

Summer 2021



**Children's
Home Network®**

IMPROVING LIVES AND CHANGING LIFE STORIES®

VOICE



Find out how our Fostering Families Program is helping teens in foster care

See details on page 4



During these summer months, I am reminded of the joys of my childhood. Sadly, children in foster care do not have the opportunity to create these precious memories.

Each day in Hillsborough County, four children will be removed from their family homes due to child abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Our Kids Village and Adolescents in Motherhood programs provide a nurturing environment that give children the chance to restore their childhoods.

Thanks to supporters like you, the boys and girls in our care are enjoying their summer vacation with the Murphey Games, trips to the skating rink, zoo, and museum. (see page 11)

As a community, we can be proud of all we have achieved in this post-pandemic world. To all of you who donate, volunteer, and attend our events, it is your support that enables us to take on the challenges of building healthy families and stronger communities.

From my heart, to yours, thank you for continuing to improve lives and change life stories.

Irene K. Rickus
Irene K. Rickus, MS, LMHC
President/CEO

Small Effort. Big Difference.

When you take the small step of naming the Children's Home Network as the Payable on Death (POD) or Transfer on Death (TOD) beneficiary of your investment, checking or savings account, you help us continue our important work of improving lives and changing life stories. A gift like this won't affect your lifestyle and it will make a tremendous impact on the boys and girls we serve.

To learn more about how you can make a difference today, please contact Frank Massaro at (813) 864-1535 or fmassaro@childrenshomenetwork.org



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A Night to Remember

70'S INFERNO

Are you ready to party for a purpose?! You're invited to the Children's Home Network's event, A Night to Remember. Together, we will help heal the hearts of abused, neglected, and abandoned children, and support thousands of local families in need. **For questions and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Lauren Ruiz by email at lruiz@childrenshomenetwork.org or by calling (813) 864-1537.**

September 17th, 2021

7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Bryan Glazer Family JCC | 522 N. Howard Ave, Tampa, FL 33606



FEATURING

Delicious Food

Open Bar

Awards for best dance moves

Awards for best costume

Music from Tampa Bay legends,

The Black Honkeys

...and more!



childrenshomenetwork.org/ntr2021

A Special Bond



With your help, the Children's Home Network is dedicated to improving lives and changing life stories of the children and families we serve. Unfortunately, statistics reveal that for teens in foster care, the future is more likely to include arrests and incarceration. The Children's Home Network together with a group of foster families strive to overcome and defy this unfortunate outcome for all of the children in our care.

17-year-old Adam never knew stability, safety, or consistent parenting throughout his life. He never met his father, and his mother struggled with chronic depression, PTSD, drug addiction and suspected involvement in prostitution. Adam's mother was sexually traumatized and turned to substance abuse to numb her pain and avoid confronting her painful past. Unable to care for her son, Adam was placed in foster care and was eventually adopted by a family member.

Sadly, chaos continued in Adam's life, and he came back into care as a young teen when his adoptive family abandoned him. It was learned that during his time with this caregiver, Adam was sexually molested, adding to the trauma he had already experienced. Trying to manage the abandonment and trauma he experienced was overwhelming and Adam's behaviors and mental health quickly deteriorated.

Adjustment to foster care and the structure of family was difficult for Adam and he challenged his caregivers often. Fortunately, when he was 15, Adam was placed into the care of Mr. Davis, a Children's Home Network specialized therapeutic foster parent. Mr. Davis became licensed as a foster parent with the motivation and commitment to care for teen males, specifically those who struggled with identity, abandonment and self-acceptance. Mr. Davis' desire has always been to empower young men to recognize their self-worth and value. CHN and Mr. Davis, advocated relentlessly to obtain the tools and resources Adam needed to heal from his traumatic past. Mr. Davis began to see Adam evolve. With the support of CHN, Mr. Davis did not see the negative but the opportunity. He was not discouraged by Adam's past, but saw the potential in a young man that others would have considered hopeless.

