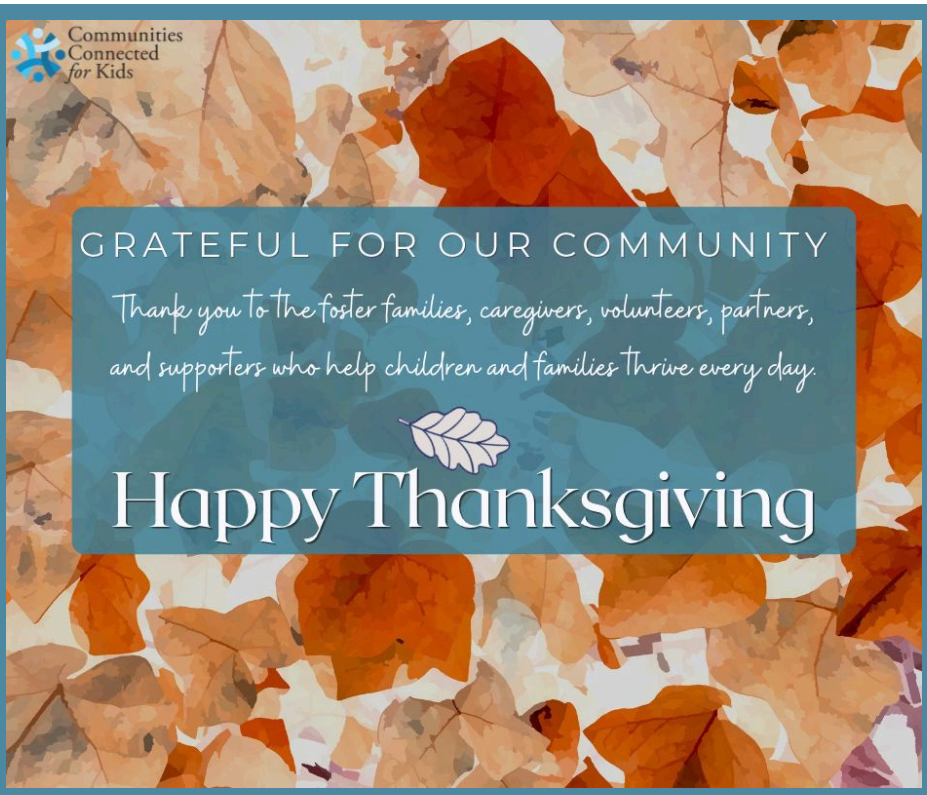
CONNECTIONS

A CCKids Community Newsletter

November 10, 2026



This Thanksgiving, we're reflecting on the power of community and the incredible people who make a difference in the lives of children and families across our region.

To our foster families, caregivers, volunteers, community partners, donors, and supporters: thank you for your unwavering commitment, compassion, and generosity. Because of you, children throughout Okeechobee, Indian River, St. Lucie, and Martin counties have the support, stability, and opportunities they need to thrive.

We are also deeply grateful for our dedicated team members who work every day to strengthen families and create brighter futures. Your passion and purpose inspire us all.
As we gather with family and friends, we celebrate the kindness, hope, and connection that bring our communities together.

From all of us at Communities Connected for Kids, we wish you a happy, peaceful, and joy-filled Thanksgiving.



National Adoption Month is a special time to celebrate the incredible bonds created through adoption and to honor the children, families, and advocates who help make forever families possible.

We are saddened to share that the venue for our National Adoption Day event, Flying Pig Ranch, has sustained significant flood damage. As a result, the event has been postponed. Please follow our social media channels for updates on a rescheduled date. We look forward to coming together soon to celebrate adoption, family, and the many lives touched by love.

Visit Our Facebook Page



Interested in being a sponsor? Click here to email

PORT ST. LUCIE — For the 18th consecutive year, Guardians for New Futures is asking the community to help make the holidays brighter for children throughout the Treasure Coast and Okeechobee.

The nonprofit organization, also known as GFNF4Kids, is partnering with Communities Connected for Kids for its annual Holiday Gift Drive, with a goal of reaching more than 1,500 children.

Last year, donations from individuals, families, businesses and community organizations helped provide holiday gifts to more than 1,500 children. Organizers hope to expand that effort this year.

The Holiday Gift Drive supports children who have experienced abuse and are involved in the child welfare system, as well as underserved youth and children who have experienced other traumatic events.

"With the community's help, this is a wonderful opportunity to come together and let children know they are valued and cared for," said Debbie Butler, GFNF4Kids president.

Community members can participate by sponsoring a child and purchasing gifts from a wish list; hosting a gift drive at a business, church or community organization; or making a monetary donation to help GFNF4Kids purchase gifts.

Guardians for New Futures is a local nonprofit that supports the unfunded needs of abused children and underserved youth. The organization works to increase community awareness and education through advocacy, community engagement and collaboration.

Its partner, Communities Connected for Kids, oversees the child welfare system in Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie counties. Through services, advocacy and community partnerships, the organization works to ensure children in foster care and their families receive the support they need.

For more information or to sponsor a child or host a gift drive, email info@gfnf4kids.org, call 772-807-3868 or visit www.gfnf4kids.org.



