

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 5TH FLOOR MANATEE ROOM  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, Florida  
April 1, 2026**

Present were:

Xtavia Bailey, Chairperson  
Jannon Pierce, Vice-Chairperson  
Hon. Scott Brownell  
Heather Felton, (Entered during meeting)  
Kristin Gallagher  
Carolann Garafola  
Michelle Laughrey  
Cassandra Mitchell  
Connie Shingledecker  
Rita Smith, (Entered during meeting)  
Debbie Tapp

Two seats are vacant.

Also present were:

Tracie Adams, Deputy Director, Community and Veteran's Services  
Melissa Bomar, Interim Children's Services Coordinator  
Mark Dillon, Senior Human Services Analyst  
Brenda Marquez Facio, Human Services Analyst  
Hannah Bishop, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court

1. **CALL TO ORDER**  
Chairperson Bailey called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**  
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Bailey

**AGENDA and SIGN-IN SHEET**

CS20260401DOC001

3. **ROLL CALL**  
A quorum was declared.
4. **MINUTES**  
A motion was made by Member Garafola, seconded by Member Shingledecker, and carried 9-0, to approve the minutes of March 25, 2026.
5. **STEP UP SUNCOAST, HEAD START PRESCHOOL/EARLY HEAD START**  
Program claimed B, Children develop literacy skills necessary to be successful in school. Program is requesting a funding increase, and eligible for tier one.
6. **STEP UP SUNCOAST, WHOLE CHILD**  
Program claimed no priority. Program is requesting a funding increase, and eligible for tier one.  
(Enter Members Felton and Smith)

7. **STEP UP SUNCOAST, COLLABORATIVE ACTION THERAPY FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH (CATCH)**  
 Program claimed B, Children develop literacy skills necessary to be successful in school. Program is requesting a funding increase, and eligible for tier one.
8. **STEP UP SUNCOAST, HOPE INSTRUCTION FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL YOUNGERS (HIPPIY)**  
 Program claimed B, Children develop literacy skills necessary to be successful in school. Program is requesting a funding increase, and eligible for tier one.
9. **STEP UP SUNCOAST, PARENTS AS TEACHERS (PAT)**  
 Program claimed A, Children are safe in their homes, free from abuse or neglect. Program is requesting a funding increase, and eligible for tier one.
10. **STEP UP SUNCOAST, HEALTHY FAMILIES' MANATEE**  
 Program claimed A, Children are safe in their homes, free from abuse or neglect. Program is requesting a funding increase, and eligible for tier one.

Discussion ensued regarding the scoring application process and matrix.

11. **STAFF UPDATES**  
 Brenda Marquez Facio, Human Services Analyst, conducted observations for Myakka City Community Center, Morning Care, After School, Camp Myakka (MAC), and Safe Children Coalition (SCC) Youth Intervention Services, with no concerns identified. She provided updates on the drowning prevention initiative, including ongoing collaboration with County departments, distribution of outreach flyers at libraries, and upcoming staff. Expanded alarm availability will be at multiple locations, including all Manatee County libraries and the Little Discovery Center. Alarms will now be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, with required digital request and pickup forms. Ms. Marquez Facio also noted that additional outreach will take place at the Manatee County Health Expo on April 7, 2026, and that subcommittee members may request a follow-up meeting if desired.

Melissa Bomar, Interim Children's Services Coordinator, conducted an observation of Manatee Children's Services, Child Advocacy Center, with no concerns identified. She reminded the Board that Member Shingledecker will host a table on April 3, 2026, and that staff will attend the Manatee County Health Expo on April 7, 2026, at the Convention Center in support of the Water Safety Initiative.

Mark Dillon, Senior Human Services Analyst, reported no updates.

Johanna Beville, Program Analyst, conducted two site visits for Just for Girls, including the Girls Alternative Program for Success (GAPS) and Stepping Up to Success (SUS) programs. The GAPS program was engaged in State testing at the time of the visit, and the Contract Manager completed file reviews. No concerns were identified for the SUS program. She offered to facilitate a meeting with Community and Veteran Services (CVS) leadership and Just for Girls, to review and discuss reports previously provided to the Board, regarding ongoing concerns with the agency's financial reporting.

Tracie Adams, Deputy Director, Community and Veteran's Services, commended Children's Services staff for their efforts in maintaining operations while short-staffed

12. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/UPDATES**

There were no Commissioner comments or updates

13. **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

Vice-Chairperson Pierced discussed batch seven with the Board.

Discussion ensued regarding the number of programs for each agency, and application criteria process.

14. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mary Ann Servian, Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, addressed the outcome annual survey, pre-testing, past results, data, allocation of funds, attendance, measurement of milestones, and program director qualifications.

Amy Yount, Peter Murawski, Kathy Patreka, Altagracia Lajara-Paredes, Anna Cismesia, and Linda Hedrick, Step Up Suncoast, addressed the purpose of the program, the students served, literacy outcomes, differences between the HIPPI and PAT programs, funding, staffing, objectives, results, and demographics.

There being no further public comment, Chairperson Bailey closed public comment.

15. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will occur April 8, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., in the Manatee County Administrative building, 1112 Manatee Avenue W, Bradenton, in the 5th Floor Manatee Room.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairperson Bailey adjourned the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_



