



CONTRACT OVERSIGHT DESK REVIEW

Eckerd Community Alternatives – Pinellas/Pasco

QJ511

As required by section 402.7305 F.S., The Department of Children and Families performed a Desk Review for Eckerd Community Alternatives – Pinellas/Pasco

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Executive Summary

Florida Statute 402.7305 requires the Department to conduct an analyses of the performance and compliance of a contracted Community Based Care (CBC) agency by means of on-site monitoring or desk reviews if the external service provider will not be monitored on site during a fiscal year. The Department’s Contract Oversight Unit performed a Desk Review for Eckerd Community Alternatives – Pasco/Pinellas (ECA), Contract QJ511 which focused on key performance indicators specific to the CBC agency as compared to the overall statewide average performance. The categories reviewed included: CBC performance, practice model implementation, child safety after termination of services, financial viability, licensed and group care and feedback from the DCF contract manager.

ECA serves children and families in Pasco & Pinellas counties in circuit six, Suncoast Region. According to the U.S. Census bureau, the annual estimate resident population (from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016) in both counties served by ECA was 1,473,098. See chart below for breakdown by county. The removal rate per 100 children Investigated from October thru December 2016 was 7.1, the fourth highest removal rate in the State and above the statewide average removal rate (5.8) (Source: Child Welfare Key Indicators Monthly Report, May 2017).

Rank	County	Population
6	Pinellas County	960,730
12	Pasco County	512,368

Source: United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016". 2016 Population Estimates Program. Web. March 2017. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

CBC Performance

A review of ECA’s performance shows both strengths and areas where opportunities for improvement exist. In ten of the scorecard measures, ECA performed at or above the established performance standards and in two of the scorecard measures, ECA performed below the established performance standards for FY 16/17 Quarter 3.

ECA's performance consistently (last six quarters) meets scorecard measures in the following areas:

- M02: % of children who are not abused/neglected during in-home services
- M04: % of children under supervision who are seen every 30 days
- M05: % of children exiting to a permanent home within 12 months of entering care
- M06: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months for those in care 12 to 23 months
- M09: % of children in foster care who received a medical service in last 12 months
- M10: % of children in foster care who received a dental service in last 7 months
- M11: % of young adults exiting foster care at age 18 who completed/are enrolled in secondary education, vocational education or adult education
- M12: % of sibling groups where all siblings are placed together

Performance on scorecard measure eight (M08: Placement moves per 1,000 days in foster care) experienced a recent dip in performance for FY 16/17, Q3 but otherwise met the measure in five of the past six quarters.

ECA's performance on scorecard measure one (M01: Rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care) currently meets the established performance standards for FY 16/17, Q3 but has not met the measure in four of the past five quarters thus local level discussions should occur to review the impact and efficacy of current practices.

One performance measure represents a clear opportunity for improvement, as it scored below the established performance standards in all of the past six quarters. It is:

- M07: % of children who do not re-enter care within 12 months of moving to a permanent home

