

The MANicure Movement™

In partnership with Embrace Families



Communities  
Connected  
for Kids

## The CCKids Connector



### First responders join the MANicure Movement

**Port St. Lucie** - They came in heavy boots and utility belts.

But they left in fingernail polish.

It was all part of the MANicure Movement - a child-abuse prevention initiative kicked off Wednesday at the St. Lucie County Fire District in observation of National Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month.

Port St. Lucie Police Chief John Bolduc, Fort Pierce Police Chief Diane Hopley-Burney, and Fire Chief Nate Spera led what became a daylong procession of first-responders, checking in to get their pointer fingers painted in "prevention blue" fingernail polish.

"The whole point is to start a conversation about child-abuse prevention, so we wanted to do something that catches people's attention," said Christina Kaiser, CCKids community relations director. "If men walk around the community all month with a fingernail painted blue, people are going to ask why."

The answer to that question is simple: One fingernail painted blue, starts one conversation that one in five children experience abuse by age 18.

That's the MANicure Movement in one sentence, said Kaiser, adding that the initiative began three years ago in Orlando to spark community-wide conversations about ways to stop violence against children.

This is the first year the movement has come to Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast - a good match for local firefighters and law enforcement officers, who see the results of child abuse up close and on a regular basis.

"Paramedics often interact with children who have been abused, and it's a very hard thing to do," Spera said. "It's a real challenge."

Locally, more than 1,000 children are in the child-welfare system, and more than 700 of those children live out of home due to abuse or neglect.

"It's really important that we make people aware this is going on here and that we talk about it," Bolduc said. "One in five children; that's why we painted one nail out of five."

Listen to full coverage of the event and interviews with chiefs Spera, Hopley-Burney and Bolduc at [WQCS](#).

*Want to get more involved? Find out how to become a foster parent by calling Jerra Wisecup at (772) 249-3188 or visit [cckids.net](http://cckids.net). Or, if you are interested in being a Volunteer Child Advocate, call Nicole Hughes at (772) 785-5804.*



## In the Clinic with Nurse Pam

*Protect your children; learn the signs of abuse*

You've heard it before: Child abuse is a cycle. In fact, statistics show that about 30 percent of abused and neglected children will go on to abuse their own children.

That's because child abuse can cause life-long mental health disorders such as a personality disorder, anxiety and post traumatic stress disorder.

We all have a part in providing safe, stable, nurturing relationships for children and to prevent child abuse and exploitation in our neighborhoods. Supportive family environments and social networks foster a child's sense of self-worth and help prevent long-term mental health issues.

Encourage your children and others to tell someone if there is a problem, and know the signs of abuse:

- Unexplained burns or marks
- Dirty or unbathed
- Extreme hunger
- Nightmares
- Regression
- Hostility or aggression
- Fear of person or people
- Bed-wetting

Finally, do not leave young children alone at home or in public, and get to know the adults in your children's lives. Teach children to stay away from strangers, including those they encounter on the internet, and to NEVER meet anyone they connect with online without your permission.

For more information, visit the [Mayo Clinic](#). If you worry that you or someone else might abuse your child, call one of these organizations: Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD, or Prevent Child Abuse America: 1-800-CHILDREN.

*Pam became a nurse in 2011 after graduating from York University in Toronto. Her clinical experience includes emergency medicine, community nursing and sexual assault care. She coordinates, assists and monitors the medical needs of children served by CCKids.*

Child abuse is a national health crisis - here's how to bring awareness to the workplace

**Port St. Lucie** - Wednesday's kick-off of the MANicure Movement was just the beginning. Now it's time to bring the movement to school and work.

"We have MANicure kits for businesses or groups that want to organize their own events," CCKids Community Relations Director Christina Kaiser said.

Those kits include small selfie signs, infographic cards to share in the community and limited amounts of blue nail polish.

"We're actually running low on the polish because we had such a large response at our kick-off event, but any blue polish will do," Kaiser said. "You can get a bottle at the Dollar Store."



Hosting a MANicure site is easy: Paint a nail, take a picture and post the picture to social media. Finally, remember to use the hashtag #MANicureMovement and to tag CCKids with the Instagram and Facebook handle @connectedforkids.

Want a kit or more information? Email [Christina Kaiser](mailto:Christina.Kaiser@connectedforkids.org).

*Pictured above are Tony Loupe, Sue Ellen Sanders and Deb LaBella, of the Early Learning Coalition of St. Lucie County, one of several local community groups participating in the MANicure Movement.*