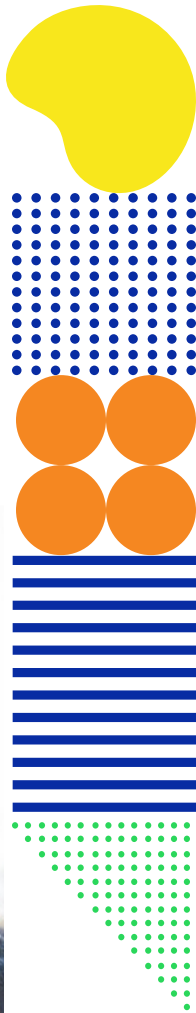


RISING ABOVE



Together
for Children

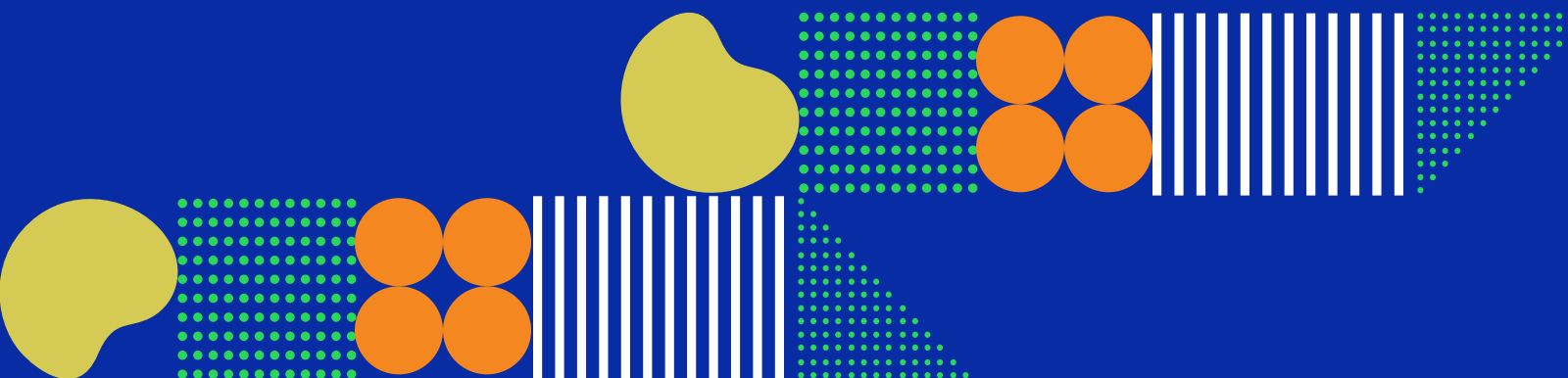


ANNUAL REPORT

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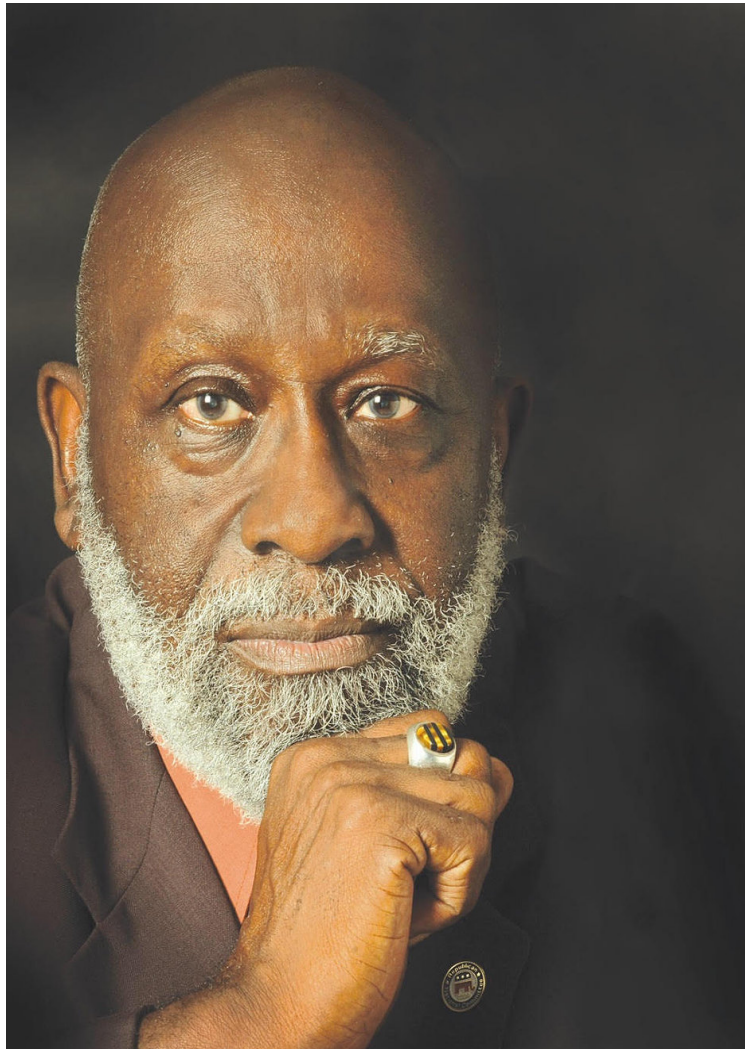
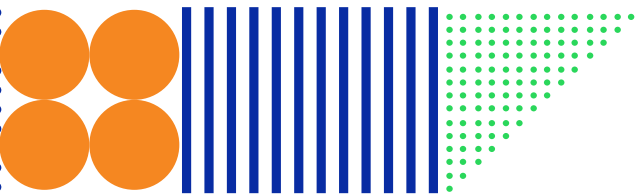
Content

