



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.
 160 North Beach Street *** (386) 238-4900

Mud Olympics set for September 24, supporting local foster children

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Have you ever wanted to be a spectator or maybe even a participant at the Olympic games? Well, very soon you will have a chance to get down and dirty. The Omega Ranch is hosting a family-oriented Mud Olympics on Saturday, September 24 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the team hopes you'll be there to support the event.



The Omega Ranch spans 1200 acres off State Road 44 in New Smyrna Beach. Owner Stan Smith has been working with Volusia County to develop the land for use in hosting events that focus on outreach. Smith plans to continue developing the infrastructure that will allow the ranch to help raise funds for local charities. The events will focus on outreach while providing entertaining, outdoor recreational activities.

pit tug-of-wars where all ages can participate. Also on the slate of competitions are fishing competitions, canoe racing, one and three-mile obstacle mud runs, laser tag, kickball contests, and relay games. The festivities will also include food and music venues.

Proceeds from the event will be donated to Community Partnership for Children. Event tickets are just \$20 in advance if purchased by August 28 or \$30 afterward. Group discounts are also available.

"We want any family to be able to participate, so we've also secured a few business sponsorships to help families and groups who may not be able to afford the full ticket price," said Smith. Contact the Omega Ranch for details at 407-324-1178 or by website at omegaranch.com.

The 2011 Mud Olympics will include mud

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Mud Olympics-All Ages
Saturday-Sept 24-From 8:00-4:00 PM
 Trophies, 1 & 3 mile Obstacle Mud Run, Tug of War, Canoe Race, Dress Contest, Talent Contest, Obstacle Course, Relays, Laser Tag, Kick Ball, Fishing/Contest
4845 SR 44, New Smyrna Beach
\$30 (RSVP by 8/28/2011 for Discount)
 Groups Discounts 407-324-1178
www.omegaranch.com or www.facebook.com/omegaranch
 Proceeds to Community Partnership for Children
www.communitypartnershipforchildren.org
Protecting children... Fostering family stability
 Subject to Errors/Omissions, some events-limited space/extra cost



We send a huge
THANK YOU to the
 team at

They and their many business partners together helped raise \$16,000 for teens aging out of foster care. You've changed MANY lives with your kindness.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the many community partners who have joined in our mission to help our children. We've all heard the adage 'It takes a village to raise a child'; well, it takes a community to protect them. I am so proud of the unique ways our community partners have found to support us.

To list a few, we have Kidds aRe First and Rock Fashions who joined efforts to launch a clothing store that helps clothe foster children. The Port Orange Rotary gears up about this time each year to launch its annual toy drive, a drive that provides toys to 500 children. We have over 50 mentors who volunteer to spend time with children each and every week. These are just three simple examples that make up a team of hundreds.

I know I will never be able to thank you enough, but thank you from all of us. We could never do this work without you.

Sincerely,
Mark Jones, CEO

**By The Numbers
Child Abuse**

Volusia, Flagler & Putnam Counties

187

Abuse Reports Every Week

13

Children Removed From Families Every Week

8

Children Able To Receive In-home Care Each Week

1,406

Abused Children Being Helped Today

Task force plans news conference and community forum for fall

The statistics around "pill mills" and prescription drug abuse and addiction in Florida are staggering. As the epidemic continues to grow, Volusia and Flagler County community leaders have formed a task force to hit this problem head on. While these two counties aren't facing the devastation that Broward County faces, with its average of one new "pain clinic" opening every three days, leaders say there are devastating effects locally.

Community Partnership for Children reports that 70% of child abuse calls are related to prescription drug abuse.

"It's an uphill battle," explains CEO Mark Jones. "Parents originally obtain the drugs legally because of some legitimate pain or injury, and then they become addicted. Some go on to resort to buying them on the street, but others visit these pain clinics and have new prescriptions filled. As with any addiction, it's tragic. It destroys their life and worse, their children's lives."

Jones also said it can impact economic development and community growth because if your community is devastated by the epidemic, it affects efforts around recruiting new businesses and tourism.

Jones and Clay LaRoche of the Department of Children and Families founded the Substance Abuse Task Force in 2010. Jones currently serves as the co-chairperson. The team was formed to address the serious issue around prescription drug abuse and its detrimental effects on the community. The focus has been on changing legislation and generating community awareness around the issue.

