



Top Ten Actions Florida Can Take to Eliminate the Unnecessary Use of Psychotropic Medications.

1. Provide the most normal home-like setting possible for all children in state care. The first placement should be one from which the child is either returned home or is adopted.
2. Provide access to behavioral intervention and support as soon as behavior issues arise.
3. Expand Medicaid coverage to encompass all services available under federal law – including behavior analysis and support for children with cognitive impairments.
4. Routinely provide behavioral health assessments, and the services recommended therein, for children who remain in care longer than one year.
5. Revise delivery of mental health services to eliminate the practice of having children change providers with each residential move.
6. Ensure that all children are not randomly assigned to Medicaid HMOs by AHCA and that they are seen by a pediatrician who can provide a “medical home.”
7. Listen to the children. Require prescribers to confer and seek to obtain assent from each child, and to document the child’s position. Require DCF to inform the Court of the child’s position.
8. Appoint counsel to represent all children for whom psychotropic medications are prescribed.
9. Screen all children for traumatic brain injury upon entry into care.
10. Contract for research studies to examine outcomes for former foster youth who were administered psychotropic medication while in state care.