



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Charlie Crist
Governor

Robert A. Butterworth
Secretary

June 30, 2008

Department Staff and Stakeholders:

The Department of Children and Families is announcing the launch of a statewide initiative to further its goal of becoming a universally co-occurring-capable statewide system of care. We want all stakeholders to be a part of this change envisioned for the mental health and substance abuse system of care. Our vision is for an inclusive system that is welcoming and meets the needs of the citizens of Florida. With your help, we will develop and improve programs and policies over the next several years to better identify and respond to the service needs of those who request treatment and support services. The goal of this system of care is to help individuals lead healthy lives and to achieve their individualized goals in recovery.

The development of the necessary infrastructure and evolution of the system of care will take time. At this time the state is beginning a multi-year process to facilitate appropriate integration of services and systems. The process will be heavily reliant on collaborative partnerships involving the state, regional and circuit offices together with provider associations, provider agencies, frontline staff and consumers and their families. A series of stakeholder meetings will be hosted at the regional and circuit levels in the coming months to solicit input in the developmental process. The Department has contracted with a group of nationally renowned consultants, ZiaPartners, Inc., led by Dr. Kenneth Minkoff and Dr. Chris Cline to support administrative, programmatic, clinical practice and clinician competency development throughout the service system. Our task is to create a more comprehensive, continuous, and integrated system of care that is more receptive to meeting the needs of individuals and families who struggle with complex mental health and substance use issues.

We welcome participation of all our service delivery partners and stakeholders. We will extend an invitation for the Department of Corrections, Agency for Health Care Administration, Department of Health, and Department of Juvenile Justice to also become involved in this transformative process. We fully support this change and believe its success is dependent on the energy and enthusiasm that that will be generated by the collaborative efforts of our partners. This collective energy will allow Florida to become a state where all individuals are welcomed into empathic, hopeful and integrated care that supports recovery, health and well-being.

1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

Please join us in this launch by providing your input and participation in the various opportunities that will be presented to you as we move forward.

If you have any questions, please contact Sean Matthews at (850) 413-0481.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Butterworth
Secretary



William H. Janes
Assistant Secretary
Substance Abuse and Mental Health



Stephenie W. Colston, M.A.
Director
Substance Abuse



Katharine V. Lyon, Ph.D.
Director
Mental Health