

# Comprehensive Strengths & Needs Assessment

Presentation for  
the Children's Trust of Alachua County

# Overview

- Purpose
- Elements of community-based strengths and needs assessments
- Acknowledging what we already know
- Describing a process

# Purpose

Community-based strengths and needs assessments should be designed to describe what is working and what is needed to further align and integrate existing services and supports.

- The purpose of a comprehensive community strengths and needs assessment is to identify:
  - Strengths of the community
  - Needs of the community
  - Opportunities for alignment and service integration
  - Areas where additional intervention is necessary to support desired outcomes
- The culmination of the comprehensive community-based strengths and needs assessment will provide guidance and recommendations to help the Children's Trust of Alachua County identify how to support better alignment and integration to achieve desired outcomes for children.

# Elements of a Comprehensive Strengths and Needs Assessment

- Appraisal of what is currently known about the community
  - Review & synthesis of extant data related to the organization's purpose
- Community strength finding
  - Solicit input from children, families, providers, and other community stakeholders
- Community need finding
  - Solicit input from children, families, providers, and other community stakeholders
- Resource and network mapping
  - Describe capacity, utilization, & benefit of community resources
- Discovering unmet needs
  - Combine data on expressed needs, revealed preferences, and available resources
- Recommendations & Guidance
  - Identify next steps of action to address unmet community needs that build on strengths within the community



# What is missing?

- Voice of the constituents
- Nuanced perspective of subpopulations and developmental phases
- Comprehensive accounting of existing community supports that are universal, targeted, and tertiary
- Description of established community partnerships
- Evaluations of models and interventions
- Impact of existing supports and services

# Key Constituents

- Families
- Children
- Service providers
- Other community stakeholders (e.g. neighborhood associations and organizations, churches and secondary service providers)

The participants in this data collection should adequately represent the population(s) of Alachua county and child and youth subpopulations.

# Potential Strategies

- Community forums
- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Surveys
- Observations
- Participatory approaches
- Mapping
- Other qualitative or quantitative tools



# Next Steps

- Technical Advisory Committee (Recommendation)
  - Ad Hoc
  - Interdisciplinary committee with expertise in child and youth development, research, and community systems of support
  - Review and synthesize best available information
  - Determine what we know and what we want to learn more about to inform action to achieve the mission of the Children's Trust of Alachua County
- Identify the short-term and long-term outcomes we desire for children in Alachua county.