



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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MAY 2007**

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Community Partnership for Children Honors Friends Jennifer Ferguson, Steven and Hollie Hillman

April is recognized as National Child Abuse Prevention Month and three Community Partnership for Children friends received Child Advocate Of The Year awards from the Volusia-Flagler Committee for Positive Parenting for their contribution and commitment to children and families. The awards were presented at the Annual Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect Luncheon on April 12.



Jennifer Ferguson
Volunteer Child Advocate Of The Year

Jennifer Ferguson was recognized as the 2007 Volunteer Child Advocate Of The Year for her tireless efforts as a volunteer with Community Partnership for Children.

Ferguson provides estate planning guidance to the organization, serves as a member of the Mentor Program and during the 2006 holiday season, she led the Port Orange Rotary effort to raise funds that bought holiday gifts for 400 foster care children.

Steven and Hollie Hillman were honored for their dedication and commitment as 2007 Parent Child Advocates Of The Year. The Hillmans care for two young girls whose biological mother died of brain cancer. The Hillmans opened their hearts and their home to the girls, absorbing all expenses without any financial assistance.

"The Hillmans consider these children as their own and are working to ensure they have a normal childhood, following such a tragic loss," said Natalie Gaddis, Case Manager for Community Partnership for Children. "They truly deserve our recognition and praise for their incredible commitment."

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Join us as a
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Open House To Welcome Friends, Partners And Community

Community Partnership for Children will hold an Open House event allowing for an inside look at child protection services.

Open to the public, guests will receive an agency tour through the departments of Administration, Case Management, Communications and Development, Records, and Finance.

A partnership Expo area will include

exhibits for foster care, the adoption unit, the Mentor Program, career opportunities, the Volunteer Program, the Guardian ad Litem Program, and The Children's Advocacy Center.

"This is an opportunity for us to share our mission with the community. Everyone is welcome," said CEO Ron Zychowski. "My team and members of our Board of Directors will be here to answer any questions."

The Open House event will take place from 4:30pm to 6:30pm at two locations:

June 14, 2007

160 N. Beach Street
Daytona Beach

June 21, 2007

990 N. Woodland Blvd
Deland

Community Partnership for Children continues our mission to protect children. Our performance results for the month of March and the quarter ending in March are in, and our performance is excellent. Weekly we post this information, called our "Company Report Card", on our website at www.CommunityPartnershipforChildren.org under the News and Data tab. I encourage you to review our progress and we welcome your feedback.

The 27 children sheltered in March was the lowest number in any month for the past 4 years. Our 125 Adoptions finalized so far this year have set our adoption team on pace for a new record. We reunified 93 children with their parents this quarter. These results are not possible without the exceptional dedication and professionalism of our staff. We have more to do and we will continue to make improvements.

Sincerely,
Ron Zychowski, CEO

By The Numbers

Child Abuse

Volusia and Flagler Counties

154

Abuse Reports Every Week

10

Children Removed From Families Every Week

9

Children Reunited With Families Every Week

1362

Abused Children Being Helped Today

My Day With A Case Manager

Although I could never walk in Jerry Antoine's shoes, it was a privilege to walk beside him during my day with a Case Manager. Our day began with a court hearing for a 17 year old Independent Living foster teen. The Independent Living Program provides teens ages 15 to 17 with the opportunity to live in an apartment with other teens and learn life skills in a real world setting.

On this day with Jerry, we were with Dominique. She will be aging out of foster care soon, as of midnight on her 18th birthday.

I sat across the hallway outside of the courtroom and listened as Jerry offered advice likened to advice I received from my own parents as a teenager. He talked with Dominique about her future plans, from finding an apartment to continuing her education to budgeting and transportation needs. He was firm, honest and extremely supportive. He showed sincere concern for her welfare and it was remarkable to witness her receptiveness.

I listened as Dominique talked about her career plans, and I found it interesting that she wanted to be a case manager, social worker or attorney. I was reminded of how many foster care survivors feel called to social work in hopes of helping a child who is having the same experience they once had.

During Dominique's Judicial Review Hearing, she asked that services be continued for three months after her 18th birthday. Many foster children who grow up in foster care yearn to leave and never look back. Yet some, like Dominique, still want the security of someone to turn to for guidance.

During an afternoon case, I watched a mother and father voluntarily surrender their rights to their six year old daughter. Jerry and I sat together in silence. "This is a very sad side of my work," he said.

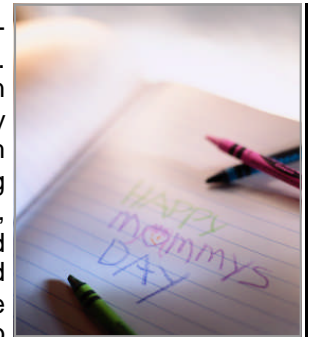
The day finished with an adoption hearing where a proud foster mother became Mommy when she adopted

her three foster children. Dressed in their Sunday best with smiles framing their faces, Mother and children stood before the judge who said, "Congratulations, you are a family."

I looked over at Jerry and his look of despondency told me this moment was bittersweet for him. He was so pleased that the siblings were kept together and matched with the perfect family, but was sad to know he would never see them again.