- Words from our Board Chair
- Who We Are
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- Neighborhood Coalitions
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- The Year Ahead



Ultimately, it is about the promise of Together for Children. We have a unique opportunity to inform what should be collectively prioritized and invested in; to determine what makes a difference for our children and our communities; and to work together to achieve it.

T. Willard Fair



Words from our Board Chair

Far too many children in Miami-Dade have had their lives cut short or irreversibly damaged due to violence. Together for Children is keeping its promise to work on a solution focused on preventing incidents through a long-term approach that will measure impact over time to ensure strong results. This collective impact model is designed to eliminate silos across organizations and establish a true network of support for our children and their families.

We are built with and for stakeholders that are working to do good for children. Mutual accountability on behalf of our children is the compass for our partnership. Anyone that is part of Together for Children has a role in the long-term solution and in the accountability of its success.

We recognize and promote the idea that thriving communities are built together. And, together, we approach solutions through a holistic lens. These solutions are framed to be preventative instead of reactive – working to reach and impact families before issues emerge.

Who We Are



Only as one can we break the cycle of youth violence

Together for Children's mission is to strengthen families, empower and protect our community's youth.

In September of 2016, after a rash of tragedies ending in the deaths of children in our communities, county leaders sought to partner with community groups, residents, parents and youth to address the root causes of youth violence. This led to the creation of Together for Children (TFC). After engaging more than 3,000 community stakeholders, six community coalitions representing areas across Miami-Dade County reached a consensus on the approach to address the root causes of youth violence and developed detailed action plans for how it can be achieved.

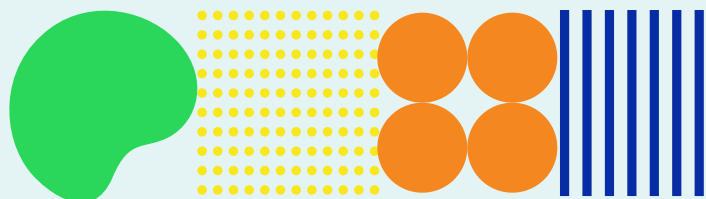
The six neighborhood coalitions have individual governing boards representing areas where youth who are at most risk have been identified and represented on the map.

TFC is a preventative approach to break the cycle of youth violence in Miami-Dade. Together as one, the neighborhood-driven community coalition of governmental, public, private, and not-for profit entities in Miami-Dade work hand-in-hand to:

- Identify youth at highest risk;
- Align services for youth and their families;
- Support neighborhood programs and providers;
- Measure impact and progress;
- Leverage community resources for the benefit of TFC's stakeholders and constituents; and
- Identify and develop relevant best practices.



