

# Florida Children's Preparedness Coalition Conference Call Minutes

January 30, 2014  
10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

## **Welcome and Roll Call - Attendees:\***

John Wilgis  
Ashley Lee  
Mike Haney  
Rex Northup  
Tommy Schechtman  
Julie Robert  
Donna Paquette  
Stephanie Anspaugh-Naples  
Cesar Rivera  
Kelly Stannard  
Shawn Hamm  
Victor Johnson  
Gail LaRosa  
Jacquelyn McCullough  
Stephanie Brown – Facilitator

## **Children's Disaster Preparedness Program Update**

Stephanie Brown opened the meeting by providing an update on the Children's Disaster Preparedness Program and shared the following:

- The Website Toolkit is continuously being updated. Members were asked to go to the site and check for resources and links they feel will be beneficial to their work.
- As new children's preparedness-related information comes in, the information is being compiled into "Information Blasts" to share with the coalition in one neat package.
- Florida's Children's Disaster Preparedness Program presented on "Creating Partnerships in Children's Preparedness" with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Second Wednesday Webinar Series. The presentation highlighted our children's preparedness activities, goals, and strategies.
- The program was able to establish connections with the Florida Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Program and the Florida Crisis Consortium (FCC) to collaborate on pediatric issues. Stephanie and Victor Johnson, the Community Resilience Program Administrator, attended Pediatric Behavioral Health training with the FCC in November and an FCC meeting in December. Both meetings were very informative and provided insight on children's behavioral & mental health issues. Stephanie also attended the most recent EMSC meeting last week to begin a partnership to benefit children preparedness planning, learn how the programs can work together to accomplish their similar but different missions, and teamed with their Disaster Workgroup.

Dr. Rex Northup noted his attendance at the EMSC meeting as well and shared how there are similarities in some of the goals for both groups, especially in the areas of training and education and the desire to create reunification guidance. Stephanie stated she noticed this as well, and once the Coalition's workgroups are established they can work jointly with members from the EMSC to have comprehensive shared documents/outcomes.

The EMSC is care-focused from a provider and hospital/facility standpoint and supports Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers to be ready to handle children in disasters and emergencies. The Children's Preparedness Coalition was created to address general public readiness that also includes providers, schools, families, businesses, etc. and ensure coordination, integration, and prioritization at all levels of disaster planning with the goal of state intra- and inter-agency organizations coordinating and incorporating public health, medical, mental and behavioral health, and safety needs of all children into their plans.

The Coordinators for the EMSC and our Children's Preparedness Coalition have agreed to work in tandem so that there is no overlap in missions and duties.

### **Review of Coalition Structure & By-Laws Leadership Setup**

After the October 2013 meeting to assess the status of the Children's Preparedness Coalition after its year-long hiatus due to the vacancy at DOH, it was very apparent there was a need to pull together as many pieces as possible and move Florida's children preparedness efforts forward. Stephanie reiterated that since children are near-and-dear to all of us, it's important to regroup, rebuild, and accomplish our goals.

Stephanie proposed going forward with the current By-Laws leadership structure which calls for a Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Coordinator to lead the group and the Steering Committee (also outlined in the By-Laws). After a brief review of Article VII, she also proposed having Coalition Champions and Workgroup Leaders who would represent the Children's Preparedness Coalition on the local level and lead the various workgroups to accomplish the coalition's goals and strategies respectively. The Coordinator position would serve as the meeting facilitator for all groups and provide the necessary support to the full coalition, Steering Committee, and workgroups to accomplish their tasks and goals.

In discussing the previous By-Laws and their setup, Dr. Rex Northup asked the program not to assume that everyone was fully familiar with the past structure and to take the time to explain the set up for the group. Stephanie agreed and shared the role and duties of the Chair and Co-Chair, and explained how the Steering Committee works with the Chair and Co-Chair to champion the coalition's projects and ensure they are accomplished.

### **Coalition Goals & Needed Workgroups to Move Children's Preparedness Forward**

There are several strategies/goals that the program believes will bring strength to children's preparedness in this state by which this coalition will be vital in helping to accomplish.

The current goals and strategies for the Coalition include:

- Strategic Planning – For our Children's Preparedness initiatives in the state, to track progress, improvements, target outcomes, and performance measures. Having valuable stakeholder input on plans help to shape our efforts to build an effective Children's Preparedness infrastructure.
- Develop Children's Preparedness State Guidance – As the experts in this field, the coalition is the perfect source to provide input on developing state guidance to best benefit children in disasters in emergencies.
- Conduct Gap Analyses – To define gaps, as well as identify current practices, programs and resources for effective planning. These analyses will help the department to develop effective: Plans for the state (as noted above), Trainings & Exercises – To help build capacity around the state and prepare responders to better serve children in disasters and emergencies, and Enhanced Communications – Such as Brochures and web-based tools to reach various audiences and populations (Schools & Organizations, Parents/Guardians, SpNS, etc.) as well as e-mail "blasts" to the coalition to communicate new developments in this field.

- Make Recommendations to the Department – Regarding annual priorities for Children’s Preparedness, with the focus of doing what’s needed to bring Florida to the height of children’s preparedness.

It was also asked if future Coalition work and minutes could be posted to the website as those who are serving and may want to serve may find the information helpful. The answer was yes, as the program is planning to restructure the website and can add a link/page specifically for the Children’s Preparedness Coalition. This page can serve as a repository for minutes, documents, etc.

### **Moving Forward**

Volunteers were requested from the Coalition to serve as the Chair and Co-Chair, as well as Champions and Leaders for pending Coalition projects; persons who would thereby make up the group’s Steering Committee. Stephanie noted to the group that she doesn’t anticipate a huge demand on their time if they volunteer to serve, as the program will serve as the backbone and “engine” for the Chairs, Steering Committee, and any workgroups developed.

The following persons volunteered for the Steering Committee: Tommy Schechtman, Rex Northup, Mike Haney, John Wilgis volunteered Ashley Lee in her absence, and Andy Rucks (who volunteered through follow-up e-mail). There were no candidates for Chairperson or Co-Chairperson at this time. Stephanie thanked all who volunteered and let them know she’d make plans for an initial meeting for the Steering Committee in the next couple of weeks. Also, she will poll the absent members to see if they are also willing to serve.

Victor Johnson posed the question of moving the meeting time to an evening or weekend to possibly make it easier for some to participate. Several noted that this option would work better for them, so it was suggested to use the Survey Monkey tool to poll the group on the best meeting days and times and postpone the April 10, meeting in favor of a new date from the survey results. Also, suggestions were requested for other potential members/organizations to join this Coalition.

Gail LaRosa posed a closing question to the group about possible lessons learned from the snow incident in Atlanta this week and how this coalition can make a difference in these types of situations in Florida to ensure there is all-hazards guidance for schools, parents, etc. After a round of discussion, it was agreed that this is definitely an item for consideration for the tentative Guidance Workgroup.

### **Next Steps**

- Setup and conduct an initial meeting with the Steering Committee.
- Send meeting minutes from this Coalition meeting.
- Poll members on the best days and times for the full Coalition meetings.
- Schedule the next full Coalition meeting.
- Share materials for Coalition Workgroup projects.

### **Comments or Questions:**

In closing, the Coalition was again thanked for their time and commitment to sticking with the group through the hiatus and passion to see great results for Florida’s children, and asked to be on the lookout for the meeting survey and minutes.