"These are my children," he said. "I have always looked out for them as if they were my own." This mindset is clearly reflected in his work and the level of care he provides our community's children. This was certainly one of the best days of my life.

By Jo Lynn Deal



Guarding An Angel

Hearing the story of a particular child frames the great work of Community Partnership for Children. There is an emotional impact of learning that a child was brought into protective care last night. However, this impact intensifies when you learn she is eight years old, her name is Amanda, she loves swimming, and she dreams of one day owning a beauty salon so she can spend all day making people feel pretty. Your mind creates an image of Amanda and you begin to feel a genuine concern for her wellbeing.

Amanda is real and there are 1362 children just like her under the protective care of Community Partnership for Children.

Because not everyone is able to join our foster care family or consider adoption, you may still enter a special relationship with our children through our *Guardian Angel* program.

As an individual, business, family, church, or civic group, through the Guardian Angel Program there is a child perfectly matched to you. Guardian Angels are provided with their child's story and monthly updates on their child's progress. You are given the opportunity to provide gifts for special occasions like birthdays, graduation, and holidays.

A letter, poem or drawing from your child is our gift to you recognizing your

exceptional commitment. This program allows you to stand with us as we guard our angels with the knowledge that you helped to heal a child and truly made a difference.

The Guardian Angel Program requests a giving commitment of at least \$360 per year. You may give monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually. Through this partnership, your gifts provide support to the necessary programs used in helping and healing your child.

To join, contact Jo Lynn Deal at (386) 944-4709.



Community Partnership Team Responds To Crisis

In February 2004 the Crisis Response Team was formed to help reduce the number of children placed in foster care. Children are removed from home if they are in imminent danger. If there is not imminent danger, the Crisis Response Team provides services to the family to help prevent removal of the child.

"There are times when the family just

needs help," explained Sally Dupree, protection coordinator for Community Partnership for Children, "Removing children is the last resort."

The Crisis Response Team includes a partnership between the Department of Children and Families, Community Partnership for Children, Stewart-Marchman Center, Children's Home Society, ACT Corporation, The House

Next Door and The Children's Advocacy Center.

The team is on call 24 hours a day. When they are called upon, a Crisis Response Team member will go to the home within two hours and immediately arrange for services. Services might include family counseling, parenting skills training, or substance abuse treatment.

"My LOVE Doesn't Hurt" Promise Campaign Launched



Community Partnership for Children launched a Child Abuse Prevention Campaign on April 1. The campaign began with recognition of National

Child Abuse Prevention Month and is touted the "My love doesn't hurt" promise campaign.

"A parent's love shouldn't hurt. Child abuse prevention begins with a promise and commitment from every individual not to abuse or neglect their children and that is the message we want to send," explained Community Partnership for Children CEO, Ron Zychowski.

The campaign will include Website

promotions, multiple public speaking engagements, and a direct mailing to partners and supporters as part of a broad community awareness effort.

The agency has created blue lapel ribbons embroidered with the "My love doesn't hurt" message and blue ribbon car magnets also depicting the message. Each are available with a donation to any Community Partnership for Children program.



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Ernest Hamilton
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Community Relations

Calendar of Events

Come join us at our event fundraisers to help support our programs and, most importantly, the 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.**

May 2007

- ✧ May 19 - Adoption Awareness Seminar, Hilton Oceanfront 2:00 - 6:00pm, free to public

June 2007

- ✧ June 14 - Open House at 160 N. Beach, Daytona
- ✧ June 21 - Open House at 990 N. Woodland, Deland

July 2007

- ✧ Back To School Appeal

October 2007

- ✧ October 11 - Estate Planning Conference
- ✧ October 7 - 3rd Annual Hand of Hope Poker Run



Adopting A Special Needs Child

Ayana Alexander and Rosalind Workmon of Community Partnership for Children work persistently to find adoptive homes for children whose parents' rights have been terminated. These children are foster care orphans whose current parent is the State of Florida.



Being in foster care, they have experienced the most devastating rejection possible— rejection by their parents. They were taken away from everything they know; school, friends, home, everything. They were placed in temporary homes, and although these were loving homes, these children were still strangers with no personal belongings. They felt alone, scared, confused, angry and powerless. Sadly, most did not even realize they were being abused.

For the children whose parents can no longer care for them and as a result had parental rights terminated, the children are now free for adoption. Currently, there are 60 children in Volusia and Flagler Counties who are in search of a permanent, loving home.



For these children, their greatest wish is to have someone to love them, someone to call Mom or Dad, someone to call when they achieve great-

ness or experience loss, someone to share holidays, birthdays, and special occasions, somewhere to call HOME.



Joining the mission to help these children is Embraced by Grace, a new private adoption agency in Volusia County.

"We are very blessed to have them join our mission of finding homes for children in need," said Community Partnership for Children CEO, Ron Zychowski.

Embraced by Grace is working with Community Partnership for Children to assist with adoption awareness and family recruitment. Embraced by Grace is hosting an Adoption Awareness Seminar at the Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront at 100 N. Atlantic Avenue on May 19 from 2 to 6pm. The seminar is free to the public. For Information, contact Pepper Wooten at (386) 615-9767.