

A BRIEF HISTORY OF

THE CHILDREN'S MOVEMENT OF FLORIDA

1996

Then-Florida-Gov. Lawton Chiles asked 55 citizens from around the state to make **recommendations for the future of public education in the next millennium.** Among them was David Lawrence Jr., then-publisher of The Miami Herald.

1999

David Lawrence Jr. chaired the task force on school readiness that led to an important **law consolidating early childhood education and child-care programs into one integrated program.**

Two generous and public-spirited Miami couples, Dr. Jane and Gerald Katcher and Jan and Daniel Lewis, together with David Lawrence, Jr., formed **The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation**, which became a national model for **high-quality early childhood development, care and education.** The foundation's work promoted a dramatic increase in high-quality childcare and early learning centers, and helped tens of thousands of children get health insurance coverage.

2001

The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation launched a successful public awareness campaign, **Teach More/Love More**, which became the model for today's statewide **Help Me Grow** parenting resource program

2002

Thanks to the efforts of the Foundation, Miami-area voters agreed by a 2-1 margin to increase their property taxes to create a dedicated funding source, **The Children's Trust of Miami-Dade**, which was charged with giving children the essential foundations to achieve their full potential.

2002

The Foundation again succeeded in moving Florida voters to pass a constitutional amendment in November -- championed by Lawrence and others -- to **make high-quality pre-kindergarten available and free for all four-year-olds in the state.**

2005

In December 2004, FL HB 0001A passed and it was signed into law in 2005, **making Florida one of only three states to offer universal VPK.**

2008

The Children's Trust was required by law to be reauthorized by Miami-Dade voters, who this time approved it by an overwhelming 86 percent.

2010

The Pilot (The Palm Beach Project): The Foundation organized 30 neighborhood meetings in Palm Beach County in March as a one-month test market for a new organization.

2010

That summer, **The Children's Movement of Florida** begins, with Lawrence serving as chairman of the board. The Movement is focused on making Florida the best state in the nation for children.

Since the Movement's start, two other couples, Mike and Constance Fernandez of Miami and Barney and Carol Jenkins Barnett of Lakeland, have been key benefactors along with the Katchers.

2010

In October, The Movement organized 17 regional committees throughout Florida. to assist in organizing and launching **17 "Milk Party" rallies** from Pensacola to Key West with a **total attendance of 15,000**.

2011

The Listening Tour:

That summer, The Movement team returned to the same 17 cities in which it held Milk Party rallies the previous September to meet with the regional committees – **more than 400 business, civic and political leaders dedicated to Florida's children** – to discuss The Movement's next steps.

2012-2014

With the passage of HB 5001 (General Appropriations), we worked to gain state support to create **Help Me Grow Florida, a comprehensive parent resource** system available by calling 211. It is now available in 35 counties.

2011

ReadingPals, a statewide initiative, was launched with our partner, United Way. This early literacy program engages close to **2,500 trained volunteers in a weekly mentorship of more than 3,000 young children** from pre-kindergarten to third grade.

2012

2012 media tour:

Led by Dave Lawrence Jr., The Movement's chair, we traveled to 10 major media markets in November -- meeting with local organizations, editorial boards and media people -- to announce our 2012 legislative agenda and host "Books and Cookies" reading events at local early learning centers.

2014

We partnered with the Florida Chamber of Commerce to create **The Business Alliance for Early Learning**. This business-led coalition pushes for innovative early education systems at the state level.

2014

TurboVote: Launched a highly-publicized, three-week voter registration campaign using the online platform TurboVote. Coordinated with dozens of partners across the state to **register more than 800 new voters in Florida**, along with developing a strategy for coordinating with childcare centers to conduct voter registration during drop off and pick up.

2016

Prior to 2016, when HB 5101 (Healthcare Services) passed, **legally residing immigrant children had to wait five years to receive health insurance.** With the advocacy of our organization and many partners, we were able to ensure **tens of thousands of children now receive the pediatric care they need.**

2018

HB 1091 (Early Learning) passed thanks to the unified voices of early childhood advocates across Florida. **This bill will establish quality measures for early learning centers**, which will promote centers that are effective and produce positive results for children across the state.

2018

The Children's Movement wants you to join them in ensuring that every child in Florida receives the start he or she deserves. Share in the joy of raising our future!