But prescription drug abuse has found new victims: our youth. Recently, a local teen visited a task force meeting and brought to light the serious effect this is having on our youth. The teen's younger sister died as a result of an overdose. She had attended what was called a Skittles party. At these parties, guests bring any prescription

medication they can find to the party. It's deposited into a large bowl and party-goers reach into the bowl and partake in a buffet of prescription medicine. This careless behavior left one young girl unconscious at a party for nine hours, while the other teenagers stammered over calling for help. Consequently, she lost her life because the other teenagers were afraid they would be in trouble if they called the police.

To combat the far reaching effects of the epidemic, the task force is hosting a news conference on September 28 and a community forum on October 27. Supported by the news conference, the forum will include a panel of experts representing 13 sectors of the community most impacted by the issue. The forum will be held at the Volusia County Health Department at 7:00 p.m. Details about the forum will be posted on the Community Partnership for Children website.

Run to the Sun chooses Community Partnership as charity for run



Jeff Ridgdill touched the lives of hundreds of youth as a teacher of social studies, government, economics, law and guitar. He sponsored the God First Always Club and Surf Club at Spruce Creek High School in Port Orange, Florida. In 2003, Ridgdill was named a "point of light" by the then Florida Governor Jeb Bush for his exemplary volunteer work and service to the community. In 2006, Ridgdill went to be with the Lord he loved, with all his heart, after a three and a half year courageous battle with pancreatic

cancer.

When one who has given so much is taken from us, a gaping hole is left in the community. There is always something missing. Ridgdill's family felt this void and wanted to do something to honor his lifelong commitment to service and community. Because Ridgdill was always on the run and doing good deeds, a "run" seemed an appropriate legacy in his honor. So every year on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, the Run to the Sun is held in Ridgdill's honor. And just as he used to care for and give to others, the proceeds of the event are given to a charitable organization.

The event raised over \$30,000 during

its first five years. This year's run marks the sixth annual Run to the Sun, and proceeds are being donated to the 2011 Community Partnership for Children holiday toy drive.

The four and a half mile walk/run is held in New Smyrna Beach, where Ridgdill lived, in celebration of his life. The event begins at 8:30 a.m. and includes a breakfast, full brunch, t-shirt and prizes for participants. Details of the event will be posted on the Community Partnership for Children website and the Run to the Sun website at runtothesun4jeff.com.

Please join us for this year's event as it will help Jeff Ridgdill make hundreds of children smile this holiday season, just as he did during his life on earth.

Community Partnership opens Flagler County office

Community Partnership for Children will hold a grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new Flagler County office on Wednesday, August 31 at 9:00 a.m. The new office is located in Palm Coast at 377 Palm Coast Parkway in Suites 2 & 3.

The event is open to the public and Palm Coast Mayor Jon Netts has been invited to attend and speak.

"We serve three counties: Volusia, Flagler and Putnam," said CEO Mark Jones. "We believe it's important to have a presence in all the communities we serve. This new location is centrally located and will enable our team to reach our Flagler area clients more efficiently."

Community Partnership for Children has seen an increase in the number of

cases for Flagler County and is currently serving 167 children and their families in that county. Of these cases, 98 are living in foster care or with a relative. The agency is working to find placements for 43 who were recently removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. To help with the increase in cases, the agency has added an additional case management unit to serve the area.

KRF Fashions dresses 55 children for the new school year



KRF Fashions, a partnership between

Kidds aRe First and Rock Fashions, held a back-to-school clothing event for teenagers. The event helped provide school clothing to teenagers who have been removed from their home and are living with a relative or friend of the family.

"Relative caregivers receive little financial help when caring for a child, and there is no funding for non-relative

caregivers," said CEO Mark Jones. "It's a tremendous financial challenge for these caregivers to take on a child, and you know it's their love for the child that makes it happen. We are so grateful to KRF for their support in helping this special group of children and their families. Now the children will start the school year with nice clothes and an uplifted spirit."

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

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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. Details of the events are shared on our website.

September 2011

- ✧ September 13 - Flagler Books-A-Million Book Fair
- ✧ September 13 - Mentor Orientation and Training, Beach St Office in Daytona
- ✧ September 24 - Omega Ranch Mud Olympics
- ✧ September 28 - Task Force News Conference

October 2011

- ✧ October 8 - Volusia and Flagler Books-A-Million Book Fairs
- ✧ October 27 - Prescription Drug Forum

November 2011

- ✧ Nov 1 - Toy Drive Begins
- ✧ Nov 19 - Volusia and Flagler Books-A-Million Book Fairs
- ✧ Nov 26 - Run to the Sun - Walk/Run

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