



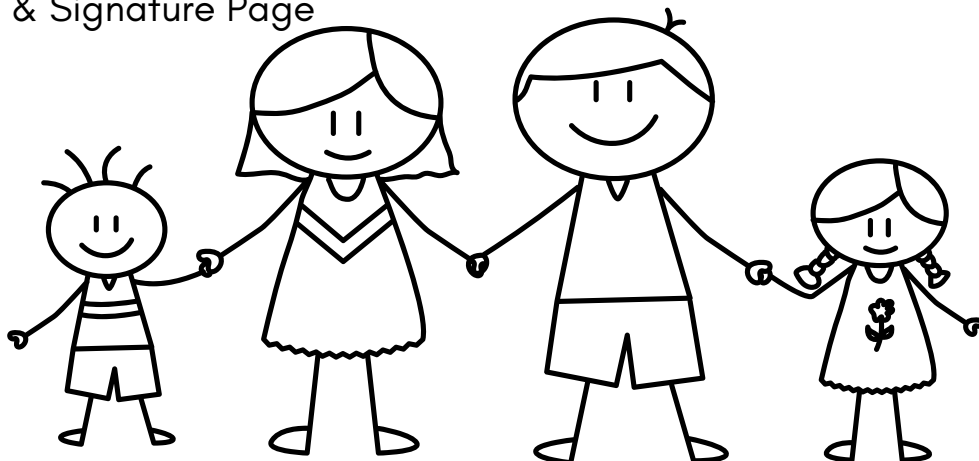
CONSUMER HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed to give you a clear understanding of what to expect from Communities Connected for Kids as you and your family proceed through the dependency process



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CONTACT INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

549 NW Lake Whitney PL, Ste. 204
Port St. Lucie, FL 34986

(772) 873-7800

www.cckids.net

HOURS OF OPERATION

Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Monday through Friday.

ON-CALL NUMBERS

Martin County

(772) 631-3868

St. Lucie County

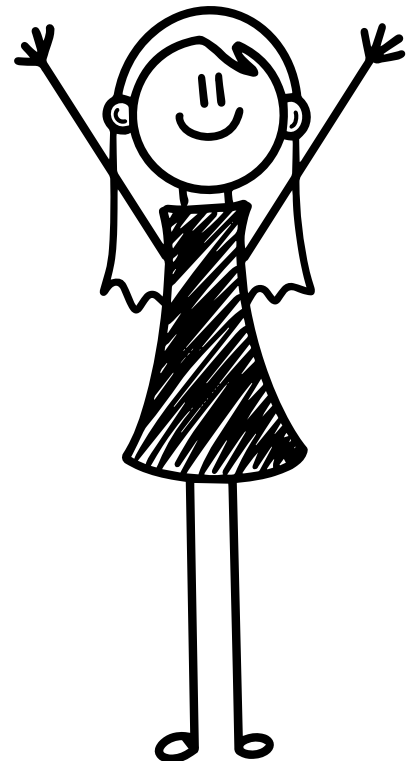
1 (800) 431-7513

Indian River County

(772) 321-3044

Okeechobee County

(863) 697-1966



MISSION, VISION & VALUES

Mission

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

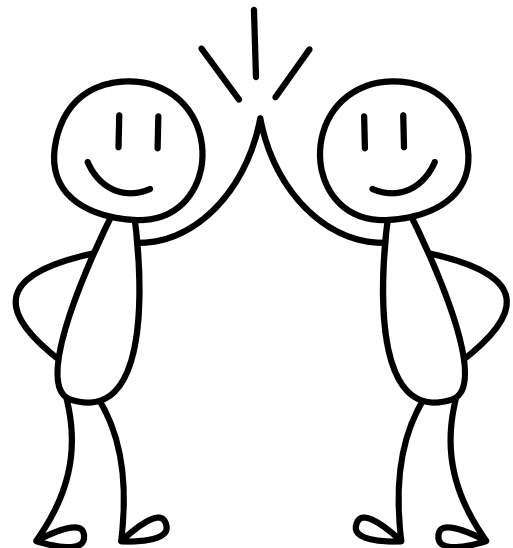
Vision

Our vision is to eliminate abuse, neglect and abandonment in Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast so all children grow to their full potential.

