



The CCKids Connector



Communities Connected for Kids hosted an open house August 29, unveiling both its new offices in St. Lucie West and its These Walls are Talkin' series of community tours.

These Walls are Talking And the Community is Listening

ST. LUCIE WEST— More than 80 people attended the August 29 open house and ribbon cutting for Communities Connected for Kids, which recently moved its headquarters to 1860 SW Fountainview Blvd., in St. Lucie West.

"It was really well attended," said Christina Kaiser, CCKids Director of Community Relations. "We knew we made the right move based on our need for space, but seeing so much of the community come out to support the "new neighbor" just affirmed our belief that we're in the right place."

Several tours were given during the 2-hour open house. The tours featured a series of quotes along hallways that help to explain the services offered by CCKids, which oversees the child-welfare system in Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast.

"Each quote helps to define a different area of our system," Kaiser said.

For example, there are quotes from young adults about the impact that their case managers had in their lives as well as quotes from people upon the adoption of their children.

"The system can be very complicated for people and difficult to understand," Kaiser said. "These quotes bring what we do to life for people."

Pictured along the right side of this story are scenes from the Aug. 29 open house, which was co-hosted by the Chamber of Commerce of St. Lucie County.



CCKids, News Channel 12 prepare to air latest series of Forever Family segments; updates previous stories



JUPITER— It was a nice day.

Bowling balls thundered down wooden lanes of maple and pine.

Arcade games shouted their presence like carnival barkers.

Pizza pies and pitchers of soft drinks appeared on tables.

And one by one, children there for a morning of Forever Family interviews took a turn in the bright light of a production lamp and told their stories to news cameras.

It was all part of the Forever Family program, which leverages the power of media to help get children adopted. Communities Connected for Kids has been a partner in the program since 2018 and had 25 children, including several large sibling groups featured.

Most of the children featured have been adopted, including a sibling group of six boys and girls, a group of four girls and a group of three boys.

Many people called in about those children after seeing them featured in the News Channel 12 Forever Family segment, which runs every Tuesday during the 5 p.m. newscast. But ultimately the children found homes through other means, said Rebecca Pope, adoptions specialist for Children's Home Society, which provides adoption services for CCKids.

"Most people who call after seeing them on TV haven't completed the required home study," Pope said. "By the time they complete the process, those children might no longer be available."

Pope said she uses the opportunity to ask callers to begin the approval process.

"So what we end up with is a pool of potential adoptive parents when the next children are featured," she said.

The next series of local Forever Family segments, which were video taped at Bowlero Jupiter earlier this week, will begin to run later this month and into the fall. The bowling alley and arcade opened early so the children could play and be video taped without interruption.