



Connections - Aug. 17, 2022



*Tonia Fede donates bags of supplies for 25 children in foster care. The bags were distributed to children living in Indian River County, the northernmost part of CCKids' Community of Care, which includes Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie counties.*

## Former Foster Youth Ensures Kids Return to School with Supplies

**Vero Beach** - As a young person who spent much of her childhood in foster care, Antonia Fede received federal funding that would help her make a successful transition into independence while also navigating the

COVID-19 pandemic.

She budgeted carefully and used what she needed. And with the rest, she purchased school supplies for children in foster care so that they, too, find success.

Antonia Fede, who goes by Tonia, bought 25 backpacks, stuffed them with supplies and donated them to Communities Connected for Kids, the nonprofit that oversees the very child-welfare system that provided her foster-care services and helped place her in an adoptive home.



The former resident of both St. Lucie and Indian River counties earned an associate's degree from [Indian River State College](#) and is now attending [Florida A&M University](#) for advanced degrees in social work.

Eventually, she wants to attend law school and become a civil rights lawyer. "I have been in and out of care growing up throughout my life. I have always had a passion for helping those around the world, standing up for what's right, and, most importantly, those in need. I feel as though elders and children are the most mistreated in society."

Tonia said she wanted to give back to the community that helped her when she was in foster care. She says she is especially grateful to a former case manager and her adoptive mother, who she credits for guidance and keeping her motivated through college.

"Words are not even enough to express how much I'm thankful," she said.

Tonia's donation of backpacks brought CCKids' total collection to nearly 300 bags – enough to send every child in out-of-home care to school with new supplies, or about 40 percent of all children in the child-welfare community of care in Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie County.

The [United Way of St. Lucie & Okeechobee County](#) also contributed supplies as part of its Back to School Bash initiative.



## Time to Get Those Physicals - In This Month's *In the Clinic*

By Lisa McBride, RN, BSN  
CCKids Nurse Care Coordinator

School is now back in session. If you weren't able to get your children to the doctor this summer, now is the time to set up those school sports physicals and annual health physicals. A sports physical and an annual well check physical are not interchangeable. Each exam looks at different parts of the body.

A sports physical centers around muscular and cardiovascular health, while an

annual exam takes a comprehensive look at all body systems.

For those of you caring for children in CCKids' community of care (foster parents, relative and non-relative caregivers), the well check/annual exam is 100% covered under the Sunshine Health Child Welfare Specialty Plan.

Sunshine Health members also can schedule annual physicals and well checks at any time during the calendar year. If your 2021 well check was in November, you can schedule your next visit anytime after January 2022.

So why are these appointments important?

During these appointments, your physician can provide preventive services as well as educational resources. They allow the physician to see if typical growth and development is occurring, and, if not, to place referrals for specialists to assist.

Additionally, vaccinations are maintained so your child's immune system is in top shape and able to fend off illness. Finally, going to an annual well visit allows you to ask any questions about your child's needs.

If you are not sure who your pediatrician or primary care physician is, you can contact your child's dependency case manager or, if you are an adoptive parent, you can call Sunshine member services at (855) 463-4100.



# INTER GENERATION MONTH

## 2022 Essay Contest

- ◆ All ages are encouraged to submit  
**This year's theme is:**  
"What We Learn in the Gap"
- ◆ Must feature characters from more than one generation, illustrate the contributions one generation can give to another & be no more than 400 words
- ◆ **Deadline is Monday, Sept. 26**

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## CCKids Hosts Essay Contest to Celebrate Intergenerational Relationships

**Port St. Lucie** - [Communities Connected for Kids](#) will host an essay contest this September to celebrate National Intergeneration Month and to raise awareness for the impact that relative caregivers - many of them grandparents - have on our community of care.

A panel of community judges will decide the winning entries in two categories - one for community and the other for CCKids staff and families. Entries must be no more than 400 words and feature characters from more than one generation.

The theme is, "What We Learn in the Gap," a reference to the so-called Generation Gap, an often derisive turn of phrase meant to describe the lack of understanding between generations.

"We want to hear about the positive contributions that one generation gives to another," said Christina Kaiser, CCKids community relations director.

Essays must be submitted by September 26 through CCKids' online portal [here](#).

The winning entries will receive cash prizes sponsored by the law firm of

Rosenthal, Levy, Simon and Sosa. For more information, visit [cckids.net](http://cckids.net).

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