



## CONNECTIONS

A CCKids Community Newsletter

June 11, 2026



June is Family Reunification Month—  
a time to honor the strength, courage, and  
healing of families who work tirelessly to  
come back together. This month, we  
celebrate their journeys, their victories, and  
the community that stands beside them.



Communities Connected for Kids recognizes the power of family reunification and the hope it brings to children and parents. This month highlights the importance of family preservation and the dedicated efforts made to help children safely remain with, or safely return to, their families.

At CCKids, we are committed to strengthening families and supporting them through every step of their journey. Working alongside caregivers, service providers, and community partners, we help ensure families have access to the resources, guidance, and support they need to heal, grow, and safely reunify. Every successful reunification represents resilience, perseverance, and the belief that children thrive best in safe, stable family environments.

We invite our community to join us in raising awareness about the challenges families face when separated through the child-welfare system—and the critical need for supportive services that make safe reunification possible. Your support helps build a stronger, more compassionate community where families have the tools they need to succeed.

Thank you for supporting our mission. Together, we can create brighter futures for children, strengthen families, and build a more connected community.

To learn more or get involved, visit: <https://cckids.net>

# SUMMER BREAKSPOT

FRIENDS FOOD FREE ALL SUMMER LONG

## Free Summer Meals for Florida Kids

Summer BreakSpot is offering free, healthy meals to all Florida children and teens 18 and under throughout the summer. No registration or paperwork is required—just show up and eat.

Families can find nearby meal sites by visiting SummerBreakSpot.org and using the site locator to search by address, city, or ZIP code. Locations include schools, parks, libraries, and community centers.

Help ensure every child has access to nutritious meals this summer by sharing this resource with families in your community.

SEARCH HERE



**Water Safety Tips**  
Stay safe at the pool, beach, and beyond!

**BEACH SAFETY**

- Always swim near a lifeguard
- Check for rip current warnings
- Stay aware of conditions
- If caught in a ripcurrent, stay calm and signal for help
- Call 911 if you see an emergency

**DROWNING PREVENTION**

- Install pool gates & alarms
- Always supervise children—stay within arm's reach
- Enroll your child in swim lessons
- Use life jackets for inexperienced swimmers
- Avoid distractions like phones while supervising
- Learn CPR and basic rescue skills

*Make water safety your priority so everyone can enjoy a fun, safe summer!*

PLEASE CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES:

STOP DROWNING NOW WEBSITE

FREE SWIM LESSON OPTIONS

SLC LESSONS (FINANCIAL AID AVAIL)

REQUEST FREE POOL ALARMS



BEACH SAFETY WITH MARTIN COUNTY FIRE RESCUE VIDEO



DROWING PREVENTION WITH MARTIN COUNTY FIRE RESCUE VIDEO



Greetings Adoptive Parents,

My name is Shearon Demps, and I am the Post Adoption Specialist for Communities Connected for Kids. I provide support to adoptive families across the Treasure Coast and Okeechobee.

A Post Adoption section will be featured in the CCK monthly newsletter, offering resources, tips, and helpful information for families. I can be reached at 772-475-8159 or via email at [shearon.demps@cckids.net](mailto:shearon.demps@cckids.net).

Adoption is a lifelong journey that involves every member of the family. The Post Adoption Support Group is designed to help families navigate the "normative crises" that often arise throughout the adoption experience. These challenges are commonly connected to core adoption issues, such as experiences of loss, memories of biological family, and post-traumatic symptoms in adoptive children. The group is facilitated by adoption-competent therapists from Residing Hope.

Post Adoption Support Groups are held virtually via Zoom on the first Monday of each month. To learn more or submit a referral, visit <https://residinghope.org/> or contact the main office at 386-259-5413. This service is provided at no cost.

Call 211 if you need immediate help. It is a free and confidential service that connects you to expert, caring help for various needs, such as housing, food, health, and mental health.

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### **Ky, Age 15**

Say hi to Ky! She is a bright and passionate young individual with a love for cooking, often finding joy in trying new recipes and expressing creativity in the kitchen. She also has a deep appreciation for nature and enjoys spending time outdoors. Ky has a growing interest in fashion, using it as a way to showcase her personality and style.

Ky is looking for a supportive and caring forever family who will encourage her growth, celebrate her individuality, and help her unlock her full potential. If you're ready to build meaningful connections and create lasting memories, you just might be the perfect match for Ky.

Interested in learning about adoption?  
Please contact Children's Home Society  
at [tcadoptions@chsfl.org](mailto:tcadoptions@chsfl.org)



**ADOPTABLE  
CHILD  
SPOTLIGHT**



**FAMILY  
FINDER  
ADOPTION  
SPOTLIGHT**

### **Adoption Success Story**

Family Finders helped turn an old connection into a forever family for a young teen. After a 15-year-old boy entered foster care, Family Finders conducted a detailed case review and uncovered a note identifying the child's Godmother as a former caregiver. Using that information, the team located her through Facebook and initiated contact, taking extra care to verify legitimacy before moving forward.

