

CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

November 17, 2025

Nicole Williams Honored as Outstanding Youth Advocate by Florida's Children First



Maya Angelou once said, “I can be changed by what happens to me, but I refuse to be reduced by it.”

This quote comes to mind when we think of Florida Children’s First 2025 Youth Advocate of the Year, Nicole Williams. Ms. Williams is a sophomore at Florida Atlantic University pursuing a degree in psychology with a 3.85 GPA. She is involved in various clubs on campus, works three jobs, is the youth representative for the Treasure Coast Alliance (with Carol DeLoach), and is also the current president of the Treasure Coast Dream Catchers Chapter of Florida Youth Shine.

Nicole started off her speech with Jeremiah 29:11–12: “For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” She said, “The reasons that I came into foster care were devastating, but I have learned through my faith and support from special mentors in my life that my pain can drive my purpose. My love for my siblings keeps me motivated because I want to show them that they can do anything and not let their circumstances define them.”

Resilience, grace, determination, and a joy for life are just a few words to describe her. During her speech, Nicole shared that her faith and love for her siblings keep her motivated. She said that this grounds her and keeps her focused. She even mentioned it during her speech, stating that looking out into the crowd, seeing the faces, and feeling the love from the people who have helped shape her destiny was profound. These were her words, not ours. She said that she has NEVER felt so accomplished and loved as she did last night.

She wanted us to convey her thanks and stated that she hopes she is making us proud—that on the days when she feels overwhelmed, she thinks back on the conversations she has had with Ms. Litty and me, and she remembers her “why.” Ms. Williams is truly an inspiration not only to Ms. Litty and me, who have been honored to mentor her on this journey, but to all that she encounters.

Written by Margie Dotson



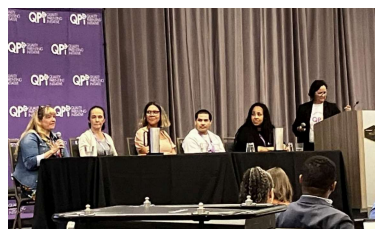
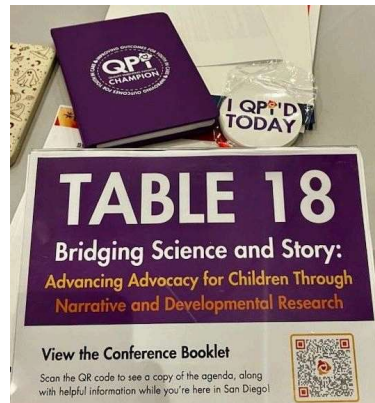
Each year, National Adoption Month gives us the opportunity to celebrate the children and families whose lives are transformed through adoption. It's also a time to recognize the incredible caregivers, caseworkers, and community partners who work tirelessly to ensure every child has the chance to grow up in a safe, loving, and permanent home.

Throughout the month, we honor the resilience of children in the child welfare system and the dedication of the families who open their hearts and homes. We also recommit ourselves to raising awareness about the need for adoptive families—especially for older youth, sibling groups, and children with unique needs. National Adoption Month is not just a celebration—it's a reminder of the life-changing impact we can make when we come together as a community. Thank you to everyone who plays a role in supporting our children and helping them find the love and stability they deserve.

If you are interested in learning more about adoption or how you can help support children in foster care, contact CCKids for more information. Together, we can help create permanent, loving homes for the children who need them most.

[Click Here To Learn More About Adoption](#)

Quality Parenting Initiative National Conference



Last month, CCKids' own Jerra Wisecup and Jamie Franks-Johnson attended the QPI Champions National Conference in San Diego! The Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) hosts this national gathering of child-welfare champions focused on improving outcomes for children in foster care and supporting families and caregivers. The conference offers opportunities for learning, networking, sharing best practices, and building stronger systems of care. Jerra and Jamie both received scholarships to attend and are diving into meaningful sessions to bringing back ideas and tools that will help us serve children and families even better. We are proud of them and excited for all they're bringing home!