Once placed into Mr. Davis' care, Adam finally seemed to relax and eventually connect with his foster dad. Adam did not trust others and still carried all the emotional wounds from his childhood, but he did allow himself to feel at home in his foster father's care. Unfortunately, Adam did have additional behavioral issues that needed to be addressed, but, Mr. Davis did not give up on him. He continued to advocate for Adam and pushed for him to receive intense and specialized treatment he needed to heal. For the next year while Adam resided in a treatment program, Mr. Davis remained in contact with Adam and participated in family therapy, soon becoming the father that Adam never had. With the critical support and encouragement of a safe 'parent', Adam was willing to participate in his treatment and he successfully completed the program.

Adam and Mr. Davis created such a special bond that they recently became a forever family by way of adoption. Adam is now a star student and in the gifted program. Looking to his future, Adam is taking pre-medical courses as an elective in school and enjoys playing basketball where his father can be found cheering him on at the sidelines.

Prior to this, Adam was destined to become another tragic statistic. Fortunately, because of donors like you, he was able to overcome the odds and with love and support from his foster dad and the Children's Home Network, he is thriving. The future looks bright for Adam, and we couldn't be happier!

THANK YOU



The 27th Annual General Schwarzkopf Memorial Sporting Clays Classic was a success! Congratulations to Team Hermes for taking first place! We are so grateful for volunteers from Aetna, and the Wharton High School ROTC color guard for presenting the colors.

A HUGE thank you to our presenting sponsor, **Absolutely Amazing Refinishing, Inc.**, and to the sponsors listed below for making this another incredible event supporting the children and families we serve.

THANK YOU EVENT SPONSORS



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- Adver-T



The 39th Annual Children's Home Network **GOLF CLASSIC & AUCTION**

November 8th, 2021

Beginning at 10:30 am

Registration: 10:30 am Lunch: 11:00 am Shotgun Start: 12:00 pm

Carrollwood Country Club
13903 Clubhouse Dr, Tampa, FL, 33618

Join us for our 39th Annual Golf Classic benefitting the children and families we serve. This fun and festive event is one of the longest-running golf tournaments in the Tampa Bay area and has raised nearly \$3.5 million since its inception. Golfers are provided complimentary range balls, golfer gifts, gourmet food, on-course beverages, and an awards ceremony. All are welcome to participate in an online auction that will lead up to the event.

Visit the link below for more information and sponsorship opportunities.



childrenshomenetwork.org/golf



9-year-old Renee, and her 10-year-old brother, Chase, have always been close. They enjoy playing board games and love pepperoni pizza. Since they were little, they have relied on each other for safety and comfort. This bond was inevitable due to their tragic childhood.

Raised in a single-parent household, finances were tight and basic amenities were hard to come by. Their mother also struggled with a drug addiction and was often absent, leaving Renee and Chase to care for themselves. Although she loved her children, she was unable to properly care for them.

In January of 2018, the siblings were removed from their home and were admitted to the Kids Village program at the Children's Home Network. Terrified of being separated, Renee and Chase begged to stay together. Our intake team reassured them that they would not be separated. Thanks to supporters like you, they immediately began receiving the therapeutic treatment they needed to heal.

As the siblings began adjusting to their new environment on campus, the Children's Home Network was notified that Renee and Chase had an older brother, Derek. Although he was an adult and was interested in caring for them, it was not feasible due to his housing and financial situation.

In the summer of 2020, Lacey, a CHN Kinship Family Finding Specialist, reconnected with Derek to see if he had any relatives that could be a possible placement for his younger siblings. Derek, now older, was eager to help. His financial and living situation had changed, and he was willing to do whatever it took to get his brother and sister out of foster care.

For weeks, Lacey, Derek, and a case management team worked together to ensure this would be the best placement for Renee and Chase. After thorough evaluations, background checks, weekend and overnight visits, all three siblings were placed together on May 28th, 2021! Derek continues to work closely with the Kinship team for support and connection to resources. Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, and CHN's Kids Village and Kinship programs, this family is on the path to a long and fulfilled future.

