



The Helping Hand

The voice of Community Partnership for Children
communitypartnershipforchildren.org (386) 238-4900

We restore families, support caring relatives, connect children with loving homes and prepare adolescents for adulthood.

Mentor program leads to nine adoptions

In 2005, Community Partnership for Children held its first Friends of Children breakfast. The event was planned to raise enough money to launch a mentor program for foster teens. With an average of 100 children aging out of foster care each year, the team at Community Partnership wanted to strengthen the support system for these children.

“We wanted to give them a lifelong community contact, a strong friendship with a responsible adult and role model,” said CEO Mark Jones. Funds from the breakfast event were used to hire a program coordinator and develop the program using models and best practices from around the country.

In 2009, the program was revamped with the help of volunteer and longtime supporter, Suzanne Steiner. Steiner helped research other similar mentor programs in search of ways to improve the training process and identify resources that would help mentors better serve the teens. Steiner is an active mentor and leads the training sessions for the program, along with Program Manager Susan Hiltz.

Since 2005, the program has matched 292 mentors and teens, who combined



Suzanne Steiner (L) was one of the first mentors matched. Pictured here with her teen, Akeda at the 2012 fundraising event.

have spent over 15,000 hours of quality time together. The program focuses on extracurricular activities like going to the beach, movies or bowling. Mentors may also help with life skills activities such as school projects or help the teen prepare their resume. Some have even volunteered to teach their mentee to drive.

An unintended outcome of the program has been its natural transition to adoption. Since 2010, nine children have been adopted by their mentors. This serves as the greatest outcome for the program since the children were matched with their mentor because they were unlikely to ever be reunified with their family or to be adopted.

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Inside this issue:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| By the numbers | 2 |
| Raymond James & Associates | 2 |
| Rent Me Homes, Inc. | 2 |
| Administrators Advisory Group | 3 |
| TD Bank | 3 |
| Tobacco Prevention Program | 3 |
| James Moore & Co. | 4 |

**SUZANNE STEINER
 DISTINGUISHED
 FRIEND OF CHILDREN
 2012**

**Thank you for your
 immeasurable generosity
 as a volunteer, mentor,
 and Gold Sponsor.**

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU
 TO OUR FRIENDS
 ALEXIS LENSSEN &**

RAYMOND JAMES®

for serving as a 2012
 Premier Event Sponsor



JOIN THE HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE!

Community Partnership for Children has launched its 2012 holiday toy drive. This year over 500 children will receive gifts through the program. Please join us this season!

- ❖ Adopt a child or children this season
- ❖ Help spread the word through your business
- ❖ Make a donation to the program

Call 386-566-6935 for more information.

As we enter the holiday season, we want to take time to thank our community supporters for making such a tremendous difference in the lives of our children and their families. Each year we reach out to area businesses and present opportunities for them to engage in the work of child protection. Our initial conversations often lead to new ideas and unique ways for businesses to get involved. In this newsletter, we are recognizing some of our new and longtime business partners, and the special individuals who helped to engage these companies in the fight against child abuse. We are sharing about the unique ways they support our children and hope you will enjoy their stories.

We wish many blessings for you and your family this holiday season.

Sincerely,
Mark Jones, CEO

By The Numbers Child Abuse

Volusia, Flagler & Putnam Counties

176

Abuse Reports Every Week

15

Children Removed From Families Every Week

4

Children Able To Receive In-home Care Each Week

1,504

Abused Children Being Helped Today

Premier Event Sponsor Raymond James & Associates, Alexis Lenssen

Alexis Lenssen joined the Community Partnership for Children board of directors in September 2011. Lenssen brings years of board member experience, financial expertise and fundraising experience to Community Partnership for Children.

Although, Lenssen was new to the board of directors, she has been engaged with Community Partnership for Children for several years by supporting the annual holiday toy drive.

The toy drive is a family initiative for Lenssen and her family; her son, Montana, volunteered to help package gifts during the 2011 toy drive. Lenssen, who is always seeking new ways to help support the children, held a holiday party for her clients and asked guests to bring an unwrapped toy to support the toy drive.

At the 2012 Friends of Children Breakfast event, Lenssen worked tirelessly to help secure event sponsors and

joined her company, Raymond James & Associates, as the premiere event sponsor. Lenssen was named Raymond James' Eastern Division "Woman Of Distinction" for 2012 for her service in the community and for piloting efforts to make a meaningful impact in the community and for those in need.

Thank you Alexis Lenssen and Raymond James & Associates for your outstanding commitment.

Rent Me Homes, Inc., Geri Westfall

Geri Westfall is certainly a woman who walks the walk. Westfall joined the Community Partnership for Children board of directors in March 2012 after already engaging with the agency for a few years. Westfall and her husband first connected with Community Partnership for Children as prospective adoptive parents and attended the required parent training class. They have since adopted a young boy from foster care.

While attending the parent training,

Westfall learned about the struggles and hardships teens face in foster care. She was saddened by their limitations and wanted to do something to help. Westfall and her colleagues at Rent Me Homes, Inc., planned and coordinated a fundraiser that raised several thousands of dollars to help teens aging out of foster care. She held her first fundraiser in 2011 and graciously continued the effort again in 2012.

