



I WANT YOU!

The Family Café CHANGE AGENT NETWORK THEY NEED YOU!

The Change Agent Network is a project of The Family Café and offers an opportunity for advocates and change agents to work collaboratively to transform the system by: combining abilities, skills, ideas, and talents; standing together for meaningful system reform measures; taking the lead in our communities and neighborhoods; sharing information to help families become effective players within their communities; developing statewide networks to organize and discuss the issues that are most important to families and persons with disabilities; and creating a united position on critical disability policy issues.

The Upcoming 2020 State Legislative Session

Amazingly, it is that time of year again when we prepare for the Florida Legislature to begin holding interim committee meetings in preparation for the annual legislative session. Don't forget, 2020 will be an early session! The official dates are January 14th until March 13th.

The Florida Senate and House will hold interim committee weeks on the following dates:

September 16th – 20th

October 14th – 18th

October 21st – 25th

November 4th – 8th

November 12th – 15th

December 9th – 13th

This is an important year for many reasons, the most pressing being that the Agency for Persons with Disabilities will be presenting a proposal for a redesign for the Home and Community Based Waiver Program. Few issues could impact our families more. Language included in the budget this past year required APD to put forth this proposal, and required it to do so while addressing the following parameters:



(a) Budget predictability – budget recommendations must include specific steps to restrict spending to budgeted amounts based on alternatives to the iBudget and four-tiered Medicaid waiver models (b) Services – the agency shall identify core services that are essential to provide for client health and safety and recommend elimination of coverage for other services that are not affordable based on available resources (c) Flexibility – the redesign shall be responsive to individual needs and to the extent possible encourage client control over allocated resources for their needs (d) Support coordination services – the plan shall modify the manner of providing support coordination services to improve management of service utilization and increase accountability and responsiveness to agency priorities



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We at The Family Café understand the necessity to improve cost predictability within in the APD waiver program. Having said that, it is important to mention that the legislature is after cost predictabil-

ity here, not draconian cuts to the existing program. It has never worked, nor should it, for the any government agency to pick and choose the services that Floridians with disabilities need to live productive and independent lives. Arbitrary decisions like these are very harmful to families and are never cost effective.

We, and many others, support the principles contained within the iBudget program. Leaving these critical decisions up to families, especially when resources are limited, must continue. We also believe there are several specific ways the iBudget program can be tweaked to improve outcomes. We do not believe this language should be used in any way to open the door to managed care. Managed care is a model that does not work for our population. While it is unlikely that the Agency will recommend a managed care solution, once this proposal is out of their hands they will not be able to control what path forward the legislature chooses.

On September 30th, APD is required to have a report submitted to the legislature. We will keep you updated as to what recommendations are being made. These months prior to the end of the year are the PERFECT time to go and sit down with your legislators while they are still at home and not facing the barrage of a committee week or legislative session. This is the time of year when you can have a substantive, non-rushed conversation with your lawmaker. Tell them what services you receive and why it is important to not support any plan that arbitrarily cuts services.

If you want to contact your legislators while they are at home in their districts, you can find their local office contact information on the Florida House website at <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/representatives.aspx> and the Florida Senate website at <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find>.



The 22nd Annual Family Café!

The Family Café is now accepting Presentation Proposals for The 22nd Annual Family Café June 5-7, 2020 in Orlando. As you know, we are the nation's largest cross-disability event. Last year's 21st Annual Family Café attracted some 12,842 participants. They had the opportunity to choose from 220+ classroom size breakout sessions that addressed a wide variety of disability related topics.

The success of The Annual Family Café relies in large part on the participation of knowledgeable, engaged presenters that are willing to share their expertise with our attendees. Please consider presenting in 2020! In order to submit a proposal, go online to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/22ndAFCPPF> . We must have the proposal by Friday, January 10, 2020.

To get a sense of the range of topics addressed at The Annual Family Café, view the official program from 2019 online at: https://familycafe.net/images/stories/pdf/files/21st_FamCafe_2019_WEB_compressed.pdf

If you have any questions regarding the presenter application process, please contact Sarah Uptagrafft at The Family Café office at suptagrafft@familycafe.net, or call us at (850) 224-4670 or toll free at (888) 309-CAFE.

It is also that time of year when we start looking for exhibitors to appear in our Exhibit Hall. If you know of any vendors or organizations that would be a good fit for The Annual Family Café, please encourage them to attend. Those reserving a booth space before February 14, 2020 will receive a \$50 discount on their exhibitor fee.

If you have any questions please contact The Family Cafe at (850) 224-4670 or e-mail us at info@familycafe.net.



Family Run Organization Movement

One of the more exciting projects we are working on this year is the creation of the Family-Run Organization Movement, or FROM. For the past several years, a series of pre-cons held in conjunction with The Annual Family Café has served as a venue to build consensus and skills among family-run organizations. The leaders that have come together through this process conceive of a model to help them fulfill their potential and rise to the highest possible level of participation in shaping Florida's system of care for people with disabilities and their family members.

The mission of FROM is to engage, support, empower and advocate for family, youth and peer-run organizations. Ultimately, accomplishing this mission will help all system of care partners collaborate at new levels of effectiveness on behalf of families and youth.

The FROM aims to provide a wide range of supports and services, including leadership training, governance enhancement, program support, monthly collaborative forums, a program newsletter, and other resources to help organizations attain new levels of participation in the system of care.

Too often family-run organizations are the weakest link in the system of services. If family organizations get better at what they do, they become strong partners, and their ability to network and support people within their communities leads to better outcomes for Florida's families and youth.

Family-run organizations are often the last line of defense for families on the Home and Community Based Waiver waiting list. Many are strong and effective partners in Florida's system of care, and with a little help, many more can be. With a thriving Family-Run Organization Movement we can grow the capacity of family-run organizations that meet the needs of families and youth, and relieve stress on the system of care that exists in Florida today.

Please stay tuned for more information on the Family-Run Organization Movement, and how you can be involved in growing Florida's family voice!

The Family Café 2020!

Thank you to those who attended The 21st Annual Family Café this past June. With approximately 13,000 people in attendance, it was one of our largest ever! Pictures and video's from the event are available on our website now.

Please mark your calendars for The 22nd Annual Family Café which will be held on June 5th-7th in Orlando. Hope to see you there! Registration will open on Friday, February 14th.

See You Next Year!

AT THE

22nd ANNUAL
Family Café
JUNE 5-7, 2020 • ORLANDO

HYATT REGENCY
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ORLANDO, FLORIDA

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