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21st CENTURY COUNCIL

HUMAN SERVICES

CITIZEN TASK FORCE REPORT

DECEMBER, 1997

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21st Century Council



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CITIZEN TASK FORCE REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The citizens of Tallahassee-Leon County have a strong history of helping the less fortunate in our community. At the request of the Tallahassee City Commission and the Leon County Board of Commissioners, the 21st Century Council agreed to examine how the human services delivery system could be improved to strengthen accountability, efficiency and effectiveness of the available resources. The Council utilized its membership and a group of citizens at large and subcontracted some tasks to the FSU Center For Needs Assessment and Planning and to Florida TaxWatch.

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helping the less fortunate



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The importance of human services to the community is apparent to most community members from all backgrounds. Because several previous Council reports had provided substantive analysis and recommendations, the City Commission and the Board of Commissioners requested the 21st Century Council to work on a citizen-based study of human services. The project, as approved by the city and County, offered a group of citizens the opportunity to examine important issues and concerns as they relate to improving the quality of life in their community. Although a number of professionals were extensively involved in contributing to and reviewing the study, the report reflects a citizen's perspective: broader and less technical than the professionals might have developed. The technical limitations of the report may be seen as an asset as the citizens seek wide community support for their recommendations.

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Working from the vision and outcome indicators articulated in the [21st Century Council's 1996 Quality of Life Report](#), a Citizen Task Force reviewed several past and current efforts to reform the human services system. These included the City of Tallahassee Human Services 1992 Action Plan, the Community Human Service Partnership (CHSP), the FSU Center for Needs Assessment and Planning (CNAP) Needs and Resource Assessment Report, the Tallahassee-Leon County Indigent Care Task Force Report, the Telephone Counseling and Referral Service (TCRS)/FLAIRS Project, and the Juvenile Justice Council, among others.

The Citizen Task Force recognized immediately that **many significant services are currently being offered by many talented and dedicated agencies and individuals**. The group also acknowledged that significant additional community support, through financial, material and personal means, will be required to meet the variety of individual and family needs in the community. A number of effective and essential services will have to be fully funded or expanded for many years to come to meet persistent problems and improve the quality of life for all citizens.



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talented and dedicated agencies and individuals



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The Task Force, however, concluded that a number of improvements to the overall human services system must take place to earn continued or increased financial support from the community. These improvements include a number of key elements:

- A greater emphasis on results-based programs that lead to long term and significant improvements in individual self-sufficiency and community quality of life.
- Increased accountability for and reporting of results from the agencies funded from public or community sources.
- Better communication and coordination among agencies to more effectively network, refer and serve individual clients and share information.
- Expanded and ongoing assessment and development of community assets and resources that can be linked to individuals and families in their neighborhood.



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These elements and the other recommendations in the report offer a chance to improve the human services system for our community through quantitative and qualitative change to the way business is done.

This report reflects the perspective of citizen members of the community. It was never intended to be the final and definitive study of all aspects of the human services delivery system. Its strength lies in the fact that it does represent a citizen's perspective on what significant steps can help move a good system to become exemplary. The 21st Century Council recognizes that additional citizen involvement will be required to implement the recommended improvements. The Council pledges its continued support to that effort.

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citizen's perspective



CHAPTER 1.

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Background

The 21st Century Council is a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in Tallahassee/ Leon County. Its goal is to transform the vision, values and beliefs that have made the community successful in the past into a sustainable, connected and self-renewing future for all citizens. Through a shared vision and community outcome indicators, the Council also provides a vehicle for the community to monitor its progress toward that future.

In 1996 the Tallahassee City Commission and the Leon County Board of Commissioners invited the 21st Century Council to examine the community's human services system. Recent successes with the United Way and the City and County in the Community Human Service Partnership (CHSP) illustrated the potential of a coordinated community effort. A broad and comprehensive study was undertaken to help expand the effort in a systematic way. "Human services" for the purpose of this study is the system for identifying individual and family needs, providing interventions to reduce those needs, and the financial and human resource structure that supports the interventions.

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The human services system is primarily a delivery system for assistance to the unfortunate and disadvantaged people in the community. It links up, however, to several other economic, educational and social systems in the community as it touches individual lives and builds the community's capacity to help. Though this report focuses on the smaller human services system with its recommendations, it does acknowledge the impact and connectedness to the larger relationships. This is especially important working with a vision that reflects improvements in the quality of life for everyone in the community.

The 21st Century Council's previous studies were well received by the community. An initial study on crime and juvenile justice supported the development of the local Juvenile Justice Council and related programs. A second study of transportation and land use coincided with the Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report and contributed to the reorganization of the Local Planning Commission and other recommended changes to the plan. The process used in the human services study was similar to the successful approach of these previous efforts.

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a delivery system for assistance



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The Structure of the Study

The human services study was coordinated by a small group of 21st Century Council members representing the council's board of directors. Subcontracts were issued to the Florida State University Center for Needs Assessment and Planning for data collection, Florida TaxWatch for process auditing and a consultant for group facilitation, research and report writing.

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was established to provide technical assistance to all phases of the project. Representing the City, County, United Way, FSU, FAMU and service providers, a cross section of professional and community practitioners participated and they reviewed data collection instruments and processes and gave feedback about the scope, direction and results of the study. (See the [conclusion](#) of the report for list of participants in the study.)

A Citizen Task Force was convened to analyze available and newly collected data, previous studies and current efforts in the human services arena. Working from the 21st Century Council vision in the 1996 Quality of Life Report, **the Task Force developed a clear, holistic picture of the person that the system should serve.** Also adopted was a [multi-dimensional conceptual model](#) to facilitate examining asset and needs data, as well as current practice.

a clear, holistic picture



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Meeting almost weekly for several months, the Task Force identified critical issues that face funders, providers and those receiving services. They also heard many agency representatives describe successful efforts currently in place in the community, along with barriers or problems they face. These efforts included the Juvenile Justice Council, Community Human Service Partnership, Tallahassee Coalition for the Homeless, Big Bend Jobs and Education Council (which serves as the WAGES Coalition and Workforce Development Board for three counties), and the Telephone Counseling and Referral Service/FLAIRS Project, among others.

The Task Force developed a number of recommendations and implementation strategies to address the issues and concerns that were raised. These build upon the successful efforts already taking place in the community, expanding and adding elements designed to reform the system in the direction of greater accountability and effectiveness. A draft report addressed a broad range of issues and concerns about the human services system and the many subsystems, networks and coalitions operating within it. Summaries of the draft report were presented to community groups and public forums for reactions and feedback to be incorporated into the final document. Multimedia formats are available and the final report will be on the Internet for access by a wide audience of community members.

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build upon the successful efforts



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From Shared Vision to Strategies

The 21 Century Council's vision for Tallahassee and Leon County formed the context for the Human Services Citizen Task Force effort: **Happy, healthy, responsible, self-sufficient, caring, contributing and cooperative community members, living in good physical and emotional health.** Improving the quality of life for all community members is the vision's guiding principle and formed the goal for all the recommendations of the group. The political community is still working to agree on a "shared community vision" with a continuation of a city and county sponsored project. Rather than wait, the Task Force chose the vision already articulated by the 21st Century Council as a basis for its work, as it gave clear direction and meaning. The report's recommendations are such that they can easily be adapted to another community-wide vision, such as, "A Learning Community," or the like.

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Improving the quality of life



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The report's recommendations and action steps are directed at moving the human services delivery system forward with increased efficiency and effectiveness, realizing that sometimes short term inefficiencies are necessary to encourage creativity and change. Current community efforts contribute greatly to helping individuals and families in our community face difficulties. Limited evidence exists, however, that intended long-term client and community results are being attained. The Task Force, after careful study, concluded that an enhanced human services system should be built upon the positive programs and individual, group and organizational strengths that currently exist. In order to better prepare the community to meet continuing demands and future challenges, however, significant organizational improvements are called for.

The improvements will require an ongoing process of planning, implementing, assessing and revising, with commitment and support from the political and social agencies in the community.



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CHAPTER 2.

PREVIOUS STUDIES AND EFFORTS

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A number of initiatives, reports, projects and activities were reviewed by the Citizen Task Force. These reports and projects illustrate the strong base for human services delivery in our community. They were only a sample, however, of the many ongoing efforts within the human services network in the Tallahassee-Leon County area. The reports that were studied, however, provide evidence that significant enhancements are required if community-wide outcomes are to be improved. Essential to these improvements are the continued and accelerated movement toward a performance-based approach to resource allocation, increased accountability for results, a focus on assessing community and client strengths, greater coordination and communication among all stakeholders, and additional support and resources for effective programs. A brief description and a few selected points for several of the reports, studies and projects follow.

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significant enhancements are required



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These directly relate to, and support, many of the recommendations suggested later in the report, and include:

[City of Tallahassee Human Services 1992-97 Strategic Action Plan](#)

[1996 Florida Benchmarks Report](#)

[Florida HRS Building Healthy Communities Plan](#)

[Tallahassee Leon County Indigent Health Care Task Force 1996-97 Report](#)

[The Tallahassee Coalition for the Homeless](#)

[Telephone Counseling and Referral Service/FLAIRS Project](#)

[Dealing with Juvenile Crime in Leon County 1993 Report and the Juvenile Justice Council](#)

[Big Bend Jobs and Education Council/WAGES Coalition Region 5](#)

[The Community Human Service Partnership](#)

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[FSU Center for Needs Assessment and Planning Preliminary Assessment Report](#)



City of Tallahassee Human Services 1992-97 Strategic Action Plan

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In 1991-92 the City of Tallahassee established a new Division of Human Services Development and appointed a Human Services Advisory Council as a private-public partnership to develop an action plan for the division. The resulting plan attempted to increase the effective use of limited City resources directed toward the most severe social problems in the community. In addition, the report promoted a coordination of existing programs and development of new ones to support a continuum of services from prevention to intervention to wellness. It also recommended a results-oriented performance standard for all city projects to evaluate their success and form a basis for expansion or revision.

The plan identified seven program areas from crime to recreation and six target areas for community focus. Three target areas were based upon needs assessment data by census tracts, including the Frenchtown, Bond and Orange Avenue neighborhoods. Other targets were citywide services, a national literature search on best practices, an ongoing needs assessment, and support for new and innovative programs.

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support a continuum of services



City of Tallahassee Human Services 1992-97 Strategic Action Plan (continued)

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The City used the study to support efforts funded during the succeeding five years. Successes have been experienced with coalitions in the targeted areas and some movement toward results-based data. However, a lack of administrative and technical capability by many agencies has limited the results-based reporting and thus subsequent data-based decision making. To some extent a sense of proprietary services and “turfism” has limited true collaboration. Ongoing monitoring by the Advisory Council faded and funding sources have been somewhat reduced. Still cognizant of the 1992 Action Plan recommendations, the City shifted its funding processes last year to the Community Partnership.

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Successes have been experienced



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The 1996 Florida Benchmarks Report

The Florida Commission on Government Accountability to the People (GAP) has encouraged local efforts such as the 21st Century Council's quality of life reports and studies. Believing that in the information age knowledge is power, the Commission models in the 1996 Florida Benchmarks Report clearly reported important outcomes on a statewide basis. These are intended to help citizens judge fairly how well state and local government is performing and determine how they can contribute to making their communities better places to live.

The report distinguishes between *inputs*, the resources used to produce services or reach a goal; *outputs*, measures of services, processes and products; and *outcomes*, measures of community results or benefits. The Citizen Task Force utilized many of the measures recommended by the report, attempting to focus primarily on gaps between desired and current community outcomes as an indicator of needs as much as possible.

inputs, outputs, and outcomes

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The 1996 Florida Benchmarks Report (continued)

The report admits there are some limits to the outcome-based approach that is being encouraged. In some cases, little or no valid data is available. In others, the data collected is mainly in numbers of people served or strategies implemented, and no long term or follow-up information is gathered. In other situations, little standardization of data categories for information is required by different funders, with age ranges or service areas ill defined or overlapping. Some compromises on community outcome data will be required until the human services system can establish data standards and ways to collect the desired information that are not currently available.

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little standardization of data



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Florida HRS Building Healthy Communities Plan

Produced for the Healthy Communities, Healthy People initiative, the 1995-96 Building Health Communities Plan recommends addressing the health problems of the community through reducing modifiable risk factors for the leading causes of death and disability. The plan describes strategies to assist communities in determining their needs, providing resources to meet them, and integrating existing community and state programs into a comprehensive system.

Recommendations include coordinating all planning activities, increasing access to information and model programs through networked data bases, coordinating county public health resources with other community resources, establishing state outcome measures, evaluating the effectiveness of comprehensive programs, and collecting other data to assist state and local planning efforts.

Limited state funding for Healthy Communities, Healthy People has resulted in only a few counties attempting a comprehensive approach. The plan, however, does provide a framework which other counties, like Leon, can build upon as they develop a comprehensive human services system.

does provide a framework



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Tallahassee Leon County Indigent Health Care Task Force 1996-97 Report

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In the spring of 1996, a community task force was charged by the City and County commissions to make recommendations regarding access to indigent health care in our area. Representatives of the County, City, School Board, hospitals, HMOs, Medical Society, Chamber of Commerce and community health providers formed a collaborative effort to address the issue and resulted in the Tallahassee Leon County Indigent Health Care Task Force 1996-97 Report.

