

FLORIDA FOSTER CARE REVIEW



Facilitate | Advocate | Innovate | Evaluate

For 25 years, Foster Care Review has worked to promote the safety and well-being of abused and neglected children through volunteer case reviews and advocacy.









Florida Foster Care Review Past, Present & Future

Twenty-five years. Behind those years are stories—the stories that shape who we are and pave the way for who we will become.

A quarter of a century ago, a United Way Committee determined to ease the burden on Miami's inundated Juvenile Dependency Court developed the blueprint for Foster Care Review, Inc. Subsequent legislative action paved the way for Citizen Review Panels. Since then, Foster Care Review's Citizen Review Panel Program has conducted case review hearings to oversee the safety and well-being of thousands of abused and neglected children. Throughout the years, our dedicated staff and volunteers have taken the time to understand each child's story and to ensure that his or her physical, emotional and educational needs are met. Whether connecting a child with tutoring, medical care, counseling, transitional housing, or simply with the chance to experience normal childhood activities, the work of Foster Care Review has not only improved the lives of abused and neglected children—in some cases it has even saved them.

But this is no time to rest on our past accomplishments. Even though the number of children in Miami's dependency court has declined since Foster Care Review's inception in 1989, the problems facing youth in foster care have grown increasingly complex. Recognizing the depth of these challenges, we are implementing new strategies to expand Foster Care Review's impact on the lives of the children and youth we serve.

Building on our core values and extensive history as a key partner in Miami's child welfare system, the newly named **Florida Foster Care Review** will diligently pursue a vision of a child welfare system that protects vulnerable children, ensures their stability and promotes future success:

- Florida Foster Care Review will continue to **facilitate** comprehensive, thorough, individualized case review hearings while also infusing our Citizen Review Panels with best practices, quality training and intensive support. To expand the impact of our panel process, we will ignite the use of citizen-led panels across the state by providing critical expertise, technical assistance and infrastructure to other communities.
- Florida Foster Care Review will harness the power of its redesigned, upgraded database and use data collected by our panels to **evaluate** systemic barriers and to identify transformative opportunities.
- Florida Foster Care Review will join forces with our volunteers, supporters and community partners to **advocate** for policy and practice changes that make a real difference in the lives of children.
- Florida Foster Care Review will develop and implement **innovative** and creative approaches to filling in the gaps and areas of greatest need experienced by the children we serve.

Underwriting our past, present and future efforts are our dedicated volunteers, board and staff members; individual donors and corporate, foundation and governmental funders; community stakeholders and providers; and, most critically, our Chief Judge and Juvenile Court Judges and General Magistrates. Your unwavering support, time and resources have made the past 25 years a success. You have brought us to this pivotal moment in our organization's history and we pay tribute to the tremendous foundation that you have laid.

Now, as always, our community's most vulnerable children are depending on all of us to jointly weave the narrative of their future. Together, we can ensure that their stories are filled with success and happiness. Thank you for all you have done and will do to ensure that Florida Foster Care Review's next 25 years are as great as the first!

1988

United Way Task Force on Child Protection



11th Judicial Circuit
Administrative Order
Allowing the Citizen
Review Panel in Miami