Westfall is a connector. She reaches out

to the community by sharing her story and serving as an advocate for foster children. She is a woman on a mission, and this year she is also adopting over 60 children from the holiday toy drive project. She will raise money to shop for the children and work with her contacts to find others to help grant the children's holiday wishes.

Thank you Geri Westfall and Rent Me Homes, Inc. for your incredible partnership.

Administrators Advisory Group, Myra Thompson

In 2011, Community Partnership for Children hired the Administrators Advisory Group (AAG) to manage various human resources functions. To help ensure the best services possible, the team at AAG was given an orientation about Community Partnership for Children, its mission, and the various roles of its staff. During this time, President Myra Thompson deeply connected with the Community Partnership for Children mission.

"I want to do more," said Thompson to Community Partnership for Children CEO Mark Jones. And more she has done, much more.

AAG signed on as a Gold Sponsor for the Friends of Children breakfast in 2012. Thompson also made a personal visit to a board of directors meeting to share about her passion for helping children.

In the summer, Thompson and her team helped gather items for a family in need. Thompson sent out a call for items to everyone she knew. She picked up nearly a truckload of items and personally delivered them to the Community Partnership for Children Deland office.

Thompson has continued her efforts

and recently took on the holiday toy drive as a primary project. She and her team have adopted 25 children and are working to grant their holiday wishes. She also has distributed the toy drive flyer to her business and community contacts in hopes of recruiting more help.

Thank you Administrators Advisory Group and Myra Thompson for your generous donation of time, talent and treasure.



TD Bank, Margaret Conn

Margaret Conn connected with Community Partnership for Children while working for Riverside National Bank, a local community bank. When Riverside was acquired by TD Bank, Conn introduced her new employer to the Community Partnership mission.

"Margaret and the TD team are a true blessing," said CEO Mark Jones.

Jones shared about Conn and her team's many contributions to the

agency, "Margaret and her team truly go above and beyond. They have volunteered at so many events, they've adopted children from the toy drive, and they have led financial literacy training to teens in foster care. They've brought breakfast to our staff members, donated items for gift bags, and even donated the gift bags! Their contributions are tremendous."

TD Bank served as a Gold Sponsor for the Friends of Children event in 2012

and has served as the Premier Event Sponsor for the event in past years. Conn has graciously spoken at many Friends of Children events, sharing her story of commitment and her husband's story of adoption from foster care.

Thank you TD Bank team and Margaret Conn for your incredible contributions over so many years.

Tobacco Prevention Program, Rakinya Hinson

For many years, Rakinya Hinson has served as the tobacco prevention coordinator at the Volusia County Health Department. One of the goals of the program is to create awareness and prevent tobacco use among the youth. As part of her community outreach, Hinson exhibited at an annual business community health fair in 2007, where she was introduced to the team at Community Partnership for Children.

After visiting with the team at the Community Partnership for Children exhibitor table, Hinson said she wanted to get more involved. She saw a connection between her work with youth and Community Partnership for Children's mission to protect children.

Hinson volunteered as an exhibitor at a 2008 Luggage Drive for foster children and signed the Tobacco Prevention Program as a Gold

Sponsor for the 2009 Friends of Children breakfast event. She and the Tobacco Prevention Program team have continued the pledge of volunteering and serving as a sponsor ever since.

Thank you Tobacco Prevention Program team and Rakinya Hinson for your longtime dedication to protecting children.

Community Partnership for Children
160 North Beach Street
Daytona Beach, Florida 32114

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Community Partnership for Children
protecting children . . . fostering family stability

Corporate Office:

160 North Beach Street

Daytona Beach, FL 32114

(386) 238-4900

communitypartnershipforchildren.org

James Moore & Co., Donna Brown

James Moore & Co., is well known throughout the Volusia County community as a business making a difference in the community. Many team members at James Moore & Co. are each actively involved in several different charities and civic organizations. Team member Donna Brown works closely with Community Partnership for Children under a contract to oversee the agency's finances. In her role, she has served as the primary business partner with the contract.

While James Moore & Co., has served as an event sponsor in the past, Brown helped advocate to increase their support. In 2012, they joined as a Gold Sponsor of the Friends of Children breakfast event. They have also helped spread awareness about child abuse prevention and the need for foster and adoptive parents.

Thank you, James Moore & Co. and Donna Brown for your business partnership and support.

THANK YOU BOOKS-A-MILLION!!!!

Books-A-Million will be collecting newly purchased books and toys for children from December 1 through December 24 at its Daytona Beach Volusia Mall location and Flagler / Palm Coast location. Community Partnership for Children staff members have been volunteering at these locations for several months to help raise awareness about child abuse prevention and to recruit mentors, foster parents and adoptive parents.

The Department of Children and Families complies with state and federal nondiscrimination laws and policies that prohibit discrimination based on age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, or sex. It is unlawful to retaliate against individuals or groups on the basis of their participation in a complaint of discrimination or on the basis of their opposition to discriminatory practices.