Are you a grandparent, aunt, uncle or other family member raising a relative's child?

We can help! Call the Kinship intake line at 1 (888) 920-8761 or visit www.childrenshomenetwork.org/kinship for more information.

Children's Home



Thank you to our friends at Nationwide Title Clearing, who gifted CHN with 60 duffel bags stuffed with essential items for the families in our Kinship program. We appreciate their kindness!



The kindergartners at Primrose School of Carrollwood gifted the Children's Home Network \$500 from their Spring Fling Fundraiser. Thank you, Sandy Deng (pictured on the far right) and the entire Primrose school for continuously supporting the children and families we serve!



We are so grateful to our friends at the Bay Area Apartment Association for their continued support! Last month they provided laundry baskets full of much-needed personal care items, and we appreciate everything they do for us!



Our generous friends at the Ciccio Restaurant Group presented the Children's Home Network with a gift of \$3,470 from their holiday fundraiser in December. Thank you CRG for being an amazing community partner! We appreciate their continuous support over the past 5 years through donation drives, providing food for our Holiday Open House, and more. This handmade butterfly plaque created by the children is a token of our appreciation for their support in improving lives and changing life stories.



JPMorgan Chase graciously gifted \$3,000 to the Children's Home Network in February. We appreciate their continuous generosity in supporting our mission of improving lives, and changing life stories. Thank you, JPMorgan Chase for all that you do for the children in our care.



Network Spotlight



In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the Steinbrenner High School's Men's Basketball Team was inspired by Myles, a teammate to give back to the Children's Home Network. After learning that the boys and girls who are residing on campus are not able to participate in external extracurricular activities due to COVID-19, Myles created a unique way to bring fun to them - virtually. Before the team competed in an MLK Basketball tournament, the team made a "training" video that included basketball drills and tips. Myles and his mom also delivered 10 basketballs as gifts for the kids to use while watching the video.

Thank you, Myles, and the Steinbrenner's Men's Basketball Team for your creativity and thoughtfulness!



The Mike Evans Family Foundation launched a campaign during the NFL playoffs called Catch For Kids. For each yard Mike was credited with during the Buccaneers games, he would donate one personal care item to a child in need. For each touchdown he received, he'd donate a total of 13 more items. During the Super Bowl, Mike secured 204 receiving yards and two touchdowns in the postseason (and a Super Bowl win!) His foundation chose the Children's Home Network as the beneficiary of this campaign. 230 items were donated to the children in our care. We are so appreciative for Mike and his foundation's support!



We are so grateful to be one of the community partners in Hillsborough County that benefit from The Junior League of Tampa's Alliance for Period Supplies Program

and a recipient of diapers for our Adolescents in Motherhood Program. Thank you, JLT, for keeping the babies in our care dry, and giving the girls and teens in our care the confidence they need to live dignified and productive lives!



CUSTOM APPAREL MADE EASY.

Thank you to Adver-T for being the official t-shirt sponsor of CHN!



Thank you Community Foundation of Tampa Bay for supporting the children and families we serve.



Ramey & Kampf, P.A. generously donated "Fun in the Sun" items for the boys and girls living on campus in the Kids Village and AIM programs. The pool toys, outdoor games, and sunscreen are being put to good use this summer! Thank you, friends.

Supplies for Success!

It takes a lot to get our children ready for school.

Will you help?



School Starts on August 10th!

Please consider giving a gift through our Target wish list.



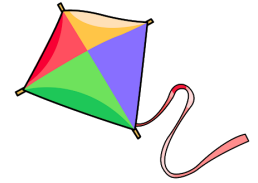
Scan the QR code to the left using your smartphone, or visit tgt.gifts/chnbacktoschool

Thank you for your support!





Summer Fun!