Executive Summary



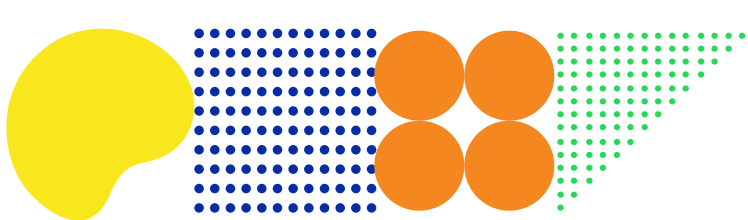
On December 13, 2019, community leaders and groups from across the county joined together to install the Together for Children Board of Trustees and formalize the county-wide, preventative initiative to break the cycle of youth violence in Miami-Dade. The Board of Trustees, made up of neighborhood coalition members and countywide anchor partners, established Rules and Procedures outlining how TFC will collaborate across neighborhood coalitions. The key priorities set out by the board centered around a common agenda, shared measurement systems, aligned action plans, continuous communication and active participation from all members to achieve a common goal.

TFC launched the year with the newly established countywide board to oversee impact throughout Miami-Dade and support the work of the six neighborhood coalitions that conduct the day-to-day efforts to address youth violence through their action plans. There is alignment across all the action plans through three common pillars - **strengthening families; empowering youth; and protecting youth**. These common pillars serve as the focal point for the work at the neighborhood level to address the root causes of youth violence.

Across coalitions, community members and anchor partners collaborated to coordinate services for families in alignment with the action plan pillars including: conducting wellness checks, expanding mental health services, providing both in-person and virtual programming for children and families, leading civic and community engagement activities, campaigning for census awareness and holding countless food and emergency item distributions.

At a countywide level, TFC established four committees to advance the goals of Together for Children. These include the Accountability Committee, Youth Committee, Parent/Caregiver Committee and Legislative Committee. Additionally, key partnerships were established with national organizations to integrate national models within the TFC framework.

2020 was a very different year, one that presented many unexpected challenges and further exposed the inequities and vulnerabilities in our community. It required TFC's members and partners to be nimble and take strategic action to respond to the emerging needs in the community. The strong foundation of partnership and collaboration at both the neighborhood coalition level and the Board of Trustees allowed for a collective response to these new community needs while also remaining focused on the mission of TFC and the common pillars across the action plans. This annual report outlines those collective efforts during a year where powerful collaboration was needed more than ever. TFC looks to further strengthen the connection to Miami-Dade County by collaborating and integrating efforts with the Peace and Prosperity Plan



Countywide Updates



Through the agreed upon governance structure, board leaders were selected - **Board of Trustees Chair, T. Willard Fair; Vice Chair, Alisha Reyes; and Secretary, Valtena Brown.** Additionally, the chairs and vice chairs of each coalition and one representative from each anchor partner make up the membership of the Board of Trustees.

Upon its launch, the Board of Trustees set out key priorities to **align** efforts and processes, **support** coalition members and **measure** impact.



Align

- Priorities
- Action Plans
- Decision Making
- Accountability/Reporting
- Referral Process



Support

- Coalition Collaboration
- Anchor Integration
- Fund Development
- Prioritization
- Capacity Building



Measure

- Outcomes & Impact
- Consensus on Accountability Strategy: Coalition Action Plans & Countywide

To support these key priorities and achieve the goals of Together for Children, four countywide committees were established. Committees are composed of two members from each of the neighborhood coalitions.



Youth Committee

Function as an advisory board to gain insight from youth and explore their role in the action plan.



Parent/Caregiver Committee

Function as an advisory board to gain insight from parents/caregivers and explore their role in the action plan.



Legislative Committee

Develop a collaborative legislative and policy priorities agenda for the legislative platform.



Accountability Committee

Develop agreed upon metrics for success and a data strategy for TFC to measure impact and inform service delivery.

Committee Progress



Despite the pandemic, the TFC committee members recognized that it was essential to move the work forward. Committees formed and pivoted to virtual working sessions. Much was accomplished during the first year to establish membership, build a foundation and identify priorities for each committee.

Youth Committee



The Youth Committee prioritized mental health as their primary focus.



Youth partnered with Informed Families' LISTEN Campaign to promote the film "Listen" to raise awareness of relevant mental health issues and launch courageous conversations in order to create a safer, more connected community.



Through their advocacy efforts, over 400 individuals signed up to watch the film and the youth led a Q&A session with participants and the filmmakers.

Parent/Caregiver Committee



Civic engagement was the key priority identified by the parent/caregiver committee.



