



The Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County

2008 Annual Report to the Community

The Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County is an independent taxing district whose mission is to improve the quality of life for all children in St. Lucie County. The Council was established by a public referendum in 1990 on the belief that by focusing on prevention and early intervention strategies, we can minimize the risks for our youth. Over the last 18 years, our local Council has worked to build and strengthen children's programs in the community, and enhance the lives of our children and families.

Connecting children and their families to the right support programs has proven those children are:

- more likely to do better at home and at school
- less likely to engage in risky behaviors
- better prepared to transition into adulthood

These goals continue to remain the focus of the Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County, and we remain dedicated to finding new programs that will reduce these risks for families who live in our community. For more information on any of the programs that Children's Services Council funds, please visit our website at www.cscslc.org.

From Kathryn Basile, Executive Director



On behalf of the Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County, it is my pleasure to present to the community our 2008 Annual Report.

Since its inception in 1990, the Children's Services Council has been an incredible resource to the children and families in our community. The Children's Services Council continues to evolve from primarily being a funder of children's programs, to providing a variety of resources to the local community, as well as a strong advocacy voice.

I am extremely proud of the work of our Council and Staff, as we are currently funding over 60 programs, and serving over 25,000 children and their families. While the public often hears only negative reports about youth in St. Lucie County, we frequently learn of the successes attained by participants in our programs. We know these programs are helping us achieve our goal of improving the quality of life for our children, one child at a time.

From Kathryn Hensley, Chair



These are interesting times in which we live. We, as a State, are in a fiscal crisis.

The good news is that the apparent lack of priorities at the state level, does not translate to a lack of priorities in St. Lucie County. Here in St. Lucie County, we focus on making the lives of children and families better with each passing year. The Children's Services Council members and staff are dedicated to the future and devoted to helping each child reach their full potential. Difficult decisions must be made, but all decisions are centered on what is best for our children and their families. We have had a wonderful year, full of great new programs and exciting events and we expect this path to continue into the future. Times may be tough, but the future is bright.

Children's Services Council Board Members

Ten local community representatives govern the Children's Services Council. Five seats are mandated by Florida statute and five seats are appointed by the Governor. The ten member Council provides the direction for the Children's Services Council to achieve its mission: "to improve the quality of life for all children in St. Lucie County."

- Kathryn Hensley – Chair – School Board Member
- H.L. "Vern" Melvin – Vice-Chair – Circuit 19 Administrator of Department of Children & Families
- Garry Wilson – Secretary – Governor Appointed
- Pat Alley – Governor Appointed
- Cynthia Angelos – Governor Appointed
- Burton Conner – Circuit Court Judge
- Dennis Corrick – Governor Appointed
- Michael Lannon – School District Superintendent
- Paula Lewis – County Commissioner
- Queen Townsend – Governor Appointed



Funding Strategies

Throughout its history, the Children’s Services Council (CSC) has been investing in children’s programs while creating a network of prevention and early intervention programs and services available to the community. Programs receive funding based on their ability to make an impact on the lives of the children they serve. Each funded program is held accountable for achieving positive change in the community as well as proper expenditure of taxpayer dollars. The CSC carefully examines the needs of our community, and then selects programs to address those identified needs.

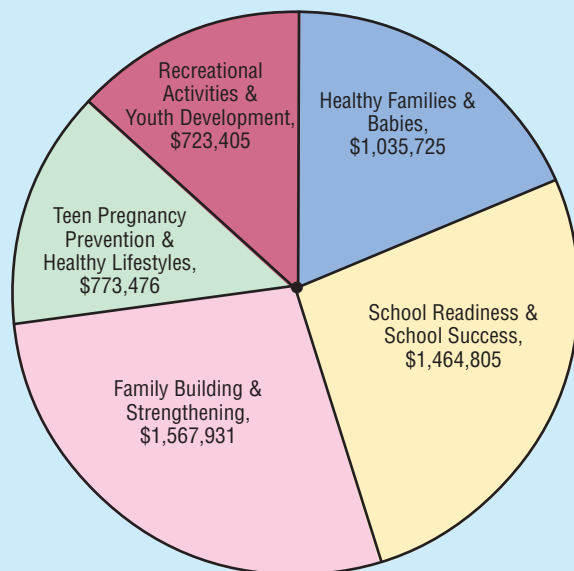
The funding priorities of the Children’s Services Council of St. Lucie County include programs that address the following goals:

- Promoting Healthy Families and Babies - CSC funds eight programs that ensure the health of newborns and their proper development.
- Promoting School Readiness and School Success – CSC funds 14 programs that ensure children are prepared to learn at school and develop positive assets so they may achieve their greatest potential.
- Promoting Family Building and Strengthening –CSC funds 22 programs that strive to provide opportunities for the family to become and maintain a stronger unit that builds resiliency and sets positive goals for its children.
- Promoting Healthy Lifestyles and Teen Pregnancy Prevention – CSC funds five programs that promote positive decision-making amongst our youth to ensure a healthy lifestyle and prevent teen pregnancy.
- Promoting Recreational Activities and Youth Development – CSC funds 12 programs that provide positive activities and promote self worth and empowerment to children and youth.

INCOME AND EXPENSES		
	Actual FY 06/07	Budgeted FY 07/08
Income		
Ad Valorem Taxes	9,203,252	9,421,817
Interest Income	374,529	225,000
Third Party Reimbursements	245,498	350
Other (Income from Reserve)	254,021	(3,882)
TOTAL INCOME	10,077,300	9,643,285
Expenses		
Children’s Programs	5,728,600	7,946,339
Administration	942,869	1,302,837
Collection Expenses	169,720	310,859
Professional Consulting	96,469	83,250
Capital Acquisitions	3,139,642	–
TOTAL EXPENSES	10,077,300	9,643,285

Program Funding by Category

The Children’s Services Council funds programs in the following categories:





Parent Trainings

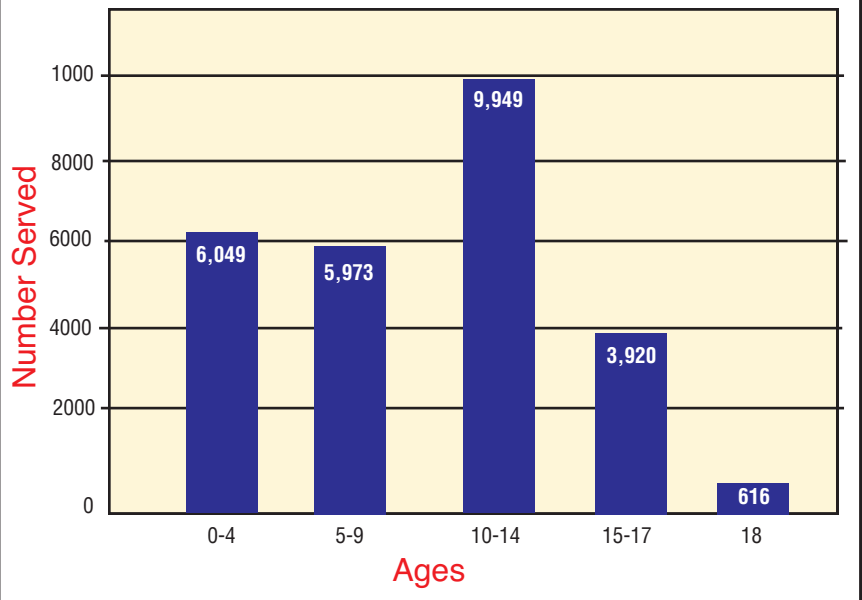
The Children's Services Council understands the importance of the task that parents and caregivers of our children are faced with and is dedicated to providing opportunities for parents to increase their skills. In an effort to support those people who most greatly influence our children, the Children's Services Council offers FREE parenting workshops throughout the year. Working in partnership with local public libraries, schools, and our funded program locations, various workshops are offered in every region of our county.