The recommendations in the report recognize the shift in resources from the state and federal levels to the local community, the requirement for multiple approaches to solving the problem of efficient access, the importance of shared data bases and the necessity for quality assurance review. Additionally, local partnerships and a coordinating advisory Citizen Task Force were called for to assist in maintaining community partnerships for funding and seeking additional resources.

Many of the specific strategies of the "CARE-NET" project described in the report are already being implemented. Although ambitious in scope, the program reflects a strategic approach to the problem. The task force addressed only one of the outcome areas that the 21st Century Council citizens identified, but it does reflect the success that a coordinated effort can attain and the report calls for further and broader scale endeavors.

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Tallahassee Coalition for the Homeless

The importance of cooperating rather than competing led to the formation of the Tallahassee Coalition for the Homeless nearly 10 years ago. The agencies that serve homeless people and other supporting community members meet regularly to discuss and share recent initiatives and issues. Although there still exists some competition for resources, most of the participating agencies have coordinated their efforts and work to support the success of each other. The coalition has been an active voice in the community for the plight of homeless people and contributes regularly to the human services dialogue.

One of the outstanding successes of the Coalition is the collaborative effort that was able to leverage new resources into the community. Since 1995, the Coalition has successfully obtained over \$750,000 in grants for member agencies to enhance local services and has become a model for how other agencies could work together.

Difficulties still exist in dealing with a complex problem such as homelessness. A variety of interventions exist, but strategies for preventing homelessness and data concerning the availability or effectiveness of follow-up referrals are limited. Long-term solutions and measures of program effectiveness are difficult, especially when providers are faced daily with many pressing demands for service.

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Telephone Counseling and Referral Service/FLAIRS Project

Since 1970, the Telephone Counseling and Referral Service (TCRS) has provided confidential counseling, training, information and referral services to Leon County and surrounding communities. TCRS has been a provider, as well as a link to other providers, for individuals in crisis or distress. The directory of community services that TCRS maintains is the only comprehensive resource directory available to the community and was the basis for many of the Citizen Task Force activities.

TCRS was involved with the development of the City of Tallahassee 1992 Action Plan and has collected data on the success and limitations of the coordinated efforts that followed. At the same time, the agency has participated in the development of a model for statewide coordination and enhancement of information and referral services. Working with the Florida Alliance of Information and Referral Services (FLAIRS), TCRS has participated in a pilot to develop standards and illustrate the infrastructure that could help agencies statewide, build partnerships, reduce duplication and fragmentation, improve the quality of information and increase access to that information.



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the only comprehensive resource directory



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Telephone Counseling and Referral Service/FLAIRS Project (continued)

The networking steps and pilot efforts show the feasibility of a resource data base. Several issues have been identified that must be addressed, including standards and protocols for data gathering, ongoing technical assistance, accountability, quality assurance and evaluation, and coordination of resources. The technical and strategic issues that the FLAIRS project identified are important and therefore should be addressed in a reformed human resources system. The cooperative relationships and linkages that TCRS has established among the community agencies and providers, and its contributions through the years to the human services dialogue, have been essential to the successes that the community has already accomplished.

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essential to the successes



Dealing with Juvenile Crime in Leon County 1993 Report and the Juvenile Justice Council

In 1993, the 21st Century Council released an extensive report dealing with Juvenile Crime in Leon County. The report addressed the issue of skyrocketing juvenile crime in our community and delinquency issues with a comprehensive approach calling for better coordination, early prevention and intervention, as well as long-term commitment for the most serious and violent juvenile offenders.

Most of the recommendations, including the Leon County Boot Camp and the Juvenile Justice Council, have become a reality and collectively have made an impact, helping reduce juvenile crime rates significantly. The greatest accomplishment, however, was bringing different agencies together to strategically coordinate their efforts toward monitoring and prevention, and that continues to have ongoing results.

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strategically coordinate their efforts



Dealing with Juvenile Crime in Leon County 1993 Report and the Juvenile Justice Council

The Leon County Juvenile Justice Council offers a coordinating council model that is comprehensive and focused. Working with a limited staff, the council members have engaged in a variety of activities. These include strategic planning to identify assets and needs, maximizing the use of resources, minimizing duplication and prioritizing neighborhood strategies. Other efforts include monitoring and evaluation of the juvenile justice system's efficiency and effectiveness, including impact analysis, conducting studies on relevant issues, increasing public awareness, providing information on research and best practices, service coordination, grant facilitation and resource development.

The council has shown that success can be obtained through a coordinating council that provides decisive leadership, despite the limited administrative support and no clear direction, Creating its own way of work and strategic plan took time, but the council is now moving quickly into each of its priority areas. Successes like the Juvenile Assessment and Receiving Center, Tallahassee Chamber Youth Employment Initiative, Juvenile Drug Court and others have grown out of the cooperative working relationships that the Juvenile Justice Council supports and exemplifies.

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strategic planning



Big Bend Jobs and Education Council/WAGES Coalition Region 5

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Federal and state welfare reform has directed a dramatic change for Florida's public assistance programs. These programs have shifted from their former purpose of providing public assistance on a more or less temporary basis to a goal of helping each person regain or obtain a sound financial footing. The reform legislation recognized that this could not be done just by mandate, but requires essential support services to help individuals overcome personal or other barriers to self sufficiency. These involve education, job training, child care, transportation and mental and physical health agencies in a broad based coalition.

The combined council established planning and evaluating workforce development components and coordinating a variety of resources and programs that are offered by each agency. This includes one-stop career centers, school to work, welfare to work and high skill/high wages programs. The partnership includes business, the Department of Children and Families, the local schools, and the Department of Labor and Employment Security.

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a dramatic change



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Big Bend Jobs and Education Council/WAGES Coalition Region 5 (continued)

The welfare reform effort operates within a performance-based funding system that requires follow-up and long-term tracking. The State of Florida's training and employment data tracking system, FETPIP, and NETPOOL, an Internet-based information management system being developed by Enterprise Florida, are evolving electronic strategies for making more information available to providers to help with their access and accountability responsibilities.

Linking clients to support services is a key role of the one stop centers and this requires coordination, cooperation and information access. Additional links are needed to get more information out to the community and to take advantage of more community-based assets and resources. With an effort as large and comprehensive as this one, providing advocacy and service to individual clients while meeting the documentation and administration requirements within the 10% restriction will always be a challenge. This is a new initiative addressing a complex area. Future positive results for all people being served will be of great interest to the community.

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Linking clients to support services



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Community Human Service Partnership

One of the most successful coordinated efforts in the community has been the collaboration of the United Way of the Big Bend, City of Tallahassee, Leon County and District 2 Department of Children and Family Services in the Community Human Service Partnership (CHSP). The CHSP established a joint request for proposals, joint review and coordinated resources allocation and a distribution process across 10 service areas, ranging from emergency services to mental health.

The United Way played a leadership role in this effort, expanding its involvement to helping build the capacity for the community to care for itself. The shift by the organization is a move beyond fund raising to capacity building in four ways: building on strengths and assets, developing relationships, setting priorities and using creative change. The CHSP is one example of the United Way's efforts to help create a more effective and efficient human services delivery system.

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the most successful coordinated effort



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This change in emphasis coincided with the city and county's desires to better coordinate their human services efforts. The CHSP utilizes a joint planning board, coordinated staff efforts, community involvement of more than 150 citizens in review teams and a joint allocations council, approximately \$2,400,000 was allocated to more than 52 agencies and providers. Both funding sources and service providers were, for the most part, very pleased with the joint application and allocation process. A few agencies found it difficult to give up past decision making power or political influence that had guaranteed funding over several years. Others resented the increased competition between past funded and new providers which has led to reductions in funding for some and new allocations for others.

Another goal of the CHSP was to foster an ongoing community-wide dialogue with both funders and providers on improving human service delivery in Leon County. This did take place around many important issues, especially the shift to performance-based evaluations required of agency plans. Concerns were raised about the increase in staff time that might be required at the same time funders are calling for minimal administrative costs. Related was the necessity for more technical assistance to help develop strategies for collecting impact data. Also raised was the concern that qualitative results are often overlooked and are just as, or more, important than quantitative results in many cases.

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The collaborative effort reflected in the CHSP was judged to be very successful by the participating funding agencies and should be expanded as a model for a revised system. Essential to the future of the human services system will be a more comprehensive community asset, resource and needs assessment; use of technology that makes the data more available; and a shared vision of important [outcomes](#). Further and more substantive commitment of staff resources and wider support from a broader coalition will also enhance the current effort.

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Other Interagency Efforts

The Task Force was aware of a number of other interagency collaborative projects in each of the identified outcome areas, but was unable to assess in depth or include them in this report. Many have made positive impacts on community outcomes and many have a long history of cooperative activities in the region. What is observed in the whole is that many of the same agencies, providers and stakeholders are participating in a multitude of these efforts, often with limited awareness between offices or departments within the same organization.

The City of Tallahassee and Leon County, for example, participate in community, recreation, health, housing, crime, economic growth and development and other joint activities with many separate departments. The Leon County school system has vocational, adult, early intervention, parent education, health, juvenile justice, disabilities and growth planning collaboratives going across school and district offices. The Citizen Task Force believes that a broad coordination of all the efforts related to human services would certainly add to the efficiency and effectiveness of the multiple ongoing programs in the community. The county is large enough to require the coordination, initiating, prodding, monitoring and linking that a coalition group can offer. It is also small enough for one group to manage to reduce duplication and increase support for the efforts that have proved to make a difference in the quality of life in the community.

limited awareness

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Research and Best Practices

Often noticeably absent from coordinated efforts in our area are the two local state universities and the community college. The involvement of Tallahassee Community College with the Big Bend Jobs and Education Council and WAGES Coalition is a notable exception. Individuals from these institutions may serve on the board of directors of an agency or directly support an initiative, and students at each school have responded enthusiastically to community service opportunities with strong administrative support. However, the reward systems of the institutions do not encourage extensive community involvement by faculty, staff or departments, a state of affairs often discussed but never really changed.

One element that higher education can easily address is that of promoting activities that have been supported by research and best practices. The access to this knowledge base is much stronger at the university level, especially since many practitioners and providers are so consumed with meeting daily individual problems they have little time to keep up with the literature. Another area is conducting research and validating best practices. Too often opportunities for study and research nearby are not taken advantage of by graduate students or faculty because they are not aware of the exemplary practices or extensive data that are available.

access to this knowledge base



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An additional area for involvement is the providing of technical assistance. The Small Business Resource Center which is sponsored by FSU and local businesses helps individuals and small companies deal with the difficulties and regulations found in the workplace. Similar assistance is also needed by the many volunteer and non-profit human services providers in areas such as management, budgeting, evaluation planning and reporting, fund raising and public relations. Some activities by individual faculty members and graduate students are taking place on a voluntary or contracted basis. Between the university and the retired professionals in the area, a wealth of additional resources are available.

The community should also look outside the area for examples of reform and restructuring of human services delivery. The Citizen Task Force reviewed the Community Services Network of Central Florida (CSNCF) as one such effort. In a 1992 study, the Orlando area found no community-wide collaborative network that served to facilitate coordinated client services, few statistical data showing services provided and little accountability for resources and limited outcome measurement.

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providing of technical assistance



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As a result of the study, CSNCF plans for a coordinated system called for the elimination of duplicate information gathering at client intake, tracking various services and referrals for individuals, efficient data management, useful and accurate reporting processes, coordinated interagency client services and community-wide access to data and information. The system established includes a computerized community resources directory of over 600 services from over 400 agencies, support group directories, agency subgroup networks and client management software. Initial evaluation has shown a positive response from both service agencies and individuals being served.

Using community resources, CSNCF provides hardware and software with ongoing training to participating agencies. With a limited formal structure and a small number of collaborative partners, the effort reflects how technology can be an important link in the system. Resources locally in our area have already been identified, from surplus state computers to technology support groups willing to provide training. These could easily be capitalized upon to develop a similar program to enhance our human services system.

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technology can be an important link



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In August of 1996, the 21st Century Council contracted with the Center for Needs Assessment and Planning (CNAP) at Florida State University to cooperatively develop and conduct a needs and limited asset assessment of human services agencies serving the residents of Leon County as part of the overall study. The data collection and analysis was intended to provide the Citizen Task Force information that would identify strengths, resources, issues and concerns that could be useful in recommending changes to the human services system in the community.

CNAP subcontracted with Florida TaxWatch to provide an independent review of the development and reporting process and also established a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to provide expertise and advice. TAG members included individuals from the 21st Century Council, staff from the City, County, United Way of the Big Bend and CNAP, faculty from the FSU and FAMU School of Social Work in addition to directors of several provider agencies. The TAG reviewed the assessment model, identified categories of service, helped develop the survey instrument and process and assisted in follow-up activities to encourage a better response. Appendix A describes in detail the development processes, instruments used, data collection steps and tabulated results.

a needs and limited asset assessment

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Three consecutive data collection procedures were implemented to collect resources and needs information from the 297 agencies identified for the study. Data from only 37 providers representing 106 programs was collected from the agencies themselves. Information was requested by the return of the survey instrument, telephone follow-up and on-site interviews. Information concerning another 20 agencies was obtained by reviewing United Way and City of Tallahassee files. A fourth round of data was collected separately by an independent subcontractor under the direction of CNAP using a much more limited-in-scope telephone survey. That information is later discussed in this report in the context of validating the decision making matrix and is included in Appendix B. This data is recommended to be the minimum in an asset and resource data bank.

