

Devereux

COMMUNITY BASED CARE OF OKEECHOBEE & THE TREASURE COAST

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News & Media

Stuff the Bus or stuff your face – it's all happening this summer

Port St. Lucie – hat last bell of the school year may signal long, lazy days of summer for children throughout the Treasure Coast.

It may mean the end of tests and paperwork for teachers. And for parents, it may be a respite from the endless packing of paper-bag lunches.

But for the United Way of St. Lucie County, Devereux Community Based Care and other nonprofit organizations everywhere, it means one thing: Back to School.

The School Supplies for Students campaign - a United Way-led community partnership recently renamed Tools for Schools - has provided school supplies to children in St. Lucie County for 20 years. It is back for a 21st year, bringing with it a mix of new and familiar community events:

- Stuff the Bus returns, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., July 15, at all St. Lucie County Wal-Mart stores. A hallmark event for the school supplies drive since 2007, Stuff the Bus posts volunteers at area stores to offer shoppers a simple and convenient way to donate supplies.
- New this year is Cause an Effect, from 5-9 p.m., June 21, at Chipotle, 1768 SW St. Lucie West Blvd. Bring this flyer, or show it on your smartphone, and 50 percent of the night's proceeds will benefit the school supplies drive.
- Then, on July 28, join the United Way and the Tools for Schools committee for a free baseball game between the Beaverton Marauders and the St. Lucie Mets. The game begins at 6:30 p.m. at First Data Field, 525 NW Peacock Blvd., Port St. Lucie. Entry is free with the donation of two new school supplies.



The campaign will take a new direction at the end of this school supplies season. Traditionally, the campaign has collected supplies and then distributed them to local schools and nonprofit organizations, like Devereux Community Based Care.

A survey conducted last year, however, indicated a need for supplies year-round, and not just at the beginning of each fall semester.

So the program was renamed and retooled, said Jessica Parrish, United Way of St. Lucie County Director of Collaborative Impact.

Plans now include a phase-out of the community-distribution model in favor of a storefront, where teachers can "shop" for supplies as needed throughout the year, Parrish said.

Devereux Community Based Care will continue to receive supplies on behalf of the foster-care system for the time being, said

Christina Kaiser, community relations director for Devereux Community Based Care, which oversees the child-welfare system in Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie counties.

"In the future, caregivers may have direct access to the storefront," said Kaiser, who represent Devereux Community Based Care on the school supplies committee.



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