



The Helping Hand

The voice of Community Partnership for Children

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

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Community Partnership welcomes new CEO

Mark Jones told his staff of 172 at their September meeting, "I want you to love your job. I am going to work very hard to make sure you have everything you need so that we give the best possible care to children and families."



Jones is one of several new faces joining Community Partnership for Children as the agency has also begun

implementing systemic changes under foster care redesign. The redesign will offer more in-home services to families to prevent the removal of children whenever possible, and will include improved backend services to help those children who have been living long-term in foster care.

Jones, who was a member of the region's foster care redesign development team, took the post as chief executive officer for Community Partnership for Children on September 1. Following a nationwide search, the Board determined that Jones possesses the unique combination of leadership in the child welfare field, strong community connections, and executive experience that is needed to lead Community Partnership for Children into the future.

A dedicated child advocate, Jones has worked in the child welfare field for over 20 years. Among his many leadership roles locally in child welfare, he has worked for Children's Home Society, Neighbor to Family, and Our Children First. His colleagues across these agencies have characterized him as a collaborator and partner.

"The Board looked closely at many highly qualified candidates in the search process and determined that Mark is the perfect blend of experiences and qualities," said Bill Griffin, Community Partnership for Children board chair. "Mark understands the issues relating to child welfare. He is a calming influence and understands the importance of partnership. He will be able to hit the ground running and I believe the children, our agency and the Board will be well served. We are delighted to have him lead this agency."

Griffin along with Circuit 7 DCF District Administrator Reggie Williams joined Jones at the September staff meeting to show support and welcome Jones to the role. Griffin said Jones was selected after a one-month search that attracted more than 30 candidates.

Jones has spent his first two weeks in the position by leading an aggressive outreach initiative. He has visited stakeholders, legislative delegates and community supporters.

"We need to open the lines of communication with our partners. Our children deserve the best care possible and our partners are our strongest allies. We can't do this work without them," said Jones.

"We are thrilled to have Mark lead our team. He will serve as a wonderful representation of the agency," said Jo Lynn Deal, chief communications officer for Community Partnership for Children. "His leadership experience and team-driven management style is exactly what we need as an agency. His commitment to always do the right thing is exactly what our children deserve."

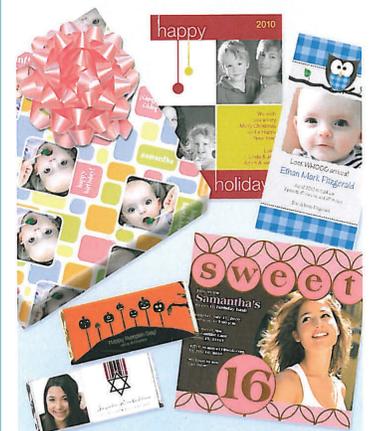
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November is just around the corner and marks National Adoption Awareness month. In our community, there are 40 children waiting to be adopted from foster care. While we are so thankful for the many supporters who have helped us find loving, adoptive homes for our local children, we must continue to work together to find homes for those who still seek a family.

Community Partnership for Children employs a Post Adoption Specialist to assist families who adopt. Her name is Kayla Gasper and she offers many years of experience with adoption from foster care. The agency also offers a support group that meets monthly where foster and adoptive parents come together to support each other and share successes.

Adoption may not be for everyone but supporting the effort is. I ask that you consider getting involved to help our children.

Sincerely,

Mark Jones, CEO

By The Numbers Child Abuse

Volusia, Flagler & Putnam Counties

169

Abuse Reports Every Week

8

Children Removed From Families Every Week

4

Children Able To Receive In-home Care Each Week

1,411

Abused Children Being Helped Today

Kidds aRe First partners with ROCK Fashions to open store for children



Kidds aRe First and ROCK Fashions, both operating as not-for-profit organizations, have partnered on a clothing initiative to assist local foster children.

Kidds aRe First was formed in 2002 by a Guardian ad Litem who wanted to make a difference for children. Executive Director Rachel Arazashvili explains that the agency provides a variety of essential necessities as well as funding for extra curricular activities to local foster children. Referrals for services are made by Guardians ad Litem.



Just around the corner, Barbara Shoner, of Tomoka Christian Church, launched a

ministry to provide clothing to children in foster care. Shoner began accepting donations of new or very 'like new' clothing and set up a store the second Saturday of each month at the church.

After realizing each was offering similar services, the ladies decided to partner and strengthen the clothing program. Arazashvili submitted an entry for free office space through a contest offered by MBA Business Center in Ormond Beach. Kidds aRe First won the contest, so now Arazashvili and Shoner are busy designing the storefront and inside to resemble a boutique retail shop. They've named the store KRF Fashions, recognizing their partnership.

"We want children to fit in, not stand out," explains Shoner. "We offer very nice clothing and even some designer products."

The store is expected to open in November and operations will run solely on volunteer help. The store will make clothing available at more regular hours where children can come with their foster parent or case manager and shop just as they would at a mall store.