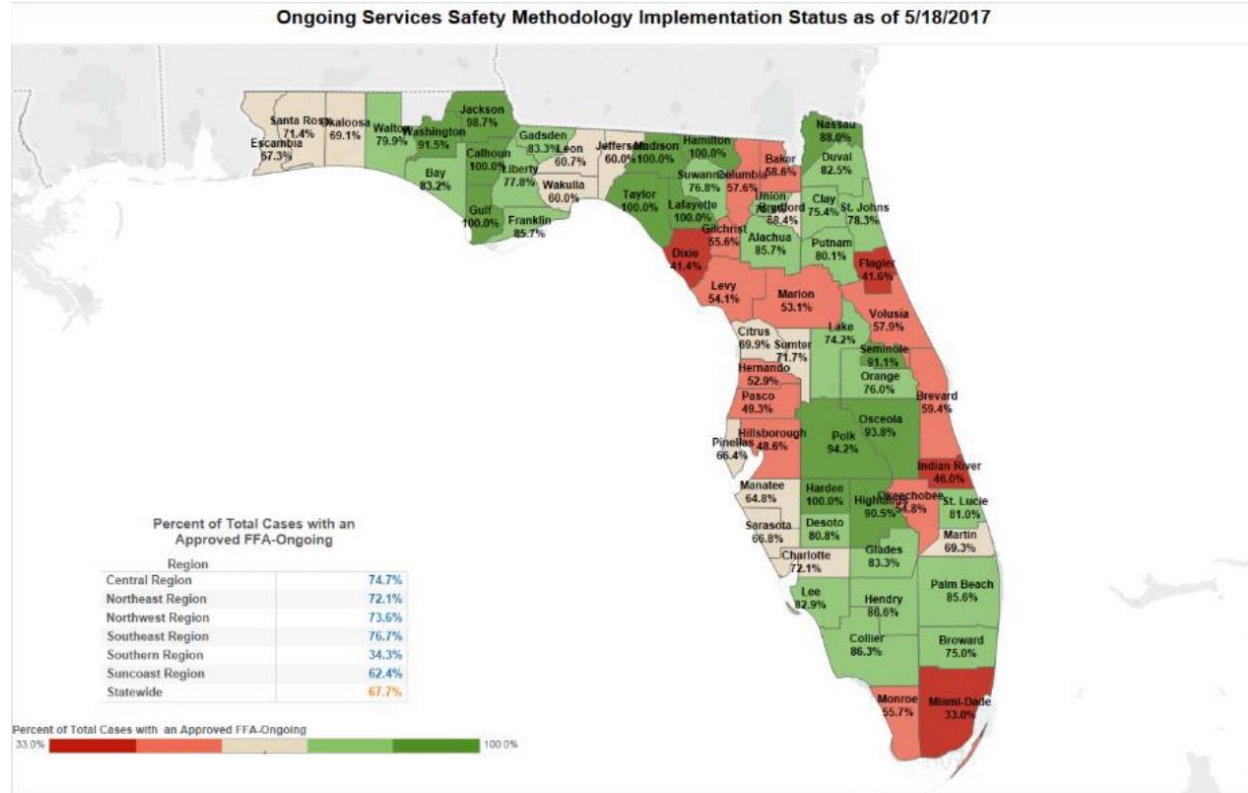
Scorecard Measure	FY 2016 Q2	FY 2016 Q3	FY 2016 Q4	FY 2017 Q1	FY 2017 Q2	FY 2017 Q3
M01: Rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care	7.86	9.27	8.77	9.83	9.97	8.36
M02: % of children who are not abused/neglect during in-home services	95.40	96.40	97.40	97.70	97.80	97.70
M03: % of children who are not neglected or abused after receiving services	97.30	96.30	93.50	95.70	94.10	98.00
M04: % of children under supervision who are seen every 30 days	99.90	99.90	99.90	99.90	99.90	99.90
M05: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months of entering care	49.30	44.80	59.60	56.90	47.60	47.60
M06: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months for those in care 12 to 23 months	59.10	61.30	55.50	52.80	55.20	51.00
M07: % of children who do not re-enter care w/in 12 months of moving to permanent home	88.50	84.60	88.90	83.50	88.40	91.00
M08: Placement moves per 1,000 days in foster care	3.68	3.48	3.66	3.85	4.00	4.13
M09: % of children in foster care who received a medical service in last 12 months	99.50	99.40	99.00	99.00	99.60	99.10
M10: % of children in foster care who received a dental service in last 7 months	97.90	96.60	96.60	97.50	98.20	95.80
M11: % of young adults exiting foster care at age 18 completed/are enrolled in sec. ed., voc. ed, or adult ed.	91.50	93.10	94.20	92.90	95.20	91.80
M12: % of sibling groups where all siblings are placed together	69.50	68.00	68.80	67.30	67.70	65.50

