



Connections - November 2, 2022



*CCKids outreach staff, Christina Kaiser and Jordan Bebout, caught up with [Sen. Gayle Harrell's](#) legislative staff, in red, from left, Carrie Lira and Karen Sweeney, last month during the Treasure Coast Business Summit in Port St. Lucie.*

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## Foster and Adoptive Mom is all Hands and Feet and Heart

**By Christina Kaiser** - Whether it's money, time or even a long car ride, local foster and adoptive mom Kristin West puts everything where her heart is.



“Kristin West is what I would call a hero,” said Lawanda Reason, a dependency case manager who works in CCKids’ system of care.

“She took in a child with severe mental health and trust issues,” Reason said. “When it was recommended the child go to a treatment facility, Kristin drove the child to the facility eight hours away to ensure a smooth transition.”

Communities Connected for Kids recently awarded West the Topaz GEM – or Going the Extra Mile – award for her dedication and

advocacy for the children in her home.

West said she is trying to do her part to make the world a better place.

“I am so humbled by this award, and I am honored to continue serving the most hurting children and families in our community,” she said. “Seeing families create a different kind of life for their children is seriously the best thing I’ve ever gotten to see.

“And getting to love them through it...I don’t even know why I was chosen to get to do that, but I’m grateful for it.”

West not only opens her home to children in need, she makes sure other caregivers have what they need to do it.

In 2021, she started the Treasure Coast chapter of Hands and Feet. The program is simple: Caregivers, including foster families, relative and non-relative caregivers, fill out a request form specifying their family’s material needs after children are placed in their homes.

Hands and Feet volunteers gather requested items from local foster closets and community donors. Finally, the items are delivered to the family within 48 hours.

If you’re a caregiver and would like more information, visit [www.handsandfeetfl.com](http://www.handsandfeetfl.com).

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*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](https://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.*

## Lookout for Respiratory Infection - In This Month's *In the Clinic*

**By Lisa McBride, RN, BSN**  
CCKids Nurse Care Coordinator

What is a respiratory infection? This is an infection that affects the part of your body responsible for breathing—the respiratory tract.

First, these are very common, especially in kids younger than two who have not yet developed immunity to the common viruses and bacteria that cause these infections. Most kids will experience between six and eight infections per year.

Because our respiratory tracts are open to the outside world through the nose and mouth, our vulnerability to respiratory infections is fairly high.

Respiratory infections are broken down into two categories: Upper and Lower



## Respiratory infections.

Upper infections include the common cold, mild flu, sinus infection, tonsillitis and laryngitis. You may see these symptoms with an upper respiratory infection: Sore throat, sneezing, coughing, stuffy or runny nose and fever.

Lower infections include bronchitis, pneumonia, chest infection and bronchiolitis.

Lower respiratory infections often present with a cough, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, tiredness/fatigue, mild headache and body aches.

Always follow the guidance of your child's pediatrician, and call the doctor when your child has a fever of 102 degrees or more for more than two to three days, has difficulty breathing or if symptoms have not resolved after 10 days and/or are worsening.

Prevention measures can greatly reduce the chance getting a respiratory infection:

- Wash, wash, wash your hands! These infections are spread through saliva and nasal secretions—this can be direct contact, someone sneezing next to you or from touching a shared surface such as a doorknob.
  - Cover your cough or sneeze; use a tissue or your elbow, and then wash your hands.
  - Teach kids to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth. (I know, easier said than done, but starting early can help develop good habits.)
  - Keep your child away from sick people.
  - Keep up with your child's vaccinations because this is a great way to help them build up their immunity!
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