



The C.C.Kids Connector



Communities Connected for Kids cuts the ribbon on its new name during the first of three ceremonies. The final ribbon cutting is scheduled for September 13, in Vero Beach. Register [here](#).

Summit to focus on child mental health

Port St. Lucie - Guardians for New Futures will host its annual two-day Treasure Coast Child Summit Sept. 26-27 at Indian River State College's Treasure Coast Public Safety Training Complex, in Fort Pierce.

The grassroots organization hosts the conference every year, bringing to the community educators to speak on topical issues facing local youth and the child-welfare community.



The theme for this year's summit - inspired by the shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School earlier this year - is "Youth Mental Health - See It, Say It; Our Responsibility."

Topics include the impact of parental substance abuse on children at various developmental stages; understanding and responding to bullying; self-harming behaviors; and serving lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students.

Additional topics will focus on missed opportunities, such as deconstructing the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting; interventions for children exposed to trauma, abuse and neglect; and adolescent substance abuse and behaviors.

As in past years, one of the day's highlights will be a panel discussion featuring sheriff's representatives from Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie counties.

The summit is free, but registration is required. For more information, and to register, visit gfnf4kids.org or via email info@gfnf4kids.org Lunch is provided each day. Donations are accepted in lieu of a registration fee.



Catalina awaits Forever Family

CBS 12 viewers met 9-year old Catalina last week on the latest Forever Family segment with news anchor Liz Quirantes.

"This sweet little girl is searching for a family who will adopt her and her three younger sisters," Quirantes said in the weekly special segment that features children in the foster-care system who want to be adopted. "She loves math and gymnastics but most of all she loves being a big sister."



Forever Family is a Florida-based non-profit organization that leverages the power of the media to help children and teens in foster care find loving, adoptive families. Communities Connected for Kids became a Forever Family partner earlier this summer, when Catalina's story and those of six other children were produced.

Catalina's interview is the second from Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast to air, preceded by Simon, a 16-year-old looking for a family that is "as loyal and loving as he is." Catalina's younger sisters also made segments, which will be featured throughout the next few months. The children want to be adopted together.

All segments air on Tuesdays at 5 p.m. and again on Saturdays, then on NBC 6 Miami, NBC 6 Fort Myers, and WFTV Channel 9 in Orlando.

To see Catalina's interview, visit [CBS 12](#). You can also catch each interview on our Communities Connected for Kids [Facebook](#) page.



In the clinic with nurse Pam

What are HEDIS measures, and why are they important?

The Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) is one of the most widely used sets of performance measurements for health care quality in the United States.

When we talk about quality, we especially want that to include our vulnerable populations, in this case, our foster children. We want all our children to be healthy and happy! That means it's up to you, not only to create

healthy habits and routines for your children, but also to teach the importance of being healthy.

The most common healthy activity we think of, and one of the basic HEDIS measures, is the annual physical. The next most common healthy activity we think of, and another basic HEDIS measure, is going to the dentist every six months for a check-up and cleaning.

HEDIS measures also include the not-so-pleasant task of updating immunizations if we ensure our foster kids get these three healthy activities done at the recommended times, our children would have a significantly increased chance at a healthy, happy and safe future.

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.



Fearless Caregiver Coming to PSL and Okeechobee

Learn how to balance family, work and caregiving at the next Fearless Caregiver Conference.

Two conferences - one in Okeechobee and another in Port St. Lucie - are scheduled. The first conference takes place from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Sept. 19, at Harbor Place, Port St. Lucie, followed by a second at the same time Sept. 20, at Indian River State College, in Okeechobee.

Both conferences are free, and lunch is included.

Guests attending also will learn how to motivate family members to help with chores and care giving, how to legally protect aging parents, and how to secure the future of adult children.

Register at caregiver.com or call (877) 829-2734.



Final ribbon cutting scheduled for Indian River County

Communities Connected for Kids will host its third and final ribbon-cutting event at 11:30 a.m. Sept. 13, 1459 20th Street, Vero Beach. Register for the event [here](#).

Guests attending the event will have the opportunity to meet and ask questions of a young man who knows first-hand how the foster care system works.

Jeromy Wilkins, 26, pictured above with Indian River County Manager Caryn Toole, lived in foster care when he was younger. He was raised in Port St. Lucie and attended Treasure Coast High School, where he played football and ran track. He attends Indian River State College, where he is working on an associate's degree in criminal justice.

He wants to attend law school, and he currently is working to open a nonprofit organization to help abused women and children.

