OUR MISSION
The Florida Network values young people and therefore creates safe pathways to their future by building strong families and communities.

OUR VISION
Florida will be a safe place where all young people reach their full potential.

OUR CORE VALUES

FAMILY: We are committed to keeping youth and families together and to strengthening family systems.

QUALITY: We are dedicated to ensuring the highest standards of practice within our programs and our organization.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: We value young people as vital resources and partners in finding solutions. We cultivate a young person’s strengths and assets in all of our programs and services.

SAFETY AND SUPPORT: We believe prevention and early intervention services are powerful, not only in keeping young people from committing crimes and families from being unsafe, but as catalysts for youth to realize their full potential and make a successful transition to adulthood.

We value the collective wisdom, energy and expertise that working together as member agencies affords us in striving toward our vision, adhering to our mission and reaching our common goals.

We believe the whole is always greater than the sum of the parts in making Florida a safer place for children and their families.
FROM THE CHAIRMAN & THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Looking back at everything we accomplished this year, we are awed by the tremendous commitment and dedication of the men and women who make up the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services. Our family of agencies are in the field every day tending to the needs of families in crisis and supporting the thousands of youth across the state that are transitioning into adulthood. With the support and collaboration of the Department of Juvenile Justice, elected officials, state decision makers, and our partners statewide we are finding new ways to best serve Florida’s youth and help them realize their own worth and potential. Our 2015 Annual Report reflects a year of growth; we embraced new families, communities, and partners, strengthening our programs in an effort to strengthen Florida’s families.

Some of the accomplishments that we are most proud of this past year include:

• The Florida Network entered into a new 5 year contract with the Department of Juvenile Justice on July 1, 2014.
• New contracts were executed for all of our agencies with an increase in care day deliverables.
• Executive and Legislative advocacy lead to funding for the expansion of Domestic Violence Respite services.
• Advocacy with state leaders and lawmakers also resulted in an expansion of CINS/FINS services to include younger children in their families in an evidence based prevention service known as SNAP (Stop Now and Plan).
• The introduction of safer medical practices in all 28 shelters with the implementation of medication management distribution carts and nursing support on site.
• An extensive training initiative certified trainers in Managing Aggressive Behavior, Motivational Interviewing and the Technology of Participation.
• Customized training delivered to instruct best practices in serving LGBTQ populations, Advancing Youth Development, Clinical Interventions for Middle Childhood, and Cultural Competency.
• Development of a state of the art, HTML 5 compliant web training environment named Katniss.
• Creation of a mobile-optimized blog to share materials and news that affect youth and families across the country.
• In partnership with the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Florida Network sponsored the 2014 Human Trafficking Summit and hosted the Runaway, Homeless, and Trapped- A panel discussion of the fault line between at-risk youth and sex trafficking.
• We were honored to serve on the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse and support Florida Missing Children’s Day.
• We participated in the Department of Juvenile Justice and Department of Children and Families working group to create new protocols for minor victims of human trafficking.
• We were successful in getting numerous editorials published covering such issues as human trafficking, LGBT homeless youth, and domestic violence.

We are thrilled to share our annual report with you and continue to work towards a brighter future for all of Florida’s families.

Chris Dudley, Chairman of the Board
Stacy J. Gromatski, President and CEO
“Sheltering” Youth and Families in Crisis

Often youth and families in crisis need shelter from their troubles. When the challenges become overwhelming the frequent results are child abuse, academic failure, domestic violence, homelessness, and juvenile delinquency. The Florida Network is a statewide association of organizations who exist to prevent such disastrous results and to provide “shelter from the storm.” These organizations are made up of caring professionals who provide numerous services such as community outreach, emergency triage and assessment, crisis shelter and family counseling.

CINS/FINS: Children and Families in Need of Services

Residential Services:
Florida Network shelters offer crisis intervention for families and a safe place to stay for youth 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. We work with families to reunify through counseling services offered by clinical professionals, a therapeutic environment, and coordination with local partners.

