

THE SCARY STATE BUDGET



say
to
YES
KIDS!



Children's Board
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Dreams Worth Growing

In this edition:

- Threats to Kids Services
- No Funds for Healthy Start?
- Early Learning Cuts

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Cover Stories/State News: State Bills Threaten Children's Funding

It's a scary budget year in Florida, from a House bill that would 'zero fund' the state Healthy Start, to cutting VPK funds for Early Learning Coalitions, to bills that would reduce services to the disabled and cut funding to out-of-school time programs, to Senate Bill 1216 which would force children's services councils - including the Children's Board of Hillsborough County - to go to referendum in 2010 and every six years thereafter. S.B. 1216 had passed through three committees as of April 19.



Editorial Questions 2010 Referendums for Children's Services Councils

A Tampa Tribune editorial on April 8 summarized what it portrayed as a sudden threat to children's services councils during the 2010 Florida Legislative Session. Following are key excerpts: In 1988, Hillsborough County residents voted to establish a board with taxing authority that would fund agencies that help children. Voters have never had cause to regret that decision. The **Children's Board of Hillsborough County** helps fund dozens of agencies that meet the needs of about 200,000 children who may be homeless, abused, neglected, disabled, impoverished or emotionally troubled. The board's one-half mill property tax has proved a good investment. It is used to leverage grants from state, federal and private sources. Board officials say in the last five years it has invested \$34 million taxpayer dollars that brought \$201 million into the community. That's an additional \$5 for every \$1 the board spends.

But this valuable enterprise may be dismantled by Tallahassee power games. Sen. Joe Negron, a freshman senator from Stuart, is pushing legislation that would require the state's eight children's services councils with taxing power to seek voter approval every six years. Even worse, he demands the boards go before voters this year, giving them little time to raise the private dollars necessary for a campaign. A few facts: Each council's taxing authority has been approved in a referendum. Contrary to Negron's argument that the councils represent "taxation without representation," the 10-member boards include elected officials.

Lawmakers should listen to Tom Hernandez, a TECO vice president, who served eight years on the Hillsborough board after being appointed by former Gov. Jeb Bush. He says the structure provides rigorous oversight. Each board's spending is audited annually....Negron's bill should be rejected. See the full story online at: <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2010/apr/07/na-bill-threatens-childrens-boards/news-opinion-editorials/>

(Pictured at right Tom Hernandez, TECO Vice President, addresses the Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners before the board voted 5-1 to oppose S.B. 1216.) See the video of the BOCC meeting online, listed under "Talking Points," at http://www.childrensboard.org/legislative_news_issues.aspx



Hillsborough Youth Collaborative Supports Children's Board on You Tube, Participates in Children's Week in State Capitol

The Hillsborough Youth Collaborative, a program of Community Tampa Bay, supported the **Children's Board** on You Tube recently and also actively participated in Children's Week in Tallahassee. Said Hillsborough Youth Collaborative (a Children's Board-funded program) member Stephanie Coates, 19. "Who better to give a voice to youth than themselves? See the story at <http://www.tallahassee.com/article/20100412/NEWS01/4120319/Advocates-converge-for-Children-s-Week>

See the link to the video on You Tube at <http://www.youtube.com/user/MochiMC#p/a/u/0/QclpomPssP8>

Funding for Healthy Start Coalitions Eliminated in House Budget

The Florida House budget eliminates all funding for the Healthy Start coalitions, which have reduced Florida's infant mortality rate by 20 percent. House leaders say they'll save \$4 million by shifting the funds for the state's 31 Healthy Start coalitions to the county health departments. But critics say no one else can or will step up to Healthy Start's role.

"What I see with Healthy Start is they are really attacking a problem," said Sen. Evelyn Lynn, R-Ormond Beach. "There's no way the Department of Health could do that job - not to the extent and the success that Healthy Start is doing it."

See more online at: <http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/wfsu/news.newsmain/article/0/0/1631914/State.News/Healthy.Start.Eliminated.in.House.Budget>



Early Learning Coalitions in Line to get VPK Cuts

Although direct state funding for school readiness programs remains the same in the State House and Senate, funding for the state's Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) program could be cut, which could have a negative impact on readiness programs of Florida's Early Learning Coalitions. State ELC CEO Chris Dugan said \$255 million in budget cuts is unsettling.

See more online at: <http://www.tallahassee.com/article/20100405/BREAKINGNEWS/100404003/State-House-and-Senate-budget-proposals-drop-cuts-to-school-readiness> mmodiEd

Newspaper: State Legislative Session is in a Budget Mire That Threatens an On-time Adjournment

Negotiations on a state budget suddenly collapsed Saturday as lawmakers called off planned public talks, citing a disagreement over the budget's bottom line and raising concerns over whether the 60-day session can end on time.