Parents and caregivers led a Civics 101 workshop in partnership with Power U focused on ways in which parents and caregivers can be civically engaged, including information about voter registration, the importance of voting and a breakdown of local ballots.

Legislative Committee



Committee members successfully advocated for collaboration with anchor partners related to the school re-opening strategy and flexibility with after school and summer programming to ensure there were options that meet the needs of families as they were navigating new challenges.

Accountability Committee

The Accountability Committee assisted with the architecture of a strategy for assessing community-wide and individual impact and informing holistic decision-making protocols, in partnership with the Boston Consulting Group and the University of Miami.

Setting the Foundation

Tools & Buy-in

Defining Success Collectively

Countywide Accountability Plan

Data Sharing & Analysis

Implementation

Mission Driven Impact

Communities are safer; children and families are thriving

Response to Emerging Community Needs

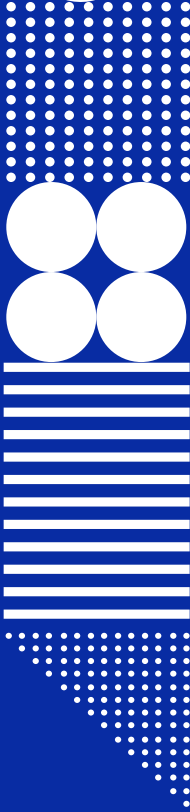
The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the disturbing social and economic disparities in urban and low-income communities. Building upon its foundation of collaboration and service coordination, Together for Children quickly responded to the unprecedented challenges that arose as a result of the pandemic, recognizing that our most vulnerable communities would be impacted the most.

TFC distributed a Needs & Resources Assessment Tool across neighborhood coalition members to identify the most immediate needs in the community, the services available, urgent concerns, and ways in which TFC can support during this time.

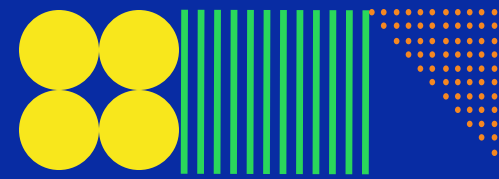
The most immediate needs identified were: food, supplies, keeping safe, guidance on the transition to virtual learning, access to accurate information, technology for school work, unemployment benefits, COVID-19 testing, referrals to services and mental health support. The TFC Board of Trustees took immediate action and approved the establishment of the COVID-19 Working Group to work with the neighborhood coalitions and anchor partners to address the immediate needs in the community that directly align with the Strengthening Families pillar of the neighborhood action plans. TFC neighborhood coalition members rallied together and leveraged resources to respond to the identified needs.

Additionally, on June 6, 2020, in response to George Floyd's horrific murder, all six neighborhood coalitions united in the belief that change must be led in partnership with system leaders, because systems must evolve and change to serve all. Our neighborhoods' children are predominantly black and brown and are living in a world that makes it systemically difficult to thrive. To address the root causes of youth violence in our communities, racism must be eradicated. A statement of action was released with a clear plan to tangibly and overtly integrate anti-racism strategies within TFC. The strategies directly align with the Protecting Youth and Empowering Youth pillars and seek to: engage youth and adults through civic education and activation, inform anti-racism policies and processes, and coordinate mental health supports for youth and families.

The TFC Board of Trustees reviewed priorities as they were brought forward by the neighborhood coalitions. Two additional key priorities that emerged were related to Census 2020 awareness and voter engagement. The board agreed to support Census 2020 campaigns at a countywide level with community partners. The board also supported the Vote the Future campaign - a youth-led campaign to use social media as a platform to encourage voting. All youth who participated received community services hours.



Neighborhood Coalitions



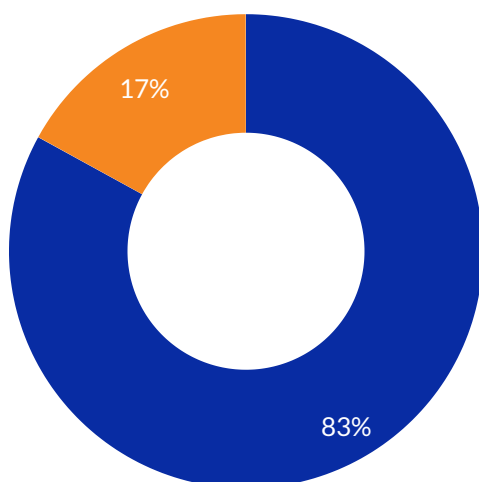
Six Coalitions, One Mission

The six neighborhood coalitions have each developed distinctive neighborhood action plans to address the individual needs of their community. A key component of all Together for Children's neighborhood action plans is a referral network that uses shared data and resources to identify children in crisis and refer them for intervention and/or prevention services that foster positive outcomes for families and ultimately help reduce violence among youth. This established infrastructure proved critical in 2020 which presented new and unforeseen needs across our communities.

