



Family Support Services of North Florida

Mission and Strategic Priorities

FSS Mission:

- Our mission is to be the leader in providing safety, stability, and quality of life for all children by working with the community to strengthen the family unit.
- Our vision is that children grow up connected to their own families, supported by families and embraced by the community; that children have the opportunity to achieve in school and to learn to be productive citizens; and that citizens of Duval and Nassau counties, organizations and agencies recognize that child protection is a community responsibility and represents the best interests of all county residents.

Strategic Priorities

- **Child Placement Resources:** One of our priorities at FSS is to increase the number and quality of placement alternatives for children entering out of home care. Part of the strategy includes emphasizing kinship placements, recruitment of specialized teen foster homes, offering specialized training, mentoring, and emergency support for all caregivers. Within this priority, FSS has two specific initiatives that are a long term goal of changing the culture from a system of care that just “treats” a child to a system that “heals” a child. The latest research shows that when we use this holistic approach, outcomes are better for children in regards to permanency, stability, and overall well-being. These two initiatives are called “Road to 75,” where we have a goal that 75% of children in care would be placed with kin caregivers, and “REACHing Teens” which work on the culture change and partnering with nationally recognized trainers and curriculum to train our caregivers. Many of the programs under this strategic priority have been legislatively funded for the past 4 years. These programs also have a direct correlation to our low use of group homes. Our group home utilization rate has been maintained at 2% or lower for the past several years.
- **Workforce Support and Development:** Another strategic priority of FSS is to focus on stabilizing the case management workforce and reducing case management workforce turnover. We learned several years ago that we could never truly become a trauma-informed system of care until our workforce was at 30% turnover or less. When case management is stable, outcomes

for children and families vastly improve. FSS has partnered with Dr. Wilke from the Florida Institute of Child Welfare for the past few years to do an in-depth longitudinal study on the workforce in our area. From there, we came up with an action plan to address the recruitment and retention of case managers. Some of these action items included switching all case management units to a 4:1 supervisor to worker ratio, training all supervisors on Reflective Supervision, making changes in our training curriculum to include experiential learning for all new case managers in our "Training House," and our ongoing Regional Integrated Training Alliance (RITA) contract where Case Managers and Child Protective Investigators are trained together.

- **Innovative Technology, Data Enterprise and Mobility:** This strategic priority is to enhance data driven decision making, provide consistent quality data for the system of care and to leverage technology to increase efficiencies and effectiveness. This is centered on case management. FSS believes that when case managers have the tools to do their job efficiently, they become more effective in case work. Effective decision making and case analysis leads to better safety and permanency outcomes for children and families. FSS has become the leader in CCWIS design and implementation and has become the site for many pilot projects. One of those pilot projects was DIONA, which was piloted with our case managers at our Nassau service center. A current pilot project is with AugIntel, which has been presented to both DCF Secretary Harris and state Senate and House staff. This pilot project has the potential to fulfil the new legislative requirements of the face sheet and family finding activities.

- **Primary Prevention/Community Reinvestment:** This strategic priority is to further our current prevention work in the community to a primary prevention model. The goal is to reinvest in the community to strengthen the community and empower families, reduce calls to the Florida abuse hotline, which results in less intrusion to families and a reduction of children coming into out of home care. FSS has focused on looking at the data and social determinants of health. GIS mapping was conducted on different zip codes and we found that the first area to impact is the 32209 population. Within the 32209 community, FSS has worked to build a peer led, community driven, family resource center that brings together numerous co-located resources for families. Over 300 surveys were conducted with residents of the community and over 124 people volunteered for different services. FSS has a city lease in the Emmett Reed Center and is currently co-located with Head Start. FSS has received funding from Casey Family Programs as well as other local community organizations to continue to expand this community center.