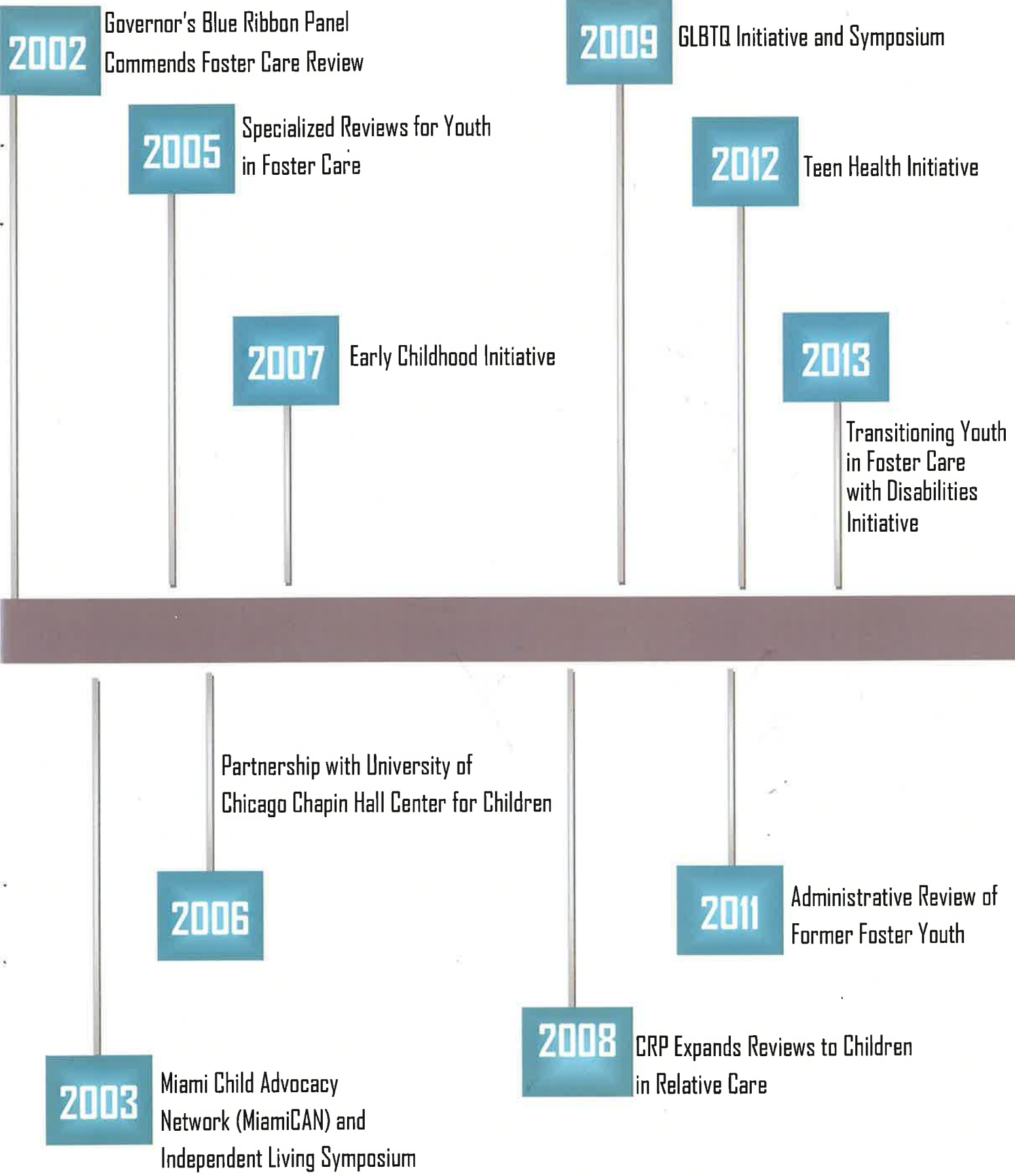
1991

1989

Legislation and Authorizing Citizen Review Panels. Foster Care Review, Inc. is incorporated.

1999

Electronic Database Developed



25 STARS OF FLORIDA FOSTER CARE REVIEW



Ana Maria Pozo
Attorney (retired) and Former Executive Director of Florida Foster Care Review, Inc.

Ana was the Executive Director of Florida Foster Care Review from 2001-2012. She feels privileged to have served in this role with committed board members, staff and volunteers who gave their time, energy and wisdom to serve children in need from our community. Ana left her mark on Florida Foster Care Review by ensuring adequate funding and by capitalizing on opportunities to expand the organization's impact. She always speaks with admiration of the many people she worked with during her tenure, and expresses sincere appreciation for the staff's support, hard work and dedication – which she describes as "unequaled and unforgettable."