Engagement at the neighborhood coalition level is essential for the success of Together for Children. There are over **475 members** across all six coalitions. Through this engagement, much was accomplished in all three pillars of the action plans, with Strengthening Families taking priority in response to the emerging needs in the community. Even with the challenges presented, members remained engaged and new members joined the coalitions. Coalitions quickly pivoted to virtual work and continued to serve their communities.

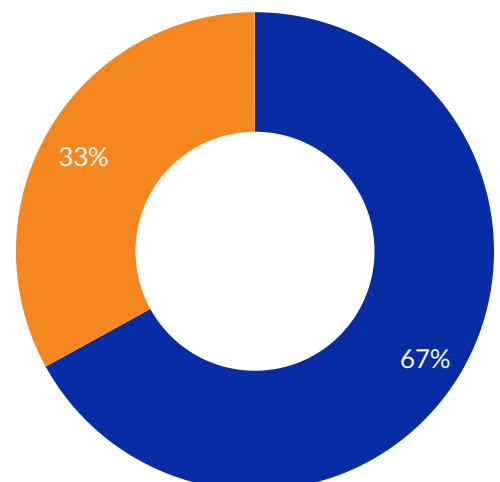
Members adjusted to virtual work to collaborate across communities on common and wide-reaching initiatives.

Collaboration Within Coalition



More than 80% of members collaborated within their coalitions & 2/3 collaborated with members from other coalitions to support children and families.

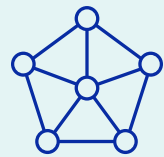
Collaboration With Other Coalitions



Across the common pillars of the action plans - **Strengthening Families, Empowering Youth and Protecting Youth**, coalition members worked collectively to provide coordinated services for children and families and contributed to revised action plans in response to the emerging needs in each of the neighborhoods.

Strengthening Families

Across neighborhood coalitions, members transitioned to virtual services and continued their commitment to supporting families through their action plans. Collectively, they:



Pooled resources together to identify families in need of support and provided the wrap-around services available through the coalition partners.



Anchor partners and community organizations consistently and systematically worked together to support children and families.



Coalition members served as ambassadors for critical information being shared across the community to keep families informed of important information and the resources available to them.



Collaborated to coordinate wellness checks among service providers to address potential gaps in services.

Neighborhood Coalition Highlights

Homestead/ Florida City/Naranja

500 families were served weekly with PPE, shoes and essential items. Families were supported throughout and linked to services. One family had a child out of school for three months and the partners connected the parent with the school and the child returned to learning.

Perrine/Goulds/ Richmond Heights

Partnered with the police department to connect with families that were hard to reach and connected them to services. Held a virtual health fair for the community where organizations provided information and resources linked to COVID-19 safety, mental health services and overall well being.

Overtown

Hired two Community Builders to strengthen the family connections to community resources. Held candidate forums during election season to advocate for community needs.

Liberty City/ Brownsville

Coordinated Thanksgiving and Toy Drives to ensure families had what they needed to celebrate the holidays. Held a Racial Equity & Inclusion Forum for residents, community organizations and anchor partners in the wake of George Floyd’s murder focused on understanding the historical perspective of racial inequity in order to move forward as a community.

Northeast Corridor

Community organizations and anchor partners collaborated to launch “Let’s Talk Tech” - a program focused on equipping parents/caregivers with devices and digital literacy skills so that they can support their children through remote learning.

Miami Gardens/ Opa-Locka

Collaborated with #305Live@5 Community Roundtable Table to strengthen community and engage residents through conversations and educational experiences. The partners organized, presented, and promoted the sessions to bring pertinent information to the community.

