



Communities Connected *for Kids*

Connections - Nov. 15 , 2023



This sweet picture, shot by Christopher Walker, was originally published Dec. 4, 2019, in the Wichita Falls Times Record News. Santa left Kansas and is on the Treasure Coast looking for a few more helpers to help make the gift wishes of children in foster care come true. Read on for more information.

We're So, So, Ho, Ho Close!

Port St. Lucie – With little more than a month to go, CCKids and [*Guardians for New Futures*](#) is very close to finding sponsors for every single child in the Circuit 19 dependency system this holiday season.

In fact, all children have been covered in Okeechobee and Martin counties.

And only about 100 are left in St. Lucie and Indian River counties.

"We only need sponsors for 28 children in the Vero Beach area and for 73 in all of St. Lucie County," said Christina Kaiser, Community Relations Director for CCKids, the organization that oversees the child-welfare community in Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast. "Another three to five sponsors would do it!"

CCKids and its Christmas partner, Guardians for New Futures, serve children during the holiday season by finding groups that can sponsor lists of children and their gift wishes. The average sponsor list is between 15 and 20 children.

Group members collect the gifts, and then CCKids comes out to collect them at a scheduled time.

Individuals, families and small groups with limited budgets or members can also sponsor children by participating in CCKids' online toy drive or by taking a list of fewer than 10 children and dropping the gifts off at locations throughout the four-county area.

"We try to make the program as accessible as possible for everyone," Kaiser said.

To learn more, or to ask for a list of children, visit the CCKids [Holiday Portal](#). There, you can find links to sponsor a list of children or to purchase gifts from our online toy drive.



Two local chapters of the Kappa Kappa Iota - Zeta and Alpha-Beta - are making Santa very happy; they got together Monday night to discuss their participation in the gift drive. The Kappa Kappa Iotas' purpose is to promote the advancement of education. Some members, like Darlene Dawson, lower left, also coordinate gift drives through other organizations. Darlene's church,

URGENT



**DONATE A
TURKEY TODAY!**

For a local family in need



CLICK HERE TO DONATE

Catch Someone Doing Something Great!

If you've recently "caught" one of us in the child-welfare community in the act of doing something AWESOME for another human, we want to hear from you!

The *Quality Parenting Initiative* national network will host its annual Elevate and Celebrate event next month and will feature special folks nominated by their peers or by the people they help. Anyone – caregivers, protective investigators, case managers – serving children and families is deserving of a shout out!

If you have a moment to spare, please nominate someone [here](#). The deadline to submit a nomination is Dec. 1.



Jordan Bebout, second from left, attends a recent Stuart/Martin County Chamber of Commerce Breakfast at the Festival of Trees and Lights, being hosted by [Tykes and Teens](#) at downtown Stuart's Flagler Center. With her on each side are Donald Bowen and Dr. Ashley Salomon, from [Hope Health and Wellness](#) Center, which is collecting toys for CCKids' holiday gift project. To the right is Matt Wisehaupt, of [Wisehaupt Bray Asset Management](#).



Did someone say "Festival of Trees and Lights?" Communities Connected for Kids submitted an entry this year. Look for our entry in the wreath room, and please come out and bid



*on our lovely advent
calendar wreath!*

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