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data collection



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An analysis of the data that was provided, and the lack of response, gave rise to a number of conclusions by the authors of the FSU-CNAP report:

- There are a number of unlucky and unfortunate citizens in our area who require both emergency assistance and assistance on how to become self sufficient and self reliant.
- We are fortunate to have in our community a number of dedicated and committed human services agencies and volunteers who want to improve the lot of our less-fortunate citizens.
- There is an increased awareness of the importance of focusing on societal results and payoffs, and funding based on the extent to which organizations and agencies seek, report and obtain value that is added to the community.
- For varied reasons, most social service agencies (publicly and privately funded) are unable and/or unwilling to report on impact and return-on-investment for what they use, do and deliver.
- Agencies expressed concern that they lack the resources to obtain such data or that their funders do not value or require the collection of outcome data.



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focusing on societal results and payoffs



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- There seems to be little formal and/or informal use of decision-making data concerning what the community and individual payoffs for current human services are, and what should be the requirements for allocation of scarce resources.
- The effort to develop consortia and human services cooperatives holds promise for collecting impact data and providing sensible vehicles for treating both underlying problems as well as crisis symptoms.
- Without impact data concerning past, current and future human services programs, decision makers cannot make justifiable program and budget allocations.

A number of recommendations were made by the authors to the Citizen Task Force to consider in their analysis and action plan report. These included:

1. Until responsive and responsible data are available, continue funding using current criteria, at the same time immediately requiring all funding initiatives to collect and report data on the consequence of services delivered.
2. As a precondition to funding any agency, organization or operation, require the collection of data on the impact of the agency's services. Also require data sharing and coordination of data collection among agencies within legal confidentiality constraints.

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report data on the consequences



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3. Provide technical assistance and support to agencies in determining what outcome and results data to collect and how to collect that data.
4. Require that funding be based on measurable objectives of who is to be helped, how they are to be helped, what role the helped will take in their own betterment, and the reporting of impact data in terms of immediate help to clients, future self-sufficiency of clients, and ways to cooperatively reduce the incidence of those in crisis.
5. Make certain that the purposes and nature of the overall study (by the Citizen Task Force) be allowed its independence.
6. Set up a cooperative data and information clearing house to serve all human services related agencies that will:
 - a. Collect and report value-added data on not only what was delivered but also what the immediate and long-term returns were.
 - b. Be composed and funded by publicly and privately supported human services agencies.
 - c. Identify cooperative possibilities among human services agencies and communities.
 - d. Assure that the value-added data be provided to decision makers for both future funding and for improvement of the existing programs and initiatives.

based on measurable objectives

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CHAPTER 3. A PROPOSED MODEL

A Holistic Approach



Believing a holistic approach is called for in helping the individual develop to his or her full potential, the Citizen Task Force developed a multi-dimensional framework for further needs and resource assessment and decision-making. The focus is a community driven, outcome-based approach within the context of serving the whole person. The Task Force believes that all aspects of an ideal community member must be addressed. Interventions that focus on only one part of a person's development, without recognizing strengths or problems in other areas, are usually insufficient and often promote chronic dependency.

An ideal community member must address development of:

Physical

Emotional

Social

Moral/Spiritual

Intellectual

multi-dimensional framework

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The Whole Person

Moral/Spiritual

Stand Up For What's Right

Compassionate

Honest

Trustworthy

Law Abiding

Social

Cooperative

Concerned

Responsible

Leader

Participant

Community Conscious

Recognized, Appreciates and Understands Differences

Intellectual

Intelligent

Open To New Ideas

Continually Learning

Physical

Health Oriented

Health Conscious

Emotional

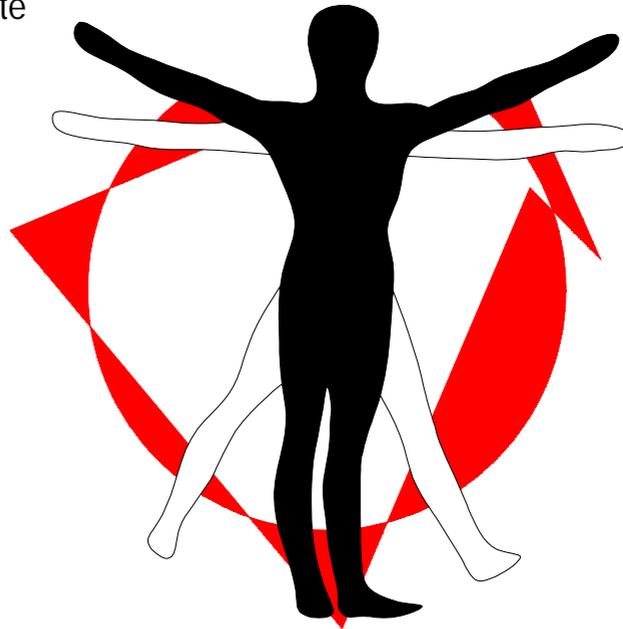
Caring

Dignity

Respectful

Compassionate

Resilient



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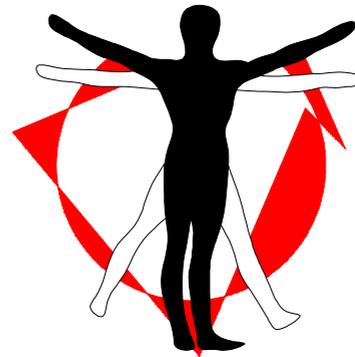
an ideal community member

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The Task Force's adoption of a wellness rather than a deficit model looks to a person's strengths and a prevention of problems as primary areas of emphasis. Interventions and treatment must be available as necessary. The objective, however, should be to reduce the dependency on a formal government supported system. In its place should be community based support, use of neighborhood and family assets, and individual strength and resiliency development helping the whole person. The chief strategy for human services agencies should be to provide the tools and resources for self sufficiency that will eventually eliminate the requirement for most outside assistance. Government agencies can then be seen as partners rather than the sole source for solving individual and family problems.



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looks to a person's strengths



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The Key Outcome Matrix

The model adopted by the Citizen Task Force offers a multi-dimensional approach to assess outcome areas by age groups and delivery strategies. The model provides for the classification of assets, resources and services available. Resource providers can also identify gaps in areas targeted, groups served or types of services provided. This should be collected on an ongoing basis, keeping the information as current as possible. Ongoing information can be maintained in an electronic data base to make available to everyone who might find it useful, a current directory of resources and services and other information.

Decision makers and other stakeholders can use the multi-dimensional model as a powerful tool. The model can help identify gaps in available service delivery types or outcome areas or age groups. Overlap or duplicate services can be easily seen as well as areas or delivery strategies that are not being addressed for certain parts of the community. Resources and services can be more effectively targeted by decision makers looking at identified gaps from actual data rather than just individual or agency perceptions. Research and best practices can then be coupled with creative grassroots efforts to target gaps in services. Most importantly, community providers who are effective can be identified and further supported and strengths and assets in the community can be matched to local problems more effectively.

multi-dimensional approach

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The key elements of the matrix are listed below. Appendix B provides the classification of over 250 providers to illustrate how an ongoing asset and resource data base could be utilized. Though the data collected represents only an example of how the matrix can be used, a great deal of information is available. Areas of service strengths and gaps, client distribution, and delivery types can be identified from a quick analysis. The proposed system would utilize this type of data collection and multi-dimensional perspective to help plan and coordinate services.



Human Services

	OUTCOME AREAS	AGE GROUPS	DELIVERY STRATEGIES
	Families/Community	Prenatal	Prevention
	Economy	Infant/Toddler (0-3)	Access/Intake
	Environment	Early Childhood/Preschool (4-7)	Intervention
	Health	Elementary (8-12)	Aftercare/Follow-up
	Safety	Adolescent/Teens (13-17)	
	Learning/Education	Young Adult (18-23)	
	Recreation/Cultural	Adults (24-49)	
		Mature (50-64)	
		Senior (65-74)	
		Elders (75+)	

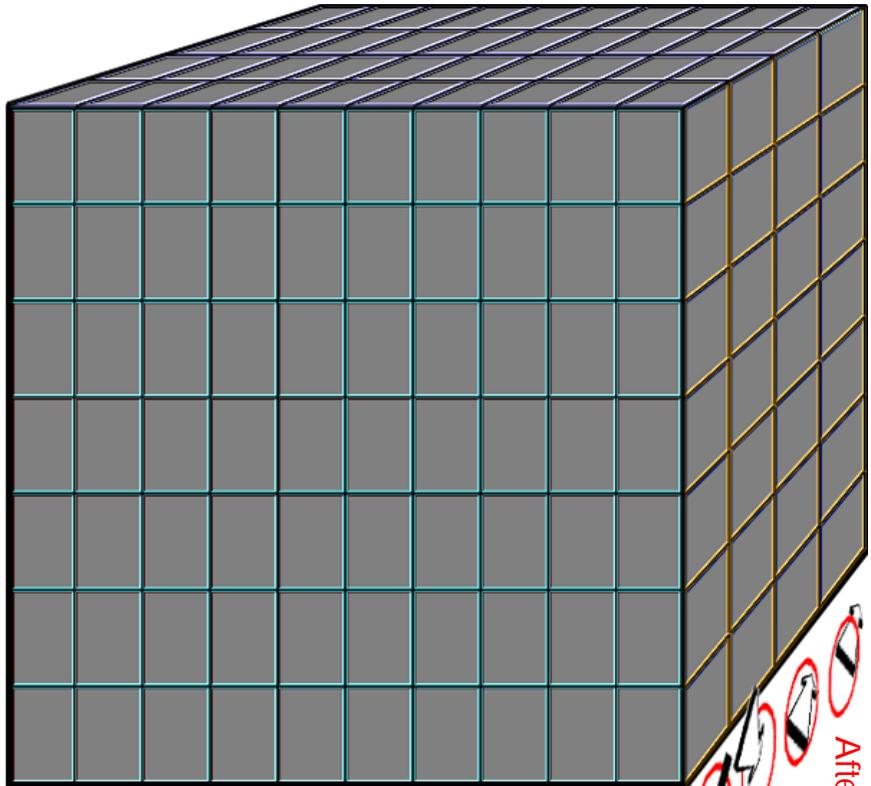
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- Families/Community
- Economy
- Environment
- Health
- Safety
- Learning/Education
- Recreation/Cultural

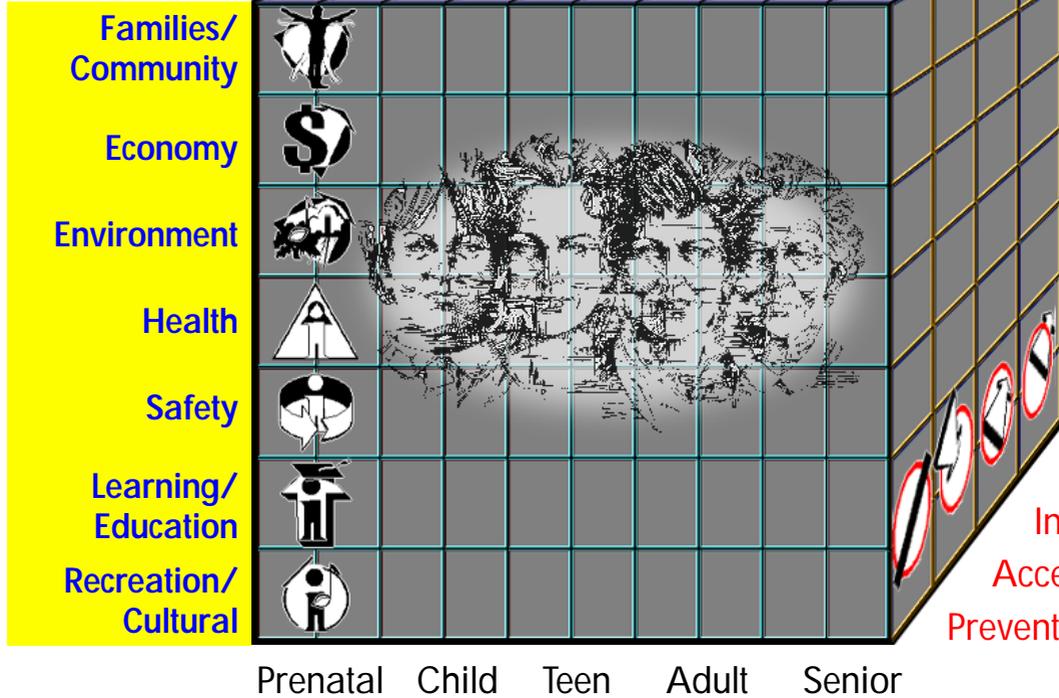


Prenatal
 Infant/Toddler (0-3)
 Early Childhood/Preschool (4-7)
 Elementary (8-12)
 Adolescent/Teens (13-17)
 Young Adult (18-23)
 Adults (24-49)
 Mature (50-64)
 Senior (65-74)
 Elders (75+)

Prevention
 Access/Intake
 Intervention
 Aftercare/Followup

Click on
OUTCOME AREAS
AGE GROUPS
DELIVERY STRATEGIES
 to view each element

Outcome Areas



The **outcome areas** reflect the perspective of the citizens and may be limited or expanded by the council.



