

Memorandum Of Agreement

Nassau County Health Department
In partnership with
Family Matters of Nassau County

This agreement is entered into between Nassau County Health Department (NCHD) and Family Matters of Nassau County (FMNC). This agreement shall be effective December 1, 2003, or upon signature of all parties to December 1, 2004, and may be renewed annually thereafter by mutual consent of the parties hereto.

Background on Healthy Families Florida:

The Florida Department of Children and Families contracts with the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida to implement the Healthy Families Florida program statewide. Healthy Families Florida is a voluntary home visiting program designed to prevent child abuse and neglect by enhancing parents' ability to create stable and nurturing home environments, promoting healthy childhood growth and development and ensuring that families' social and medical needs are met.

NCHD provides Healthy Families (HF) services to Nassau County residents. NCHD offers services to expectant families and families of newborns who are at risk of abuse or neglect. A voluntary assessment is conducted to determine the need for HF services. If the assessment determines intensive home visiting services are needed, and the family volunteers to participate, a trained family support worker is assigned to the family to provide services. If NCHD is at capacity and is unable to provide home visiting services to the family, NCHD will provide the family referrals and information on community resources, depending on the needs of the family. The family support worker's responsibilities include:

- Conducting developmental assessments
- Helping the family develop and work toward goals through the use of family support plans
- Providing and following up on referrals to community resources
- Assessing the safety of the home environment
- Linking families to a medical provider and tracking the child's immunizations and well-baby checks
- Teaching awareness of child developmental milestones and supporting families in developing positive parent-child relationships
- Modeling positive adult-child interaction and effective coping skills.

Some families may need services beyond those offered through NCHD home visiting. These services, such as domestic violence intervention, substance abuse treatment, psychiatric treatment and protective supervision, fall outside the scope of the NCHD program. NCHD relies upon strong partnerships in the community to provide these types of services.

NCHD can accept referrals from FMNC during pregnancy or when the family has a baby who is less than three months of age as long as the family does not have an active case with the Child Protection System (CPS) as a result of "verified" or "some indication" of abuse or neglect. Families who are under CPS investigation at the time of assessment are also eligible for enrollment. If a family is enrolled while under investigation and the investigation results in "some indication" or "verified" abuse and neglect or should a family become involved in the CPS during participation in HF, a staffing should occur with the investigating agency, the family (when appropriate), FMNC, NCHD and other agencies as appropriate. The purpose of the staffing is to determine whether continued voluntary participation in HF is in the best interest of the child. Should FMNC and NCHD determine that continued services are appropriate, the family will be provided the opportunity to continue HF services on a voluntary basis. HF participation cannot be court-ordered or mandated on a family's treatment plan. The HF program is effective because the family support worker and the family develop a trusting working relationship over time that is based upon the family's positive experiences in the program.

Background on Family Matters of Nassau County:

The Florida Department of Children and Families contracted Family Matters of Nassau County to be the lead agency to assume responsibility for and oversight of all post protective child investigative services in Nassau County, Florida. FMNC will provide temporary shelter care, protective supervision, foster care and adoption services to children considered at risk of abuse, neglect and abandonment.

Purpose:

NCHD and FMNC are partners in strengthening and supporting families. NCHD and FMNC are committed to working together to provide a continuum of care to families residing in their community. When NCHD and FMNC are both providing services to a given family, NCHD and FMNC will mutually support each other's role through collaborative planning for prevention and early intervention of child abuse and neglect. The purpose of this agreement is to outline the responsibilities for NCHD and FMNC collaboration.

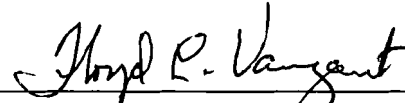
Mutual Responsibilities:

1. NCHD and FMNC will promote collaboration by actively participating in the Nassau County Alliance.
2. Should NCHD and FMNC provide services to a family at the same time, NCHD and FMNC will be mutually responsible for maintaining coordination of services to the family and maintaining routine contact (minimum of once a month) to discuss the family's progress as long as both agencies serve the family. FMNC and NCHD agree to participate in periodic staffings (with family's participation, when appropriate) to discuss the progress of the family and to support each agency's role in working with the family. On an individual case basis, FMNC and NCHD may develop a written agreement outlining specific roles each may play in providing service to the family. FMNC and NCHD may also choose, at the request of the family, to provide occasional joint home visits.

3. To facilitate communication between FMNC and NCHD, NCHD and FMNC will each designate a liaison for NCHD and FMNC contacts.
4. NCHD and FMNC agree to respect the confidentiality of the family. Information may be shared between FMNC and NCHD if the agency providing the information has a signed Consent for Release of Information form from the family. Information to be shared may include information related to the general care of children, parenting skills, risk factors, level of home visits the family is receiving and the family's strengths and goals.
5. NCHD and FMNC will provide ongoing training about their programs to one another as the need arises.
6. NCHD and FMNC will share training opportunities that may enhance the knowledge or skills of staff from NCHD or FMNC.

All terms of this agreement are fully understood and accepted by FMNC and NCHD and their respective service providers as represented by the signers of this agreement. Any modifications to this agreement will be made in writing with the consent of all parties.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA



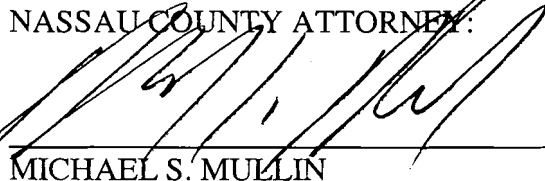
FLOYD L. VANZANT
Its: Chairman

ATTEST:



J. M. "CHIP" OXLEY, JR.
Its: Ex-Officio Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM BY THE
NASSAU COUNTY ATTORNEY:



MICHAEL S. MULLIN



E. J. NGO-SEIDEL, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Nassau County Health Department