

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local child- and family-serving agencies join forces to prevent child abuse and neglect in South Dade

Dr. Ted Greer Jr. selected to oversee initiative

MIAMI, Fla.—More than a dozen agencies have joined forces to form the South Dade Children's Resource Network, a new service partnership which gives vulnerable families a single point of access to appropriate, effective, coordinated services. Services are available to qualifying families on a voluntary basis.

The Network offers community-based support and service navigation through an assigned Family Support Specialist who can assist with issues such as housing/homelessness, mental health, substance abuse, child care and emergency assistance funds.

"The Network is designed to improve the lives of children and their families by connecting a family's natural support system with other services available in their communities," said Dr. Ted Greer, the new senior vice president over the initiative.

"Our primary goal is to support children and families before a situation becomes a crisis—ultimately preventing abuse and neglect from ever occurring and keeping children and families out of the child welfare system."

Greer has more than 25 years experience in the nonprofit setting and most recently served as the assistant vice president of programs/community initiatives for Health Choice Network in Miami. He also serves as the senior pastor of Ebenezer Community Church in Goulds.

Greer is working to create and expand service partnerships with community organizations and neighborhood programs. Current partners include:

- Agape Family Ministries
- American Heart Association
- Children's Home Society
- Community Health of South Florida
- Department of Children & Families
- Faith Christian Center
- Florida International University School of Social Work
- Girls and Boys Town
- Goulds Coalition of Ministers and Lay People
- Greater Goulds Optimist Club
- Kids Hope United

- Lutheran Services of Florida
- Naranja Optimist Club
- Richmond Perrine Optimist Club

The initiative, funded by The Children's Trust of Miami-Dade County, is in the planning stages and will roll out services on May 1 to the following communities: Goulds, Cutler Bay, Perrine, Richmond Heights and Naranja. Kids Hope United serves as the lead and fiscal agent for the grant.

A governing board made up of representatives from each service provider as well as other community representatives provides leadership and oversight. Kids Hope United serves as the fiscal agent for the grant.

The Network will accept self-referrals and referrals from the community through the CRN Help Desk at 866.547.1232. The Network expects to serve more than 800 children and their families by March 2009.

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The South Dade Children's Resource Network is funded by The Children's Trust. The Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County.