Values

We ensure services provided are:

- Individualized, based on the strengths and needs of the families we serve
- Respectful & culturally sensitive
- Effective & accountable
- Evidence based & data driven
- Permanency focused
- Managed to ensure financial accountability



YOUR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

You have the following rights and responsibilities while working with Communities Connected for Kids (CCKids) or with any of our provider agencies. Please read these Consumer Rights and Responsibilities and take this time to ask questions. When you are satisfied that you understand your rights and responsibilities, please sign the form on the back page of this pamphlet to indicate that you received our handbook.

YOUR RIGHTS

- You have the right to be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect without regard to race, religion, age or disability.
- You have the right to understand the services you receive and the availability of those services.
- You have the right to receive quality service in a professional and timely manner.
- You have the right to receive services from employees who will comply with all laws that protect you and your family from abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- You have the right to confidentiality and privacy within the limits of the law, and to give your consent before information is given to another agency or person outside CCKids.

- You have the right to know that your record may be reviewed for quality and compliance by the Council on Accreditation, Department of Children and Families, and other monitoring agencies.
- You have the right to help build and review your case plan and to have a say in scheduling meetings that you are required to attend.
- You have the right to refuse service, unless the court has limited your rights, and to be informed of what will happen if you refuse.
- And finally, you have the right to file a complaint following the grievance procedure outlined on Pages 16- 17 of this handbook.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- It is your responsibility to give honest information regarding your case to CCKids. An honest partnership will help speed along your case plan and ensure that you receive the best services for your family's situation.
- It is your responsibility to work closely with your case manager toward all service goals agreed upon in your case plan and to communicate any barriers you are experiencing.
- You must also respect the privacy and confidentiality of other people who are receiving CCKids services.
- You are expected to behave in a manner that does not threaten or endanger another person. Failing to do so may result in changes to the way we must deliver services to you.

OUR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Communities Connected for Kids has a responsibility to you and your family; we also have rights and expectations. We have listed these rights, responsibilities and expectations here to help you prepare for our services:

- CCKids offers high-quality services, and it is our responsibility to help you find appointments and activities that are helpful to you in meeting your case plan goals. We will strive to make our services as accessible and convenient as possible.
- It is also our responsibility to protect your privacy and confidentiality except when required by law if abuse or neglect is suspected.
- We are responsible for involving you in the development of your case plan. That means we will include you in the process and respectfully consider your input.
- We are responsible for hiring qualified staff and for providing services in safe and clean buildings.
- All Communities Connected for Kids staff are required by law to report suspicion of child abuse or elder abuse.

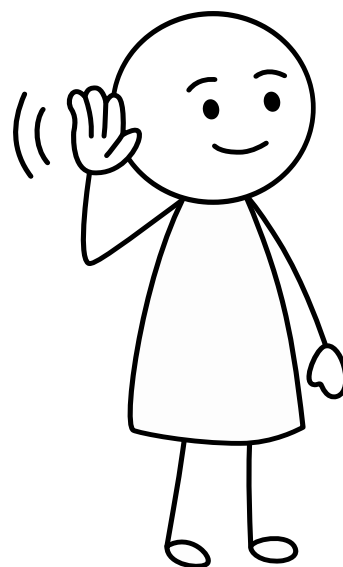
- We are responsible for providing a safe environment for our employees, caregivers, families, children and YOU!
- CCKids does not employ restrictive behavior management interventions for children, defined as isolation, manual restraint, mechanical restraint and locked seclusion. Instead, we use positive reinforcement, verbal de-escalation, and Family Safety Contracts that follow federal, state, and local legal and regulatory requirements.
- If any of our staff suspect that you are a danger to yourself or anyone else, that employee must:
 - *Consult with mental health professionals and, in some instances, call 911 for help.*
 - *If possible, we will notify your family or anyone we feel might be in danger.*
 - *Our staff have also been instructed to call law enforcement if they believe the situation cannot be resolved.*
 - *Staff must disclose information to law enforcement and/or mental health professionals needed to resolve the dangerous situation; and document the incident.*

COMMUNICATION ASSISTANCE

It is important that you have an equal opportunity to access and benefit from CCKids' services. CCKids will make reasonable accommodations if you need help due to impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, or if you have limited English.