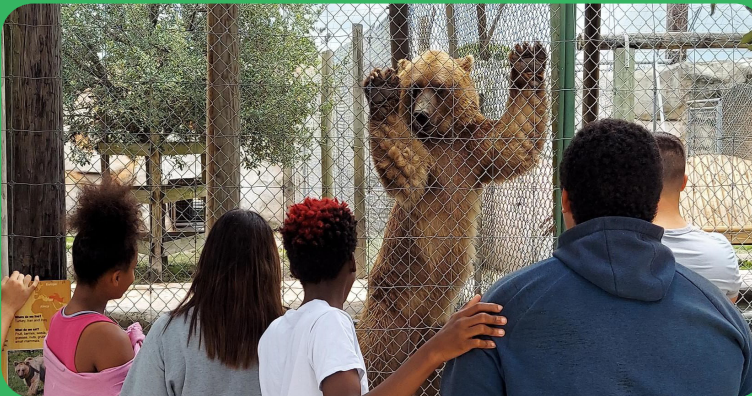


The youth residing in Kids Village and Adolescents in Motherhood programs enjoyed a fun day at the Tampa Bay Grand Prix. For many of the boys and girls, this was their first time riding in a go-cart and they loved it! Smiles were shared all around, and a second trip has already been scheduled.



The Murphey Games opening ceremony kicked off on May 29th and the fun is in full swing! Boys and girls living on campus are competing in a variety of sports activities that promote self-confidence, commitment, and teamwork. This annual tradition promotes the "Courage to Try," and healthy competition.

This fun summer event began with a parade that was lined with unique banners created by kids living in each cottage. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Fire Department and Police Department were not able to participate this year. However, thanks to a staff member, a local car club joined us! The youth enjoyed looking and learning about different vehicles. The ceremony included the lighting of the Murphey Awards torch and the two winners of the "Courage to Try" essays shared their work with the crowd. The day ended with water balloons, bouncy house fun, and smiles all around. A special thank you to Adver-T Screen Printing for the awesome t-shirts and Hooters for catering a delicious wing and tater-tot lunch!



One of the highlights for the children residing on campus in our Kids Village and Adolescents in Motherhood programs is the summer trips. Recently, boys and girls visited Big Cat Habitat & Gulf Coast Sanctuary, a sanctuary for exotic cats and other wild species in Sarasota. Youth enjoyed touring the facility, learning about different cat species and how to help protect them. They even encountered a large brown bear up close!



This has been such a fun-filled summer for the children residing on campus. Other fun outings include visiting a local skating rink, the St. Pete Pride celebration, the Tampa Museum of Art, and local farms.

*Children's faces have been blurred for their protection.

Community Partner Events



Are you part of an organization, club, or business that would like to host an event to benefit CHN? You can host your own event by raising funds and/or collecting items that will benefit the boys and girls in the Kids Village and Adolescents in Motherhood Programs. Community Partners are an asset to our organization, and we appreciate everyone who rolls up their sleeves to help our kids and families.

www.childrenshomenetwork.org/host-an-event

Homework Helpers Are Needed!

With the start of the school year right around the corner, we are looking for dedicated volunteers to help our campus youth with their homework after school. Homework Helpers must be at least 18 years old and must be able to volunteer one-weekday afternoon/evening each week on a regular basis. **If you are interested in making a positive impact in the lives of our kids, please email Lauren Ruiz at Lruiz@childrenshomenetwork.org.**

(Background screening may be required.)



On-Going Needs

The Kids Village residential campus is in constant need of the everyday items used by both the youth and staff. From personal care needs to items for the cottages, there is a wide variety of items on our Amazon wish lists. Please visit our website listed below to view the lists and donate today.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

www.childrenshomenetwork.org/donate-in-kind-items



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS, FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS | DONATIONS OF \$100 OR MORE

January 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021

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**50th Wedding Anniversary of
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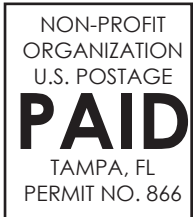
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