

## Special Needs Advisory Coalition (SNAC) of Broward

### Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

Meeting Held via Zoom

#### Chair(s) in Attendance:

**Dr. Justin Kohlhagen** (JAFCO Children's Ability Center)

#### CSC Council Member(s) in Attendance:

**Maria Schneider** (Assistant State Attorney 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Court)

#### SNAC Members in Attendance:

**2-1-1 Broward** (Gail Moore, Frank Isaza); **Act4Me** (Florencia Tischler); **Advocate** (Denise Mathurin, Robert Mayersohn); **Agency for Persons with Disabilities** (Milroy Senat); **Ann Storck Center** (Amanda Hernandez, Karen Flowers, Terri Shermett); **Arc Broward** (Jody Ellis, Shawn Preston); **Autism Speaks Florida** (Stacey Hoaglund); **Broward County Children's Services** (LaToya Davenport); **Broward County Community Action Agency** (Maria Polanco); **Broward County Public Schools** (Stacy Wolfe); **Center for Hearing & Communication** (Olivia Angeli); **Center for Independent Living** (Brian Johnson); **Children's Diagnostic Treatment Center** (Ellie Schrot); **College Living Experience** (Sandra Soriano); **Dan Marino Foundation** (Rhianna Jenkins, Susan Morantes); **Equine-Assisted Therapies of South Florida** (David Plath); **Evolving Learning Community** (Christina Sullivan); **Flite Center** (Natarish Bacon); **Family Care Council** (Marty Norris); **Family Network on Disabilities** (Lisa Math); **Florida Department of Health** (Mary Joyce, Rachel Baker-Blackwell); **GAPS Legal** (Michelle Kenney, Esq); **Memorial Healthcare Systems** (Berta Plantz, Laura Costa, Marilyn Camerota ); **Parent Education Network** (Ally Walford); **Project 10** (Lisa Friedman-Chavez); **Smith Community Center** (Donna Lavalley, Liat Kazas); **The Journey Institute Inc.** (Dr. Harleen Hutchinson); **United Community Options** (Cathea Comiskey); **YMCA South Florida** (Alison Rodriguez, Susan Feldman); **Jewish Family Services of Broward** (Samantha Salver); **Nova** (Shantigra "Shae" Williams).

#### CSC Staff in Attendance:

Dr. Laura Ganci–Director of Research and Planning; Marissa Aquino–Planning & Evaluation Manager Special Needs; Melissa Soza–Programs Manager; Piper Weber–Programs Manager; Megan Turetsky–Government Affairs Manager; Dr. Joshua Caraballo–Research & Evaluation Manager; Dr. Lorenzo Benaine–Research & Evaluation Manager; Jessica Rincon–Programs Manager; Shaquoia Wilson–Programs Manager; Liza Khan–Senior Programs Manager; Jill Denis-Lay–Assistant Director

#### I. Welcome

Justin Kohlhagen welcomed the committee members at 9:30 a.m. and wished the members are healthy and well as we are now one year virtual. He commended the special needs community on ensuring services exist for families virtually and in person, as this community was hit particularly hard by the pandemic and families rely on benefits.

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve minutes was made by Bob Mayersohn, seconded by David Plath, and passed unanimously.

## **III. Welcome CSC Council Member**

Justin Kohlhagen welcomed the CSC Council Member, Maria Schneider. Ms. Schneider shared that she is appointed to the Children's Services Council and was involved with diversion programs for children and young adults. She is very supportive of issues related to special needs that have arisen before the Council, and she is excited to be a SNAC committee member. She is looking forward to advocating for the children and families.

## **IV. Broward County Community Action Housing Program**

Maria Polanco, the Housing Coordinator, provided an overview of services via PowerPoint presentation. Broward County Family Success Centers Self-Sufficiency Case Management Programs offers Case Management Services, Emergency Assistance, Rent/Mortgage, and Utilities, and information & referrals to local community partners. The program participants' household income must be within two hundred percent (200%) of the poverty level and be a Broward County resident to qualify for assistance. Virtual orientation is offered the first of every month to review program eligibility and services.

Three years ago, the county started the housing and employment piece of the Community Action Agency program. In the past, an individual could have obtained an apartment under \$1000; now, a one-bedroom is about \$1250 and higher. Unemployed individuals who need assistance or who are in arrears or facing eviction meet with an employment coordinator to assist with job placement. Once employment is obtained, the housing coordinator addresses the arrears. The Housing Coordinator works with the landlord and pays directly for the months in arrears. The Housing Coordinators works with an array of landlords and property managers in the community to eliminate the stress of the families searching for a place to live. The PowerPoint and housing referral was made available in the chat which will include additional information of the services.

For more questions, please contact Maria Polanco via email at [mapolanco@broward.org](mailto:mapolanco@broward.org).