Empowering Youth

All six neighborhood coalitions continued to provide virtual and/or in-person programming for youth. New activities were incorporated into the action plans to support children with the transition to remote learning. Additionally, the TFC Statement of Action focused on engaging youth and adults through civic education and activation, coordinating conversations with youth and police departments, and expanding mental health services. Across all coalitions, the following activities took place:



Virtual Tutoring
Services



Summer
Youth Internships



Civic Education &
Engagement Programs

Neighborhood Coalition Highlights

Homestead/ Florida City/ Naranja

Met with school leaders about how to best support them and their students, leading to strong collaboration and strengthened communication lines between support agencies and local schools.

Overtown

Supported approximately 500 students academically through online learning, home visits, virtual college tours, and outreach initiatives such as field trips. Hired 150 youth to serve as social media activists for the Vote the Future campaign.

Northeast Corridor

Continued to provide high-quality programming for youth, both virtual and in person. Participated in training with Ron Clark Academy focused on best practices and strategies for engaging youth in virtual platforms.

Perrine/ Goulds/ Richmond Heights

Connected with youth who are hard to reach through direct outreach from coalition partners and the police department - assessed the support needed for successful completion of their distance learning.

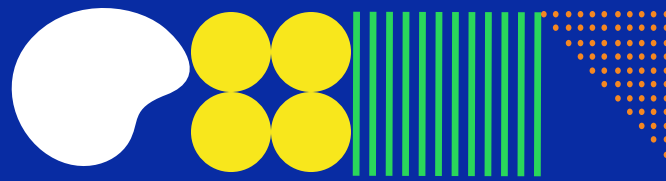
Liberty City/Brownsville

Held a Youth Summit prior to the start of the school year providing a forum for youth to express their thoughts about returning to school. Anchor partners were present to listen to the feedback and share resources available to youth to support the transition back to in-person learning.

Miami Gardens/Opa-Locka

Launched “One Day One Hour” - a platform for volunteer retired teachers to assist youth with distance learning activities. Youth participated in the Talk it Through with Police Series - 8 sessions focused on building relationships and breaking down barriers between youth and law enforcement.

Protecting Youth



During this challenging year, neighborhood coalitions rallied together to provide critical items and emergency services throughout their communities. Through the strong collaboration between community organizations and anchor partners, coalitions connected youth and families to the services available at the community and countywide levels, including:



Coordinated weekly distribution events for necessary items such as food, diapers and PPE.



Participated in workshops presented by Miami-Dade County Public Schools regarding mental health resources and expanded mental health services for youth and their families.



Took deliberate steps to identify youth who were hard to reach to ensure they were safe and connect them to resources as needed.

Neighborhood Coalition Highlights

Homestead/ Florida City/ Naranja

Through the TFC network the ability to coordinate services, leverage resources and share information has grown exponentially. A family with a child with special needs was in need of tutoring services and in less than 30 minutes, the family was connected to five community resources via the TFC WhatsApp group.

Perrine/ Goulds/ Richmond Heights

Held two virtual sessions with youth to raise awareness of mental health services and connect them to resources available in the community. The sessions were led by medical professionals and law enforcement officers and focused on recognizing the characteristics of mental health challenges and strategies for navigating difficult moments.

Overtown

Held Professional Development workshops/webinars for community providers and members related to mindfulness, stress reduction, parenting, mental health, COVID, and organization management.

Liberty City/ Brownsville

Adopted a recommended framework and strategies for the action plan utilizing a prevention science model. The model uses data to identify risk and protective factors to inform the action plan and drive activities and action steps.

Northeast Corridor

Held a mental health session for youth focused on supporting youth during difficult times and assisting with the transition to the “new normal”. Provided ongoing mental health services through the referral process in collaboration with anchor partners. Supported M-DCPS with outreach and engagement of disengaged youth.

Miami Gardens/ Opa-Locka

The community pulled together for true collective impact and action. Community organizations and anchor partners reached out to each other to support collaborative initiatives. Trends were identified across the community and concerted efforts were made to address community needs.