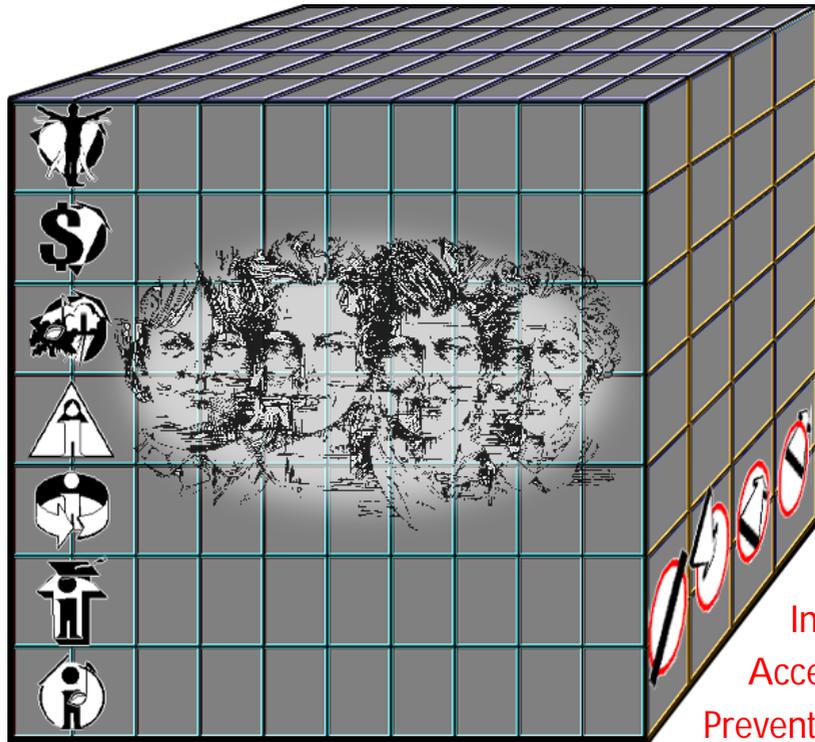
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Human Services

- Families/Community
- Economy
- Environment
- Health
- Safety
- Learning/Education
- Recreation/Cultural



Followup
Intervention
Access
Prevention

- Prenatal
- Infant/Toddler (0-3)
- Early Childhood/Preschool (4-7)
- Elementary (8-12)
- Adolescent/Teens (13-17)
- Young Adult (18-23)
- Adults (24-49)
- Mature (50-64)
- Senior (65-74)
- Elders (75+)

Age groups were selected to represent natural clusters found in the literature and in practice, but may be adjusted depending upon federal, state or other data classifications for funding or reporting.



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The Citizen Task Force recommends several outcome areas and suggests related indicators to be part of an annual “Report Card” to the community. Most of the indicators address the outcomes by showing results for the primary beneficiaries, the citizens of Leon County. This is much broader than the way people usually consider outcomes with a focus on processes, products or individual results. The limitations to the use of outcome measures were listed in the discussion of the GAP Report earlier, including: data not being directly available, some validity questions of the data that is available, and some data on only processes or numbers served due to a lack of follow-up or long-term results.

The 21st Century Council, working with a human services coordinating council, would collect and report results in an expanded version of its current report. The community at large and the agencies that solicit and provide resources would be the target audience. The outcome indicators, when combined, reflect one picture of the status of the quality of life in Tallahassee and Leon County. They also can be used to hold funding agencies and stakeholders accountable for the decisions that they make, decisions that should be judged by the improvements they bring to the community. The public should know if the taxes, contributions and volunteer hours they give to agencies are having an impact.

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annual “Report Card”



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With a combined and coordinated effort coupled with an effective use of funds by providers over time, the community should see, over time, an improvement on these community-wide indicators.

Needs can be identified as gaps between desired results and those currently attained. Many of the results are phrased in terms of “continuous improvement” to emphasize that a community may never reach an ideal, but it should always be moving forward. Appendix C includes trend data to show progress or lack of progress across those results where information was readily available. For example, the following charts show outcome indicators which have been successfully impacted by local programs. The reduction in the number of children suffering lead poisoning has been drastically reduced. This has been in part because of national and local efforts ranging from awareness to house rehabilitation.

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the community should see an improvement

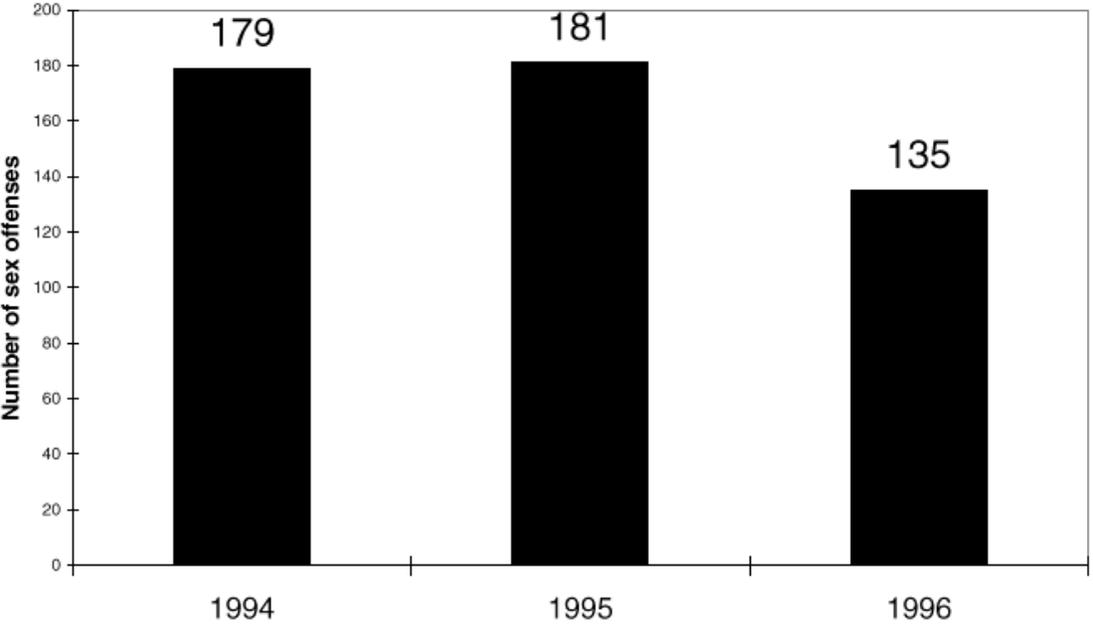


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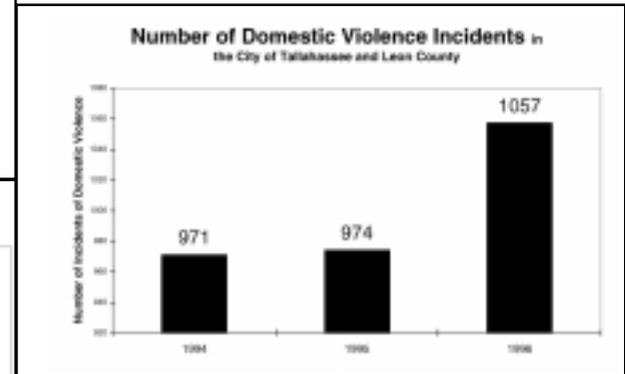
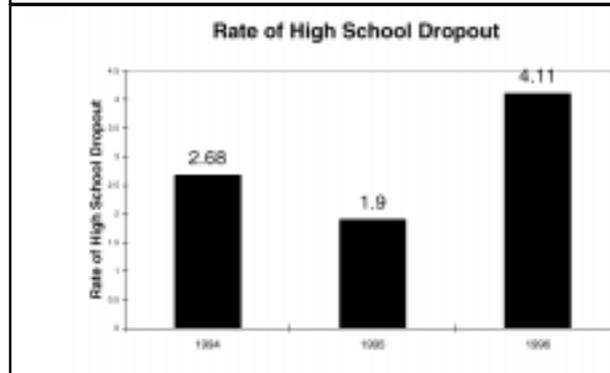
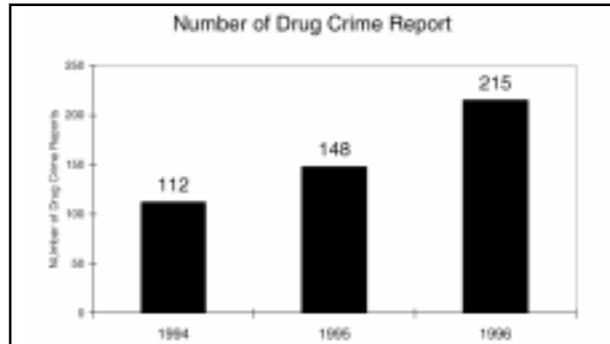
Another effort is reflected in a decrease in reported sex offenses. Programs at both state universities coupled with an intensive law enforcement effort has seen a significant decline in these numbers. The activities and effective community efforts should continue to be supported and enhanced.

Number of reported sex offenses



a significant decline

The following graphs highlight areas where we have invested a great many resources, but do not seem to be having a great deal of impact. These include drug crime reports, domestic violence incidents and high school drop out rates. There are many reasons that can be given for the lack of progress, including better reporting or increased awareness of services for victims. However, decision makers and providers should examine current strategies and look for alternatives that may hold more promise for significant results.





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Results-based Approaches and Service Providers

Providers in a performance-based system are increasingly expected to contribute to improvements in one or more of the outcome areas. They should also be judged on their creativity, use of best practices and research, and the effective and efficient use of requested resources. It is impossible to hold any one agency, however, accountable for any one community-based outcome indicator. Each provider has a unique mission and specific objectives that it is attempting to reach. These contribute to improved community outcomes when combined with the results from other providers and broader resources.

Every agency should be expected, and most want, to address and report results that are appropriate for its programs in the context of the area it is trying to impact. Effective agencies have in place an evaluation process that assesses the results they wish to attain, and are able to communicate those results to the community that supports them. The current situation is not that providers are not performance-based at all. It is that the results that they are trying to attain frequently are not clear, data is not collected on the long term impact of their services, and reporting of results is not a requirement for continuation of funding or support.



Human Services

address and report results



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Ultimately, through a combined and coordinated reporting effort with an effective allocation of funds to providers, the community can see a cumulative effect on the following community-wide outcome indicators suggested by the Citizen Task Force. Clearly, funding is important. Outside funding, however, is not the only solution to many human service needs. Other resources, especially individuals, groups and organizations are necessary. With a focus on outcomes, however, these can be effectively targeted at attaining results, not simply improving processes.

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attaining results



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Outcome Areas and Suggested Indicators

The Citizen Task Force recommended outcome areas and selected indicators are described below. These are not meant to be exhaustive, but rather examples and illustrations of what could be addressed. These types of data are what the 21st Century Council or a coordinating council should be collecting related to the human services system and publicizing on an ongoing basis.

These are a starting point and should be examined in light of the availability of valid and reliable data. They do represent, however, a broad citizen's perspective of what is important to members of the community when they think of the quality of life.

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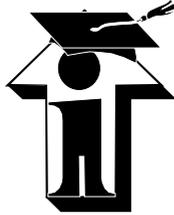
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Education/ Learning - All members of the community make well-reasoned, thoughtful, challenging and healthy lifelong learning decisions, are lifelong learners, respect the rights of others and are not under the care, custody or control of another person, agency or substance.

Suggested Indicators

- *Reduced rate of high school graduates needing remediation in college*
- *Increased percentage of high school graduates in continuing education or working*
- *Reduced rate of adults with middle-high illiteracy*
- *Improved student writing, math, reading achievement based on CAT/5 and Florida Writes*
- *Reduced rate of dropouts and increased GED/ Graduation rates*
- *Increased percentage of students ready to start kindergarten*
- *Increased non-formal indicators of lifelong learning such as library membership, community courses, visits to museums*

[Click here for overall progress data](#)



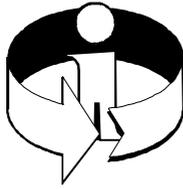
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Safety: All members of the community feel safe and free from threat in their homes, community and workplace.

Suggested Indicators

- *Reduced rate of accidental deaths and injuries*
- *Reduced reported domestic violence*
- *Reduced rate of violent and nonviolent and drug crime reports*
- *Reduced reported child abuse incidents*
- *Reduced incidence of youthful offenders/juvenile delinquency*
- *Decreased emergency response time: police, fire, 911, emergency room*
- *Increased percent of people in community who report they feel safe at home, work/school, community and neighborhood*

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feel safe and free

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Families and Community: All members of the community value the dignity and worth of all people and cooperatively support and maintain personal responsibility and the family structure within a diverse community.

