



**Brevard C.A.R.E.S.  
Report April 2018**

**Strengthening Families...Whatever It Takes!**

## March 2018

In the last week of the Florida legislative session, after several days of heated floor debates on school safety, workforce housing, education, the state budget, gaming and other high-profile policy issues the Florida Legislature were not able to end on time on Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup> and were forced into overtime. The House and Senate were unable to agree on a state budget as Constitutionally-required to allow 72 hours before the final budget vote, delaying the end of session. As a result, all other pending bills “died” Friday evening, including the C.A.R.E.S. replication project in Volusia/Flagler Counties. Session was officially completed on Sunday March 11<sup>th</sup>, after the full vote on the general appropriations act, the implementing bill, and the annual tax package.

Brevard C.A.R.E.S. continues to be actively engaged with the Brevard Opioid Task Force for Brevard County. Three of the four subcommittees of the task force have conducted initial introductory meetings and have begun exploratory work needed to establish specific community priorities for addressing the opioid crisis locally.

- The Education and Prevention subcommittee has broken its focus down into four subcomponents of focus: Parent and Community Education, Elementary Education, Middle School Education, and High School Education.
- The Healthcare subcommittee is seeking to gather more county specific data related before setting priorities. Some of the priorities discussed thus far include doctor and pharmacist training, community position of the use of Narcan (used for the emergency treatment of a known or suspected opioid overdose), use and availability of Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) in conjunction with co-occurring behavior modification counseling/therapy.
- The Treatment Subcommittee is seeking to increase access and entry of users into evidence based treatment; automatic referrals to MAT upon release from Brevard County Corrections on opioid related charges; Family and Teen Opioid Education and Support Groups; and increasing marketing of programs that already exist.
- The Criminal Justice subcommittee is the only committee that has yet to have a face to face meeting but are engaged in communications across law enforcement agencies and with the State Attorney’s office regarding strategies to target suppliers.

The Executive Director has been engaged in ongoing discussions with the Department of Children and Families Operations Manager regarding strategies to increase effective working relationships and successful outcomes for families. These discussions have been primarily focused around our Non Judicial In Home Services (NJIHS) and the barriers we are both seeing regarding family engagement and timely referral and delivery of needed services. One of our first action steps was to update the current document that parents sign when they consent to NJIHS to be reflective of the expectation of the Department. Historically the form was titled Voluntary Protective Services Consent; it now reads NJIHS Consent with an updated explanation of services. In April we will be continuing our discussion to include the Child Protective Investigations Management Team and the full C.A.R.E.S. Management team.

The Executive Director participated along with members of the Brevard Family Partnership Board of Directors Risk Management Subcommittee to complete a risk assessment for the pending loss of the IV-E Waiver. The assessment identifies potential financial, governance, reputation, compliance, client service, and human services risks along with their probability of occurrence, impact of occurrence, consequences of occurrence and mitigating strategies to respond to the identified risk. The Risk Management Subcommittee will continue to monitor the associated risk and actions being taking to mitigate risk during their monthly meetings.

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, representatives from Brevard C.A.R.E.S. and the Department of Children and Families accepted the Brevard County Commissioners proclamation of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. This event was followed by the Child Abuse Prevention Month kickoff on March 24<sup>th</sup> at Squid Lips. We had great participation for both events.

Brevard C.A.R.E.S. continues to provide leadership for the Together in Partnership Family Strengthening subcommittee. This committee has historically focused on the five year plan for Child Abuse Prevention and Adoption Promotion and Support and early years services such as healthy Start, Healthy Families, and infant mental health. In January the committee was tasked with several additional Together in Partnership strategic priorities to include:

- Increased Education and Awareness of Opioid Epidemic and Resources for Treatment, this priority aligns and supports with the Opioid Task Force Education and Prevention Subcommittee.
- Youth Suicide Prevention, this priority aligns and supports the work of the Youth Mental Health Task Force
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment for Prenatal Women, this priority aligns and supports with the Opioid Task Force Healthcare Subcommittee
- Increasing Resources for Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention. Through this priority the committee will focus on bringing together homeless prevention/homeless services providers and child welfare providers to create a shared vision and strategy for our community with a focus on affordable housing to support reunification of children in out of home care with their parents.

The Brevard Parenting with Love and Limits Implementation team met in March to review and evaluate process to date. The program has been off to a slow start and overall the Implementation team evaluated initial implementation as low and identified strategies and action items to ramp up implementation. The team will reconvene in May to re-evaluate the referral process and progress.

The Executive Director has continued to participate in weekly Family of Agencies (FOA) Executive Directors meetings. These meetings focus on activities that strengthen our mutual commitments to work to support the Brevard Family Partnerships mission to “protect children, strengthen families and change lives through the prevention of child abuse and the operation and management of a comprehensive, integrated, community-based system of care for abused, abandoned and neglected children and their families”. As part of these meetings we have had ongoing discussion regarding the roles of the sub-agencies (Brevard C.A.R.E.S., National center for Innovation & Excellence, and Family Allies), communication strategies, activities with overarching system impact, and collective objectives and goals.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Phebe Powell  
Executive Director