



The CCKids Connector

We moved! Find us at 1860 SW Fountainview Blvd., PSL



Joel Fincannon volunteers during the 14th Annual Stuff the Bus event - an annual school-supply collection hosted at St. Lucie County Wal-Mart stores.

Carts, bags - but no buses - stuffed with school supplies during weekend event

PORT ST. LUCIE, July 22, 2019 — No child left behind, or every child succeeds – either way, they need school supplies. Communities Connected for Kids, in partnership with the United Way of St. Lucie County and more than 100 volunteers spent Saturday making sure they have those supplies when they return to school next month. Volunteers collected close to 5,000 school supplies and \$1,574, during the 14th annual Stuff the Bus event, located at all St. Lucie County Wal-Mart stores. Saturday's collection represented a more than 30 percent increase from the previous year, continuing an overall tradition of expansion. In fact, volunteers have collected more than 75,000 school supplies since the project began in 2005. At the time, event coordinators parked school buses at each Wal-Mart, and shoppers were encouraged to load the vehicles with donations.



Carts and tents replaced buses in recent years to make the donation process easier for shoppers and volunteers. Communities Connected for Kids, which receives supplies for children in foster care from the partnership, led the St. Lucie West and Port St. Lucie/U.S.1 sites during this year's event. "We're really proud of our contribution," said CCKids Community Relations Director Christina Kaiser, whose U.S.1 site collected more than \$380 from Saturday's six-hour event.

"We've been a part of the project from the beginning, and it's something we look forward to each year." Stuff the Bus is part of the United Way's Tools for Schools St. Lucie, a community initiative that helps keep local classrooms full of supplies year round. CCKids, which manages the child-welfare system of care in Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast, is part of that initiative and serves on the Tools for Schools Committee.

Pictured top right are students from Jensen Beach High School, Brynn Foster, Abby Kaiser, Makayla Boyle and Tyler Favier; and, bottom left, CCKids foster mom Kandace West and her daughter, Hailey.



211 has compiled

a list of

**Back to School
Events & Activities**

[Click Here For More Info](#)

The 5th Annual
**BACK to
SCHOOL
EXPO**

Join us as we share school supplies, clothing and valuable information with our community from local agencies who serve children and families!

First come, first served. Parents/Guardians must bring a good attitude, ID with Okeechobee Address, and have children in attendance to receive supplies.



Thank You to Our Sponsors!





Who is in the Nurse's Corner?

Communities Connected for Kids said good-bye to Pam Boyer earlier this summer when she left to pursue other opportunities.

Pam - a nurse whose clinical experience included emergency medicine, community nursing and sexual assault care - coordinated and monitored the medical needs of children served by CCKids for the past two years.

"She had a wonderful working relationship with our case managers and community partners," CCKids Clinical Supervisor Melanie Kranker said. "She was dedicated to serving our community's children and was always willing to help."

Pam wrote a monthly nursing column for the CCKids Connector, covering a range of topics that included water safety, medical resources and issues specific to the foster-care system.

CCKids is in the process of filling Pam's considerable shoes, at which time the special nursing section of the newsletter will resume.

Florida Coalition for Children Names Litty Summers 2019 Case Manager of the Year

PORT ST. LUCIE, July 17, 2019 — Ending a vacation in Paris might be a let-down for many people. Not Litty Summers; not this particular vacation.

She stepped off the plane, turned on her phone and discovered a statewide body of her peers had just named her the 2019 Case Manager of the Year.

"I couldn't believe it; I was in shock," said Summers, who, as a specialist in Communities Connected for Kids' Road to Success program, helps teens and young adults transition out of foster care. "I was looking around for someone to tell – I was so excited, but it was so late."

Summers was honored July 9 during the 2019 Florida Coalition for Children Conference in Orlando. Her supervisor, Chris Martinez, accepted the award on her behalf, describing her as "truly exceptional."



“Her passion and dedication to families is inspiring,” he said. “It really is an honor to have her on our team.”

Summers joined that team earlier this year after serving nearly five years as a dependency case manager in St. Lucie County. Prior to that, she served as a traveling career coach, specializing in the Spanish-speaking community.

“To know that you did something right, and that people noticed – that the extra hours you put in made a difference in somebody’s life – that’s a very special feeling,” said Summers, who still gets calls from former clients.

“I always pick up the phone,” she said. “I just might be the one voice that makes a difference.”

She really does change lives, said Margie Dotson, a Road to Success colleague who nominated Summers for the award.

“Litty is the epitome of a social worker,” Dotson said. “She’s able to be professional, yet personal with our families and provide them with what they need – she advocates, teaches, empowers and strengthens every family on her caseload.”