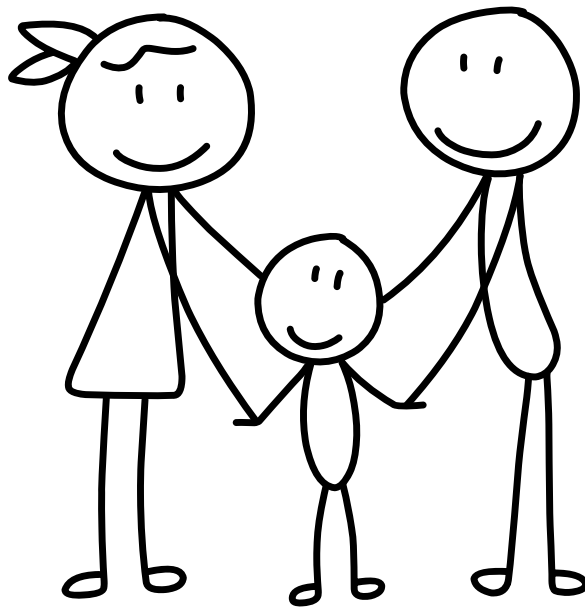
Auxiliary aids for clients with sensory impairment may include:

- Amplified telephones and other assistive listening devices and systems such as Pocket Talker;
- TDD/TTY - Text telephone used like a typewriter that can be used by people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired;
- Florida Relay Service (FRS) - A service that enables a hearing person to communicate with a person who is hearing or speech impaired through a specially trained operator called a communications assistant;
- Braille, Large Print, Audiotapes and Translation Services;
- Qualified American Sign Language interpreters, note takers, and readers.



This is what you can expect from our staff and network providers in regard to auxiliary aids:

- Staff will work with you to assess your needs and form of communication. Hearing impaired people and those with limited English have a right to a qualified interpreter. We discourage using family or friends as interpreters to prevent breaches in communication.
- During the initial needs assessment, you will be informed of the available auxiliary aids, which we will provide to you at our cost. You and your case manager will talk to decide which auxiliary aids are best for you.
- Posters listing the availability of auxiliary aids are posted in service centers.



CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLIENT INFORMATION

We won't release any of your information, or information about your relatives or other relevant parties, without your written consent. All client records will be handled with care, and all electronic records will meet security standards to ensure client confidentiality. All records regarding clients are considered the property of the agency.

NEED-TO-KNOW BASIS

We will share your information on a need-to-know basis, only. This means that we will never use or share your information outside the responsibilities and duties of the job. If approached by someone looking for information outside these rules, our staff will direct the individual to the appropriate staff.

Any details of your case will never be discussed in public areas. Instead, our staff will practice extreme caution when discussing your case, sharing information only in secure areas.

CCKids volunteers are also subject to the need-to-know rule and will always be overseen by staff. Only the information relevant to a volunteer's job will be shared by staff. For example, a volunteer who tutors a child may know that the child is experiencing difficulty in school performance. However, that same volunteer should not know personal information about you, your family, the status of your case, or the problems that brought your family under the supervision of the agency.

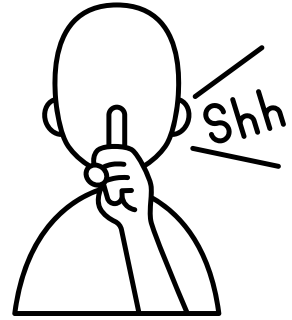
Finally, foster parents may share only need-to-know information with other foster parents. All CCKids staff, providers, volunteers and caregivers will be trained on confidentiality and ethical standards.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO HIV/AIDS RECORDS

The following procedures apply to HIV/AIDS records and information access:

- Child's case narrative will not refer to HIV infection or AIDS.
- We will disclose a child's medical condition to prospective caregivers, but the child's name will be shared only at placement.
- CCKids will provide the child's complete medical history to caregivers once the child is placed. This information will be held in strict confidentiality and shared only with health-care professionals.
- Medical documents needed for school enrollment must be provided separately by the physician and may not contain any reference to the child's HIV/AIDS status.
- We will keep all HIV/AIDS information in an envelope used to safeguard sensitive case information. The child's caregivers, natural parents and/or legal guardians, will have access to this information once the child is placed.
- We do not classify case records in any way that would permit their identification as case records of HIV/AIDS infected children.