Counseling and Case Management:
Network members provide community based outpatient counseling services to youth and families who are experiencing conflict and instability in the home. This early intervention helps to facilitate communication between the youth and their parents or guardian, to deter destructive behavior before it’s too late.

CINS/FINS counseling programs are provided in communities where some of Florida’s most marginalized youth and families live. Individual, Family, and Group sessions are available to young people, parents, and guardians, free of charge. Programs utilize evidence-based approaches like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Trauma-informed Care to help youth and families survive crisis and thrive beyond it.

Many of the Network’s CINS/FINS community counseling partners are minority operated and faith-based programs that are long-invested in the communities they serve, providing a trusted and welcoming culture of care.

Staff Secure:
Sometimes a higher level of supervision is necessary to help a youth stay safe and stable during a shelter stay. In these instances member agencies implement this Staff Secure model which provides for a one-to-one staff to youth ratio.

Physically Secure:
In rare circumstances, utilization of a physically secure program environment may be necessary. The Florida Network provides this through contracted agreements with specialized Adolescent Mental Health Treatment Centers.

Juvenile Justice Respite Programs

Domestic Violence Respite:
This program serves as an alternative to secure detention for youth who are arrested and charged with a Domestic Violence Offense on a household member. The Network office coordinates statewide oversight, assistance and training to the member agencies to better support this population of youth.

Probation Respite:
This program provides a respite to youth who are at-risk of violating their probation, through this intervention youth are encouraged to make positive choices through the services offered at the member agencies.
Quality and Accountability

The Florida Network has received recognition by national organizations such as the American Bar Association, the Vera Institute of Justice, and the United States Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Prevention. These organizations have found the Network to be a best practice in the de-institutionalization of status offenders. As a result, several states have developed legislation and services to replicate the success of Florida’s CINS/FINS programs.

We support all of our local providers through a quality improvement review process that evaluates organizational resilience and readiness to respond to the present and future needs of Florida’s families. On-going training and technical assistance reflects our shared commitment to successful strategies grounded in results.

Being accountable to tax payers is always a priority of the Network. Both Florida Tax Watch and the Justice Research Center have found that these services save tax payers millions of dollars each year.

We provide:

31
Private Nonprofit Community Agencies

28
Youth Crisis Shelters

24
Hours a Day

7
Days a Week

Florida Network Expenditures
Compared to Justice System Costs Avoided

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Thaise strives to empower at-risk youth by educating and improving their quality of life through weekly counseling, mentoring, Enrichment Classes, tutoring and college tours. Thaise brings out the best in its youth by using education and exposure to elevate their minds and help them reach their full potential. Thaise works to reduce and ultimately eliminate high school dropouts, teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse and juvenile crime in Sarasota, Pinellas, Orange, and Duval County. One of Thaise’s many tools for molding positive and productive young adults is its Enrichment Program. The program includes several classes that cover job skills, drug prevention, pregnancy prevention, anger management, life skills, HIV/AIDS awareness, conflict resolution and etiquette. The job skills course not only equips youth with the tools they need to be effective workers, but also places students in jobs in the community. Thaise staff monitors the students for several months to ensure their continued success.

The Florida Network of Youth and Family Services is proud of all our members who are dedicated to serving youth in crisis. Neighborhood partners are a unique and special group of organizations who provide important community based services to high need areas across the state. The impact on the youth they serve transcends the circumstances from which these youth come from. The support provided by these agencies pushes youth to new heights, one example is Thaise Educational & Exposure Tours.

Thaise has given me the skills I need to be on task with things academically and financially,” said Melissa. “I learned that my family’s low-income status was an obstacle I could overcome. Because of Thaise Educational and Exposure Tours, I know I have the tools I need to not only overcome my financial situation, but all other obstacles I will face in the future.”

