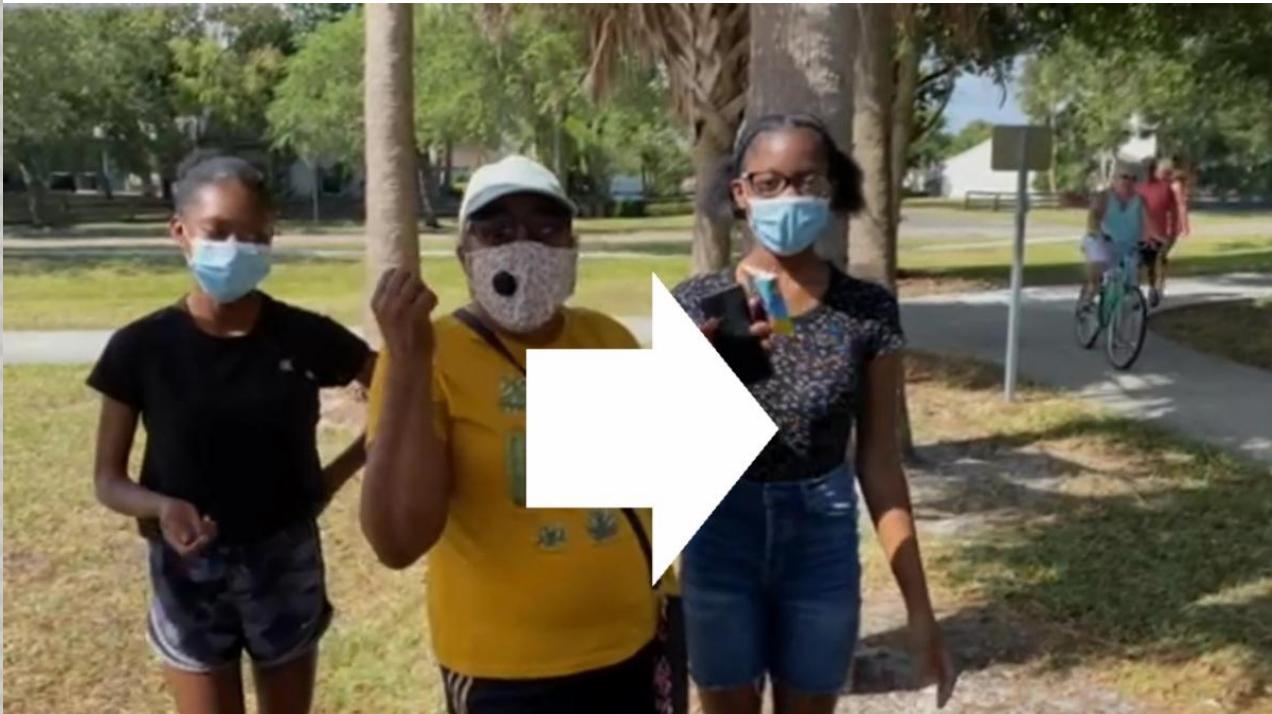




Connections - June 30, 2021



Community Celebrates Strong Families; Creates #MomentOfCheer

St. Lucie West - Today is the last day of CCKids' #CelebrateFamily campaign, a monthlong celebration of the children and families who found their way back to one another through the hard work of reunification.

Throughout the month, we have been collecting video clips from people in the community cheering them on and encouraging their journeys that often include substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling and triumphs over economic barriers.

Clips were collected from families, volunteers, donors, business people and advocates - all representing different areas of the Judicial Circuit 19 child-welfare community. They were spliced together to create one celebratory #MomentOfCheer.

Click the [video above](#), and check it out! See how many familiar faces you can

spot, then share the video on Facebook.

Do You Know a GEM?

If you know a case manager, CCKids staff member or foster parent who you recently found Going the Extra Mile, we want to know about it!

Click to Nominate

St. Lucie West – The window to nominate someone for CCKids' GEM award is now open, and, for the first time, nomination forms are available to the public.

GEM stands for Going the Extra Mile. If you know a foster parent, a dependency case manager or any other CCKids employee who should be recognized for extraordinary work in the last three months, please visit our homepage and click the [GEM banner](#) for a nomination form. You can also click the picture above.

The GEM program recognizes superior work in three categories each quarter. This is the first quarter foster parents are included, recognized in the recently added Topaz category. The previously established categories are Emerald, for CCKids staff, and Ruby for CCKids and Children's Home Society case managers and case manager supervisors.



Advocacy Center Receives Critical Funding

PORT ST. LUCIE - The area's first Child Advocacy Center received critical state funding and is on mark to open this fall, said Debbie Butler, president of Guardians for New Futures, the non-profit organization driving the project.

The center will house intake services for children in one place, reducing trauma experienced by abused, abandoned and neglected children by cutting back on the number of times they have to tell their stories, Butler said.

"Right now children removed from home for abuse have to go to the police station to tell their story, then somewhere else for a physical exam and then to another place for mental-health resources," she said.

The center, which received \$1.3 million from the state during the 2021 legislative session, will bring many of these services under one roof. The center is expected to open in October.