■ Standard or Better
 ■ Below Standard
 ■ Def Zone

Last Updated: 4/30/2017

Practice Model Implementation

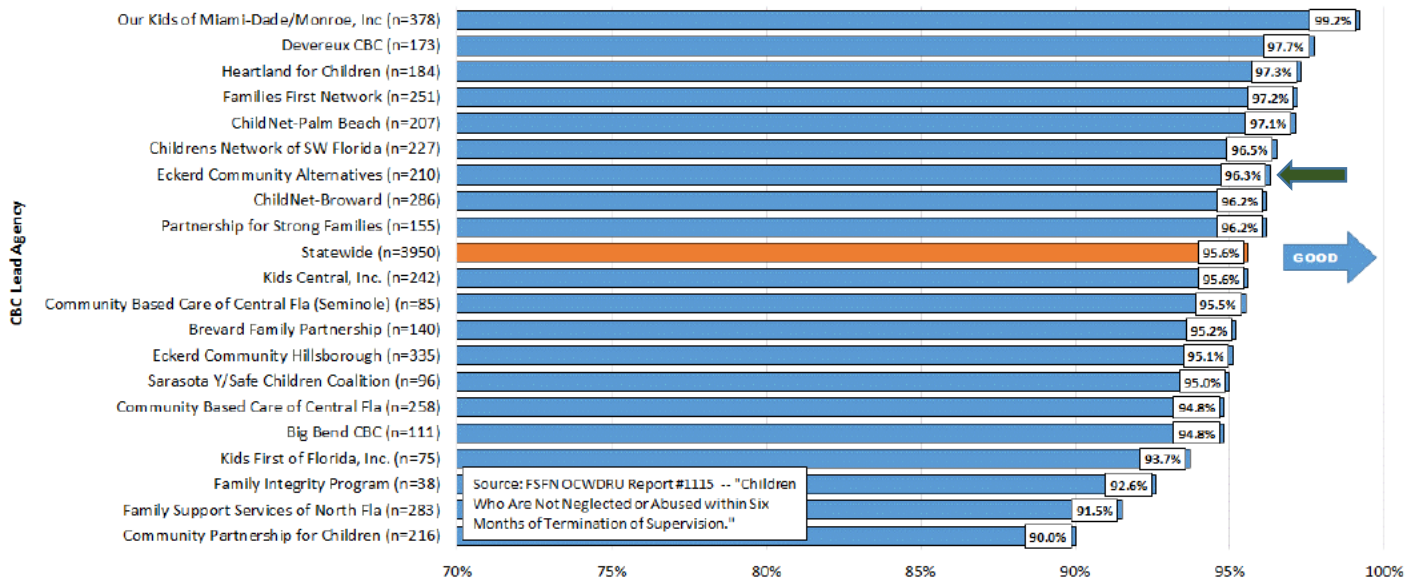
ECA has made minimal progress toward implementation of the Practice Model as shown in the chart below. As of 5/18/17, ECA's status for implementation of the practice model was 49.3% (Pasco) and 66.4% (Pinellas), which is below the statewide average (67.7%), and represents the total percent of active cases with an approved Family Functioning Assessment Ongoing (FFA-O). This demonstrates an area for improvement for ECA to fully implement the Practice Model into their practice. (Source: Child Welfare Key Indicators Monthly Report, May 2017)



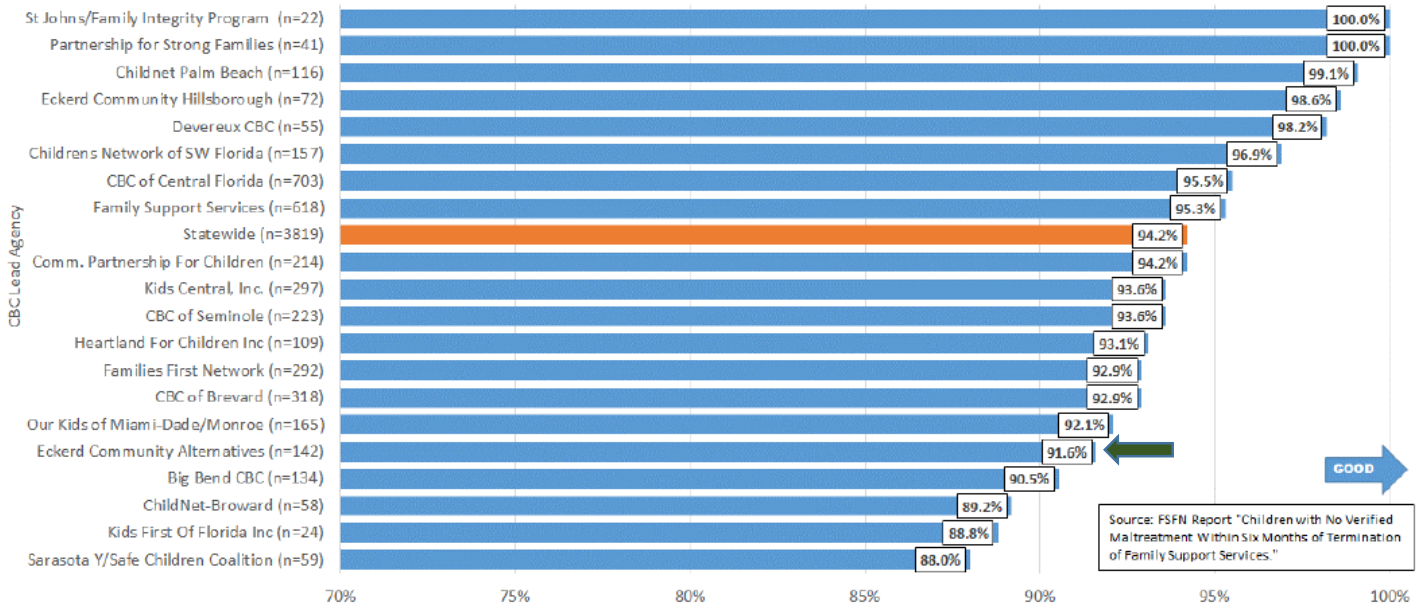
Child Safety After Termination of Services