CHS National Adoption Day Fun

November is National Adoption Month, and our community came together in a beautiful way to honor it. On November 15th, many of our team members joined families, friends, and partners at Children's Home Society's 25th Annual National Adoption Day—a free, family-friendly celebration hosted at Flying Pig Ranch in Fort Pierce. The event was filled with joy and activities for all ages, including a bounce house, petting zoo, raffles, hayrides, games, and plenty of great food. It was a heartwarming day of connection, celebration, and recognition of the incredible families formed through adoption. Thank you to everyone who came out to support this special day. Together, we helped shine a spotlight on the importance of adoption and the children and families whose stories inspire us all.

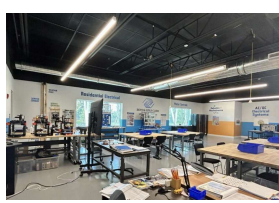


New Boys & Girls Club of Martin County

Some of the CCKids team had the pleasure of touring the new Boys & Girls Clubs of Martin County, and we were so impressed by the incredible programs and opportunities they provide for youth in Martin County! The Club serves students in grades K–12 from the East Stuart community, offering a safe, supportive space where young people can learn, grow, and thrive.

From homework help and STEM challenges to culinary training with the Fork in the Road and career exploration programs in skilled trades, drones, and fashion design — the Club truly opens doors to bright futures. A huge thank-you to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Martin County team for welcoming us and for all they do to empower local youth. We're excited to see the positive impact this new facility will have on our community!





Communities
Connected
for Kids

Donation Drive

Help Us Meet the Current Needs of Children in Foster Care

Every item you donate helps bring comfort and care to local Treasure Coast kids.

Scan the QR code to donate or email Dana.Anderwald@ockids.net to schedule a pickup.



Toddler Training Pants



Calming bags
for children
coming into
foster care



Duffle Bags
for children
to move
locations
with dignity



Baby Wipes



Size 4 & 5 Diapers

CITY OF FORT PIERCE & TREASURE COAST FOOD BANK
PRESENTS

Thanksgiving

FOOD DISTRIBUTION DRIVE-THRU

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2025
8:00 A.M. TO 12:00 P.M. OR UNTIL SUPPLIES LAST
PERCY PEEK GYMNASIUM, 2902 AVENUE D

WWW.CITYOFFORTPIERCE.COM | 772.467.3000






Did you know your child may be able to get extra help with school?

Our Sunshine Health School Liaisons can work with you and your child’s school to request an evaluation. There may be special services and supports that can help your child succeed. Ask their Care Manager for a referral to the School Liaison program to get started.

WHAT SCHOOL LIAISONS DO:

- ✓ Help get your child the medical services and accommodations they need at school
- ✓ Teach you about the Florida public school system and your child’s educational rights
- ✓ Work with your child’s Care Manager, doctors and other service providers to coordinate your child’s school based care
- ✓ Inform schools and school districts about the school liaison program
- ✓ Form relationships with schools and school districts as the health plan’s education experts

Questions? Contact Member Services at **1-855-463-4100** (TTY 1-800-955-8770)

If you think your child is a good fit for the School Liaison program, contact your child’s Care Manager for a referral.

1-855-463-4100
(TTY 1-800-955-8770)

SunshineHealth.com
CW 9538



Its My Very Own Bag Donation

CCKids received an incredible donation of It’s My Very Own Bags from Kaye & Joe and the wonderful team at Midport Seventh-day Adventist Church!

Each handmade bag is thoughtfully packed with comfort items and necessities for children entering care — many of whom have never had some of these things before. From diapers, toys, flashlights, stuffed animals, toothbrushes, brushes, and books to cozy quilts — these bags are truly filled to the brim with love.

A heartfelt thank you to Midport Church for your generosity and for thinking of the children in care!

Out And About in the Community

Bob McPartlan from DCF and CCKids own Caryn Toole at the United Way of Indian River Community Leaders Breakfast on October 1st. This annual event brings together 200 plus nonprofit, business, community leaders, and elected officials. Caryn serves as a board member of UWIRC.





Starting November 5th, 2025
the Marty Transit System
will be

FARE-FREE!

Marty is now fare-free as part of an
initiative to make public transit more
accessible for Martin County residents.



martin.fl.us/transit



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