Evidence2Success Partnership

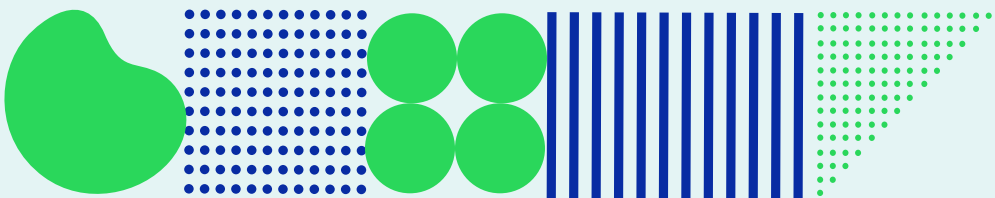


Together for Children has strengthened its partnership with the **Annie E. Casey Foundation** to integrate its Evidence2Success framework within the TFC Liberty City/Brownsville neighborhood coalition. The lessons learned from the collaboration will direct the efforts to scale the partnership to all six TFC neighborhood coalitions and will further inform the countywide accountability committee. The Evidence2Success model includes five phases as follows:

Five Phases Provide a Roadmap

				
1	2	3	4	5
GET STARTED	GET ORGANIZED	DEVELOP COMMUNITY PROFILE	CREATE A PLAN	IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE
Engage city, public system, school, neighborhood and community leaders	Build all partners' capacity to engage in joint decision making	Produce a "big picture" view of child well-being	Select tested, effective programs to advance broad strategy	Implement tested, effective programs and monitor performance
Designate a coordinator	Orient community board	Work to interpret data	Develop short- and long-term action plans	Finalize plans and train providers
Engage community board	Educate and inform community and systems	Develop broad strategy focused on priority outcomes, risk factors and protective factors	Develop financing strategies to support tested, effective programs	Engage the community in recruitment
Conduct Youth Experience Survey	Begin fund mapping	Identify opportunities to shift funding	Share action plan	Celebrate successes
	Expand community board		Identify service providers	Track progress and make changes as needed

The Evidence2Success Working Group was formed as part of the Liberty City/Brownsville Neighborhood Coalition and is represented by both community members and system partners. The group participated in the Race Equity and Inclusion training, has begun reviewing youth data to drive priorities, is conducting focus groups to gather youth input, and is in the initial stages of the fund mapping process.



Referral & Case Management Program

The initial phase of Together for Children was led by anchor partners who collectively developed the TFC referral and family case management process including the **H.E.R.O. program**, the **Middle School Aged Youth Program**, and the expansion of the **One Stop Centers**. These programs have become integral components of all six coalitions' Together for Children action plans and the referral backbone of all coalitions' Protecting Youth committees' work.

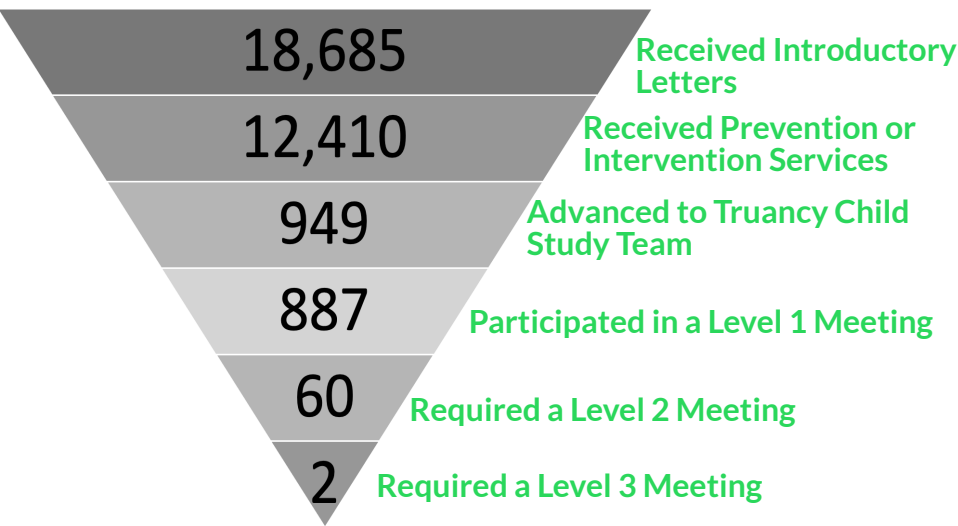
Collaborating on prevention and early intervention efforts are the path to addressing long-term and long-lasting solutions that nurture and develop safe and thriving communities. Focusing on early warning indicators like attendance in the earliest grades allows TFC to collectively work on systems and resources for the families and youth that most need our support; nevertheless, there are youth in our neighborhoods facing the need for immediate and time sensitive interventions. Referral and case management entryways, like the One Stop Centers, build the lines of trust and communication among all partners working on behalf of anchor organizations and our communities.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools continues to implement the referral and family case management system as funded by The Children's Trust and Miami-Dade County. A progress update on the elements of each program is provided below.