Ensuring children are safe and protected following case management & family support services service intervention is a strong indicator of overall system of care performance. For this reason, post service termination re-maltreatment episodes are measured to determine the percentage of children in case management and family support services who are not re-abused or maltreated within six months of the termination of services. For the most recent quarter (services terminated between April – June 2016), ECA (96.3%) was above the statewide average (95.6%) for cases with no maltreatment within six months of case management services. ECA (91.6%) was lower than the statewide average (94.2%) for family support services during the same time period. See the charts below. (Source: Child Welfare Key Indicators Monthly Report, May 2017) This data represents an opportunity for ECA to review the quality and effectiveness of family support services.

Percent of Children Terminated from Case Managed Services in Quarter Who Were Not Maltreated within Six Months, for Children with Services Terminated April-June 2016



Percent of Children Terminated from Family Support Services in Quarter Who Were Not Maltreated within Six Months, for Children with Services Terminated April-June 2016



Financial Viability Report Analysis

The Office of CBC/ME Financial Accountability performed financial monitoring procedures based on the DCF 2016-17 CBC-ME Financial Monitoring Tool for Desk Reviews of ECA and found three areas of noncompliance. The desk review period was from July 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016. The findings of non-compliance were:

Non-compliance with federal/state regulatory requirements –

1. ECA made a payment to an incorrect recipient for licensed out-of-home care. ECA recouped the funds from the incorrectly paid recipient and paid the correct recipient.
2. ECA recorded payments to a young adult in FSFN with payment service end dates after the client’s 21st birthday. ECA reports that FSFN was corrected with the appropriate service end dates.

3. Payments recorded in FSFN have overlapping service dates. ECA reports that FSFN was corrected to reflect correct payment for the applicable clients.

Licensed & Group Care Placement

As of May 31, 2017, 685 children were placed in licensed care which represents 33.2% of all children on out of home care in Pasco & Pinellas counties. The current statewide average of children placed in licensed care versus other placement settings is lower at 29.54%. As of the same date, there were 164 children placed in group care, representing 7.95% of all ECA placements. The current statewide average of children placed in group care versus other placement settings is higher at 8.91%. This data represents an opportunity for ECA to review practices related to licensed care placements to ensure all reasonable efforts are being made to utilize least restrictive placements.

Eckerd Community Alternatives – Pasco Pinellas		
Licensed & Group Care Placements	CBC	Statewide
Number of Children in Licensed Care	685	7,183
% of Children in Licensed Care	33.2%	29.54%
Number of Children in Group Care	164	2,166
% of Children in Group Care	7.95%	8.91%

Source: Department of Children & Families - Children in Out of Home Care by Lead Agency Report (updated 6/11/17)

DCF Contract Manager Feedback

The information contained in this section was obtained from Suncoast Region leadership.

Foster Home Recruitment and Retention

Responses indicated several goals toward improving foster home recruitment, including:

Objective: Offer prospective foster parents the opportunity to have flexibility in attending an Orientation through the Eckerd Kids website.

Impact: Increase the number of families attending Orientation from 153 in first quarter in 16/17 to 185 in the third quarter of 16/17 by making it more accommodating and available online at any time.

1. Record the online Orientation video.
2. Upload video to Eckerd Kids Website and make videos available for online viewing.
3. Develop plan to market Online Orientation through various media sources.
4. On a quarterly basis, collect data to analyze effectiveness of online Orientation in educating more families and expediting the licensing process.

Results:

Q1: 153 families attended in-person Orientations (123 for foster and 30 for adoption).

Q2: 103 families attended in-person Orientations (66 for foster and 37 for adoption).

Q3: 125 families attended in-person Orientations (76 for foster and 49 for adoption).

163 families registered to view the online Orientation

25 families submitted packets expressing an interest in moving.

248 families registered to view the online Orientation November 1-March 31.

In FY 16/17, Eckerd Pinellas/Pasco licensed 107 homes year-to-date. Information is not available to determine if the homes licensed were licensed were from the on-line orientation.

Recruitment FY15/16 – 88 homes (as of 04/30/16)

Recruitment FY 16/17 – 94 (as of 04/30/17)
Percentage Increase/Decrease: 7% Increase

ECA is also committed to retaining current foster home providers and focused on improving communication between case managers and foster home providers.