Barbara Rostov*
Community Volunteer and Social Worker

Barbara volunteered with Florida Foster Care Review from 1991 until 2013 as a panel member and eventually as a panel chair. She served as the volunteer coordinator for two years before it became a staff position and was a member of the Board of Directors from 1997-2002/2003-2012. Barbara has remained involved with Florida Foster Care Review because she believes that the organization plays an important role in the child welfare area and it is so gratifying to be a part of changing children's lives.



Berta Blecke*
Child Advocate

Berta is a founding board member of Florida Foster Care Review as well as a founder of the Guardian Ad Litem Program in 1980. She currently is a member of Florida Foster Care Review's Legacy Board. Berta's passion for the rights of abused and neglected children and belief that our community has the responsibility and capacity to change lives has been the driving force behind her decades of involvement with Florida Foster Care Review and the many other organizations she's spearheaded.



Ann Shepard Feeley Swaner
Associate Professor of Theology - Barry University
Citizen Review Panel Volunteer

Ann moved to Miami from Iowa in 1992 to teach at Barry University. Looking for a way to learn and give back to her new community, Ann discovered that Florida Foster Care Review was looking for volunteers. Since that time, she has served as a Citizen Review Panel volunteer. Ann remains motivated to continue this work because of the dedicated, conscientious and insightful volunteers and staff as well as the profound sense that their collective work makes a real, positive difference in the lives of the children and families we help.



Brian F. Misiunas
Partner/CPA – Pinchasik Yelen Muskat Stein LLC

Brian served on the Florida Foster Care Review Board of Directors from 2003 to 2013. Towards the end of his tenure, Brian served as President of the Board during the executive leadership transition. A CPA by profession with more than 13 years in public accounting, Brian provided thorough financial oversight and guidance throughout his many years of Board service. In 2013, he was awarded the President's Award for his many years of service and he continues to support Florida Foster Care Review as a member of the Legacy Board.

25 STARS OF FLORIDA FOSTER CARE REVIEW



Christopher M. Hutchins
Senior Manager, CPA – Cherry
Bekaert LLP

Chris served on the Florida Foster Care Review Board of Directors for 11 years. During this time, he was Treasurer, Vice President and President. Throughout his tenure on the Board, the organization benefitted tremendously from his financial and accounting expertise and guidance. Having adopted his son from the foster care system, Chris strongly connected with Florida Foster Care Review's mission to serve at-risk children and he remains committed to Florida Foster Care Review as an active member of the Legacy Board.



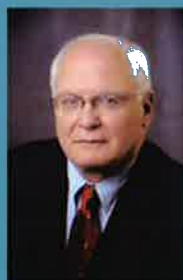
Cindy S. Lederman*
11th Circuit Court Judge – Dependency Division

The Honorable Cindy S. Lederman has been a steadfast advocate and supporter of Florida Foster Care Review from her first days on the Dependency Court bench. Judge Lederman shared that she has relied upon Florida Foster Care Review to assist her with the handling of Judicial Reviews for two decades. She believes that four minds concentrating on one family for one hour provides the most well-reasoned, thoughtful decision making. She is very grateful for the time and expertise of the Florida Foster Care Review volunteers, and Florida Foster Care Review is equally grateful for her unwavering support throughout the years.



David Duckenfield
Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
at the US Department of State

David began his relationship with Florida Foster Care Review as a board member in 1999, thanks to the persistent insistence of his good friend, Michael Samway. Within a year, David was in charge of the 10th year Anniversary event. One of his most rewarding experiences during his tenure on the Board was selecting Ana Pozo as the then new Executive Director. David has stayed connected to Florida Foster Care Review because he believes in the organization's mission and believes that the staff and volunteers better the lives of children in the foster care system, creating a lasting and positive effect for both the children and the community.