KRF Fashions is in need of various types of equipment, retail display items, and



assistance with the electric charges to operate the store. Local businesses can support this initiative by donating needed items, in-kind services, or funds to help cover operating costs.

"This is a community effort," said Arazashvili. "We want as many people as possible to get involved."

For information on how you can help, contact either Rachel Arazashvili at 386-492-5500 or Barbara Shoner at 386-569-9999.

National Adoption Day to be celebrated November 19

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On Friday, November 19, Community Partnership will celebrate National Adoption Day, to create awareness about those children who are still waiting for a forever home.

In Volusia, Flagler, and Putnam counties, there are 40 children who are eligible for adoption but have not been placed with a family.

This year's adoption day celebration will take place at Sunset Harbor Yacht Club in Daytona Beach.

Also supporting public adoption is the new One Church One Child (OCOC) program. OCOC operates statewide in Florida and is a private, non-profit, faith-based organization that provides adoption related services and works in partnership with the Florida Department of Children and Families, local churches and lead agencies. The math is pretty simple, if one family in

each Florida church adopts one child, then all of the 850 children eligible for adoption throughout the state would have a forever family. For more information on the program, visit OCOCFL.ORG.

To learn about children living in Volusia, Flagler or Putnam counties who are awaiting a forever family, visit the Community Partnership website and click on adoptions. Adoption parenting classes are held several times throughout the year.

Port Orange-South Daytona Rotary Club launches 9th annual toy drive

The Port Orange-South Daytona Rotary Club has been helping local foster children during the holiday season for over a decade. When child welfare was privatized and Community Partnership for Children began caring for children in Volusia and Flagler counties in 2001, Rotarians continued with the drive and began working with the local agency.

Every year since, the Rotarians have raised thousands of dollars and adopt on average 500 children during the season. The project is led by Rotarian Jennifer Ferguson, who has also

served as a mentor to a teen in foster care.

"In October, I switch hats to my Santa hat and begin recruiting helpers," said Ferguson. "We recruit people to adopt a child and grant their wishes, helpers to help us shop or manage the toy site, and of course, donations. There is an easy way for anyone to get involved."

The project, originally called the *Tree of Angels*, seeks community volunteers or businesses to adopt one or more children during the holiday season. Volunteers receive information about their child or children, such as

their first name, favorite color, clothing size and three wishes. If possible, volunteers work to grant the three wishes. One-time donations of toys are also accepted under the program.

"I'm amazed at the quality of gifts and the outpouring of support we receive each year," said Ferguson. "It's a great way to share in the true meaning of the season."

You can get involved by giving Jennifer a call at 386-756-5676 or send her an email requesting information to jenferg101@yahoo.com.

Grassroots Giving organizes luggage drive to help hundreds of kids



Moving from one foster home to another, former foster child Christina vividly remembers having to carry her belongings in a garbage bag.

"Sometimes the bags would break, and other times they were mistaken for garbage and thrown out," said Christina.

Missy Gibson, founder of Grassroots Giving, was inspired by Christina's story and worked with her to launch a luggage

drive. The goal was to gather enough new or like-new luggage so that every child in foster care in Volusia, Flagler and Putnam counties had something nice in which to store their belongings.

The luggage drive took place the week of September 19 and collected about 500 pieces of luggage. The luggage will be distributed to children by Community Partnership for Children case managers during their upcoming visits.



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Calendar of Events

Fall is for family. Bring your family to an upcoming event to help support our programs and, most importantly, local children in need. Enjoy a great time networking with partners of Community Partnership for Children. **To get involved, please contact Jo Lynn Deal at 386-944-4709.**



October 2010

- ◇ Holiday Toy Drive Begins
- ◇ October 12: Mentor Training Session
- ◇ Putnam Children's Tea Party and Rotary events
- ◇ October 29: 'Not so Scary' Halloween Event

November 2010

- ◇ November: National Adoption Awareness Month
- ◇ November 19: National Adoption Day Event

December 2010

- ◇ December 4 & 5: Winter Art Event - Hammock Gardens, Palm Coast

Backpacks and fashion events held to help kids



Members of the Beachside Church in Ormond Beach adopted nearly 300 children during the 2010 back-to-school season and provided much-needed backpacks and supplies. Entering a new school year can bring out anxiety in even the most prepared students, but for children who have suffered from abuse, it can be especially daunting. The kind gesture of giving a child a new back pack can help tremendously in the healing process by boosting self-esteem and adding a sense of normalcy. Many thanks to the Beachside Church family for their support this year.

The Fashion Show Extravaganza marked the first event of the fall season and was held September 12 at the Schnebly Center in Ormond Beach. Organized by Case Manager Precious Jones, the show featured local modeling and design talent. Designers and

models rocked the runway just like what you would expect to find in the big city. The event raised over \$500 to support local programs.



Photo courtesy of John Reeves

Join the mission make a difference

Here are some ideas:

- Make a donation today.
- Sponsor an adoption matching event or sponsor one child to attend the event.
- Donate giveaway items for distribution at community events.
- Hold a fundraising event.

Questions? Please call 386-944-4709