Melissa is double majoring in exercise science and nutrition and expects to graduate in 2018. She offered advice to those still participating in the program: “I attribute almost 100 percent of my future college career to Thaise, so keep studying and working hard. That’s what you’re going to do when you get to college, and the harder you work the more opportunities you will have for your future.”

A cornerstone of Thaise’s program is visiting college campuses with at-risk youth, one such visit this year was to Florida State University (FSU). While touring the campus, youth learned about the fields of study and co-curricular programs available. During the visit, Thaise program participants met a former Thaise youth and learned how the program helped her get to where she is now. Melissa Castor, a sophomore at FSU, was a member of Thaise for two years. During her time in the program she received tutoring and financial aid advising which she says significantly helped prepare her for college.
IMPACT

31 community nonprofits including 28 shelters

YOUTH SERVED
17,683

CINS/FINS: 16,850
Domestic Violence Respite: 783
Probation Respite: 50

Impact
Youth Returned to Parent or other appropriate living situation
CINS/FINS 93%
Domestic Violence Respite 81%

Domestic Violence Respite 8 days

Race

50.6% White
39.5% Black
9.9% Other

CINS/FINS

Ethnicity
Program Type Hispanic Non-Hispanic Other
CINS/FINS 19% 76% 5%
Domestic Violence Respite 15% 81% 4%

Gender
Program Type Male Female
CINS/FINS 54% 46%
Domestic Violence Respite 54% 46%

Average Length of Stay
Residential: 13 days
Non-Residential: 100 days
Domestic Violence Respite: 8 days

Risk Factors of Youth Served
Face Challenges at School 87.0%
Experiencing Family Conflict and Instability 95.9%
Engaging in Risky Behaviors 74.1%
Have Peer Relationships Putting Them at Further Risk 83.8%

Average Age at Intake
Program Type Age (Yrs.)
CINS/FINS 14
Domestic Violence Respite 15
OUTCOME

Changing Lives—Everyday

23,992 CALLS FOR HELP

COUNSELING AND CASE MANAGEMENT
Delivered to 11,057 Youth and their Families

SAFE SHELTER & BRIEF RESPITE PROVIDED to
5,773 Teens and their Families

CONDUCTED 2,358 OUTREACH EVENTS
Provided 82,662 TOTAL CARE DAYS

FINANCIALS

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

DJJ Contract
CINS/FINS $ 33,523,925
Title IVE $ 750,000
Domestic Violence Respite $ 1,219,658
Probation Respite $ 204,323
Nongovernmental $ 338,470

Total SUPPORT AND REVENUE $ 36,036,376

DJJ CINS/FINS Contract $ 35,697,906
Nongovernmental $ 338,470

Total EXPENSES $ 36,036,376

6% Revenue Spent on Training, Monitoring & Administration

94% Direct Services

Completed Services
Residential: 92%
Non-Residential: 94%
Domestic Violence Respite: 86%

Crime-Free Six Months After Services
Residential: 87%
Non-Residential: 95%
An integral part to the Florida Network’s growth last year was our focus on providing a number of training opportunities to our dedicated members across the state. What started as a response to a request for more training, evolved into a rigorous training schedule that brought together the best and brightest subject matter experts in areas such as Managing Aggressive Behavior, therapeutic strategies for youth under 10, and LGBTQ youth. We were proud to partner with academic institutions like the University of Oklahoma and its National Resource Center for Youth Services as well as nationally recognized organizations like WHY TRY?, to bring innovative and evidence-based practices to Florida.

By exposing hundreds of staff members to new insights and curricula on a variety of topics, we invested in their knowledge of youth and helped build their confidence in responding to families in crisis. We were thrilled to hear that even staff who had been with agencies for over a decade were continuing to find valuable new tools and skills at our trainings to better serve the ever changing population of children and teens statewide.

“A well trained workforce leads to better overall organizational and personal performance.”