Suggested Indicators

- *Increased community integration variables (race, housing, economics) and perceptions of race relations*
- *Increased volunteers to schools and community agencies and charitable giving*
- *Reduced incidence of homeless adults and children*
- *Increased voting rate in major and local elections*
- *Reduced percentage of people in poverty and substandard housing*
- *Reduced prevalence of teen pregnancies*
- *Increased percent of neighborhoods with crime watch programs*
- *Increased number of community based organizations*

[Click here for overall progress data](#)

maintain personal responsibility

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Health: All members of the community have access to prevention oriented health care programs that help people to be healthy from birth until death.

Suggested Indicators

- *Increased number of babies with an APGAR score of 7+*
- *Reduced number of deaths and hospitalizations for preventable diseases and accidents*
- *Reduced rate of deaths of infants and persons under 65*
- *Reduced rate of hospitalizations in mental health facilities (including alcohol and substance abuse)*
- *Reduced rate of youth drug and alcohol use*
- *Increased percent of the population that has adequate private or public health insurance*
- *Reduced number of people who show up at emergency rooms for non-emergency care.*
- *Reduced rate of referral and increased rate of linkage of people referred with services*

[Click here for overall progress data](#)

healthy from birth until death

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Economy: All members of the community have the opportunities, skills and motivation to adequately support themselves and their families with options for upward mobility and increased earnings.

Suggested Indicators

- *Reduced rate of people on public assistance, i.e., Medicaid/CEE/CCDA/Food Stamps/AFDC*
- *Increased per capita income*
- *Reduced poverty rate and prevalence of working poor (150% of poverty)*
- *Net increase in the number of new full- and part-time jobs*
- *Reduced rate of people over age 16 unable to find work*
- *Reduced number of families waiting for subsidized housing*
- *Reduced proportion of the population spending more than 30% of their income on housing*
- *Reduced number of people not having access to work/school/recreation because of transportation difficulties*
- *Reduced rate of utility cut offs for nonpayment*

[Click here for overall progress data](#)



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Natural and Built Environment: All members live in a safe, productive and attractive community with clean and safe air and water, while conserving non-renewable resources.

Suggested Indicators

- *Increased quality indicators of natural environment including clean air and water*
- *Increased affordable housing and rentals*
- *Increased availability of shelter for homeless people*
- *Improved family stability*
- *Improved traffic flow and public transportation*
- *Increased solid waste recycling*
- *Reduced water, electric and petroleum use per capita*
- *Reduced frequency of environmentally caused health problems*
- *Increased acres of protected high-quality natural areas*



Human Services

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safe, productive and attractive community



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Recreation/Cultural: All member of the community have the opportunity to participate in a variety of both passive and active arts and leisure time activities.

Suggested Indicators

- *Increased accessibility of facilities and transportation for elderly and disabled*
- *Increased acres and numbers of both passive and active parks per capita Increased number of cultural events such as museums, theater, concerts Increased rate of participation in community recreational and creative arts programs*
- *Increased number of available recreational programs including life long activities*
- *Increased number of spectators at sporting, cultural and other events*

[Click here for overall progress data](#)

[Appendix C](#) includes data on a number of additional indicators. The sample reflects many of the successes the community has experienced and many of the needs that still remain.

participate in a variety



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CHAPTER 4. CRITICAL ISSUES AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS

A number of issues and concerns were identified by the Citizen Task Force, the Technical Advisory Group, and various individuals in community groups and public forums. Many of these were also identified in past and current studies and in discussions with providers. These issues and the discussions that took place at the Citizen Task Force meetings and at a number of public forums gave rise to the recommendations included in the report. Highlighted among the issues and concerns are:

There is an increased shift to performance-based funding in government and private sector support for social services. Many state and federal programs as well as private foundations have moved to performance-based funding. Allocations are based upon projected outcomes with refunding or incentives based upon documented results. A general concern for “return on investment” and competition for diminishing fiscal resources have contributed to the adoption of a more results-oriented approach in many sectors. These conditions also apply in the Tallahassee area.



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performance-based funding



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Human services delivery is a complex system. The dynamics of demand for service and the community's ability to meet the demand are complicated. Both financial and human resources are limited, and sometimes client requests are endless. Individual or even consortia of agencies cannot do everything despite their good plans or boundless optimism.

There are not enough traditional resources to do all that could or should be done. There are more individual and community needs than can be met with currently allocated resources. The probability of significant increases in outside financial resources is not high given shifting state and federal priorities. Agencies and groups will have to be more creative, collaborative and conscientious to stretch available dollars or encourage greater community giving. They will also have to tap volunteer and other nontraditional, non-fiscal resources as well. Multi-year funding and other longer term support can facilitate more long term planning and assist organizations and groups to work toward greater financial independence.

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resources are limited



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Performance-based measures must also be tied to agency or program goals. A focus on community outcomes is essential. Sometimes, however, a project or agency is intervening in a small but important way that does not directly lead to improved community results. Whatever accountability system is developed, it must be sensitive to the goals of the agency and useful to the agency to encourage participation. If agencies are attending to the context of community outcomes and reporting their results, the cumulative effects can be measured.

The community should hold funding agencies, particularly tax and contribution- supported agencies, accountable for making cost-effective improvements in the quality of life in the community. Little reporting has been done to the larger community about the impact of dollars spent on individual and community health, economic status, safety and the like. Although a great deal of data is available, it only occasionally comes out in the media. There is little discussion of the return on investment. The 21st Century Council's effort to clarify a vision and important outcomes is an attempt to start a community report card. Indicators in the key human service outcome areas can help show the public that their taxes and donation dollars are making a significant difference in the lives of the people around them and justify additional requests for support. And if the evidence is that they are not, citizens can demand changes be made to insure more effectiveness or greater efficiency.

focus on community outcomes



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Data is required for important outcomes, including longitudinal or follow-up data on clients served by local agencies. The FSU-CNAP Preliminary Assessment Report highlighted the fact that few agencies maintain or are able to report data on the impact of their efforts. Important community outcome areas may be addressed with a variety of strategies, but little substantial measurement of results is available, especially for follow-up after initial interventions. This absence of information makes it very difficult to measure the value of programs or make future funding decisions.

Data collection should be cooperative and coordinated. With a unified data source, much information will be readily available to agencies and groups with a need to know. It can also reduce the requirement to duplicate or triplicate client information as well as allow long-term tracking of client successes.

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report data on the impact



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There is little standardization of data categories and limited reported information available from providers regarding client or community impacts or results. Different funding agencies require different types of reporting. Even within outcome areas such as health or economics, agency reporting on outcome indicators differs from the data collected and reported by service providers. There are few common age group categories, demographic characteristic or service delivery types to allow comparisons or analysis across the community. Standardization is an important first discussion at the state and local levels.

Qualitative as well as quantitative data should be reported. One danger of a move to performance-based funding and evaluation is an over reliance on quantitative data. Rich descriptions of program impacts can be equally important to understanding and evaluating long-term effects on individuals and families. Additionally, many results of creative programs are supportive of later, longer-lasting outcomes. These may be hard to measure in the short run. Flexibility will be required for many programs.

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important to understanding



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Confidentiality, especially in the collection, maintenance and reporting of data, is essential. Because of the sensitive nature of many of the personal problems addressed by social service agencies, confidentiality is very important to clients. Data collection of information for reporting and evaluation purposes must be specific enough to allow for tracking individuals as they work through the system. Information about clients should be detailed enough to allow for significant analysis and evaluation. At the same time, individual privacy must be maintained and clients assured that the information will not be used to limit, but enhance their services.

A related issue is, who collects the data and who has access to what information? While sharing information is important in a coordinated delivery system, confidentiality within the system is essential. Protocols and other restricts are technically feasible and must be included.



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privacy must be maintained



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Demands and problems faced by clients often change faster than the system can respond. Agencies and providers often face the same problem that clients do in the search for resources and support to meet new challenges and requests. The system is often cyclical and formal, with a time lag between needs assessment, funding, evaluation and refunding. Like businesses, to meet changing demands, a “just in time” approach is required. Data and information should be on line and current. Moreover, some resources and assets should be reserved to be available for quick responses. Flexibility and openness should characterize decision-making.

Community organizations have a desire for clear direction. Currently in our community there is no unifying vision or direction that helps all human service groups pull in the same direction. The criteria for decision-making by resource allocation agencies and the accountability processes vary greatly. The City and County have talked about a community visioning process for several years, but aside from the 21st Century Council, little action has been taken to articulate and use a shared focus. Many organizations would welcome a consistent and clear description of the community vision that would guide funding and other programmatic decisions that they have to live with. Not only is it welcomed, but it may be an absolute necessity to build unified community support for significant change.

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There will always be great resistance to change. Change is always difficult. For established or new entities and service providers the expectations are no different. Most have to cope with limited funds, uncertain budget cycles and great turnover in staff and volunteers. Many, on the other hand, have been in the business for a number of years and have developed ways of work they are comfortable with. Any system-wide change will have to be gradual and accompanied by a great deal of personal and technical support. A long-term and flexible perspective can bring along rather than push the participating entities toward a more performance-based approach.

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Incentives and a recognition of administrative costs will be necessary to assist change efforts. Funding agencies or consortia can provide very direct incentives to change to a performance-based, greater accountability model. They can require proposals that specify outcome-based targets and effective measurement strategies, and refund only those providers that demonstrate results. As many providers lack the technical skills to move in the results direction quickly, this approach may not be immediately or completely successful. Working with volunteer agencies, giving additional points or preferences in rating criteria and especially offering technical assistance, technology linkages and training may be a better initial approach. Additionally, if the larger community begins to expect more long-term impact reporting from the providers they support, they must recognize the staff time and resources required. When successful efforts are publicized, more agencies will see the value in moving more quickly in that direction.

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Ongoing technical assistance to providers will be necessary from a variety of sources. The Tallahassee area is rich in professional and technical resources that can help providers move to a more performance-based approach. Many community members have volunteered their time and energy to help different groups become more effective. Many funding agencies have provided help, especially related to grant or proposal writing and grant management. On the other hand, there does not exist an organized program like the Small Business Assistance Center which is supported by the university and business communities. With human services and social work programs, a wealth of support can be made available if organized and coordinated with service learning centers and other resources at both Florida State and Florida A & M, Tallahassee Community College and many state government agencies.

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Administrative overhead and staff time spent on paperwork should be minimized. Recommendations for change that would be acceptable to providers must not include an undue burden of paperwork or other administrative tasks. Contributors, volunteers and staff are all in the service arena to help, not do clerical or management tasks. Whatever system components are in place for uniform data or increased performance-based reporting, they should not require inordinate amounts of paperwork or time.

Centralizing some tasks, utilizing electronic databases and reducing proposal writing can all contribute to solutions rather than add to the problems. Any change should have as a goal the reduction of administrative burdens on the providers.



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Common funding cycles and coordinated reporting requirements are important ways to reduce the burden on providers. Many agencies seek support or resources from several sources and must spend a great deal of time preparing different proposals and reports. Recent coordination of RFPs in Leon County has been warmly received by the providers and helped the funding agencies' processes as well. An increase in the coordination and standardization in the proposal stages can free up time to do a better job planning for and reporting significant outcomes and results.

Attention should be paid to unnecessary duplication and overlap. Increases in effectiveness come from both doing the right things and doing things right. Increases in efficiency come from doing the right things in a way that gets the most results for the resources invested. A quick byproduct of a systemic view of local resources and services is a picture of some unneeded overlap and duplication as well as a number of gaps. In some cases, redundancy is necessary, especially when cultural or client sensitive interventions are offered or a large number or range of unmet needs exist. In many other cases, the resources and efforts are better utilized if shifted to address unmet community needs.

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Technology may offer help for some communication and coordination problems but technology alone is not the solution. Technology is not the total answer to all the data collection and reporting problems. It may offer, however, a vehicle to deal with several issues. Coordinated intake could be managed on line as it is in some communities. Increases in state data banks for health, education, welfare and other program areas offer tracking resources for follow-up evaluation. Technology requires skills and equipment, which many volunteers or grassroots providers may not possess. In addition, community-wide networks and data bases, with the attendant setup, monitoring, repair and replacement costs, are necessary prerequisites. Many resources are available in the community in this area.

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Improved interagency communication can benefit clients as well as providers. Communication among funding agencies, particularly about outcomes they are trying to obtain, will better help coordinate the use of resources. Communication among providers can allow for better referrals and a more complete range of services available to individuals and families. The Telephone Counseling and Referral Service, for example, offers a single referral point for individuals that has proven to be very effective.

The concept of interagency communication can be broadened with agencies linked in consortia. Agencies are then able to expand and coordinate the assistance that the community can provide to people in need. Often this can be done with little or no incentives or support. Consortia have been shown to be a very effective delivery model and should be encouraged in all outcome areas.