NOTICE OF PRIVACY POLICY



HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY ACT - HIPAA

Your medical information is protected by federal law under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

CCKids will comply with all federal and state laws concerning medical privacy, including your health status, medical condition, claims experience, receipt of health care, medical history, genetic information, and evidence of insurability and disability.

CCKids may use or share your protected health information for the following reasons:

- **Treatment & Payment:** We will use or share your information with medical professionals in order to coordinate your health care. Likewise, we will share your protected health information with insurers, collection agencies and consumer reporting agencies in order to receive payment for services.
- **Business Operations:** We may also use your protected health information in the course of normal business operations. This might mean using your information to evaluate the capacity of a caregiver to take care of you, using it as a training tool for student caregivers, or using it to resolve grievances.

- Persons Involved in Your Care: We may share your protected health information with a relative, close personal friend or any person involved in your case only if you have signed a consent for release of information. If you are a minor,
 - CCKids may share your protected health information about you to a parent, guardian or other person responsible for you except in some situations.
 - We are required by law to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Florida Department of Children and Families.
- CCKids may release your protected health information without your consent when required by law in certain circumstances including law enforcement and judicial investigations, and serious threats to public health or safety.

AUTHORIZATION

Other than the uses and sharing listed above, CCKids will not use or share your protected health information without signed permission. Likewise, we will not share the protected health information of your children without your signed consent.

You may later revoke your permission by writing us a letter canceling your permission. In some instances, court orders and case plans may require us to share information with the court and other parties to the case (eg: Guardian ad Litem office).

PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to a copy of your protected health information (PHI). To see or receive a copy of your PHI, or to request any changes to your information, you must make a written request or fill out the CCKids Record Request Form. You can find this at www.cckids.net, under resources: case management resources.

Older records may take some time to pull from storage. CCKids may deny your request in certain situations but will explain why in writing and let you know if you have the right to have our decision reviewed by another person.

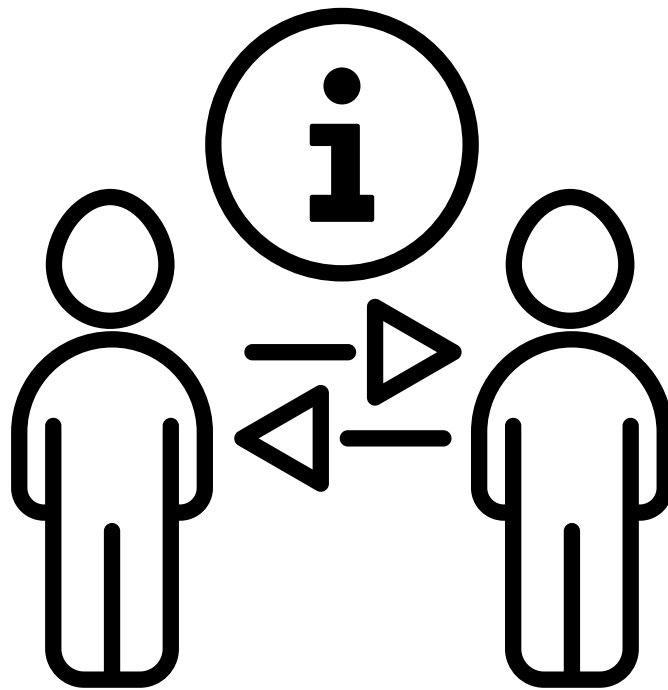
You have the right to request that CCKids amends your PHI if you believe information completed by our staff is not correct or complete.

We may deny your request in certain situations. If CCKids denies your request, we will explain why in writing. You will have the opportunity to send us a statement explaining why you disagree with our decision. Your statement will be noted and shared wherever your information is used.

