



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 partners sing the blues

The success of Community Partnership for Children relies on the strength of its partnerships with the community. It is for this reason the partnership team sends a special thank you to all who have jumped on board to help.

These include partnerships with our provider organizations such as the Children's Home Society which provides foster care services and many other services to our children, civic groups like the Port Orange Rotary Club which provides in-kind and monetary donations to support the children and our programs, and residents who volunteer to who help with special events. All of these partnerships make a tremendous contribution to help abused children.

In this November issue we spotlight the Daytona Blues Society All-Stars, which sponsored outstanding entertainment at the third annual Hand of Hope Poker Run and all new Biker Bash. The Daytona

Blues Society was formed by a few local residents and musicians to bring back the once thriving blues scene to Daytona Beach. This group of talented musicians



volunteered to sing the blues to a crowd of bikers and tourists at the Biker Bash on October 7. The poker run and bash raised nearly \$8,000 in support of many children's programs.

If you missed the Bash, you can still sing the blues at a

Daytona Blues Society True Blues Jam every Wednesday at the Bank and Blues from 8pm to 12pm. Details about the band and the Jams are available at <http://daytonabluesociety.org>.

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Visit us at the Gingerbread Extravaganza at Volusia Mall
11/9/07—12/30/07

Friends of Children invited to attend third annual breakfast

The third annual Friends of Children Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, January 9, 2008. Riverside Bank joins again as the event's Signature Community Partner and will be among the featured speakers.

The agency will honor Judge Hubert Grimes as its Distinguished Friend of Children award recipient and guests will hear heartwarming testimony from an adoptive family, view a pictorial

presentation of the year in review, and enjoy many more great surprises.

CEO Ron Zychowski will present an update on the agency's progress through 2007 and goals set forth for 2008.

As seating is limited, reservations to attend are required. If you are interested in attending the third annual

Friends of Children Breakfast, please contact Jo Lynn Deal at (386) 944-4709.

Event Details:
Wednesday, January 9, 2008
8:30 am - 10:00 am
Wyndham Resort, Ocean Walk
Daytona Beach

Dear Friends of Children,

We continue to move in the right direction as an organization and with the services we provide our children. The new Florida United Methodist Children's Home (FUMCH) Emergency Shelter served over 50 children in the first three months of the contract. Because of the dedication and focus of the Community Partnership for Children and FUMCH staff, appropriate placements have been found for all of the children who have been discharged from the shelter.

Annual Contract Monitoring by the Contract Management and QA staff has begun for this fiscal year. We are currently on schedule with the on-site monitorings, and are meeting all required timeframes for the written reports that are issued for each provider.

We have hired a new Director of Information Technology who has improved our firewall protection, data backup, and disaster recovery measures. We opened a new training center

in Daytona Beach, and we continue to work to improve employee retention. Last year, we formed the Employee Advisory Committee. Among many initiatives, the committee hosted an Employee Appreciation Picnic in July, and more recently implemented an employee recognition program.

We have worked toward strengthening documentation and streamlining the Independent Living process, streamlining and tracking the preparation of necessary paperwork for initiating termination of parental rights, and revising required court forms for legal sufficiency.

There is much work still to be done, but with our strong community partnerships, the goal is obtainable. Our team and I sincerely thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
Ron Zychowski, CEO

My day with a records manager

During community outreach efforts and presentations, I always share that we have 1,200 children in care at Community Partnership for Children. The image of hundreds of their tiny faces instantly came to mind today when I walked into the Records Department for my day with Candia Flasch, records manager for Community Partnership for Children. The Records Department was lined with hundreds of children's records providing a visual reminder that we have so many children depending on us to protect them.

Candia explained that many changes have recently taken place in the Records Department. In the past, where case managers were responsible for filing information into the child's file, Community Partnership for Children now uses a centralized filing system. The new system has improved consistency and efficiency with record keeping, while also freeing up time for the case managers to work more with children and families.

The new system has a case manager dividing items to be filed by case and completing a filing form for each compilation of material. The material is turned into the Records Department where the records team processes the information within three business days.

The Records Department houses open case files. When a case is closed, the file is moved to the Closed Record Room for a period of six months. From that point, it is sent to a file archive company for storage. As a quality assurance measure, the team also conducts periodic file audits of all open files to make sure all files are indeed open.



Records Manager Candia Flasch reviews child's record

Candia walked me through the life of a file, which metaphorically is the life of the child while they are in our care. First, the information received from the Department of Children and Families is reviewed, and then a Program Operations Administrator signs the information into the Records

Department. The records team reviews the information. If the child is a high-risk case, e.g., having a serious health or safety risk, the program office is notified. A new file/binder is created and documents are organized following the new filing procedures. This early information for the child might include demographics, legal forms, and investigative work. Once the file is created, the unit supervisor is sent an email directing them to retrieve the file and pair the child with a case manager.

"I have been with this department since it was created, and the changes we have implemented over the past nine months are incredible," said Michele Clement, records specialist. "This department and the case managers and staff work together as a team. It runs very efficiently."

In my observation, the Records Department runs like a well-oiled machine. The staff is cohesive and efficient, and the processes developed for filing are thorough and well organized. The information for each child is highly respected and treated confidentially, with the understanding that these are children and their lives are in our hands.