H.E.R.O. Truancy Prevention Program

The H.E.R.O. Truancy Prevention Program serves over 18,000 students in 39 schools across all six neighborhood coalitions. During the 2019-20 school year, more than **900** families participated in Truancy Child Study Team (TCST) Meetings. The expectation is that students' attendance will increase after meeting with an attendance interventionist - **76%** of students showed an increase in attendance after their TCST meeting and nearly **90%** of the students earned passing grades in their core content courses.

Key Numbers



Through the H.E.R.O. Program, a single mother with five children who had lost her job as a result of the pandemic, was able to access job placement support and secure employment. The family also received school uniforms, school supplies and basic needs. The students returned to school and have been present with no attendance issues.

Middle School Aged Youth Program

During this challenging year, TFC middle school aged children continued to be a priority as part of Miami-Dade County's Juvenile Services Department's (JSD) comprehensive approach to prevention. JSD provided the following services to this component:

- Training to all School Champions on the benefits of JSD's Prevention Program.
- Contact services to **146** families by a licensed clinician.
- **135** home visits to re-introduce JSD's services to families where telephone contact was not successful.
- **65** neighborhood coalition meetings were attended by JSD's Supervisory Staff.
- Multi-disciplinary staffings were led by JSD licensed clinicians and school personnel to jointly address the needs of the population.
- **9** families entered JSD's prevention program:
 - All families were connected to evidence-based programming, such as: Functional Family Therapy and Community Action Teams.
 - **67%** were at moderate risk to continue being involved in at-risk behaviors.
 - The highest risk areas were in mental health and family needs.

One Stop Centers

Students served at One Stop centers during the 2019-20 school year received a variety of individual and family related academic and affective counseling. There were a total of **2,787** visits with One Stop personnel leading to **5,663** counseling sessions to support a successful transition. Nearly 1,500 students were contacted by a One Stop Specialist, representing 96% of eligible participants, and **84%** were provided an appropriate educational setting. Below is a breakdown of the top services provided and the number of occurrences for each service:



One Stop served a total of 970 unique students referred through the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Recidivism was measured as returning to Miami-Dade Detention School following a previous stay in detention or completion of a commitment program. Segregating data for all DCF involved students, students for whom One Stop services were refused, and inability to contact families resulted in:

10.7%

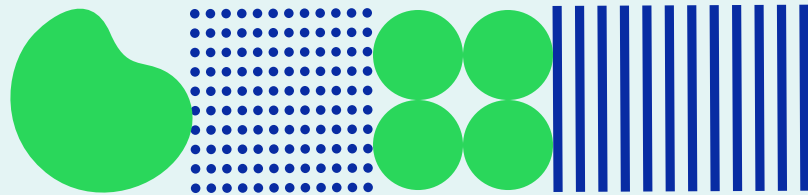
Rate of Recidivism



21%

Decrease from Previous Year

The Year Ahead



As 2021 begins, Together for Children continues to implement its preventative approach to breaking the cycle of youth violence in Miami-Dade County by addressing the root causes through a long-term sustainable strategy in collaboration with Miami-Dade County's Peace and Prosperity Plan. The collective impact approach will be further enhanced through the Align-Support-Measure model as follows:



Align



Align action plans with the already funded referral and family case management process to support the success and sustainability of TFC's mission and vision.



Develop countywide priorities - reflect on the inaugural year of TFC's Board of Trustees and identify collective priorities for the year ahead based on the needs and priorities identified by the neighborhood coalitions.



Support



Increase participation of children and families in the services provided by neighborhood coalitions.



Strengthen engagement of coalition members through a common approach to member onboarding and agreed upon expectations.



Develop a capacity building strategy that meets the individual needs of neighborhood coalitions.



Measure



Identify initial metrics and data sources aligned to the TFC measures of success with neighborhood coalition members and anchor partners.



Develop an approach to data collection, sharing and analysis at both the neighborhood and countywide levels.



Implement the strategy to improve outcome measurements and establish business protocols to ensure that information collected and shared are guided by TFC neighborhood-led priorities rooted in participatory research practices.