



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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APRIL 2011

Friends of Children breakfast to highlight mentor programs and community partner

Community Partnership for Children is hosting its sixth annual Friends of Children breakfast on Wednesday, April 27. This year's premier event sponsors include TD Bank and Rent Me Homes.

The event program features guest speaker Jeff Hite, who, along with his wife Julie, is a volunteer mentor for Community Partnership for Children. Jeff and Julie are mentors to two teenage boys in foster care and spend nearly every week-end with the teens.

Also scheduled to speak is Bonita Culver who is a longtime foster parent through Neighbor to Family. Culver recently became a foster parent mentor. The foster parent mentor program was developed to assist new foster parents in their role.

Community Partnership for Children is honoring Calvary Christian Center as the 2011 Distinguished Friend of Children at the breakfast event.



In 2008, Community Partnership for Children began a partnership with the team from Calvary Christian Center. During this time, Calvary has offered significant in-kind support in an effort to help all children in the foster care system.

The list of their contributions is tremendous: launching the All For Children ministry; serving as a host for a National Adoption Day event; hosting bi-annual Q&A sessions around foster care, adoption, and mentoring; serving as a site for the national day of prayer for foster children; hosting a matching event; hosting foster parent training classes several times per year; opening a clothing closet; holding a sermon on foster care during 2010 National Adoption Awareness month; and most recently hosting the QPI conference for foster parents.

"Our success is built around partnerships like this," said Chief Executive Officer Mark Jones. "The members of Calvary not only help us with tremendous outreach initiatives, they walk the walk. There are church members who foster, adopt, mentor and who volunteer as guardian ad litem. They are integrally involved in our mission."

Community Partnership awarded contract by DCF

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) has announced the award of the lead agency contract to Community Partnership for Children. Under the contract, Community Partnership for Children will continue to provide child protection services for Volusia, Flagler and Putnam Counties.

"Community Partnership for Children has aggressively pursued expanding services

for children and families," said DCF Circuit Seven Administrator Reggie Williams. "Their pursuit has resulted in fewer children being sheltered and more finding permanent homes through adoptions. We look forward to this continued relationship and working with a staff who serves the children and families in our community with passion."

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6th Annual
Friends of Children Breakfast
brought to you in part by



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RENT ME HOMES
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Wednesday, April 27
8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.
Palms of Indigo Ballroom
312 Indigo Drive
Daytona Beach
RSVP required by April 22
386-944-4709

This has been a difficult time for children entering out-of-home care. Over the past couple months, we have seen record numbers with the number of children being sheltered. We continue to see prescription drug abuse as the number one presenting problem.

During this challenging quarter, our team prepared a response to the Department's Invitation to Negotiate (ITN), which is similar to an RFP process. (Our existing contract expires on June 30.) Our agency has served this region since 2001 and we are proud of our accomplishments and the support we receive from the community. This was demonstrated in our proposal which received a unanimous vote by the review panel. I want to thank everyone who supported us through the ITN process. We have many challenges that lie ahead but together we can accomplish about anything we set our sights on.

Sincerely,
Mark Jones, CEO

By The Numbers Child Abuse

Volusia, Flagler & Putnam Counties

179

Abuse Reports Every Week

12

Children Removed From Families Every Week

4

Children Able To Receive In-home Care Each Week

1,478

Abused Children Being Helped Today

Rent Me Homes reaches out to help youth aging out of foster care

RENT ME HOMES
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On average 40 children age out of foster care each year in our community. The team at Community Partnership for Children recognizes that the disruption a child experiences while in care directly impacts their ability to succeed in school. Educational success can be obstructed by the child having a poor educational foundation when they entered foster care, being moved between placements while in care, being moved between schools while in care, and most impacting, dealing with the trauma of abuse.

Children in foster care are engaged in the Independent Living Program between the ages of 13 and 17. The program provides them with a counselor and life skills training to help prepare them for adulthood. When they turn 18, if they are still in high

school they may remain in the Independent Living Program until they graduate. Youth who decide to pursue post-secondary education may enroll in the Road To Independence Program. This program helps provide funds for college and living expenses for youth who meet eligibility requirements. For youth who are not furthering their education, transitional funds may be available to help them secure living arrangements and to cover some basic necessities. However, while there are these options for teens who are aging out of foster care—they are essentially on their own.

Geri Westfall, owner of Rent Me Homes in Ormond Beach, has been helping at-risk youth for many years. She has built a tremendous base of professional contacts through her long-time service in the real estate industry and advocates for this vulnerable population.

In March, Westfall contacted Community Partnership for Children with a desire to do more for those teens aging out of foster care. She and her team at

Rent Me Homes are coordinating fundraising initiatives to raise enough money to give each child aging out of care this year a \$500 check to help them get started.



The team has organized a "Sidewalk Sale" to take place at the Rent Me Homes Ormond Beach office on Saturday, April 9. Proceeds from the event will support the cause. The event is a planned family-fun affair with hot dogs, face painting for the kids, Trouble the clown, and a myriad of donated items for sale. The sale and festivities runs from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m.

If you would like more information, contact Rent Me Homes at 386-677-5594.



The Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) was developed to ensure that every child removed from the home because of abandonment, abuse or neglect is cared for by a foster family who provides skilled, nurturing parenting while helping the child maintain connections with their family. The foster family works closely with child welfare agencies, case workers, courts, attorneys and others to protect the child's best interests.

QPI is a joint project of the Youth Law Center, Florida's Department of Children and Families, 15 community-based care lead agencies and the Eckerd Family Foundation. One of the key ways the QPI supports these foster families is by providing in-depth training to help them manage the challenges they face. These may be routine events, like appearing in court, or more complex problems like helping a child transition home, coping with behavioral problems, or advocating for special education services. The training also helps families to better understand any information they were given about the child at the time of placement, so they can be proactive in advocating for the child and getting the right assistance.

The Just-in-Time web based learning project was designed to connect foster

parents with trainers who can answer their questions and give them a framework for dealing with these challenges. The project coordinator will receive requests for training and will quickly identify individuals who are available to provide that training. These may be subject matter experts, like doctors, psychologists, lawyers or teachers. Or they may be practice experts like other foster parents who have successfully dealt with the same situation. The coordinator will identify other families who can benefit from the training, arrange a time, and coordinate technical aspects of the training.



The training is provided live online and is easily accessible from any internet connected computer. Participants are able to see and interact with trainers so that they can ask questions, clarify points, or give examples of scenarios to process.

These training webinars are video recorded, edited, and available at no charge for use by other families who are unable to attend or for later use as a refresher for participants.

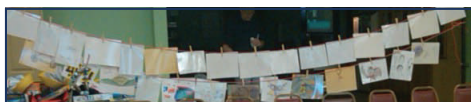


In February, the Community Partnership for Children QPI team organized and held a QPI conference. Over 600 foster parents and child welfare professionals attended the conference. Kim Hernandez, foster parent and president of the Florida State Foster Adopt Association, and Carole Shauffer from the California Youth Law Center presented an introduction to the QPI Initiative.

The conference also included breakout sessions and workshops with training on the dependency system, trauma informed care and working with biological parents.

First annual "Children's Art Show" a hit for Putnam County teens

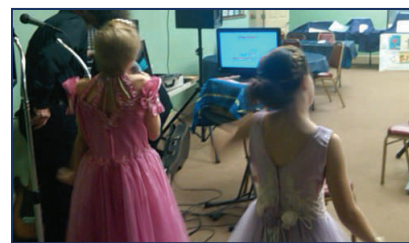
Foster mother Kathie Kelly organized a Children's Art Show that raised \$1,000 for Putnam County foster children. The event was hosted by the Palatka Moose Lodge 184 on February 21. Children from area elementary and middle schools submitted original art work that was offered to the public on a donation basis.



"The donations will be used to buy prom dresses, yearbooks, and other items for the children," said Kelly.

"These events help engage the local community in our mission," said CEO Mark Jones. "Ms. Kelly is an amazing support."

Community Partnership for Children Program Operations Administrator Marianna Cotter and her husband Bill



provided karaoke musical entertainment. A few children who attended the event sang current pop songs in true karaoke fashion.



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Calendar of Events

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.**



April 2011

- ✧ April 7 - Rent Me Homes Sidewalk Sale
- ✧ April 27 - 6th annual Friends of Children Breakfast

May 2011

- ✧ May 17 - Mentor Orientation and Training

June 2011

- ✧ June 7 - Mentor Orientation and Training

For the most current list of special events and details on the events, please visit our Web site at communitypartnershipforchildren.org.

Faith-based network gives hope to children

In February 2009, Community Partnership for Children launched the Hope for Children networking group. Group members are civic-minded citizens of faith who are working together to help local foster children and families in need.

At the network's inaugural meeting, group members brainstormed about several innovative ways to help. From this meeting the "child of the month" initiative was



Savannah is an adorable, African American female with a sparkling personality. She is very outgoing, sociable, funny, and a joy to be around. She loves to sing, dance, draw, and read. She is a very bright and intelligent young woman. She is currently in the foster care system and is looking for a permanent home. She is a very sweet and loving child who is looking for a family to love and care for her. She is a very bright and intelligent young woman. She is currently in the foster care system and is looking for a permanent home. She is a very sweet and loving child who is looking for a family to love and care for her.

launched which supports the adoption Program. Each month, members receive a photo and biography of a child who is eligible for adoption. Members share the information with churches and civic groups in hopes of helping to find a home for the child.

The group also supports teens aging out of foster care. When a teenager has located an apartment, the group receives an email seeking household items to help furnish the apartment. Members, in turn, send the request to their churches and close friends in search of items for the teen. Since beginning the program, the group has helped five teenagers who have aged

out of foster care.

"Our Hope for Children Network has been a blessing to children and families in many unique ways," said Jo Lynn Deal, who serves as the network coordinator. "When a family has a need, I reach out to our network friends and almost always the need is met. I then share with the family about the network so that they know it's their community who helped them."

Anyone can join the network. If you would like to join or serve as a liaison for your church, please call Jo Lynn Deal at 386-944-4709.

Join the mission make a difference

Here are some ideas:

- Join the Hope for Children Network.
- 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