



The C.C.Kids Connector



Communities Connected for Kids staff and families participated in the United Way of St. Lucie County's Day of Caring event, September 29. Team CCK volunteered at the Treasure Coast Food Bank along with about 125 other people. More than 300 people altogether participated in the event, which assigned groups of volunteers to non-profit projects throughout St. Lucie County.

Cases unpack comfort for local children

Port St. Lucie -They've been featured on Ellen, the Today Show and on news broadcasts throughout the country.

Now Comfort Cases is coming to Okeechobee & the Treasure Coast.

Communities Connected for Kids is one of the latest partners in the Comfort Case craze, which had its start eight years ago when founder Rob Scheer and his husband, Reece, became foster parents and noticed that some of the children coming to their Maryland home brought their belonging in garbage bags.



He gathered family and friends for a "packing day" and assembled the first Comfort Cases - backpacks full of pajamas, books, writing material and toiletries. The idea caught on, more packing days were planned and the project quickly grew into a 501c3 non-profit organization serving more than 40,000 youth in 39 states.

"We were so excited when our bags were delivered," said C.C. Kids Community Relations Director Christina Kaiser. "They are bright, sturdy, high-quality bags, and we can't wait to get them out to children."

Kaiser said overnight bags have been made available to children in the local foster care system for more than a decade thanks to the generosity of local donors. But Comfort Cases adds consistency to the project and expands it to more children and partners.

"We will share our bags with local protective investigators, who are usually the first responders to incidents of child abuse and neglect," Kaiser said. "They can keep a few in their cars, so they have them when they remove children from home."

Click the video above to learn more about Comfort Cases, including the assembly process, or visit, www.comfortcases.org.



FCB looking for children's art

Florida Community Bank invites local children to submit artwork to its second annual holiday art contest.

"We received such a great response to last year's holiday cards that we've decided to follow the same concept again this year," said Beth Labno, marketing and communications specialist for Florida Community Bank.

The winning submission will be used to create the bank's 2018 holiday card. Artwork must be hand-drawn using markers, crayons or colored pencils, and themes must be non-denominational.

Examples of themes that can be used are wrapped presents, stars, various patterned ribbons, snowmen, penguins and snowflakes. All entries must be submitted by Friday, October 19, to any Florida Community Bank.

The 2017 winning submission is pictured above. You can find a template for submitting entries by clicking [here](#).



In the clinic with nurse Pam

As October clouds roll in, we are reminded that winter is on its way. And with winter comes flu season - and your friendly Nurse-Pam reminder to have your children vaccinated.

On the fence about it? Consider this: 140 children in the United States died from flu last year, the deadliest flu season on record.

Flu vaccination is recommended for everyone over the age of 6 months, and Tamiflu can be used to treat flu symptoms within 48 hours of onset for infants 2 weeks or older. Here are some other flu

facts:

- It takes two weeks for the body to produce antibodies sufficient to fight the disease - so get your shot early
- Flu activity begins to increase in October, with the worst time between December and February
- Flu vaccines cannot cause the flu virus; they are made with non-living viruses or with just a gene from the virus
- The vaccine may reduce the severity of symptoms if you do get sick

Finally, Publix is giving \$10 gift cards with every flu vaccination this year. If you are a foster parent, be sure to get consent from your child's parent before getting the vaccine.

Originally from Canada, 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. Pam moved to Florida with her husband (and IT wizard) Jody Boyer in 2014 and began work with Communities Connected for Kids the next year. She coordinates, assists and monitors the medical needs of children served by C.C.Kids.



Meet Isabella in this week's Forever Family

Isabella is a sweet little girl who is waiting in foster care to be adopted with her three sisters, ranging in ages from 2 to 9. She is the latest child to be featured in the Forever Family project, which leverages the power of media to find adoptive homes for children in foster care.

Did you miss her story on CBS 12 News with Liz Quirantes Tuesday evening? No problem - you can catch this week's Forever Family segment again on Sunday at 6, 7 and 8 a.m.

And if you're in Broward this weekend, you can see it at 6 p.m. Saturday on NBC 6.

Tune in [here](#) and see if you might be Isabella's Forever Family, or learn more by visiting ForeverFamily.Org.



Martin County Library System Volunteer Fair

Connect with local organizations to see how you can make a difference in your neighborhood - come to a community volunteer fair from 12-2 p.m. October 6.

The Martin County Library System is organizing the event, which will take place at the Blake Library, 2351 SE Monterey Road, Stuart.

Participating organizations at the fair include Habitat for Humanity, the Humane Society of the Treasure Coast, the United Way of Martin County, Children's Museum, House of Hope, Helping People Succeed, Hibiscus Children's Center, and many more.

For more information, contact Terry Dick at tdick@martin.fl.us or (772) 219-4906.