The House and Senate are about \$880 million apart when it comes to using Medicaid money, and are about \$500 million apart over transportation spending.

Saturday's cancellation makes an on-time adjournment of the session April 30 less likely, and that would result in an election-year embarrassment for Republicans who run the Legislature. They could face criticism for failing to produce an on-time balanced budget despite billions in federal economic stimulus money from the Obama administration.

"I think they are pretty far apart over there and I would implore the House and Senate to get it together," Gov. Charlie Crist said in a campaign appearance Saturday afternoon in Jacksonville.

Sen. Mike Fasano, R-New Port Richey, said Senate President Jeff Atwater called him Saturday morning to tell him a planned introductory meeting of budget conferees was off.

"I don't have specifics and the president wasn't specific, either," Fasano said.

At one point, it looked like a sure thing that hundreds of millions more in Medicaid money would flow from Democrats in Congress, and Gov. Charlie Crist plugged the money into his proposed budget.

The Senate provisionally plugged in the money but the House didn't and won't.

So far, it looks like the House was right because there's not much movement on Capitol Hill to spend more money because Republicans up there are balking at more social services spending.

Atwater said Friday that he was ready to go to the House position and "make more reductions," but said he didn't think it was necessary yet. House Speaker Larry Cretul said earlier in the week that he wanted the Senate to give him a list of specific programs that would face cuts if the new Medicaid money never arrived. Apparently, he never got the list or he didn't like what he saw.

Read the complete story online at <http://www.tampabay.com/news/article1088311.ece>

'Achieve the Dream' Successes

Single Female Deputy Adopts Daughters of Terminally Ill Immigrant Mother



It was a fairy tale story in Tampa Judge Tracy Sheehan's courtroom. Lorrie Brown, a sheriff's deputy, had taken in, at her own expense, two foster children from Jamaica whose birth mom is terminally ill from cancer. Now they were being formally adopted before family, friends, and media in an emotional ceremony.

See more online at: <http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/a-deputy-two-foster-children-and-suddenly-a-family/1086311>, <http://www.myfoxtampabay.com/dpp/news/local/hillsborough/408-difficult-childhoods-get-joyful-new-start>, and <http://www.wtsp.com/news/topstories/story.aspx?storyid=129390&catid=250>

Fundraisers Contribute Toward Bettering Children's Lives

It's spring and fundraisers to help benefit children are in full swing. Among the events in Hillsborough County recently:

Friends of Joshua House Foundation: The Joshua House Foundation's Circle of Friends fundraiser netted \$54,000 for Joshua House programs to help neglected and abused children who are removed from their homes.

Pediatric Cancer Center Foundation: The Pediatric Cancer Foundation's annual fashion show including 28 girls who are cancer survivors raised about \$350,000 for the battle against pediatric cancer.

Make-A-Wish Foundation: The Make-A-Wish Foundation's inaugural Wishmaker Ball for children with serious medical conditions raised more than \$53,000 which is expected to fund about seven wishes.

Boys and Girls Scouts Luncheon: The Gulf Ridge Council Boys Scouts of America luncheon raised \$470,000 and the Girls Scouts of West Central Florida raised \$70,000, each in March.

Junior Woman's Club: The Junior Woman's Club raised \$47,000 Camp Hopetake and other philanthropies of the club.

Former Foster Child Gives Back, Will be Featured Speaker at Child Abuse Awareness Luncheon

Carissa Alvarnarz was abandoned as an infant and was a resident of Joshua House. She now helps children in A Kid's Place shelter, and will be the featured speaker at the April 23 Child Abuse Awareness luncheon.

See more online at: <http://www.tampabay.com/features/humaninterest/st-james-united-methodist-church-has-friendzone-for-special-needs-children/1080580>

Photo: Carissa Alvarnarz with Dottie Berger, founder of Joshua House and A Kid's Place.)



Former Buc, Brandon Foundation Help Single Moms

Former Tampa Bay Buccaneer Shelton Quarles brought his best game, a team of recruits and his Impact charity, to tackle two single mother's houses in dire need of repair. The Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce Foundation helped collect more than \$80,000 worth of products and services for the two families.

See more online at: <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2010/mar/22/220033/na-home-makeover-floors-owner/>

Local News

In Memorium: Marion Rodgers, Champion for Kids

Marion Rodgers was a champion for children. She also was a founder of the **Children's Board**. She has passed but her passion lives on. Columnist Steve Otto regarded her as "simply the best." *She's pictured, far right, with Children's Board CEO Luanne Panacek and Colleen Bevis, another founder (center).*

See more online at: <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2010/apr/11/na-marion-rodgers---simply-the-best/>



CBHC Radio Show Features Child Abuse Prevention

On CBHC Radio, the Internet radio station of the **Children's Board**:

From April 15-22: Dr. Carol Lilly of the University of South Florida child development section of the department of pediatrics in the College of Medicine discusses child abuse awareness prevention during a "Safe and Sound" workshop sponsored by the Early Childhood Council, a program funded by the **Children's Board**. CBHC Radio is a 24/7 Internet radio station. Public Radio. See the website and launch "player" to hear CBHC Radio programming .

