1 million designated to the Employment Enhancement Project, and the implementation of the ABLE Act which ensures every person has the opportunity to reach their full potential regardless of the challenges they may face.
 - ❖ Area FCCs have experienced membership growth in the past two years. Each FCC has actively recruited and recommended applicants for their local FCC, and Governor Scott has appointed 27 members to FCCs across the state.

- ❖ Area FCCs held regularly scheduled, advertised, monthly meetings averaging 10 meetings per year for each council, as required by Section 393.502, F.S. and Florida Sunshine laws.
- ❖ Area FCC meeting agenda examples include: FCC business items, budgetary issues, by-law reviews and updates, action/support plan items, and APD updates by regional APD staff. Meeting agendas also cover topics that include current issues and needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, and planning for outreach, education, resources, legislation, and employment issues.

Area FCC Activities and Accomplishments included, but were not limited to the following:

- Visited with Legislators in their home offices, at local delegation meetings and in Tallahassee at DD Day. Developed or supported legislative platforms for issues affecting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Facilitated procurement of individual stories for the FCCF “Community Booklet” distributed to all legislators, and for community education and outreach.
- FCCF provided each council copies of *Apple Bites: Commonsense Disability Strategies for Everyone*
- Hosted local family forums and conferences with a diverse agenda of topics for education and outreach to individuals and families. Resource fairs were held and APD waiting list, housing, employment/benefits, Social Security, ESE & EES-Transition, iBudget, guardianship, wills and trusts, *Disability is Natural*, and behavioral issues were among the top agenda items. Several councils collaborated with local organizations for community events on pertinent issues.
- FCCF created a new website to better connect and share information with families across the state. FCCs also cultivated mailing and email lists for broader distribution and outreach.
- Multiple FCC members from around the state attended the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) State Plan Meeting and participated in the creation of their 5-year plan.
- Participated on APD, FDDC, Agency for Health Care Administration, Children Medical Services and other related workgroups, focus group surveys, iBudget Handbook rule hearings, weekly Family Café legislation calls, and workshops held throughout the year.
- Sponsored or attended various conferences and events regarding Housing Coalition, VISIONS, American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), Arc Conference, Autism, Down Syndrome, Managed Care, Special Olympics, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS), Easter Seals, Superintendent’s District Advisory Panel, Family Community Involvement Advisory Council (FCIA), meetings held by DD stakeholder organizations such as FARF, FND, The Arc of Florida, the 2015 Justice Summit, Youth Summit, SNAC, Disability Mentoring Day, Disability Awareness Month, Department of Elder Affairs’ No Wrong Door Initiative, Americans with Disabilities Act celebrations, Life Access, Sumter/Lake Delegate Days, Florida Disabled Outdoors Association SportsAbility events, Center for Autism and Related Disorders, FDDC participating in activities, and workshops.
- Served on the Delmarva Quality Council and local active Quality Steering committees.

- Sponsored 116 families to attend Family Café. FCC members also attended, with several FCC members assisting with the FCCF exhibit. A few members assisted with Café registration and other activities as well.
- FCCF received approximately 145 calls (via the FCCF maintained toll free number) from persons requesting information, resources or other issues. Local council members connected with callers to provide guidance, education, and resources from their local areas
- Members are active with Department of Education Exceptional Student Education Parent Stake Holder committee, PTI CFPC, and COPAA Council for Parents, Advocates, and Attorneys. Provides webinar training to support and educate parents, Medicaid waiver coordinators, and guardian advocates.
- Purchased equipment for local APD office to assist with mailings going out into the community.
- Received many calls and emails from individuals, family members, community organizations, healthcare offices and others with questions about services and supports available for families, waiting list and waiver issues, and community resources available or needed. Information and referrals made as indicated.
- Outreach by Area FCC's occurred in several ways:
 - Articles in local newspapers; Facebook and other social media set up with postings; brochures or articles posted on local community and office bulletin boards; fact sheets prepared and circulated; local website and resource libraries developed and updated.
 - Distributed FCCF and APD brochures. Several local councils also designed and distributed local-specific FCC Brochures.
 - Attended and participated at APD trainings, and APD provider and waiver support coordinator meetings.
 - Promoted and encouraged the organization of support groups and participation with self-advocacy groups such as Florida Self-Advocate Network'D (FL SAND). Local members assist Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+) support groups in several APD/FCC areas.