Provider Trainings

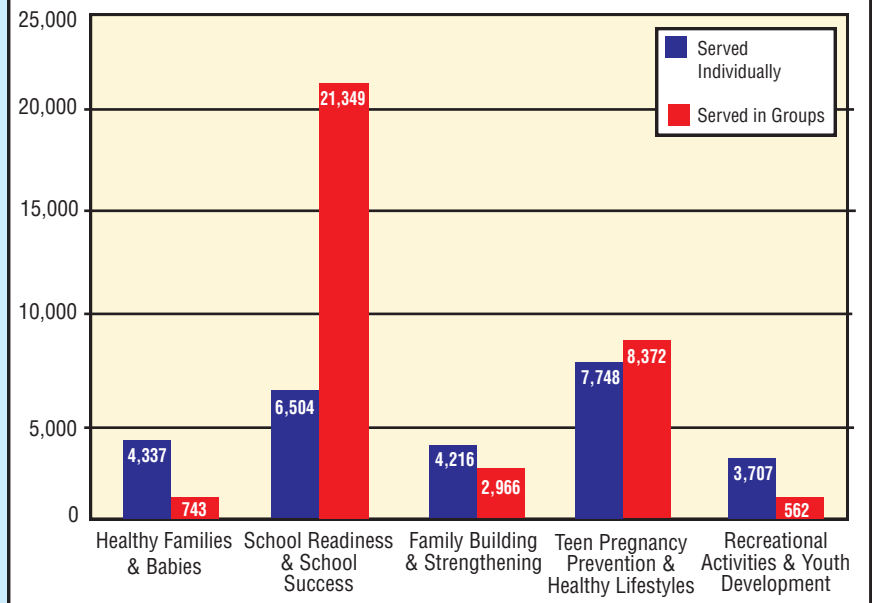
The Children's Services Council also recognizes the importance of building the skills of the workers that provide needed services to our community. CSC offers a wide variety of training workshops and classes for the people who are continually shaping and strengthening the lives of the children in our area. Our "Toolbox" training calendar offers the facilitation of skill building classes focused on children's issues directly related to the needs of individuals that provide services locally.

To learn more about parenting classes, the Toolbox Training calendar, or any other CSC activity, please go to www.cscslc.org

Number of Children Served by Age Range



Number of Children Served by Funding Category



Local and Legislative Initiatives

In addition to funding programs, CSC is a leader and active partner in several community initiatives and projects that contribute to the future of children and families in St. Lucie County. Some of those initiatives are listed below:

Heart Gallery of Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast - The Heart Gallery is a photography exhibit spotlighting children who are looking for “forever families”. Founded in collaboration with Children’s Home Society, Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers, and Children’s Services Council this traveling display was created. The gallery features professional photographs, taken by Scripps newspapers’ photographers, of children waiting to be adopted, and has now been displayed in numerous locations across Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast.

Lifelong Literacy Coalition – The Lifelong Literacy Coalition was formed to actively promote the importance of literacy for residents of all ages. Over 20 representatives from diverse local agencies participate in this volunteer group to support literacy awareness in St. Lucie County.

Foster Care Support –The Foster Care Support group is a committee of the Alliance of Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast. Made up of representatives from the various agencies who work with abused and neglected children in Circuit 19, the

committee strives to improve the quality of life for this most vulnerable population by enhancing services.

Swim Collaborative of St. Lucie County – Over 30 agencies came together in 2002 to promote the importance of water safety skills for children. To date, more than 800 children across the county have received swim lesson instruction paid for by this group. The Collaborative also established a local “SwimLine” that parents can call to receive information on local programs that offer swimming or water safety lessons. To access that information please call: 772.462.1515.

Children’s Almanac – Every two years, the Children’s Services Council partners with the Early Learning Coalition of St. Lucie County to produce the Children’s Almanac and Child Care Directory. It includes complete and updated listings of licensed child care providers serving St. Lucie County and is printed in English, Spanish and Creole. The 2008/2009 edition was released in early April. Copies are available throughout the County at child care centers, libraries, Riverside and National City Banks’ branches, as well as hundreds of agencies and local businesses. To obtain a copy, visit one of these locations or call 772.408.1100.

Legislative Advocacy - Together with the Treasure Coast Coordination Coalition’s Legislative Summit and the Florida Children’s Services Council, CSC advocates on behalf of children and families on State and Federal levels. CSC works with our elected officials and community members to craft or amend legislation, as well as request appropriate levels of funding for needed services. Current legislative priorities include improving access to Healthy Kids; adequate funding for Healthy Start, Healthy Families, Community Based Care, and Juvenile Justice; and ensuring quality childcare.

Cultural Competency Collaborative – Based upon the changing demographics in St. Lucie and Martin Counties, CSC partnered with the Children’s Services Council of Martin County, Tykes & Teens, and Sandy Pines Hospital to form the Cultural Competency Collaborative. The Collaborative worked with national expert, Ira SanGupta, to develop a curriculum specific to Martin and St. Lucie Counties. Using the curriculum, the Collaborative provided cultural competency trainings to over 120 social service staff in 2006-07. The Collaborative is funded by the Allegany Franciscan Foundation and continues to offer workshops to our social service agencies.



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