-Florida Network Statewide Training Coordinator Karen Boulding
The 2015 Annual Meeting in Bonita Springs, FL brought together members and partners from around the state to celebrate the strengthening and expansion of services to Florida’s youth and families. The Florida Network recognized leaders, programs, and agencies for embodying the vision and core values of the Network and their dedication to serving youth in crisis. At the Awards Luncheon, guest speaker Lucas Boyce inspired attendees with stories detailing his journey from foster care to serving in the White House and flying in Air Force One. He is an example of the impact mentoring and building relationships can have on the lives of young people. The Florida Network recognized two Agencies of the Year—Bethel Community Foundation and Youth and Family Alternatives for their exceptional service and advocacy for Florida’s families.

The Chairman’s Leadership Award was awarded to Angel Colon for his work advocating for a young female victim of sex trafficking. His dedication and commitment as a case manager with the Hillsborough Child and Family Counseling Program helped bring services to a young girl who in the face of limited options, had given up on herself. We were honored to recognize Angel as one of the many exceptional youth care workers who strive to provide a safe and healthy future for Florida’s at-risk youth.

2015 FLORIDA NETWORK ANNUAL AWARDS WINNERS:

- Agency of the Year – Bethel Community Foundation (St. Petersburg)
- Agency of the Year – Youth and Family Alternatives (New Port Richey)
- Chairman’s Leadership Award – Angel Colon (Tampa)
- Counselor of the Year – Florence Boyce (Daytona Beach)
- Manager of the Year – Gonzellas “Zeke” Whitter (Gainesville)
- Network Executive of the Year – Cheri Brandies (Ocala)
- Networker of the Year – Merlyn Applewhite (Pensacola)
- President’s Leadership Award – Danielle Husband (New Port Richey)
- Program of the Year – Children’s Home Society Wave C.R.E.S.T. Youth Shelter (Ft. Pierce)
- Youth Care Worker of the Year – Christine Morgan (Orlando)
FLORIDA NETWORK Programs 2014-2015

1. Lutheran Services of Florida, Currie House (Pensacola)
2. Lutheran Services of Florida, Hope House (Crestview)
3. Anchorage Children’s Home, Hidde House (Panama City)
4. Capital City Youth Services, Some Place Else (Tallahassee)
5. CDS Behavioral, Interface Northwest (Lake City)
6. Youth Crisis Center (Jacksonville)
7. CDS Behavioral, Interface Central (Gainesville)
8. CDS Behavioral, Interface East (Palatka)
9. Arnette House (Ocala)
10. Stewart Marchman Behavioral Healthcare, Beach House (Daytona Beach)
11. Boys Town Central Florida, Inc. (Oviedo)
12. Youth & Family Alternatives, New Beginnings (Brooksville)
13. Orange County Youth & Family Services (Orlando)
14. Youth & Family Alternatives, RAP House (New Port Richey)
15. Family Resources, SafePlace2B (St. Petersburg)
16. Family Resources, SafePlace2B (Clearwater)
17. Hillsborough County Children’s Services, Haven Poe (Tampa)
18. Youth & Family Alternatives, George W. Harris (Bartow)
19. Crosswinds Youth Services, Crosswinds (Cocoa)
21. Family Resources, SafePlace2B (Bradenton)
22. YMCA Children, Youth and Family Services, Sarasota YMCA (Sarasota)
23. Lutheran Services of Florida, Oasis Youth Shelter (Ft. Myers)
24. Children’s Home Society, Safe Harbor Runaway Shelter (West Palm Beach)
25. Lutheran Services of Florida, Lippman Youth Shelter (Oakland Park)
26. Chrysalis Health, Crescent House, Boys only (Broward)
27. Miami Bridge Youth & Family Services, Central Dade (Miami)
28. Miami Bridge Youth & Family Services, Homestead/South Dade (Miami)
29. Florida Keys Children’s Shelter (Tavernier) *Staff Secure Shelters

Nonresidential
Full Service Agencies