

Volusia County Pilot Update

As a result of rich and robust discussion with our partners through an initial special review, a three-phase pilot was formed to address medium- and long-term solutions for holistically serving families and children with deeper service level needs. Stage one includes an inventory of community assets; customer journey mapping to identify moments of impact; and opportunities for enhancement, as well as recruiting for and deepening relationships with appropriate state and local partners.

In addition to the components in phase one, law enforcement immediately identified a lack of service engagement, ownership and capacity for youth being Baker Acted and released, which often results in re-admissions and/or criminal involvement due to a lack of system accountability and service capacity. This was identified as an immediate gap in the system that required attention.

On September 27, 2021, to address the identified needs, the Department activated the following:

- The Department's regional Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH) office designated an email address for law enforcement to refer youth identified by their field deputies, detectives, and youth services divisions. This inbox is monitored by the Department's regional children's care coordinators.
- The SAMH children's care coordinators work in concert with each circuit's integrated practice team, which is comprised of a Department representative and a community-based care representative, to receive referrals and immediately conduct a holistic review of the family.
- In partnership with the family and other partners, the integrated practice team ensures informed recommendations and engagement is occurring; addresses any funding or capacity barriers with the provider network; and immediately elevates barriers that are unable to be resolved at the local level to secure needed resources timely.
- The children's care coordinators provide feedback to the referring source to close the loop; improve consistent communications with families; and earn trust.

As of February 2, 2022, the Department has contacted 85 at-risk youth and their families.

Testimonial: There was a youth displaying high rates of elopement throughout the day. The youth is prone to physical aggression and does not respond well to verbal directives when re-directed to his home. To address these concerns, a meeting was held with key stakeholders. As a result, Community Partnership for Children placed two caregivers in the home to provide 2-on-1 supervision and help the mother manage the youth's behavior. The two caregivers work 12 hours per day, seven days per week, and they have had a positive impact on the family. Since they have been engaged, the youth's elopements have decreased. Additionally, the youth now has a targeted case manager and an Agency for Persons with Disabilities coordinator.

The goal and outcome of this pilot is to reduce entries into crisis stabilization units and contact with law enforcement, including Department of Juvenile Justice involvement, and to increase support provided by the mobile response team; and connections to services and support for children and families.