Hear the show online at: http://www.childrensboard.org/cbhc_radio.aspx

Hillsborough Children's Services Expands Center

The Hillsborough County Children's Services Lake Magdalene campus for children with emotional and behavioral had a ribbon cutting on April 8 to dedicate three new bungalow-style cottages, multipurpose building and dining center. Fifty children live on campus and 85 are bused in for various programs. *Mario Green is pictured reading from "wall of memories" during a campus tour.*

See more online at: <http://www.tampabay.com/news/education/hillsborough-childrens-services-opens-expanded-center-in-carrollwood/1087365>



Children's Board Innovative Business Plan Competition Briefing Will Be May 12

The **Children's Board** invites interested agencies to participate in the 2010 Innovative Business Plan Competition. There will be a briefing session at the Children's Board at 9 a.m. on May 12. Click on the notice below to access the full announcement located on the **Children's Board** website. Any questions please contact Irene Hill at ihill@childrensboard.org or (813) 204-1758.

For more information see: http://www.childrensboard.org/business_plan_competition.aspx



Free Clinic is Answer to Prayers

A free health clinic provides hope for people in need. For 38 years, the Judeo-Christian Health Clinic has served the working poor who fall through the cracks on health coverage. *(Pictured, left: patients wait to see a specialist at the Judeo-Christian free health clinic in Tampa.)*

See the complete story online at: <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2010/apr/08/free-health-clinic-provides-hope-people-need/news-metro/>

Neighborhood and FSRC News

Network of East Hillsborough Neighborhoods Issues RFPs

The Network of East Hillsborough Neighborhoods Is Offering Funding For Out-Of-School Time Programs Designed To Help Meet The Needs Of Children And Youth In East County.

The Network of East Hillsborough Neighborhoods, funded by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County, has issued a request for proposals for new or existing out-of-school time programs for children and youth in East County during the summer of 2010 and for programs that will run through September 30, 2011.

There are two funding periods. No funding limits have been established for this request.

OPTION 1 (SUMMER ONLY)

June 21, 2010 through August 14, 2010

OPTION 2

June 21, 2010 through September 30, 2011

Programs awarded funds under this request must be well-rounded and accessible to families in their own neighborhoods. They will offer a combination of activities that target literacy, math, study skills, life skills, health education, and sponsor educational field trips.

To clarify expectations and requirements, an application workshop will be held at The Network located at 639 East Alexander Street in Plant City on Tuesday, April 27th at 10:00 AM and repeated at 6:00 PM. Attendance is strongly encouraged. Please register for the workshop by Thursday, April 22nd at grants@thenetworkehn.org or call (813)752-8700.

National News

ABC News: Suburban American Teens Getting Hooked on Cheap, Strong Heroin

Suburban American teens are getting addicted, overdosing and dying. The explosion of heroin in suburban America isn't by accident. Rather, it is the plan of drug lords from Mexico and Columbia, who strategically market the drug to middle America with new, sophisticated techniques.

Packets of heroin are now stamped with popular brand names like Chevrolet or Prada, or marketed using blockbuster movies aimed at young people, like the Twilight series. "Those drug traffickers were marketing that Heroin directly towards teenagers," says John Gilbride of the DEA in New York.

Dealers even give it away for free in the suburbs at first. Once the kids are hooked, they sell it to them, dirt cheap. In fact, kids can buy a small bag of heroin for as little as \$5. It's cheaper than movie tickets or a six pack of beer. And this stuff is more potent than any pill. "I was paying \$60 a pill for oxycontin," said one girl. "Heroin was a lot cheaper and the effects were a lot stronger." New York affiliate WABC, spoke to former heroin users at a rehab center. "It's euphoric," said one patient. "It's unexplainable."

They start by snorting it. "Whenever you're having a bad day it makes you feel better," said another. "If bad things were to happen to you that would hurt you...you don't really care about it." "You'll never get that same rush you got the first time you did it. That really warm sensation," said another patient. "It's unexplainable...you keep chasing it." That chase is what leads many to start injecting the drug. "Jake" and "Katie," are two young users with similar stories. "[I'm] definitely from the suburbs, pool in my backyard," says Katie, "A nice big house, lots of brothers and sisters, big family, you know went to a good school." See the full story online at <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/heroin-suburbs-rise/story?id=10230269>