



Connections Newsletter

October 15, 2025

Check Out These Road-To-Success Successes!

The youth in our Road to Success program have been busy achieving incredible milestones this year!

**COLLEGE GRADS FROM
FLORIDA STATE,
INDIAN RIVER STATE &
DAYTONA STATE**

**SEVEN NEW HIGH
SCHOOL GRADS NOW
ENROLLED IN COLLEGES
ACROSS FLORIDA**

**A YOUNG LEADER
JOINING THE HIGH
SCHOOL BAND**

**YOUTH STEPPING
INTO CIVIC GROUP
LEADERSHIP ROLES**



There are so many amazing things happening in Independent Living:

Our young adults continue to shine and make remarkable strides in education and leadership:

- A recent graduate from Florida State University earned two advanced degrees Summa Cum Laude.
- An Indian River State College graduate completed her associate's degree with honors and is continuing toward a bachelor's degree.
- A Daytona State College graduate earned her associate's degree with honors and has transferred to University of Central Florida to complete her bachelor's degree.
- A youth leader has been selected to represent the youth voice on the Treasure Coast Alliance.
- A sophomore at a local High School completed two years of FLVS during the summer to transition successfully into high school and is now an active member of the HS Marching Band.
- Seven high school graduates from this past spring have enrolled in colleges and universities across Florida.

Come see us at the....



WHERE:
Flying Pig Ranch
5265 Emerson Ave.
Fort Pierce, FL 34951

WHEN:
Saturday, November
15th, 2025
11 A.M. - 3 P.M.

Children's Home Society

15 NOV 25th Annual National Adoption DAY Event

★ **FREE**, family event, celebrating ALL families ★

- ★ Child Welfare Information Tables
- ★ Petting Zoo
- ★ Raffles
- ★ Bounce House
- ★ Hayrides
- ★ Lunch & Snacks
- ★ KONA Ice
- ★ Crafts & Games

For More Information, contact Children's Home Society at 772-429-2001 or TCAptions@chsf.org

Children's Home Society of Florida recognizes that some of our clients have particular communications needs. We will make available auxiliary aids, sign language and foreign language interpreters at no charge in order to meet these needs. To request such assistance, please contact Children's Home Society at 772-429-2001 at least 48 hours prior to the date of the assistance needed.

Adoption Program and Funding provided by Communities Connected For Kids

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Join the Parent Council Meeting October 23rd



COMMUNITIES
CONNECTED
FOR KIDS




PARENT COUNCIL

Connect with Other Parents and Share Your Experiences in our Child Welfare System! Your Perspective Helps Us Help Other Parents.

3RD THURSDAY MONTHLY VIRTUAL MEETING @ 6:30PM

MEETING LINK

josie.kirchner@cckids.net

www.cckids.net

We look forward to seeing you there!

Jan. 16	Mar. 20	May 15	Jul. 17	Sep. 18	Nov. 20
Feb. 20	Apr. 17	Jun. 19	Aug. 21	Oct. 23	Dec. 18

Click on the flyer above to join us on **THURSDAY OCTOBER 23 at 6:30pm**

The Parent Council is a powerful initiative giving families directly impacted by the dependency system a seat at the table. Comprised of parents who have navigated child welfare firsthand, the council bridges the gap between families and the agencies that serve them.

By sharing lived experiences, members advocate for compassionate, family-centered solutions, provide feedback to improve accountability, and mentor other

parents on their journey. Their voices help shape policies and practices, fostering a more respectful and collaborative environment—one that values family strengths and prioritizes reunification and healing.



Help Make the Co-Parenting Thanksgiving Luncheon a Success

This November, the CCKids Caregiver Support Team will bring together foster children, foster parents, and biological families for a heartwarming Thanksgiving meal. The Co-Parenting Thanksgiving Luncheon is more than just a feast—it's a chance for families to create memories, share gratitude, and strengthen their bonds.

Please note: This is a private event for families selected by Communities Connected for Kids and is not open to the general public.

You can help make this special day possible! Donations from generous community members provide food, drinks, activities, and a welcoming space for families who might otherwise spend the holiday apart. Please support these families and help give them the gift of togetherness this Thanksgiving.

Donations can be made online here: [Thanksgiving Donation](#)
Together, we can make this Thanksgiving a celebration families will remember!

Celebrating the Heart of CCKids: Highlights from Child Welfare Workers Week

From September 15–19, Communities Connected for Kids celebrated Child Welfare Workers Week with a week full of fun and appreciation! Our All-Hands Committee made sure every day honored the heart, compassion, and resilience our staff bring to children and families. Highlights included a treat cart spreading sweet surprises throughout the offices, a wellness training, and the week wrapped up with a bountiful breakfast at an all-staff update meeting. It was a wonderful way to say “thank you” to the incredible team making a difference every single day!



Congratulations to Margie!

This year's DCF Child Welfare Dependency Summit was held from September 3-5 and gave case managers, partners, and youth leaders the chance to reconnect with their purpose and celebrate the impact they make every day.

We're so proud of the Treasure Coast Chapter of Florida Youth SHINE for not only attending but also leading a workshop on the importance of strong, supportive relationships. Their hard work was recognized with the Most Improved Chapter Award, and their amazing mentor, CCKids own Margie M. Dotson, was named Mentor of the Year!