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. I can be reached at 772-475-8159 or via email at 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.

National Adoption Month Spotlight: The Ball Family's Forever Story



This National Adoption Month, we're celebrating the Ball family's journey to forever.

After meeting Steven Jr. in 2025, Steven and Nicole Ball began mentoring him and spent months building a bond rooted in trust, love, and connection. What started as a mentorship grew, and by May 2026, Steven Jr. joined their family. On August 3, 2026, their adoption was finalized, making them a forever family. Today, Steven Jr. has a loving mom, dad, and grandparents who are proud to call him their son and grandson. Their story is a beautiful reminder of the life-changing power of patience, commitment, and love.

Have you used your Care Grant from Sunshine Health this year?

Care Grants: Up to **$150 per child per year** for services and supplies for social or physical activities, such as gym membership, sports equipment, art supplies and application fees for post-high school education. Call Sunshine Health 1-855-463-4100 for the form or the Post Adoption Specialist, 772-475-8159.







CCKids had an amazing time celebrating Halloween in our communities!

Our team enjoyed connecting with families at both the 2nd Street Cowboys & Cobwebs event in Fort Pierce and the DeBerard Family Foundation and United Way of St. Lucie & Okeechobee Halloween celebration at the Okeechobee Agri-Civic Center.

From costumes and candy to smiles and community spirit, these events were a wonderful opportunity to spend time with local children and families while sharing the mission of CCKids. Thank you to everyone who stopped by to say hello and to the organizers who made these festive celebrations possible!



CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE MEETING

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) for the Holidays: Navigating Seasonal Stress

Help your family prepare for a successful holiday season by joining one of two virtual sessions of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) for the Holidays: Using Behavior Principles to Navigate Seasonal Stress, presented by Devereux's Behavior Support Program.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is an evidence-based approach that helps caregivers understand behavior and develop strategies that encourage positive outcomes. This free training will provide insight into the holiday-related stressors that can affect children diagnosed with, or at risk for, emotional and behavioral disorders. Participants will learn practical techniques for managing transitions, supporting positive behaviors, and reducing stress during the busy holiday season.

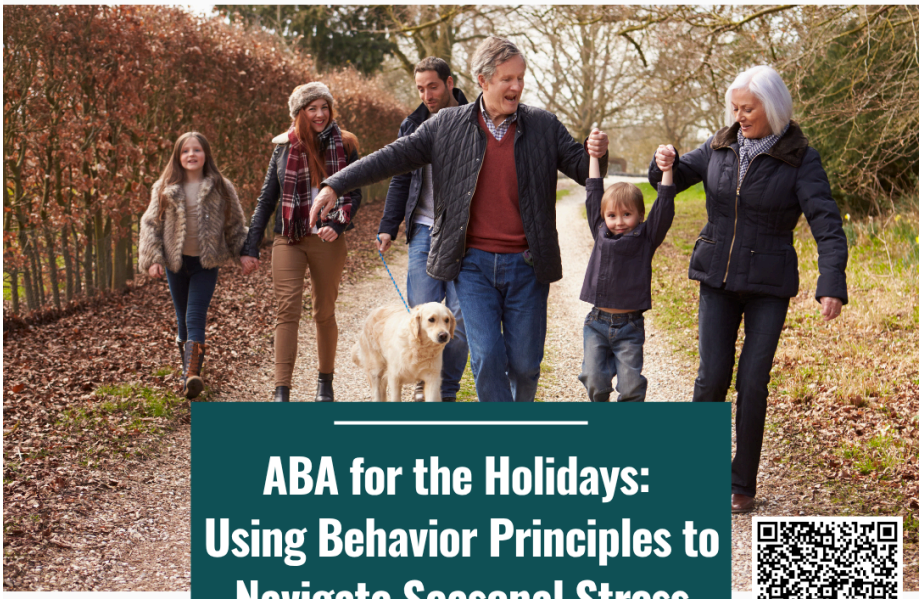
Register via the links below or scan the QR codes on the images below:

Session 1 Registration: November 9th at 12pm

Session 2 Registration: November 18th at 6pm

DEVEREUX FLORIDA'S PARENT AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERIES

Devereux | FL



ABA for the Holidays: Using Behavior Principles to Navigate Seasonal Stress

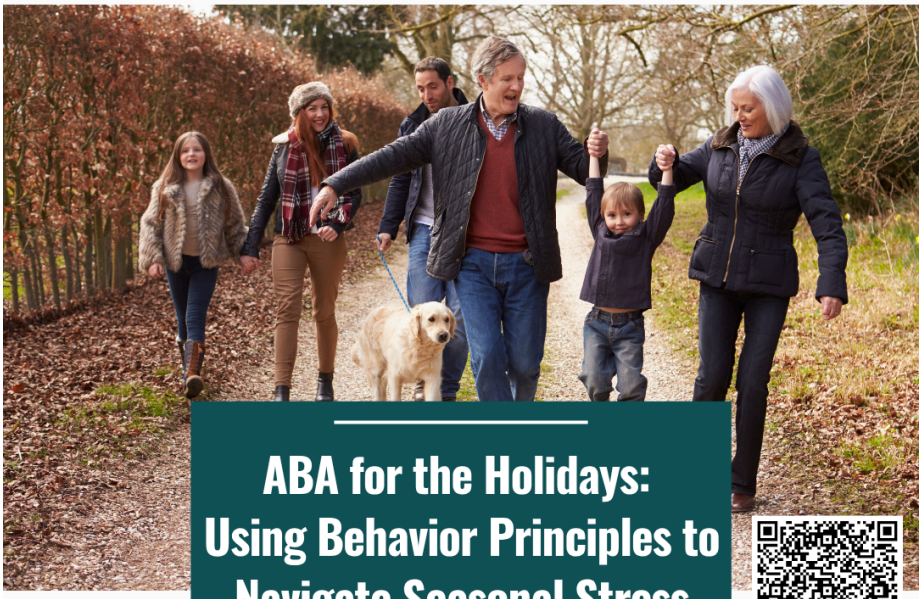
A VIRTUAL WORKSHOP| MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH | 12PM

This workshop will provide parents and caregivers with insight into the stressors around the holiday season that impact children diagnosed with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders.

Register by Scanning the QR Code

DEVEREUX FLORIDA'S PARENT AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERIES

Devereux | FL



ABA for the Holidays: Using Behavior Principles to Navigate Seasonal Stress

A VIRTUAL WORKSHOP| WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH | 6PM

This workshop will provide parents and caregivers with insight into the stressors around the holiday season that impact children diagnosed with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders.

Register by Scanning the QR Code



CCKids is proud to launch the Tresses of Texture Hair Care Initiative, a program designed to ensure children and youth in care have access to the specialized products needed to care for textured hair. Our goal is to stock these products at all four CCKids service centers, making them available to children, caregivers, and group homes throughout our region.

DONATE PRODUCTS HERE

Celebrating TCFB's New Chapter

CCKids joined community leaders in celebrating the Treasure Coast Food Bank's new facility at its ribbon-cutting ceremony. Their partnership helps us keep our diaper closet stocked with essentials for infants and toddlers in foster care, ensuring our youngest children receive the support they need. Thank you, Treasure Coast Food Bank, for making a difference in the lives of local families!











Foster Homes Needed

Children in Florida need foster homes that can provide safety, stability, and connection.

There is no “perfect time” in someone’s life to become a foster parent – if you’ve thought about fostering, there is no better time to take the next steps.

This free mini-course can help you make an informed decision on whether this role is right for you. No assumptions. No pressure. Just a short course that provides a realistic overview of what to expect.

Take the first step today!



Learn More Here



Grace Baptist Church Donates 22 Suitcases for Children in Foster Care

CCKids is grateful to Grace Baptist Church for their generous donation of 22 additional suitcases for children entering foster care. These suitcases provide children with a safe and dignified way to transport their belongings during times of transition, helping replace the use of trash bags and offering comfort during uncertain moments. Thank you, Grace Baptist Church, for making a meaningful difference in the lives of local children and families.

Human Trafficking Awareness Training

Join Devereux's Delta Team for one of two virtual Human Trafficking Awareness sessions designed for parents, caregivers, and community members.
This free training will explore what human trafficking is, how individuals can be recruited and exploited, who may be vulnerable, and the lasting effects of exploitation. Participants will gain valuable knowledge to help recognize warning signs and better protect children and youth.

Session 1 Registration November 10th at 6pm

Session 2 Registration November 13th at 12pm

DEVEREUX FLORIDA'S PARENT AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERIES

Devereux | FL



Human Trafficking Awareness

A VIRTUAL WORKSHOP| TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH | 6PM

This training offers a common definition of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children, explains how individuals can be recruited, who is vulnerable to exploitation, who the exploiters and customers are, the effects of exploitation, and how to identify youth who have been exploited. This training also provides recommended approaches for supporting individuals who are at risk or when there are causes for concern.

Register by Scanning the QR Code

DEVEREUX FLORIDA'S PARENT AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERIES

Devereux | FL



Human Trafficking Awareness

A VIRTUAL WORKSHOP| FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13TH | 12PM

This training offers a common definition of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children, explains how individuals can be recruited, who is vulnerable to exploitation, who the exploiters and customers are, the effects of exploitation, and how to identify youth who have been exploited. This training also provides recommended approaches for supporting individuals who are at risk or when there are causes for concern.

Register by Scanning the QR Code

MARTIN COUNTY PAL RISING RESPONDERS YOUTH FIRE PROGRAM

Our youth Fire Rescue Program is designed to prepare youth for future careers in fire rescue, emergency response, and public safety leadership. Through hands-on training, teamwork, physical fitness, and real-world skill development, students gain exposure to the responsibilities and discipline required in the fire service.

RISING RESPONDERS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MARTIN COUNTY FIRE RESCUE

- EMR Certification
- Conditioning/Strength Training
- Leadership Development
- Equipment /Tool training
- Culinary
- Uniforms Provided



MARTIN PAL COUNTY

1 YEAR $250

Info@martincountypal.org
www.martincountypal.org



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