

Broward County News Release

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Broward County Receives \$800,000 Federal Grant to Plan a System of Care for Older Adolescents and Young Adults

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BROWARD COUNTY, FL - Broward County has received an \$800,000 grant from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to develop a comprehensive plan to enhance the system of care for adolescents and young adults ages 14-21 who have serious emotional problems and other conditions such as substance abuse and a history of trauma. The one year grant begins on September 30, 2014, and will be administered by the Broward County Human Services Department's Community Partnerships Division in collaboration with the Broward Behavioral Health Coalition.

According to a Harvard University study, about 75 percent of diagnosable mental health conditions appear by age 24. Many children with emotional problems are served by multiple agencies and coordination of services is critically important. Although Broward County has instituted a system of care approach for youth, formerly known as One Community Partnership, this new undertaking will improve the system and specifically address the challenges of youth transitioning to the adult system of care.

The grant will support the development of a comprehensive plan to address the complex needs of this population, engage youth and families as primary stakeholders, adopt culturally and linguistically competent services and implement evidence based practices. According to Michael F. Elwell, Human Services Department Director, "This grant is an amazing opportunity for Broward County to capitalize on the successes of our earlier grant and work in partnership with the Broward Behavioral Health Coalition to improve the system of care for older adolescents with serious emotional problems. The result will be a family focused, recovery oriented approach for serving transitional youth that will involve not only behavioral health, child welfare, the school system and juvenile justice, but also the child and adult systems of care."

Broward County will have an opportunity to apply for subsequent funding to implement the plan developed during the grant period.

About the Broward County Human Services Department

The Human Services Department seeks to enhance the quality of life for Broward County residents through innovative and integrated health and human services programs. The Department has developed partnerships with the public and private sectors to provide assistance in a coordinated, comprehensive, community based, and consumer-directed manner. Self-reliance is the goal of helping people get back on their feet. When a resident has access, information, education and economic stability, they are able to be more productive and can contribute to and participate in the community in which they live.

About the Broward Behavioral Health Coalition

The Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, Inc. (BBHC) was created in 2011 and was selected by the Florida Department of Children and Families as Broward County's managing entity for mental health and substance abuse services. BBHC seeks to advocate and ensure an effective and efficient behavioral health system of care is available in Broward County. BBHC is committed to the provision of services that are consumer driven, culturally competent, compassionate, and efficiently managed in an innovative system with fiscal integrity.