You have the right to know who has seen your information. If requested, CCKids will provide you with a list of people and organizations with whom we've shared your information in the last six years. You can make a request by letter or by filling out the CCKids Record Request Form. Please note that CCKids may charge you a fee to cover the cost of preparing the list.

You may ask CCKids to limit the use and sharing of your protected health information, (PHI), for treatment, payment and health care operations. Communities Connected for Kids is not required to agree to your request.

You have the right to change your contact information. If you would like to be contacted by a different method or at a different location, please submit a written request to your case manager.



CONSUMER GRIEVANCE PROCESS

You have the right to file a complaint following the grievance procedure outlined below. Communities Connected for Kids will respond to grievances individually, timely and respectfully.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

This is what you can expect when you file a grievance through CCKids' Consumer Grievance Procedure:

1. The first step when a conflict or difference of opinion occurs is to reach out to your case manager. This is an informal step, but your complaint will be documented. If you don't have your case manager's phone number, call **(772) 873-7800** or fill out the form found here: <https://cckids.net/foster-parents/upcoming-classes/parent-family-dependency-contact/>
2. If your concerns are not addressed to your satisfaction, the next step is to speak to the case manager supervisor. Your case manager will give you the name and contact information for the appropriate supervisor. If the concern cannot be resolved by the supervisor, the supervisor will provide you with the name of the and contact information of the program director. Call **(772) 873-7800** for supervisor contact information.
3. Sometimes, it may be necessary to involve CCKids management. This is the next step if your complaint cannot be resolved at the case management level. The program director will provide you with the appropriate CCKids management team member contact. Call **(772) 873-7800**.

4. You have one final option if you've moved through the previous steps and still are not satisfied. Our Chief Executive Officer is the final authority on all disagreements. The CEO will review all data and make a final decision regarding the complaint within five days of receiving the request to review. Call **(772) 873-7800**.

CIVIL RIGHTS

You also have a right to make a complaint outside of CCKids:

1. Compliance Hotline: You may confidentially report concerns or grievances through the Compliance Hotline by calling **1-855-662-SAFE (1-855-662-7233)** or by visiting **www.safehotline.com**. Reports can be submitted online by selecting "Submit a Report." When making a report, please use CCKids Company ID number 5733737145, which is required to ensure the report is properly directed.

2. You may file a written complaint within 180 days and mail to:

***Assistant Staff Director for Civil Rights
DCF Office of Inspector General/Office of Civil Rights
1317 Winewood Boulevard
Building 1, Room 110
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700
(850) 487-1901; TDD (850) 922-9220***

***U.S Department of Health and Human Services
Attention: Office of Civil Rights
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center, Suite 16T70 61,
Forsyth Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8909
(404) 562-7886; TDD (404) 562-7884***



FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE

The following numbers are for reporting fraud, waste and abuse of Medicaid services:

- The Florida Medicaid Program Integrity Office: **1-850-412-4600**
- Complaint Form: **<https://ahca.myflorida.com/contact-ahca/file-a-complaint>**
- Sunshine Health Compliance hotline at **1-800-345-1642** or Sunshine Health's anonymous and confidential hotline at **1-866-685-8664**

FOR YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

If you are a youth or young adult in Florida's dependency care system and have a concern about your placement, care, or services, you have the right to contact the Florida Children's Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is a confidential, independent resource that listens to your concerns, helps explain policies or procedures, and takes complaints without fear of retaliation.

You can reach the Office of the Children's Ombudsman at:

(850) 717-4199, Option 4

dcf.ombudsman@myflfamilies.com

While confidentiality is protected as much as possible under the law, the Ombudsman may share information if necessary to address the issue or ensure someone's safety.

SUPPORT ALONG THE WAY

Every journey has challenges, and you do not have to face them alone.

Communities Connected for Kids is here to support children, youth, and families with guidance, encouragement, and access to resources when they are needed most. If you have questions or need help at any point, support is available to you.

You can scan the QR code to find trusted information and connections to resources whenever you're ready.



SIGNATURE PAGE

By signing this page, I acknowledge that I have received and read this consumer handbook, which has informed me of my rights and responsibilities and those of Communities Connected for Kids.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature _____