



Accomplishments

Pre-Kindergarten

In 2005, FAST secured commitments from the director of the Early Learning Coalition to provide funding for a full-day of Pre-K for any child whose parents are working and make less than 200% of the poverty level. To date, over 3,000 low-income 4-year-olds in Pinellas County have been able to attend Pre-K because of this funding. FAST was also able to get the Early Learning Coalition to hire two full-time outreach coordinators to ensure that the program is made known to low-income working families. Because of this, Pinellas County was #2 in the state for the percentage of children enrolled in Pre-K programs. Now, low-income working families and their children have access to a full-day of high quality, pre-kindergarten education.

Senior Transportation

In another area, FAST has worked with Mr. Brian Smith, director of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, to create a new one-number system for senior transportation. This new system, unveiled in March 2006, works with the Area Agency for Aging and allows seniors to speak directly with a trained professional who can help them with their transportation needs. There are over 20,000 seniors in Pinellas County who do not drive and now benefit from this new system. FAST leaders have also identified an unsafe bus stop that needed to be moved and 6 areas where bus shelters were needed for the elderly or young children riding the bus. The leaders have worked with Mr. Sweeny, director of the Pinellas Sun coast Transit Authority (PSTA), to be sure these bus stops are put in place. (The phone number for seniors to call is 217-8111)

Since then, FAST has been working on some bigger more difficult issues. Currently, FAST is working on the issues of affordable housing, crime and drugs, and education.