



Board of Directors Meeting

July 9, 2009

Legislative Update

Item IV. E.

Recommended Action: Information Only

Issue: Federal Legislation Summary

Strategic Plan Goal: Increase the efficiency of JWB's work

Federal Legislation

Home Visitation

The Education Begins At Home Act (EBAH, S. 244), introduced by Senators Bond (R-MO), Murray (D-WA) and Clinton (D-NY, prior to leaving the Senate), would extend to a broad range of families the opportunity to benefit from Healthy Families America and other quality home visitation programs. EBAH would provide \$500 million, over three years, to help states establish or expand quality home visitation programs. Of the \$500 million authorized in EBAH, \$400 million would be provided to states on a formula basis to expand and enhance home visiting programs, while the remaining \$100 million would be divided between two competitive grants to reach military families and families with English Language Learners. This would be a key program component to a Children's Zone® model initiative.

Benefits of Home Visitation:

- Home visitation delivers parent education and family support services directly to parents with young children, providing guidance on how parents can enhance their children's development from birth through kindergarten entry.
- Home visitation is an effective, research-based and cost-efficient way to bring families and resources together, and to ensure that all children have the opportunity to grow up healthy and ready to learn.
- Quality early childhood home visitation programs lead to proven, positive outcomes for children and families, including improved school readiness, improved child health and development, improved parenting practices, and reductions in child maltreatment.

Calling for 211 Act

The calling for 2-1-1 Act of 2009 - Directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award a grant to each state to carry out a program for making available throughout that state the 2-1-1 telephone service for information and referral on human services. The bill requires a participating state to ensure that at least 50% of the resources of the program funded by the grant will be derived from other sources, and requires a state seeking a grant to carry out its activities through a lead entity to be known as a 2-1-1 Collaborative. Requires grant amounts to be used solely to make 2-1-1 telephone service available to a state for community information and referral on human services to all citizens of that state with phone access, including telephone connections between families and individuals seeking services and the service providers. Grant recipients are required to:

- (1) abide by the Key Standards for 2-1-1 Centers; and
- (2) collaborate with human service organizations to provide an exhaustive database of services with which to provide information or referral to individuals utilizing the 2-1-1 service.

The Children's Policy team has been working with Sen. Bill Nelson and Rep. Kathy Castor to support this legislation in an effort to stabilize 211 system funding statewide and in Pinellas County.

Florida Children and Youth Cabinet

State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care

As a result of the 2007 reauthorization of Head Start, the Governor is required to create or designate the advisory council. The council will be tasked with many of the issues that have been identified in the Children's Cabinet 2009-10 Strategic Plan. As a result, the Advisory Council will become a designated standing committee of the Cabinet and the Chief Child Advocate, Jim Kallinger, will serve as the lead for the workgroup.

The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) will fund the nationwide activities of the council with \$100 million over three years, of which Florida is eligible for \$4.8 million with a 70% match or \$11.6 million. The state is expected to match with existing allocations in Pre-K and Department of Health expenses.