By Jo Lynn Deal

The blessing of a forever home draws near

At the age of 45 with her children grown and starting families of their own, Starr would normally have been looking forward to quiet time with her husband Gary. The road she took, however, was miraculously different. Starr and Gary are in some ways starting over as they are adopting their 27 month-old granddaughter, KaseyJewel, on November 17.

KaseyJewel was born premature at 24 weeks, just one day into the legal term of a viable pregnancy. She lived the first six months of her life in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Florida Children's Hospital in Orlando. Because KaseyJewel's mother was not able to care for her, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) was contacted and KaseyJewel was placed with Community Partnership for Children.

"The first step with a child like KaseyJewel is to try and find a loving relative who is able to care for them," explains Ron Zychowski, Community Partnership for Children CEO.

Finding a loving relative to care for KaseyJewel was an easy process. While KaseyJewel was in the hospital, Starr worked 12 to 14 hour days as an Office Manager and Computer Instructor, and then traveled 60 miles to the hospital to be with KaseyJewel. This steadfast commitment lasted the entire six months KaseyJewel lived in the hospital.

KaseyJewel has battled countless medical issues, from using a G-tube for feeding, a breathing machine, the inability to walk, and the necessary medicines to assist with all of her health problems. KaseyJewel is not only surviving, she is now thriving because of the loving care she received from Starr and Gary, along with the support of the Department of Children and Families and Community Partnership for Children.

"Gary and I are so grateful to the Department of Children and Families. They have been there for us every step of the way," says Starr. "Community Partnership for Children was instrumental in providing the calming effects to our home life. The transition from shelter care to a permanent home could have been overwhelming without such dedicated work by each one of these people. When I say they have gone above and beyond the call of duty, it is said with conviction."

November marks National Adoption Awareness month, and on National Adoption Awareness Day, November 17, KaseyJewel will be officially adopted by Starr and Gary.

Last year, Community Partnership for Children found forever homes for 145 children, like KaseyJewel, who were eligible for adoption. Today, there are 54 children eligible for adoption

in Volusia and Flagler counties who still need a loving family.

"KaseyJewel is the miracle in our lives," says Starr. "She makes everything joyful. I honestly don't know how we existed before her. People assume that adoption is a hardship, when nothing could be further from the truth. Adoption is an honor; it's not a sacrifice, but rather a gift. The only hardship you will face is waiting for



Starr with KaseyJewel on Labor Day

your final court date. For the wait, you have the wonderful team of agency workers to guide and calm you."

To learn more about children eligible for adoption through Community Partnership for Children, please contact 386-254-3766. Find more information at www.communitypartnershipforchildren.org.

Kinship Care Hope Fund will bring relief to relatives



The Volusia and Flagler community has the opportunity to better serve its

children by strengthening the programs available to relatives willing to care for abused and neglected children.

One such program is the new Kinship Care Hope Fund. This fund was developed to assist relatives in taking on the abused or neglected child, rather than having the child placed in foster care. The Hope Fund will relieve the financial burden for relatives who need assistance until state support can be obtained. The Hope Fund will cover

expenses relating to daycare, medical expenses, clothing, food, and educational materials.

Placing a child with a relative offers greater stability for children versus the child being removed from their school, friends, extra curricular activities, church, and other normal functions. Relative caregivers are a vital support for hundreds of local children.



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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.

November 2007

✧ November 9 - December 30 - Gingerbread Extravaganza at Volusia Mall

✧ November 17 - Adoption Awareness Event and Celebration

December 2007

✧ December 1-14 - Holiday Toy Drive and Distribution

January 2008

✧ January 9 - 3rd Annual Friends of Children Breakfast Wyndham Ocean Walk Village



5K makes a difference for children



Westside Elementary School cheerleaders

Westside Elementary School cheerleaders cheered a group of 100 runners and walkers at the Make A Difference Day 4Kids 5K. The group came together in support of the fundraiser to benefit programs supporting local children. The proceeds will benefit three organizations; the Food Brings Hope Initiative which has a mission to help break the hunger and poverty cycle for homeless and economically disadvantaged children in Volusia and Flagler county schools, Westside Elementary School's Night Alive program which provides a safe haven for children to learn and play after school, and Community Partnership for Children.

"This truly is a community partnership,"

said Jo Lynn Deal, Community Partnership for Children chief development officer. "Each of the participating organizations has a mission to help children, and those volunteering want to make a difference. Together, we make a strong team with great outcomes for children."

Volunteers from Fifth Third bank wore bright smiles and manned the water stations, the Daytona Track Team volunteered to manage the 5K logistics, and students from the University of Central Florida Cornerstone Class adopted the event as their class project. The students spent two months organizing and promoting the event and securing sponsorships. Their hard work resulted in a well-organized 5K and raised \$2,800 toward the effort.

In true Make A Difference fashion, local businesses sponsored the event and sent teams consisting of staff and family to participate. Sponsors included ICI Homes, Merrill Lynch-The BCH Group, Riverside Bank, Rotary Club of Daytona Beach, HabiTech Systems, Inc., Cobb and Cole, Legacy-Gator Golf, Real Estate Advisory Group, Exclusive Homes, Inc., Children's Health Associates, the Iranian American Society of Daytona Beach, and Ten United.