David Lawrence, Jr.*
President – Early Childhood Initiative Foundation
and The Children's Movement of Florida

David Lawrence, Jr. retired in 1999 as publisher of The Miami Herald to work in the area of early childhood development and readiness. He has been instrumental in establishing many of our community's most impactful children's organizations, including The Children's Trust. Dave serves all of our children through his many leadership roles including, president of the Early Childhood Initiative Foundation and The Children's Movement of Florida. He has received countless awards for his tremendous contributions to the citizens and environment of Florida. Dave, more than most, understands the incredible value of engaging citizens to speak out on behalf of the



Douglas M. Halsey
Partner - White & Case

Douglas M. Halsey has been affiliated with Florida Foster Care Review since its formation and served as a founding board member and Board President. Over the past 25 years, he has remained significantly involved and is currently serving as the chair of the Legacy Board. Doug has devoted countless hours also to litigating cases against state agencies on behalf of vulnerable children. In honor of his enormous contribution to the community, in 2000, Florida Foster Care Review created the Douglas M. Halsey Award for Community Service that is given to an individual who exemplifies Doug's commitment to community service and child advocacy. When not helping children in need, Doug is a partner at the global law firm White & Case LLP where his legal practice covers all aspects of environmental and land use law, including litigation, transactional advice and regulatory matters. We are grateful for his many years of support and know that Doug has been - and will always be - close to the heart of Florida Foster Care Review.

*Denotes Douglas M. Halsey Award for Community Service Recipient

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Edith Hudson
Citizen Review Panel Volunteer

Edith has been a volunteer with Florida Foster Care Review since 1996. Introduced to the organization by Barbara Rostov and taught "everything" by her first panel chair, Claude Hurst, Edith became a panel chair herself in 1997 when Claude retired. As a panel chair, she has tried very hard to be fair and non-judgmental, but above all, to never lose the focus of the work – the children. Notwithstanding the ups and downs of the child welfare system, Edith has faith in the volunteers who do this work solely to improve the lives of children in foster care.



Glenda S. Whatley
**Retired Stock/
Commodity Trader**
**Citizen Review
Panel Volunteer**

Glenda was first made aware of Foster Care Review in October of 1997 through an announcement in the "Neighbors" section of the Herald. She joined as a volunteer and became a panel chair in the same year, never losing sight of the organization's drive to promote prompt, permanent, positive outcomes for each child. Glenda feels "pure joy" when a child is adopted or reunified with a parent. Even raising a school grade from failing to passing is cause for celebration. Just knowing that the panel's recommendations make a difference in the life of a child has kept her volunteering with Florida Foster Care Review through the decades.



Judy Webb
Citizen Review Panel Volunteer

Judy started her volunteerism in the child welfare arena in 1993 as a Guardian Ad Litem volunteer and began serving as a CRP volunteer in 1995. She now chairs two of the citizen review panels. According to Judy, "Volunteering for Florida Foster Care Review has been the most rewarding thing I have ever done!" She is grateful for all of the caring volunteers she's worked with over the years and appreciates the staff for their support and expertise.



Kathy Ezell, Esq.*
Partner – Podhurst Orseck, P.A.

Kathy Ezell is the consummate child advocate. A partner at the law firm of Podhurst Orseck, Kathy has been a volunteer attorney for children, parents and guardians in dependency cases for more than a decade, and she has received numerous awards for her advocacy efforts. Kathy is a Past-President of Florida Foster Care Review, which is one organization of many in Miami that has benefitted from her leadership, guidance, wisdom and grace. Kathy now serves on Florida Foster Care Review's Legacy Board and continues to be a source of support and insight.



MaryAnne Lukacs, Esq.*
**Attorney and Florida Supreme Court
Mediator in Family, Circuit Civil and
County Court**

MaryAnne joined Florida Foster Care Review in 1996 as a volunteer panel member and then panel chair until 2005 when she was appointed as a General Magistrate for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit. She served on the Board of Directors from 2005-2010 and then again from 2012-present. Most of MaryAnne's life has been dedicated to youth as a teacher, coach, mentor, board member, lawyer, mediator and member of the judiciary. Being a part of Florida Foster Care Review has given MaryAnne the opportunity to contribute to children and youth in a meaningful and significant way.