

Unaccompanied Immigrant Children Committee

Mission: To ensure that all unaccompanied immigrant children in Hillsborough County have access to the services and supports they need to remain safe and well.

Goals:

1. Facilitate communication among stake holders about the availability of existing services.
2. Identify barriers to accessing services and supports and work on solutions to overcome those barriers.
3. Identify service gaps and develop resources to address them.
4. Educate and engage the public to support children and their families.

Strategies for Addressing Goals:

1. Facilitate communication:
 - a. Identify all post-release case workers with Hillsborough cases and connect them with "resource row" at Diversion and with Kinship Support services to help them learn about existing community resources.
 - i. Designate a liaison so they can have ongoing communication
 - b. Provide fact sheet on access to medical care - eg alternatives to Medicaid, Florida Healthy Kids, Hillsborough County indigent health care, free clinics.
 - c. Advise folks on availability of ASO funds to children who have case management (includes post release ORR children)
 - d. Ask school district to designate a liaison/social worker to facilitate school issues.
2. Barriers
 - a. Lack of health insurance /unavailability of Medicaid.
 - i. Fact sheet on health insurance alternatives
 - ii. Availability of ASO funds
 - iii. Identify trauma-informed providers for referral
 - b. Caregivers lack sufficient custodial status to consent to mental health treatment. Some providers will not accept forms notarized by parents abroad.
 - i. Assist caregivers to obtain custody in family, probate, or dependency court
 - ii. Recruit and support pro bono lawyers to represent custodians
 - iii. Work with providers to facilitate acceptance of alternative forms of consent
 - iv. Consider administrative rule or statutory change
 - c. Lack of legal services
 - d. Acculturation
 - e. Lack of affordable and available interpreters for languages other than Spanish.
 - i. Identify existing contracted services and ascertain to who those services can be extended (ex. Pacific Interpreters, USCRI)