## **V. 211 Special Needs Website:**

Frank Isaza, 211 Chief Operations Officer, shared a preliminary design of the special needs' website. He thanked Michelle Kenney for providing some of the information from the Education and Awareness SNAC subcommittee. Based on feedback from the special needs system of care survey, the new design will be easier to navigate and user-friendly. The subcommittee has not reviewed the content and made suggestions, as the website is not live yet. Frank provided a view of the new features, such as mapping services created by the Education & Awareness SNAC subcommittee.

Marissa and Michelle will schedule a meeting and send an email to those who wish to review the website's content. Ellie Schrot volunteered to check the early intervention and developmental screening section.

## **VI. Broward Parent ESE Advisory Council**

Absent

## **VII. Legislative Updates:**

Megan Turetsky—Government Affairs Manager, reported the DCF Secretary resigned, which shifted other state level staff. Tuesday was the first day of the legislative session. The Governor gave the State of the State address and the Speaker of the House and Senate President also gave remarks. Megan reported it was indicated that the state of Florida is not as bad of an economically as initially predicted. Potentially, there is some legislation to extend some of the workaround sales tax online to mitigate the effects of COVID-19.

Megan advised members to subscribe to Capitol Connection: <https://flchildrenscouncil.org/subscribe-for-updates/> for updates. For more information, please contact Megan at [mturetsky@cscbroward.org](mailto:mturetsky@cscbroward.org) or cell phone at 954-551-0735.

## **VIII. Old Business:**

### **a. Screening & Early Detection.**

Jessica Rincon, CSC, provided an update that she is looking to develop a way to collect the community's data in reviewing. This is an opportunity to see the bigger picture before establishing a workgroup. Jessica will compile the most important data to this committee and find a way to present it to facilitate some positive discussion and hopefully positive outcomes.

Please email Jessica Rincon at [jrincon@cscbroward.org](mailto:jrincon@cscbroward.org) if there are specific data for the community to review regarding early screening.

### **b. Virtual Resource Fair.**

Gail Moore, 211 Broward, reported the parent virtual resource fair is coming up on March 9th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on MS Teams. The virtual fair will offer 25 organizations to provide a brief overview of their programs. Parents will be unable to ask questions directly to the presenters; however, the information will be updated on the Broward ESE Advisory web page. The latest flyer will be provided in chat and after the SNAC meeting.

Available slots to become presenters, if interested, please contact [Gailmoore@211-broward.org](mailto:Gailmoore@211-broward.org) and telephone 954-390-0493 ext. 8019.

## **IX. SNAC Members Virtual Support**

Marissa Aquino, CSC, requested assistance with the virtual platform. The chat, SNAC membership registration, meeting notes, and alternate host are available opportunities in case of computer shutdown. Olivia Angeli offered to take attendance and compile attendance for members. Ire Diaz and Gail Moore will provide chat support. There is an extensive list of SNAC membership registration, and we need to see who is still active. Marissa is unable to send a mass email of more than 25 external emails, unless using constant contact or Result 4 Broward. She will utilize Results 4 Broward to send SNAC information. Please ensure you are registered with Results 4 Broward. Marissa announced that SNAC is a community meeting and members should approve all suggested activities or projects.

## **X. CSC Updates**

Piper Weber, CSC, reported a few openings in the CSC programs in middle and high schools. Throughout the county, CSC programs are offering virtual programming. She encouraged the committee to refer families to the CSC Funded directory. Some providers may be transitioning to in-person programming. Piper placed the link to the CSC funded program directory into the chat.

Frank, 211, shared assisted childcare is available, and the flyer is also in the chat.

## **XI. Community Roundtable COVID-19 Needs/Updates:**

Susan Morantes, Dan Marino Foundation, announced a mini virtual event held in April called "1.3 and Me"; information will be in the chat. The Reno Virtual Learning, which covers employability skills and training, and social skills, will be virtual. They are in the final stages and offer that the community help tests the free service. If anyone is interested, please email [smorantes@danmarinofoundation.org](mailto:smorantes@danmarinofoundation.org).

Stacy Wolfe, BCPS, reached out to the committee to contact business for opportunities for non-paid internships or paid internships. It is more challenging with COVID-19 to place students in businesses. Piper and Stacy have developed an Employment Task Force, including CSC STEP providers and BCPS Transition Team. The task force will help the job coaches be aware of businesses opened to work internship programs. The first meeting will be to identify other job developers and invite more partners to the task force. Any business leads to share with Stacy. Please email her at [stacy.wolfe@browardschools.com](mailto:stacy.wolfe@browardschools.com)

## **XII. Next Meeting Date:** Next SNAC meeting is set for May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom

## **XIII. Adjourn Meeting**

- a. Meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.