A home study was completed, and the child was placed with his Godmother. While the journey included challenges and a temporary disruption, she remained committed and continued advocating for him. Nearly two years later, she welcomed him back into her home with the goal of adoption. Just four months later, the adoption was finalized in November 2025.

Today, he is thriving in the loving, permanent home of his Godmother—a powerful example of persistence, connection, and the life-changing impact of Family Finder's work.

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# Florida's Adoption Information Center

## ADOPTIVE PARENT TRAINING

**Tuesday June 16, 2026—Via ZOOM**

### Educational Opportunity for Adoptive Parents:

#### Agenda

10:00a.m.—Welcome

10:05a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Handling Difficult Children: A Two-Part Workshop** Learn how to prevent, respond to, and recover from family crises with effective de-escalation tools for anger, hurtful language, and aggressive behavior.

12:00 - 1:00p.m. Lunch Break

1:00 to 3:00p.m.

**Part 2** focuses on practical strategies and skills for calming an escalated child while maintaining our own emotional regulation throughout the process.

### Adoptive Parent Training — FREE

*Pre Registration Required*

*Limited to first 100 registrants!*

### For more information:

**Florida's Adoption Information Center  
1-800-962-3678**

Email: [adoptflorida@danielkids.org](mailto:adoptflorida@danielkids.org)  
4203 Southpoint Boulevard - Jacksonville, Florida 32216

### Presented by: Susan Badeau



Susan Badeau (Sue) writes and speaks extensively on topics related to children, particularly those with special needs and is a frequent and passionate keynote speaker and workshop leader at state, regional and national conferences. Sue and her husband, Hector, are the lifetime parents of twenty-two children, two by birth and twenty adopted (three, with terminal illnesses, are now deceased). They have also served as foster parents for more than 50 children in three states, and as a host family for refugee youth from Sudan, Kosovo and Guatemala. Recently, their 35<sup>th</sup> grandchild and fourth great-grandchild were born. They have won numerous awards for their work, including being recognized with an "Adoption Excellence" award, and receiving an "Angels in Adoption" award from Congress both of these awards were for their work on behalf of adoption and children in foster care. She is co-author "Are We There Yet? The Ultimate Road Trip Adopting & Raising 22 Kids"



As an organization approved by the Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling, Daniel Memorial is able to offer 4 continuing education credits. Provider Number 50-481. Expires 03/31/2027.

## Check out these recent Benefit changes your adopted child is able to receive from Sunshine Health:



#### Benefit Modifications:

- The OTC benefit will decrease from \$50 to \$25 per month (effective July 1, 2026).
- The Camp Scholarship benefit will increase from \$150 to \$300 (effective June 1, 2026).

**Benefit Additions - effective June 1, 2026** - You can contact the assigned Sunshine Care Manager for more information and eligibility requirements:

We are excited to introduce several new benefits, including:

- **Digital Youth Engagement Tool:** Offers digital behavioral health support for teens and young adults returning to the community after an inpatient stay or emergency department visit. Includes a digital tele-behavioral health platform with Certified Peer Specialist Mentor support. Member Eligibility: Must be age 13-22 and transitioning back to the community after a behavioral health inpatient stay or emergency department visit; Contact the assigned Sunshine Care Manager, because the referral must be completed by them.
- **Fresh Funds:** Supports healthier nutrition after delivery and helps members during the postpartum period. Provides \$50 per month for up to 6 months after delivery of baby.
- **Ready for Baby Bundles:** Helps families with baby care supplies and other items that support infant comfort, hygiene, and early care needs during the first year of life. Provides 2 bundles per delivery/baby; for multiple babies, more than one bundle may be available.
- **Mom Care Bundle:** Provides a postpartum self-care bundle to support recovery and well-being after pregnancy. One bundle per pregnancy or delivery.
- **First Year of Life Safe Sleep:** Helps support safer infant sleep by providing a crib for eligible babies. Provides 1 crib per delivery/baby; for multiple babies, more than one crib may be available.
- **Medically Tailored Meals for both Diabetes and Cardiovascular conditions:** Provides medically tailored meals to help members better manage their health through nutrition support. Up to 84 meals over 6 weeks.
- **Digital Care Support for Adults:** Offers digital behavioral health support for adults managing conditions such as anxiety, depression, substance use disorder, or schizophrenia. Provides access to a digital behavioral health support platform.