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There is much to be learned from research and best practices. Many of the resource providers are dependent upon service providers to identify appropriate strategies to offer individuals and families in need. Although these strategies are often creative and effective, they may be based upon assumptions or experiences that have little support from national or international research, or have been found to be ineffective when studied. It is important to the community that effective and recognized best practices be in place and that ineffective and inefficient approaches be reduced or eliminated. Many years of collected wisdom and experience can be centrally collected and systematically applied to local problems.

Clearly not every solution from other locales will fit Leon County's specific requirements. There is, however, much similarity to local problems, particularly in the outcome areas the citizens have identified, to allow adoption or adaptation of effective strategies. Called for is access and openness to new and creative strategies to meet persistent needs.



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Cultural differences in the community are strengths not problems. Many service providers have grown from individuals trying to help other people in their neighborhood. They have a sensitivity to and a caring for the unique strengths and needs of their families and community. This sensitivity is a positive element in our human service delivery and must be utilized. The variety of cultural, ethnic, racial and religious groups in our county can provide a source of creative solutions to many problems. In addition, greater sensitivity to cultural differences among clients can make prevention and intervention strategies much more effective. Unique and special cultural and nontraditional community organizations, groups and individuals should be recognized and encouraged both when identifying assets and resources and also in the funding cycles.

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A collaborative and coordinated system of human services can help leverage additional dollars from outside sources. Many of the service providers in our community have been dependent upon City, County or United Way support for a long time. These groups compete with one another for a limited number of resources. When seeking statewide or national grants they are often at a disadvantage because of their size or inability to offer substantial matching funds. A coordinated human services system can encourage consortia and cooperation to maximize effectiveness and reduce duplication and competition. It can also assist in building partnerships and supporting grant proposals that bring in outside funding. A community proposal showing broad and coordinated support can compete nationally better than any single agency proposal can, as illustrated by the Tallahassee Homeless Coalition's recent successes

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The key federal, state and local policy, funding and provider players **must be involved in the system.** To make any community-wide system work, all elements of the community must “buy in”, be involved and stay supportive. Conflicts over “turf” must be reduced. This often begins or ends with elected officials, such as the City or County Commissioners and the School Board. It also must include the other administrative heads from Public Health, City, County and School Board, United Way and key social services agencies. Community groups such as churches and neighborhoods must feel they have a stake in the system and a voice in the decision- and/or policy-making process. It is easy to say that whoever has the money can make all the key decisions. To be successful in the long run, the larger community must feel involved, heard and respected.

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A renewed human services system should build on community strengths and current successes. The community does not require another bureaucracy. Human Services, however, has been a “loosely coupled system” for a long time with many successes, such as the recent CHSP, Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition, Tallahassee Homeless Coalition and the Juvenile Justice Council. Continuity with these and other established and successful programs is very important. However, there have been many inefficiencies and often little hard evidence of long-term impact on the community. A coordinated system will help better utilize resources, reinforce successful programs and encourage local efforts to “fill in the gaps” in provider services. It can provide the connectedness and continuity required as well as encourage creativity and coordination.

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The human service system should be flexible and encourage creativity and grassroots efforts. Whatever system is in place must be flexible enough to allow for community-based action programs to flourish and for new and creative ideas to be supported. The system also must recognize the difference among agencies which range from sophisticated professionals to part-time volunteers. Any favoritism toward the established infrastructures without room for neighborhood or community-based action programs will alienate many potential supporters and volunteers and dissuade those with new and creative ideas from participating.



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Building up and supporting families and communities should be at the core of the human services effort. Strong families are the source of healthy and productive individuals. Strong communities offer families and individuals the support and resources they require. Much of the current human services delivery system is targeted at meeting critical short term individual and family problems and difficulties. To be successful in reducing the call for services in the future, more attention will have to be paid to enhancing every family's ability to help its members. Community based organizations, such as churches, civic and cultural groups, clubs, sororities and fraternities and the like are also resources that must be made more available to families and individuals before their difficulties become critical or chronic.

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Developing a coordinated and effective human resource system is a long-term endeavor. It will take three to five years to establish and institutionalize any system-wide change. Even then, the system and its component parts must be open enough to continue learning and growing to meet changing conditions and needs. As all the partners grow in their ability to work together to meet shared goals and strategies, new challenges will arise. And not everyone will come on board in the beginning.

If the community shares a vision for the health, happiness and productivity of its citizens and a picture for a support system that is effective and uses resources wisely, the chances for success are good. The vision must be constantly kept in the forefront and decisions must be made based on data that show progress toward making it a reality. If everyone expects success and contributes, success will ensue. It will certainly take time, effort and patience.



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CHAPTER 5. POLICY AND STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

Theory, Research and Best Practices

The current theory and research on organizational effectiveness point to **focus** and **relationships** as the key elements. The size of the Tallahassee and Leon County community is small enough that many positive and productive relationships exist in the human services area among governmental, business and community agencies. What is lacking is a coherent vision and the coordinated commitment to shape the current human services efforts into a dynamic, productive, results-oriented and self-renewing system. This system must fully address current community strengths and needs and prepare to identify and develop local assets to meet future needs. It must reflect top down commitment and support as well as bottom up creativity and contributions.



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A number of essential components of a dynamic system have been identified from the literature on organizational development. They include at a minimum: **coherence, coordination, connectedness, communication, creativity, caring, change and commitment.** They may be called by other names or described in slightly different ways, but effective organizations in any arena have all of these characteristics. Attending to each is essential to helping our current good system to become an outstanding human services system for empowering all members of the community to help each other.

For each of the recommendations specific action steps are suggested. These are not intended to be a comprehensive strategic plan. Rather, it is to show that each of the recommendations is realistic and paints a picture of how they could be made to come about. It would be the responsibility of the coordinating council and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan, benchmarks and timelines. The effectiveness of all of the recommendations that are implemented should be evaluated if the system as a whole is to be truly results based. A summary of the steps, responsibilities and phases is detailed in [Appendix D](#).

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Many providers are driven by a passion to serve rather than being funding driven. The community has several very positive collaborative efforts already working within the human services arena. Primary among these is the CHSP with the United Way, City of Tallahassee, Leon County, and Children and Families. Other coordinated efforts, such as the Juvenile Justice Council, the Tallahassee Coalition for the Homeless, the Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition and the Tallahassee-Leon County Indigent Care Task Force, also offer a strong basis to build from. The Task Force recommendations call for building upon, not replacing, the current networking, coordination and identification of assets and resources efforts. They offer a challenge and a framework for moving to the next level: a fully coordinated, integrated and self-renewing human services system.

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COHERENCE

An effective systemic approach to improving human services delivery requires a focus or clear vision. **The Citizen Task Force recommends that the community vision reflects that articulated by the 21st Century Council: Happy, healthy, responsible, self-sufficient, caring, contributing and cooperative community members, living in good physical and emotional health.**

The recommended human services organizational vision is of a performance-based delivery system where decisions are based upon effectiveness and efficiency on a continuum of care that improves community-valued outcomes.

Decisions about which areas to allocate how many resources, which strategies are best to support, or what programs to continue should be based on the shared vision for the community and the human services system. The picture of the future developed by the community is the best guide for decision-making and monitoring progress.

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The community is increasingly interested in the results of the efforts of public, non-profit and private programs. A greater emphasis on results has led to more performance-based resource allocation models and better reporting of community valued outcome measures. The success in meeting the community vision will be best evidenced by annual report cards related to important indicators of the quality of life in Tallahassee and Leon County.

Coherence Recommended Action

Community Vision

1. Utilize as a frame of reference — in all plans, activities and reports— a vision statement that describes the desired or ideal community member and his or her strengths and characteristics.
2. Publicize the vision statement as belonging to the whole community.
3. Seek stakeholder support for adopting, adapting and using the community vision statement as a key element in each of their organizational plans.
4. Utilize the vision as a criteria for decision-making, judging strategies as to how they well they support the attainment of the vision.
5. Market the vision and supporting strategies and activities together as an ongoing and important package that reflects the values and beliefs of the community.



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Human Services Organizational Vision

1. Seek and build consensus on an organizational vision statement with resource providers and other groups that represent key stakeholders.
2. Publicize the vision statement and related goals for the coordinated human resource system to the community at large.
3. Encourage providers to utilize the organizational and community vision to develop their mission, goals and strategies.
4. Use the organizational vision and goals for decision-making regarding the allocation of resources and other support for agencies, groups and individuals, programs and projects.
5. Monitor and regularly report to the community progress toward implementing the organizational vision.

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Community Example

The 21st Century Council has taken the leadership in the community with regard to articulating a vision that represents a consensus of a wide cross section of individuals. The 1996 Quality of Life Report includes the interrelated elements of the community vision:

We are a community of equals who value the dignity and worth of all people who cooperatively create and maintain a diverse community where:

- We are happy, healthy, responsible, self-sufficient, caring and contributing citizens, living in good physical and emotional health;
- Our sustainable economy provides increasing upward mobility for citizens and creates increased wealth for the community;
- Our natural, built, and cultural environment enables us to live in a safe, productive, and attractive community which acknowledges and integrates with regional economic and ecological issues;



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- Our government is of the people, by the people and for the people of Tallahassee Leon County.
- We communicate and organize our resources to achieve and sustain our ideal vision.

For each aspect of the vision, the report describes an individual goal and a family, employer, neighborhood or government goal. Though ongoing efforts are underway to reach a community-wide consensus on a vision for Tallahassee and Leon County, the 21st Century Council has made the most significant start.



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COMMITMENT

No plan for systematic change will be successful without a commitment from the key players or organizations who will have to implement those changes. Many human services plans in the past have not been fully realized because of a lack of enthusiasm or support for their conclusions.

The Citizen Task Force recommends that all the key resource providers commit to implementing a coordinated performance-based human services delivery system by building upon current successful partnerships, appointing members to a coordinating council and supporting council activities through dedicated staff and contributions for operating expenses.

The cost for coordinating council activities can be covered by savings from a reduction in duplicated staff and organizational efforts. Increased efficiencies will come from a single RFP process, coordinated resource allocation, shared monitoring, joint grant or foundation proposals and other benefits.



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The CHSP, Juvenile Justice Council and other community- initiated efforts have proved to be effective when all interested and affected parties join to support a coordinated approach. These efforts should be expanded to include all important players and all available resources. An effective way of work is evolving that should be built upon. The efforts, however, must be formalized and made more open to the community if they are to be effective in the long-term.

The coordination council concept does involve the giving up of some autonomy on the part of some participants. The involvement and tangible support of all the key players, working in consensus mode, can lead to expanded influence rather than less. What must be seen is real, not token support, with a shift of staff and resources that reduces the bureaucracy while building commitment and participation.

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Commitment Recommended Action

1. Boards, commissions and other resource providers adopt a resolution supporting a coordinated performance-based approach to human services delivery in our community.
2. Resource agencies identify a coordinating agency, consortium or council, such as the CHSP, that may be utilized to coordinate human service efforts in the community, building upon already established relationships and successful practices.
3. Resource providers identify funds and other resources that may appropriately flow through a coordinating council and what conditions or limitations that might apply to any and all funds.
4. Resource providers identify current staff and staff time spent in soliciting, allocating, monitoring and evaluating services.
5. Resource providers identify possible savings or improvements that would accrue from shared or dedicated staff, space or other materials, equipment or resources, or contracted services that might be provided to a coordinating council.
6. Agencies and commissions establish evaluation criteria and processes to track and report cost neutral or cost savings and process improvements accrued from joint activities of a coordinated human services delivery system.
7. Agencies and commissions approve interagency agreements, assignments, contracts and other arrangements to share staff and resources for joint human services coordinated activities.

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Community Example

The Community Human Service Partnership (CHSP) represents an excellent example of a commitment of funds and staff time to a joint effort. There was a lot of risk for all parties involved in the common issuing of a single Request For Proposals and sharing the decision-making process with the larger community. Although final allocations were made by each agency according to the rules they had to operate under, such as United Way funds to member agencies, HUD funds for restricted purposes and the like, the commitment was made to the joint process and all stayed in to the end.

As a result of the effort, great strides were made in coordinating services and adding more performance-based elements to required proposals and reports. Staff working together broadened their perspectives, learned of additional activities that were going on in the community and networked with new contacts for possible future relationships. A coordinating council was shown to be effective in setting guidelines and working out processes. It may have taken a little more time up front and involved more decision makers in establishing the way of work, but it set a pattern for the future that will be hard to back away from.



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COORDINATION

Significant steps have been taken toward coordinating resource allocation in the community through the Community Human Service Partnership. Other community resources, especially active and committed individuals, groups and associations, should be coordinated as well. These resources can then be targeted to support activities that have proved to be successful as well as directed to identified gaps and needs in neighborhoods and other areas.

The Citizen Task Force recommends the Community Human Service Partnership be expanded to include resources from additional state and local, private and public providers through an expanded coordinating council supported by staff contributed from different agencies that currently provide resources.

By working together, few or no new positions are required and duplication of efforts can be reduced. The coordinating council can provide for a common application process, multiple agency funding, reduction in duplication of services, common data collection elements, and comprehensive needs and impact analysis. Additionally, coordinated community-wide efforts for seeking substantial additional outside resources have been very successful in several communities, especially when supported by a performance-based system.

