



Communities Connected *for Kids*

Connections - November 16, 2022



CCKids will partner with Motivational Edge and Fort Pierce's Flying Pig Ranch to provide specialized skills training and daycare drop-in services to young people in the local community of care, particularly teens and young adults receiving Independent Living services.

New Program Shows Anything is Possible with a Little Creativity and a Flying Pig or Two

By Christina Kaiser - The phrase, "When Pigs Fly," could be a mantra for Motivational Edge, a nonprofit organization that offers specialized skills training to children and young people.

Because the group, new to Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast, is making creative dreams come true at Fort Pierce's Flying Pig Ranch.

Communities Connected for Kids is finalizing a contract with the group this week, making specialized skills training like music production, the arts and

creative writing available to teens in its local community of care.

The service will be offered at Flying Pig Ranch, a stretch of rural property in Fort Pierce ranch that takes in abused and unwanted farm animals.

Although the program will include drop-in day camp services, "we're going to use it to help kids explore their creative sides in a safe and therapeutic environment," said Andi Poli, CCKids Contracts Director.

The program, which Motivational Edge offers in multiple locations throughout Florida, including Miami, also will be available for the general community, Poli said.

CCKids contract with the Motivational Edge is valued at \$76,000. It's unclear how many clients that will serve because every skills camp has its own cost and schedule. For example, the creative writing course is an eight-week program, while day camp is a daily activity.

"It's hard to say how many kids we'll be able to serve yet, but we expect to reach quite a few," said Christina Kaiser, CCKids Community Relations Director. "This puts the 'well being' in our mission to ensure safety, permanency and well-being to children who have been abused, abandoned or neglected."

Family Weathers the Storm this Month of Thanks



By Carol DeLoach

CCKids Chief Executive Officer

Earlier this month, an unusually late storm punctuated our month-long celebration of #NationalAdoptionMonth.

Nicole's poorly timed interruption turned my thoughts to our families who very literally weathered the storm together. This thought gave me peace, because I know that no matter what comes along, there is comfort and strength in facing challenges together.

For many of these families, another type of storm has come and gone – the trauma of abuse and separation is behind them, healing has begun, the waiting over. They are settled, and they are together.

CCKids is prepared for all storms. Our staff worked around the clock before the Nicole's landfall to contact every family in our care and document every individual family plan. We did it all again once the storm left the area, and our focus once again returned to the more personal storms of addiction, domestic violence and mental illness that fuel child abuse and neglect.

I am comforted by the vast kindness of strangers who open their homes to hurting children, provide family to those who have none and support the

efforts of others working hard to reunify. To all of you, I say Happy National Adoption Month - and here's to the storm being behind you.

November is
NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Over 800 children in Florida's foster care system are waiting to be adopted.

Raise awareness to help these children find their forever families.



 One Heart.  One Home.  Change a Life Forever.

 SELFLESS LOVE FOUNDATION  Communities Connected for Kids

For more information or to begin your adoption journey, visit SelflessLoveFoundation.org/OneHeartOneHome

Follow us all month on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) as we celebrate National Adoption Month. Children's Home Society provides adoption services to CCKids' system of care and continues to exceed adoption goals year after year. During this month of gratitude, we are most thankful for all the growing families spending their first Thanksgiving together. Please send pictures of your Thanksgiving dinner to Christina.Kaiser@cckids.net.

Meet Some of the People Making Adoptions in Our Community Possible this National Adoption Month

Meet Lorrie Snodgrass, an adoption specialist and recruiter for Children's Home Society of Florida, the organization that provides adoption services to CCKids' system of care. Lorrie is part of a team of talented people who help make adoptions possible in our community. So far this fiscal year, which started July 1, they have helped finalize 20 new forever families and are well on their way to this year's goal of 75.



"I was first employed with Children's Home Society as a case manager in Okeechobee and later transferred to adoptions in 2016," Lorrie said. "I work as an adoption specialist in the recruitment unit to find forever families for our children on the Treasure Coast in foster care who are in need of adoption."

Lorrie said she has always loved working with children and wanted to work in a field where she could have an impact on the lives of others.

"Working in adoptions is truly rewarding," she said, adding that she, herself, was adopted in 1978 by her stepfather. "It inspires me to be a part of a wonderful team and work with amazing families."

During her career with CHS adoptions, Lorrie said she has been a part of finalizing over 50 adoptions.
