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**Special Needs Advisory Coalition (SNAC) of Broward
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 6, 2022 @ 9:30am – 11:30am
Meeting Held via Zoom**

Chair(s) in Attendance:

Dr. Justin Kohlhagen (JAFCO Children's Ability Center); **Debra Hixon** (School Board of Broward County); **Andrea Knowles** (Broward Legislative Delegation & Broward Days, Inc)

CSC Council Member(s):

Maria Schneider, State Attorney 17th Judicial Circuit

SNAC Members in Attendance:

Advocacy Network on Disabilities (Ire Diaz); **Agency for Persons with Disabilities** (Milroy Senat); **Center for Hearing & Communication** (Olivia Angeli); **Dan Marino Foundation** (Susan Morantes); **Family Care Council** (Marty Norris); **Project 10** (Lisa Friedman-Chavez); **YMCA South Florida** (Shaymonica Jones, Alison Bregman-Rodriguez, Susan Feldman); **Nova-UM CARD** (Shantigra "Shae" Williams); **ELC Broward** (Allison Metsch, Debbie Kay); **University of Miami** (Nancy Torres); **The Journey Institute** (Dr. Harleen Hutchinson); **Children's Diagnostic Treatment Center** (Ellen Schrot); **Act 4 Me** (Floencia Tischler); **Broward County Public Schools** (Stacy Wolfe); **Helping Adults with Autism Perform and Excel** (Larry Rothman); **Broward County Parks & Rec** (Mary Palacios); **Federation of Broward County** (Jennifer Goldfaden); **Family Network on Disabilities** (Lisa Math); **GAPS Legal** (Michelle Kenney)

CSC Staff in Attendance:

Dr. Laura Ganci – Director of Research & Planning

- I. **Welcome & Introductions:** Andrea Knowles welcomed the members at 9:30 am.
- II. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Larry Rothman made a motion to approve meeting minutes, seconded by Shantigra Williams, and passed unanimously.
- III. **University of Miami, Family Navigator Program:** Nancy Torres, Director of Family Navigator Program of the University of Miami Medical Center for Child Development, shared that the program in Broward County connects families living with disabilities and chronic medical needs with different resources available in the community. The Family Navigator Program is free and serves Miami Dade and Broward County families. The program also offers disability training with coaching to community agencies to develop more skills and knowledge.

For more information on the Family Navigator Program, please contact Nancy Torres nlt33@miami.edu.

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- IV. Advancing Equity:** Ire Diaz, Advocacy Network CEO/President, shared a news report regarding a mom who was arrested in Miami Dade County for putting her child in a dog cage. The child was diagnosed with oppositional defiant disorder. It appears the child may have been misdiagnosed. The Disability community must be aware that black and brown children, especially boys, who have autism are often misdiagnosed with oppositional defiant disorder. The child was not receiving the proper treatment or care. Ire shared that practitioners need to be aware of this inequity in diagnosing. One of the concerning things with diagnosing using the DSM-5 is that the inter-rater reliability is very low. The Advocacy Network with Disabilities is working with FIU to create a curriculum to train practitioners in the community and increase awareness of these issues to have more equity in diagnosing. Ire stated that she believes the pipeline to prison for black and brown boys starts with the misdiagnoses of some conditions. She encouraged SNAC members to take some action in the community and focus on the inequities.

Dr. Harleen Hutchinson proposes to advocate for clinicians to receive training in using the DC:05 as the appropriate diagnostic tool for the birth to five population, not the DSM-5 to diagnose young children.

To view the reported news article, click:

<https://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/homestead-woman-locks-son-in-dog-cage-after-child-was-being-aggressive-police/2654890/>

- V. Legislative Priorities:**

Andrea Knowles reported that the legislative session begins on Tuesday, 1/11/2022, and runs for 60 days unless they extend it for a special session. Part of this session will include redistricting, which will affect the leadership of different areas. This redistricting is a result of the Census, which updates population data.

Budget committees are available on the Florida channel; you can watch and provide some input to legislators on these calls to see what may be done.

- VI. Break-Out Connections:** Members enjoyed a relationship building conversation about two things they would like to change in the New Year.
- VII. Special Needs Parent & Systems Assessment Results:** Dr. Laura Ganci, reported the analysis of the Special Needs Follow up assessment is not fully completed but had some preliminary results of the survey. There were 532 completed responses, 89% of the respondents attended Broward County Public Schools and the other 11% attended either a private school, charter school, or were homeschooled. The parents' top reported needs were financial assistance, childcare, and transportation. Marissa will be emailing a one-pager of the results to everyone within the month.

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VIII. Community Meetings Updates:

Ellen Schrot, shared that the CSC Early Identification meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 14, 2022 at 9:30am. The workgroup is looking for system updates for early identification of developmental delays or handicapping conditions.

Mary Palacios, Broward County Parks, reported that services are in-person, but they are still offering virtual options. Refer to the Broward County Park local page for more information.

IX. Community Roundtable:

CSC Youth Summit with a focus on special needs is scheduled for Saturday, March 5, 2022, at the Broward Center for Performing Arts, from 9:15 am – 12:30 pm. The event will have three different presentations including a panel discussion on relationships and dating.

Dr. Harleen Hutchinson discussed the Equity, Diversity, and Belonging workgroup. One of the goals of the workgroup is to focus on inequities across systems as it relates to implicit bias and racism in the early care population to ensure children are receiving services. To get involved, contact Dr. Hutchinson at hhutchinson@thejourneyinstituteinc.com.

Larry Rothman, President of Helping Adults with Autism Perform Excel, shared the agency has five specific work-related trainings for people with autism, including an online supply chain logistics training and certification programs in eight different disciplines. For more information on additional trainings, please email Larry Rothman, l.rothman@haape.org or contact him by phone 732-586-7367. www.haape.org

Debbie Kay, from Early Learning Coalition, shared that ELC has been able to provide additional support to the early learning staff. ELC is paying for the first 45 hours of Child Care training to be eligible to work in the classroom.

Lisa Friedman-Chavez, from Project-10, shared Project-10 had a topical brief about transition legislative updates. Please click to view the document: <https://campaignlp.constantcontact.com/em/1114495419393/79c91062-d8f8-452c-b7ba-2fe5d820fd7a>

Shantigra Williams, from UM – NSU Card, is adding a training this summer for Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity for agencies. She thanked CSC for their partnership. The organization is working closely with agencies and organizations on trainings and they have seen significant progress and had a 207% increase in registrations from black and brown families within a three to four month period.

X. Next Meeting March 3, 2022, at 9:30 am via Zoom.

XI. Adjourn