GFNF Child Summit Recap

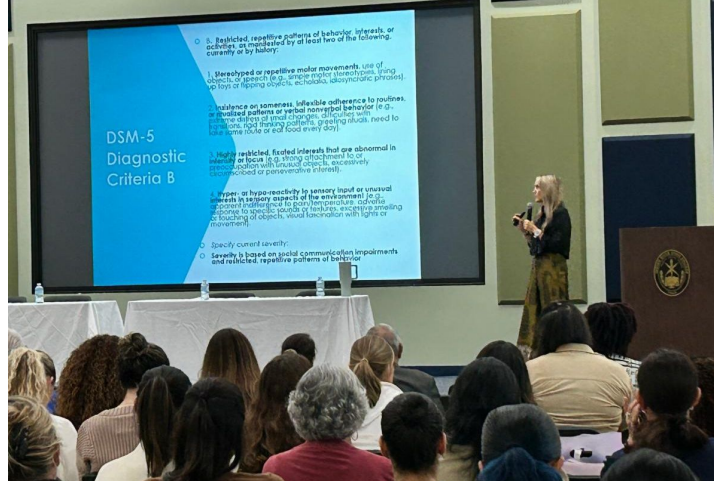
Several CCKids team members attended this year's Guardians for New Futures (GFNF) Child Summit, a two-day event offering high-quality training and professional development for child welfare providers on the Treasure Coast. The summit featured a wide range of expert speakers and panels addressing critical issues affecting children and families.

Highlights included the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) Panel, where

professionals from law enforcement, child protection, and advocacy organizations discussed strategies for supporting children and families impacted by abuse. Staff also watched a moving video testimony from an adult male abuse survivor, offering powerful, firsthand insight into the long-term effects of childhood trauma.

Other standout sessions included "Autism Spectrum Disorder: Diagnosis and Treatment Trends" with Dr. Brandi Rials of Palm Beach Behavioral Health & Wellness, "Growing Up in a Porn Culture: The Social, Emotional, & Cognitive Effects & a Public Health Solution" with Dr. Amanda Sanchez, Director of Programming at CultureReframed, and "Digital Predators: The Rise of AI-Facilitated Child Exploitation" presented by Detective Brian Broughton of the Martin County Sheriff's Special Victims Unit. These sessions provided staff with practical strategies and deeper understanding of the complex challenges children face today.

The summit was an inspiring opportunity for CCKids staff to enhance their skills, connect with fellow professionals, and bring back valuable insights to strengthen support for children and families across the Treasure Coast.



CCKids Newly Redesigned Brochures

COMMUNITIES CONNECTED FOR KIDS OVERSEES:

- CASE MANAGEMENT
- PREVENTION & DIVERSION SERVICES
- PROTECTIVE SUPERVISION
- BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE COORDINATION
- PLACEMENT
- FOSTER CARE & CAREGIVER SUPPORT
- EXTENDED FOSTER CARE
- ADOPTION
- POST-ADOPTION SUPPORT
- INDEPENDENT LIVING TRAINING

[Learn More](#)

549 NW LAKE WHITNEY PL.
SUITE 204
PORT ST. LUCIE FL, 34986

Sponsored by the state of Florida
Department of Children & Families

Communities Connected for Kids

Our vision is to eliminate abuse, neglect, and abandonment so all children grow to their full potential.

ABOUT US

Communities Connected for Kids is the lead agency providing community-based child welfare services in Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, and St. Lucie counties. Our system of care is supported by a network of local child welfare, mental health, and substance abuse providers.

Our mission is to enhance the safety, permanency & well-being of all children in Okeechobee & the Treasure Coast through a network of family support services.

GUIDING EVERY STEP TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

We offer a continuum of services for children and families referred by DCF to protect them from abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Our services focus on keeping children safely out of foster care whenever possible, while providing comprehensive support for those who must enter care. Children in care are supported until they can return home, achieve permanency through adoption or permanent guardianship, or transition into adulthood with our post-18 programs. All services are designed to achieve the following outcomes:

SAFETY

We safeguard children from abuse and neglect. Whenever possible and appropriate, our services help keep children safely at home with their families.

PERMANENCY

We ensure children have stability and permanency in their living arrangements while supporting the preservation of family relationships.

WELL BEING

We support a child's well-being by providing access to medical, dental, mental health, and substance abuse care.

We help families strengthen their ability to meet their children's needs and make sure every child has the educational resources they need to succeed.

A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

Communities Connected for Kids

(772) 873-7800
www.cckids.net

Martin County InterAgency Coalition Agency Fair

CCKids joined the Martin County InterAgency Coalition's annual Agency Fair on Sept. 10 at the Kane Center in Stuart. The event brought together dozens of local agencies and community partners to showcase programs and services that strengthen



Martin County families. Our team enjoyed connecting with fellow providers and sharing how CCKids supports children and families across our community.

COSA Showcase of Services

CCKids was proud to take part in the Council of Social Agencies of St. Lucie's September Showcase of Services on Sept. 17 at the Havert L. Fenn Center. The event was a great opportunity to connect with local partners and share the many ways we're supporting children and families in St. Lucie County. Thanks to everyone who stopped by our table — it was wonderful to see so many familiar faces and meet new ones, too!





HELP BRING JOY TO LOCAL CHILDREN IN NEED



HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE



YOU COLLECT, WE PICK UP & DELIVER

How To Help:
Sign up your church, school, business or social group to sponsor a toy drive

How it Works:
1) You will be given a list of children's names and wishes
2) Collect gifts from your members
3) Toys are picked up

Please Avoid:
Used toys
Food or candy
Gift wrapping

For more information or to sign up, please contact:
Dana.Anderwaldecckids.net



This is a partnership between Guardians for New Futures & Communities Connected for Kids.
Donations will be distributed to children served by CCKids' system of care.