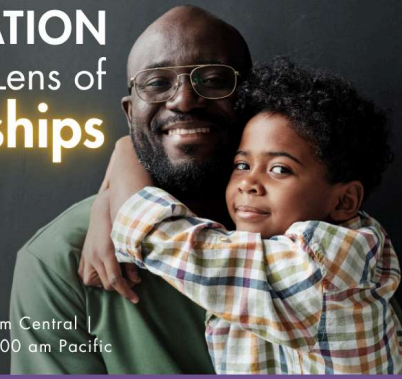
If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to the assigned Sunshine Health Care Manager or your Program Manager.

## QPI MONTHLY WEBINAR SERIES:

# REUNIFICATION Through the Lens of Relationships

JUNE 18, 2026

2:00 pm Eastern | 1:00 pm Central |  
12:00 pm Mountain | 11:00 am Pacific



QUALITY PARENTING INITIATIVE  
WEBINAR REGISTER HERE

### *Helping Children Find Calm in Difficult Moments*

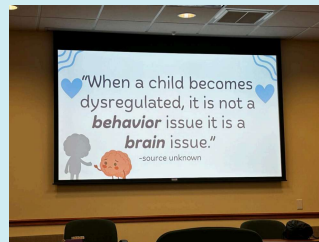
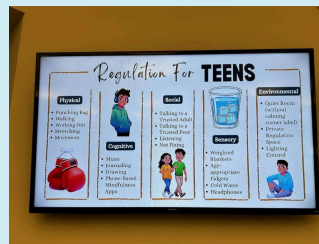
CCKids recently partnered with Tykes & Teens to provide two specialized trainings focused on helping children and teens regulate emotions during high-stress situations.

In February, CCKids team members participated in a training centered on younger children. The session explored practical strategies and tools—such as calming bags—to support kids during moments of stress, transition, or uncertainty. These age-appropriate resources help children feel safe, grounded, and better able to manage their emotions.

Building on that foundation, a second training was held in April, with a focus on teen regulation and coping. This session addressed the unique needs of adolescents, offering tools and approaches tailored to how teens experience and respond to stress, empowering staff to support them more effectively during challenging moments.

As a result of these trainings, calming resources are now available at each CCKids service center for case management staff to use in real time with children, teens, and families.

By equipping Case Management with developmentally appropriate strategies and tools for both kids and teens, CCKids continues to strengthen trauma-informed care and ensure youth of all ages feel supported, understood, and safe during times of heightened stress.



JOIN US JUNE 18 AT NOON

Let's Talk!  
**PARENT COUNCIL**



*Partnering for Success*

Connect with other parents and share your experiences. Your perspectives help us help others!

**MONTHLY VIRTUAL MEETING**

every 3rd Thursday

Jan 15, March 19, May 21 @ 6:30pm

Feb 19, April 16, June 18 @ Noon



SCAN HERE

Your participation makes a difference!

**CONTACT US 772-873-7800**



[CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE MEETING](#)

**Foster Banners Up in Martin!**

Foster care awareness is getting a visible boost in Martin County thanks to new banners now displayed at all four Apple Tree Academy locations.

These banners, featuring the message "Foster the Future – Become a Foster Parent," help shine a light on the ongoing need for loving, supportive homes for children in our community. By placing them in high-traffic school locations, more families and community members are seeing how they can get involved and make a difference.

We're grateful to Lisa Chitty of Apple Tree Academy for partnering with Communities Connected for Kids to help spread awareness and support local children in need of foster families.





### Sunshine Health Orthodontia Grant

Sunshine Health will open the next Orthodontia Grant on August 1. The grant will be open from Aug 1-31 with the eligibility criteria of being active on the Sunshine CWSP-Child Welfare Specialty Plan—now being called the Pathway to Shine Plan.

Summer is a great time for kids with orthodontia referrals to have their evaluations done!

Any questions can sent to Lisa McBride at: [lisa.mcbride@cckids.net](mailto:lisa.mcbride@cckids.net).

### Place of Hope Ribbon Cutting

The CCKids Independent Living team was honored to attend the ribbon cutting for Place of Hope's Bender Family Campus in Stuart. This innovative campus serves foster children, young adults aging out of foster care, survivors of human trafficking, and youth experiencing homelessness—providing safe housing alongside comprehensive support services, life skills training, and pathways to independence. Designed as a holistic community, the campus empowers individuals to heal, grow, and build a stable future.



[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)



### It's My Very Own Bag Donation

CCKids received a generous donation of It's My Very Own Bags from Kaye & Joe and the team at Midport Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Each handmade bag is filled with comfort items and essentials for children entering care—many for the first time.

Thank you, Midport Church, for your kindness!

### ELC's Family Fun Fair

CCKids attended the Early Learning Center of St. Lucie County's Family Fun Fest at the Fenn Center in April. This free community event was full of engaging activities for children and brought together many families for a fun and memorable day.



### Indian River Healthy Start Coalition

IRC County Director Caryn Toole attended the IRC Healthy Start Coalition Annual Meeting, here with Healthy Start CEO Megan McFall and United Way of IRC CEO Meredith Egan.