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A coordinating council with additional community-based representatives can provide leadership, serve as a focal point for examining human services needs, and identify available service providers and other assets and resources. It can bring to the decision-making process the results of recent research and best practices in the area and state, nationally and internationally. No resources should be drawn from service agencies to fund a council, and its success should be measured by the reduced duplication and increased efficiencies that it brings about. Greater community involvement can lead to greater community support.

The council should not be another bureaucracy, but a facilitating structure that reduces barriers facing providers who currently must deal with multiple resources agencies. The council should provide important linkages between agencies and providers. There would be a single source that the community could turn to look for collecting and reporting accountability data, establishing information networks, assessing assets and resources, lining providers and clients needs. These and other important tasks the council will be able to coordinate.

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Coordination Recommended Action

1. Establish a coordination model, staffing requirements and decision-making strategies with identified savings and benefits to clients and agencies, building upon the CHSP.
2. Assess the successes and problems experienced in current community partnership efforts.
3. Research coordination strategies of other communities in Florida and other states, their problems and successes.
4. Establish a process for ongoing identification of resources and assets from all sources available to the community.
5. Identify staff tasks and timelines for human resources allocations, monitoring, assistance, follow-up and evaluation from all agencies.
6. Market the coordination model to appropriate agencies, commissions, boards and/or councils.
7. Implement a coordination strategy with participating agencies according to agreed-upon plans.

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Community Example

The Juvenile Assessment and Receiving Center (JARC) offers a strong case for the benefits of a fully coordinated effort that is both broad-based and comprehensive. The JARC is a cooperative partnership between community agencies and local government. Included are Capital City Youth Services, Inc., Department of Juvenile Justice, DISC Village, Leon County Circuit Court, Leon County School Board, Leon County Sheriff's Office, the State Attorney and Public Defender, HRS Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental health, Tallahassee Police Department, and Short-term Diagnostic Stabilization Outpatient Services.

The JARC encompasses three separate components: the Truancy Center, the Booking/Intake Unit and the Addiction Receiving Facility, and is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Staff from several agencies are co-located at the facility to manage these as well as other services such as case management, alternative services, treatment alternatives and outpatient services.

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The goal of the coordinated program is to be a one-stop center to offer prevention, early intervention, quick processing of arrests, biosocial and substance abuse assessments, psychiatric/psychological evaluations, physical evaluations, links to other needed services and case management. A comprehensive system of data collection has been established, enabling access to background information from the Leon County School Board, Department of Juvenile Justice, DISC Village, the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and the Clerk of the Court.

The governing board of the center reflects the commitment of all to coordinate action in an area that is of great importance to all segments of the community. Dealing with a real problem of juveniles in trouble, the coordinated and combined effort has made more effective use of available resources as well as intervened positively in the lives of many teens.

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CONNECTEDNESS

In the Tallahassee area, over 290 organizations, groups and agencies of all types offer human services to people in need. Except for a few consortia or informal networks, the only common link seems to be inclusion in the Telephone Counseling and Referral Service Community Resource Directory. To avoid duplication and overlap, help identify gaps in services and better link resources to people in need, a formal network should be established.

The Citizen Task Force recommends establishing a server-based networking system that allows for coordinated intake and referral, shared and customized client records, inter-agency electronic communication, client tracking and outcome-based program evaluation.



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Client, process and outcome data bases should be customized to serve the needs of the individual agencies, but coordinated to permit evaluation by outcome areas. The Citizen Task Force recognizes that it will take time and resources to develop this type of system, make the required technology available to the agencies and provide required training and support. Not to be forgotten are the other non-funded agencies and groups that provide services to the community. The connected system must be community-wide and cut across the lines of governmental, organizational and sectional boundaries. Use of a multidimensional matrix for ongoing resource and needs assessment will make available essential information to all stakeholders.

The networking component of the human services delivery system can provide a response to many of the issues raised by the study. Data categories can be standardized and information on client and community results expanded. Information on research and best practices can be made more readily available. Over a period of several years and coordinated with other local, state, and federal networks, a comprehensive, flexible, useful and open network can be developed.



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Connectedness Recommended Action

1. Contact existing community technology groups, such as Florida InfoPort or Tallahassee FreeNet, to assist with the network design task.
2. Design network/server requirements and cost estimates for communication, hardware, software and training.
3. Examine existing community or government technology resources for a network server that could be used to establish the system.
4. Identify software requirements for communication, record keeping and reporting and available vendors.
5. Identify existing and potential contributors of communications and hardware resources for agencies and service providers.
6. Identify informal networks for communication that can be strengthened or utilized.
7. Develop training design and training resources.
8. Develop incentives for providers to join the network.
9. Design client data collection, access, record keeping, reporting, confidentiality and quality control protocols and monitoring strategies coordinated with state and federal initiatives.
10. Field test with pilot volunteer participants.
11. Revise and make human services information network available communitywide.

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Community Example

The Telephone Counseling and Referral Service described previously offers a good example of an organization which has made connectedness its primary goal. Certainly connecting to people who are in crisis or are experiencing difficulties is what they do best. In addition, TCRS has for many years maintained the most comprehensive directory of human services providers in the community. As a referral service it has linked up thousands of people with agencies and groups that can provide additional assistance.

TCRS participation in the Florida Information and Referral Services project is an example of its attempt to remain on the cutting edge of technology. As a pilot for the electronic information system, they offer to our community the experience and understanding of the complex task of developing, implementing and maintaining such a service. They also offer an example of openness to new ideas coupled with a sensitivity to individual community members and their private struggles that all organizations have to keep in mind.

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COMMUNICATION

Clear and effective communication is important at all levels of any system. Concern for client confidentiality is also paramount. Decision-makers, however, have a need for complete information to assess program effectiveness and allocate resources. The community also deserves information regarding the results and benefits their time, energy and dollars are supporting.

The Citizen Task Force recommends that applications for resources and reports of results emphasize community strengths and performance results related to the outcome areas identified in the system-wide vision and that they be shared with all parts of the community.

It is recognized that many grass roots or voluntary groups may not have the technical expertise to include a performance-based approach in their proposals, record keeping and reporting. The use of community resources, especially our universities and retired professionals, can provide much-needed support and assistance.

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Annual reports to decision makers, resource providers and the community should emphasize the progress that is being made toward improving critical and important outcome indicators. The numbers served or amount of services provided are important but insufficient measures. The improvements that are being made in the quality of individual and community life are what the community finds important. Human services should be marketed in a professional way as an effective community approach to community problems and needs that deserve support from all segments of society.

It is also important that the communication system emphasizes the availability of assets and resources in the community. The citizen Task Force supports an ongoing community effort to assess and make available the individuals, groups and organizations that can provide important services. Because individuals should be able to find out who is available in their block or neighborhood to help them with a need or a problem, an ongoing process for identifying and publicizing strengths and opportunities should be maintained.

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Communication Recommended Action

1. Identify and maintain on line a complete directory of all human services providers in the community.
2. Make available to individuals, groups and organizations community strengths and resources through electronic, paper and informal networks.
3. Construct and maintain a current data base of needs and available resources categorized by outcome area, age group(s) served and service type.
4. Utilize needs, asset and resource data to identify and communicate to providers gaps or duplication in services.
5. Utilize performance-based and qualitative assessments to identify strengths and successes in human services delivery systems and community and neighborhood assets that may not be part of a formal system.
6. Support sharing of information among providers to facilitate assisting and/or referring clients with a minimum of delay, duplication or paperwork.
7. Maximize coordination of benefits through project service centers, technical assistance centers or consortia.
8. Market the successes of agencies, consortia, the coordinated resource model, performance-based funding and improvements in the quality of life indicators for the community.

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Community Example

The "CARE-NET" Project described in the Tallahassee-Leon County Indigent Health Care Task Force Report is an example of the type of communication that links data from needs assessment to performance based outcomes with a coordination of benefits and resources. The project addresses the demonstrated need for episodic and primary care to reduce the inappropriate use of emergency room services. A coalition of members of the medical community, HRS, HMOs, hospitals, City, County and School Board working together developed a performance-based plan to build the needed infrastructure for services.

The project's objectives include increasing the number of patients being served and providing preventive treatment and aftercare, increasing available funding, and improving the quality of available care to those who did not have access previously. In addition to the proposed integration of services, the project recommends community based information and health awareness programs to obtain community-wide involvement and support. The implementation of the plan has just begun with promising results for children and their families.



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Two additional suggested activities reflect other recommendations in this Citizen Task Force Report. One is the identification of community assets, such as retired medical professionals who might be willing to support expanded services with a few hours of their time. Another is the development of a demographic data base and a standardized and coordinated patient tracking system to assist in program planning, evaluation and coordination of services. This electronic link to the hospitals and other service centers, coupled with the networking of the agencies represented in the coalition offer communication vehicles that add to the effectiveness of the projects efforts and gain further support from the community.

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CREATIVITY

Too often in the human services area there are more good strategies and ideas looking for support or an opportunity to serve than there are funds to support them. At the same time there are many clients with needs that cannot be adequately met by the current community providers. Finding a way to encourage creativity and grassroots involvement in human services programs while improving efficiency and effectiveness is a challenge. However, many strengths and resources exist in communities and neighborhoods that can be encouraged, supported and utilized.

The Citizen Task Force recommends the use of an ongoing needs, asset and resource assessment process to monitor the gap between individual and family issues and their resolution, and to identify and support services and community based programs that reflect research, best practice and creative problem solving.



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An emphasis on efficiency alone may steer resources to larger agencies with more paid professional staff. An effort by the coordinating council should be made to capitalize on the wide array of citizen talent and interest in community service from many different segments of Tallahassee and Leon County. This can be done through small incentives, grants or other supported projects that build on local strengths. Many areas in our community do not realize the resources that they have living among them, and an effort must be made to identify and highlight these assets on an ongoing basis.

When evaluating the success of programs or providers, a broader measure than numerical results is called for. Results-based accountability and reporting is more than just numbers of people served. Beyond quantitative data are qualitative descriptions that reflect long term impacts and substantial results. Measures of quality, such as long term benefits to individuals through case studies or other impacts on families that contribute to improvements in their quality of life across several indicators are important.



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Creativity Recommended Action

1. Identify key outcome areas, age groups and/or delivery strategies where needs are not being met.
2. Survey locally, statewide and nationally best practices and current effective research results which may suggest new or different delivery strategies or programs to meet community needs.
3. Support a coordinated effort to identify neighborhood and community assets that may be underutilized or not readily known.
4. Encourage and support with technical assistance community based groups and organizations to adopt or adapt best practices or research validated strategies in areas of need.
5. Identify, publicize and support creative efforts by community individuals, groups and organizations to solve community problems.
6. Provide seed money, technical assistance and other human or material resources to community based individuals, projects and programs willing to risk trying new and innovative strategies to solve difficult or ongoing client problems.
7. Encourage networking and consortia approaches to addressing complex problems with multi-faceted and coordinated approaches to seeking funds, coordinating human and other resources and completing management and reporting tasks.

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Community Example

The Leon Interagency for Kids (LINK) is a family focused collaborative council formed to serve children up to age five and their families. The council involves a wide range of partners, including Kids, Inc., Brehon Institute, Capital Area Community Action Agency, Children's Home Society, Department of Children and Families, and Leon County Public Health Unit, the Department of Education, Easter Seal Society, Leon County Schools, Tallahassee Pediatric Foundation, private child care providers and family representatives.

Working together to provide early intervention and support services for all at-risk children through age five and their families, the council operates with several creative and culturally sensitive guiding principles. These include the belief that the family should determine its personal needs and have access to services to meet them. Culturally relevant and sensitive services should be individualized and family focused, accessible to all children and families, responsive to changes affecting the families, and directed toward recognizing and building on the strengths of the family unit. These services should be provided at the earliest time possible and in a natural setting. They should also be comprehensive and coordinated across agencies.



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The strategic plan for the council supports public and private provider cooperation, understanding their respective purposes and restrictions, avoiding duplication and gaps in service and promoting cost-effective programming. Additionally, access to prevention and early intervention for all children and their families is emphasized along with promoting public awareness and outreach through local community organizations and providers. Support for parent training and other skill development, cost sharing, interagency agreements and automated record keeping are also called for.

This project shows that public and private agencies can cooperate and support one another in a way that maintains the strengths of community based services while assuring quality, providing assistance, and offering support. The creative approaches to the requirements of hundreds of children and their families that respect their culture and take advantage of their neighborhood resources are good examples for other coordinated efforts to examine.



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CARING

A community-wide unity of purpose and greater integration of practice will only come about when differences among ethnic, racial or religious groups are seen as strengths rather than problems. These strengths can be viewed system wide, community-wide and on an individual level.

The Citizen Task Force recommends that a sensitivity to and consideration of cultural differences permeate all decision-making and characterize the delivery of services in the community.

The strength of a community depends upon the recognized strengths of its individual members. Working from a strength rather than a deficit model will support a sensitivity to the cultural, racial and economic differences that constitute our population. Prevention and intervention strategies must begin with client strengths and successes, no matter how few. Citizen support and assistance must begin with family and neighbors, a resource base that has not been taken full advantage of. Building upon personal and familial relationships is essential. People will not pay attention to what is said or done if they are not convinced that one really cares.

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Demands made upon the human resources delivery system often change faster than the system can respond. The informal networks in the community: church, social, fraternal, athletic and the like must be encouraged and supported as well. Some duplication and overlap may be required to provide options that reflect cultural and community differences. When a coordinated human services system recognizes and supports community and cultural strengths, it moves a long way toward encouraging new and creative grassroots efforts.



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Caring Recommended Action

1. Identify through an ongoing needs and resource assessment culturally-based and culturally sensitive characteristics of the community.
2. Identify culturally rich individuals, groups, associations and organizations and highlight the strengths and resources of each.
3. Invite and involve community-based providers to initiate and coordinate programs and services to meet identified local needs.
4. Identify and support programs that work with clients' strengths rather than only a deficit model.
5. Support efforts to identify and develop grass roots community leaders who can initiate and coordinate local efforts.
6. Give priority to providing volunteer and community-based groups technical assistance in program development, application, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.
7. Invite members from the community who reflect the community's diversity to participate on boards, councils and other decision-making or coordinating groups and provide them a significant voice or vote.

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Community Example

An inspiring example of caring is the story of the Tallahassee Boys Choir. Formed by an individual looking for a way to make a difference in the lives of at-risk young men, the effort had its roots in the community and is strongly supported by the community. Primarily a volunteer effort running on donations, prayers, and the strong support of the FSU School of Social Work, the choir now includes over 90 young men who have found success and pride in a way they may never have thought possible.

The success in competitions and the wonderful reception they have received from people around the country are small in comparison to the successes the choir members find as a result of doing more than they thought they could. Hard work has paid off with opportunities greater than a chance to sing and travel as academic achievements and increased educational aspirations have become the norm. Due to the commitment of the director and the parents and guardians who support their children, the community sees an outstanding example of caring enough to build upon the hidden strengths and talents of its youth.

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CHANGE

Many factors are involved in the ongoing call for change. Critical among them are the increasing numbers of individuals seeking assistance in the community for problems ranging from homelessness and drug abuse to teen pregnancy and equal access to adequate health care. On the other side of the coin are millions of dollars annually spent on programs to help individuals and families, with little data to show their effectiveness or improvements in community outcomes. Some changes are being made through the cooperation of several resource providers and consortium efforts of some service providers. Much more has to be done if significant improvements in community outcomes are to be obtained.

The Citizen Task Force recommends that a significant change take place in the process for identifying and allocating resources and services to reinforce a coordinated performance-based approach to funding and reporting results that makes a difference in individual and community outcomes.

Prevention and asset development, access and linkages, intervention and aftercare, and accountability for results are all necessary elements of an effective system. Change just for change's sake is rarely appropriate. Change to increase the effectiveness of what is being done is always important. Change for meeting needs in a changing world is essential for future successes.

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A coordinated allocation process can facilitate decisions based upon an ongoing monitoring of community needs and priorities. Gaps between desired outcomes and present situations provide clear direction for new or innovative programs or a shift in provider emphasis. A constantly updated resource and asset directory is required to provide information and data on programs that are working well and which should be continued or strengthened.

Of equal importance is discontinuing or retooling what is not working effectively and shifting those resources to areas where gaps exist or to expand successful programs. The goal is to reduce individual reliance on formal human service programs in the future. This can happen with a renewed emphasis on prevention, a better utilization of neighborhood and community action, and support for programs of quality that assist individuals in a holistic way.

Change is not easy for any part of the system. People resist change because they are not sure if they will really be better off with something different. Institutions and organizations resist change because it disturbs the equilibrium, influence and management controls they have developed. Incentives and motivation to change are necessary to move from the status quo.

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Much motivation can come from data that show that some things are not working effectively. Another comes from citizens, contributors or clients who demand different approaches. Another is competition promising to be more effective for the same dollars. People and organizations will change when they see the necessity to do something different, have a workable plan and are willing to make the commitment. The citizen Task Force recognizes that changing the system will take time, but offers realistic recommendations in each of the areas that will support organizations and groups to begin or continue the process.

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Change Recommended Actions

1. Identify anticipated changes in resources from state, federal and local sources.
2. Analyze anticipated future changes and conditions related to community assets, client needs and community problems.
3. Survey shifts in philosophy and strategic plans of organizational, institutional and community approaches to human services delivery.
4. Develop increased performance-based or results-oriented approaches to funding decisions to reflect changes in state, federal and community expectations and requirements.
5. Provide ongoing technical assistance to providers to assist in required performance-based evaluations for all funding proposals.
6. Provide ongoing technical assistance through a trained cadre of staff and volunteers to providers to assist in required results-based reporting as part of initial or renewal contracts and reports.
7. Encourage funding and other resource decision makers to utilize data on community strengths and assets, program outcomes, provider performance, identified needs and resources gaps and duplication when prioritizing and making allocations.

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8. Recognize, support and reinforce successful individual and group efforts, programs, consortia, and especially community-based or non-profit agencies and their unique and creative contributions to the community.
9. Maintain a flexible and constantly reflective and improving system that seeks to implement the community's vision rather than maintain its own status quo.



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Community Example

No greater change faces the community and the state in the human services area than welfare reform. The state and federal focus has shifted from a safety net for all citizens to cost reduction in process and deliver. There is great concern that the mandate to reduce the number of people receiving assistance will result in many individuals and families being abandoned by their government to fend for themselves, despite their problems or difficulties. The Big Bend Jobs and Education Council/ WAGES Region 5 Coalition offers a coordinated approach in response to the mandated changes in the welfare process.

Working within a performance-based environment, the Council recognizes the importance of follow-up and long-term support to obtain significant results for individuals. They have set their program goals not just to get citizens off public assistance. They want to help individuals capitalize on their strengths or develop new ones to gain employment that will offer them a decent standard of living.

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Coordinating support services, one-stop centers for assistance, electronic information bases and client tracking are all forward-looking efforts and creative responses to change. Coupled with a holistic approach that looks at each individual's strengths and situational requirements and the linkages to community assets and resources, the Council aims to match those looking for workers to those looking for work. The cooperative training, employment, child care, transportation and health services promote effective use of other agency resources as well. The response to the legislative changes that are happening in our community through the Council is sound, forward looking and takes advantage of research and best practices from around the country.

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CONCLUSION

The Citizen Task Force recognizes that significant change will take time, especially when some stakeholders, content with the status quo, will be reluctant to admit any change is really called for. Many agencies and service providers agree that changes in the system should be made, as long as they are significant and well thought out. It is important to keep and enhance what is working and not to create a new bureaucracy or additional problems.

Believing that the community, as represented by City and County government, was open to the same broad review and extensive recommendations that characterized previous work by the council, the 21st Century Council agreed to conduct the study This report is consistent with previous efforts of citizen members of the council to suggest significant steps to increase the quality of life for all members of the Tallahassee and Leon County community. Hopefully, it will spur community action to reinforce and build upon what is working and take bold new steps to change what is not.



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increase the quality of life



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Human Services Interactive CD-ROM Reports

The Appendices listed below are available on the *Human Services Interactive* CD-ROM produced by the 21st Century Council. They are connected through the use of hyperlinks, and provide a rich resource of information concerning the delivery of human services in our community. The reports are created as Adobe Acrobat files, and the software is included on the CD-ROM. Personal computers using Microsoft Windows 95 will be able to view the documents without installing any software. Windows 3.1 user's may have to install Adobe Acrobat Reader 3.01 with Search to their computers to view the files. The *Human Services Interactive* CD-ROM also contains this report in 8.5 x 11 paper format, as well as a computer screen formatted version. The Matrix is also linked to the Resource Matrix Report.

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APPENDIX A: FSU CNAP NEEDS AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT REPORT (HSNA.PDF)

This report provides information resulting from the needs and assets survey, for use by the Citizens' Committee. The needs and assets survey is a building-block assessment of what current human services agencies used, did, delivered, and the impact they had for the unlucky and the unfortunate. Those data, along with other information, were then used by a broadly-based Citizens Advisory Committee to make specific recommendations concerning future human services strategies.

APPENDIX B: HUMAN SERVICES RESOURCE MATRIX REPORT (SURVEY.PDF)

Two hundred and fifty-five Leon county human service agencies were surveyed to determine: what types of services are offered by each organization, the age range of clientele served, the type of human delivery strategy, the number of clients served per year and the number of self-sufficient or self-reliant individuals after receiving services. Then the agencies were categorized according to the age range of clientele served and delivery strategies.



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APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY OUTCOME INDICATOR TREND DATA REPORT (SURVEY.PDF)

Area, Data Source, and Outcome Indicators for 94, 95, and 96.

APPENDIX D: ACTION PLAN STEPS AND TIME FRAMES (ACTION.PDF)

No report is complete without a place to start. These actions steps are some possible ways that the citizen's report can be implemented.



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This report is based on this vision which was articulated in the 21st Century Council's 1996 Quality of Life Report.

We are a community of equals who value the dignity and worth of all people who cooperatively create and maintain a diverse community where:

We are happy, healthy, responsible, self-sufficient, caring, and contributing citizens, living in good physical and emotional health.



Family Goal: Personal, intimate, and loving partnerships form and sustain themselves. Every child is secure and loved.

Individual Goal: We make well-reasoned, thoughtful, challenging, and healthy lifelong decisions. We are life-long learners. We respect the rights of others. No person is under the care, custody or control of another person, agency, or substance.

Our sustainable economy provides increasing upward mobility for citizens and creates increasing wealth for the community.



Employer Goal: Our businesses earn sustainable profits. A diversity of economic opportunities exists for all citizens. Our economic base is expanding through development of exportable products and services. Employers produce goods and services which improve the quality of life.

Individual Goal: We have the opportunities, skills, and motivation to support ourselves and our families. Every family earns at least as much as it costs to live.

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Our natural, built, and cultural environment enables us to live in a safe, productive, and attractive community which acknowledges and integrates with regional economic and ecological issues.



Neighborhood Goal: We function as a community of interconnected neighborhoods, capable of completing trips safely, effectively, and efficiently. Leon County's environment is healthful and aesthetically pleasing. Wildlife and plant life species and their habitats are maintained as valuable resources. Canopy roads and greenspaces are maintained as community cultural and scenic resources.

Individual Goal: Our air and water are clean and safe. Energy requirements are met while conserving non-renewable fuel resources. We actively participate in artistic, recreational, and/or athletic events.

Our government is of the people, by the people, for the people of Tallahassee Leon County. We communicate and organize our resources to achieve and sustain our ideal vision.



Governmental Goal: Each government agency is organized and funded to meet its objectives and contribute to the common good. They operate effectively with sound fiscal management and planning.

Individual Goal: The city and county governments provide quality services and are responsive to each citizen. Citizens contribute to the common good through financial support and personal involvement in government and service organizations.



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The Honorable Steve Meisburg,
 City Commissioner

The Honorable Gary Yordon,
 County Commissioner

The Honorable Tom Young,
 School Board Member



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Glossary

21st Century Council- A non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in Tallahassee/Leon County. Its goal is to transform the vision into reality through participation by the community

Administrative overhead – the money or people necessary to keep an organization running and reporting

Access/Intake- Services that link individuals in needs with the agencies, organizations or individuals that can assist them

Aftercare/follow-up – Services provided to maintain or enhance the interventions someone has received.

Best practices – strategies that have successfully worked in a particular situation

Community – A group of people united by common purpose or share experiences.

Cultural Differences- Practices, rituals or behaviors that differ from one group to another

Data – information that is gathered for a particular purpose

Goal – An outcome or desired state that a group or organization hope to reach.

Family - any unit of people who live and work together on a daily basis and define themselves as family



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Funding agencies – people or organizations that supply the money for human services

Holistic- Big picture containing all parts, but functionally only operating as a whole.

Incentives- pay-off that may be expected as a reward for doing something

Indicators – Data that reflects attainment of results

Intervention – Providing of services that move an identified individual or family from crisis or difficulty toward wellness or self-sufficiency

Learning Community- Communities that are coping with change and learning from it (Robert Garrett)

Matrix – A Multi-dimensional (usually two or three dimensions) chart of interrelated items

Mission – The primary purpose for an organization's functioning

Needs - Gaps between desired outcomes and those currently attained

Objective – The results that a group or organization is trying to obtain

Performance-based- did we do what we said we were going to do and can we prove it

Prevention – activities that enable individuals and families to avoid problems, difficulties or being designated as an at-risk individual or group

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Qualitative- Whether the task is done correctly or positive results that cannot be counted

Quantitative- How many or a number count of the results

Report Card – A status report that reflects the attainment of results

Results-based- Action or activities that are influenced by data-based decisions or attainments of impact on outcomes

Research- Formal way of testing theories through collecting and comparing data

Service providers- People who deliver activities or programs to others.

Strategy – An activity that an individual or group uses to reach a goal or attain an objective.

Systems- A collection of parts which interact with each other to function as a whole

Systemic- Interaction of systems

Theory- A way of explaining a phenomena or event that can be used to predict a future occurrence

Vision- A picture of desired outcome, state or condition

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