Objective: Case management staff to gain a better understanding of the importance of professional communication among staff, foster parents, GAL, the court system, non-relatives, relatives, and birth parents. Case managers will role model good communication skills to foster parents and guide them when a situation occurs enabling a better partnership and understanding of each other's roles.

Impact: Foster parents will be surveyed in June 2017 to determine their level of satisfaction and this will be compared to the last satisfaction surveys. Of the 138 foster parents to complete the survey in FY16, 71.7% of the foster parents reported to be satisfied to very satisfied when asked about being respected by case management and 58.7% report receiving help from case management.

Goal for FY17 survey:

80% of foster parents feel satisfied to very satisfied in terms of being respected by case management 70% will report to being satisfied to very satisfied in terms of being helped by case management.

1. Licensing Supervisors will attend team meetings at each of the case management agencies. They will discuss concerns from case managers. The teams will be given the necessary tools that are needed by foster parents to communicate better.
2. Licensing supervisors will be presenting the partnership plan with the team discussing the roles and responsibilities.

Information is not available to evaluate the pre and post-test satisfaction scores.

Retention FY15/16 – 96 homes (as of 04/30/16)

Retention FY 16/17 – 93 (as of 04/30/17)

Percentage Increase/Decrease: 3% Increase

Placement Process

Placement activities are conducted in-house, as well as licensing for traditional homes. Therapeutic homes are recruited and trained by Child Placing Agencies, however ECA conducts licensing reviews and provides oversight for these Child Placing Agencies. Staff is currently stable.

In regards to group home placements, Pinellas/Pasco counties do not have the number of group homes that Hillsborough does, therefore resulting in placements out of circuit. ECA does have a very unique group home, Sail Future. The intensive intervention program is designed specifically for high risk juvenile offenders who would otherwise be placed in juvenile detention centers and residential programs. During their stay, youth live and work aboard a sailboat aptly named "Defy the Odds". While on board they earn their GEDs, engage in daily counseling and vocational training.

Caregiver Support & Retention Efforts

To support relative and non-relative caregivers, ECA utilizes prevention/diversion/flex funds to stabilize and maintain placements. Additionally, Kinship Support Groups are offered monthly at multiple locations in both counties.

Extended Foster Care

To assist and develop extended foster care placements, ECA has an independent living specialist to assist case managers and youth understand IL program requirements and program eligibility. ECA subcontracts independent living services. An EFC case manager is assigned to each youth. In Pinellas/Pasco, a total of 24 young adults in licensed foster care turned 18 between January 1 and March 31, 2017. Of those 24 youth, 23 are currently enrolled in the EFC program. In the month of March 2017, 62 youth were served under the EFC program. In addition, ECAPP partners with Ready for Life to assist youth that are aging out/have aged out of foster care. Ready for Life employs former foster youth, mentor youth in care, has resources to assist youth that are struggling, and advocates for youth.

Conclusion

Based on the limited review of Eckerd Community Alternatives – Pasco/Pinellas, contract QJ511 several strengths and opportunities for improvement were found.

This desk review highlights the CBC's positive performance on some of the Scorecard measures. In the past six quarters, ECA met the established performance target 82% of the time which is above the average statewide cumulative scorecard performance. ECA's status toward practice model implementation, in both counties, is below the statewide average. Case Management services provided to children and families in Pasco & Pinellas counties have yielded rates of re-maltreatment which are lower the statewide average. However, family support services provided to children and families in Pasco & Pinellas counties have yielded re-maltreatment rates which are higher than the statewide average. And, while the percentage of children in group care is lower than the statewide average, ECA has a higher percentage of children in licensed care than the statewide average.

The Department's Contract Oversight Unit recommends the following:

1. Continue to monitor all contract and performance measures and take immediate corrective action by initiating local review and discussion of any measure which falls below the established performance target.
2. Review and discuss current practice related to the following measures and implement immediate actions to monitor and improve performance in these areas.
 - a. Rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care
 - b. Percent of children who do not re-enter care within 12 months of moving to a permanent home
3. Continue efforts to fully implement the practice model in both counties served by ECA.
4. Review and discuss re-maltreatment episodes for children with family support services terminated within six months. Evaluate causality and patterns by identifying referred service providers, length of care and any other common factors that could be addressed & remedied during local level provider contract negotiations.
5. Follow all fiscal and reporting recommendations as outlined in Financial Accountability reports.
6. Review and discuss cases involving children currently placed in licensed care for possible step down to a less restrictive placement option.
7. Continue efforts to recruit and license quality foster homes.