



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL REPORT RECOGNIZES LOCAL CHILD WELFARE AGENCY

GAINESVILLE, FLA — Casey Family Programs, the nation's largest operating foundation focused on safely reducing the need for foster care and building Communities of Hope for children and families across America, issued an annual signature report recognizing Partnership for Strong Families' (PSF) three Resource Centers in Gainesville. The centers were recognized for their innovation in improving outcomes for children and families in of Gainesville's most at-risk communities.

Casey has been involved in the development of the Resource Centers since the inception of the model, more than ten years ago. The development of the three centers – the Library Partnership, SWAG Family Resource Center and Cone Park Library Resource Center – began as an effort to reduce child abuse and neglect in neighborhoods that have historically shown the highest rates of crime, poverty, domestic violence and child abuse.

“Any time you keep a child from entering foster care, you've reduced trauma, not only in that child, but in their family ... and their neighborhood and their community,” said Pebbles Edelman, Senior Vice President of Clinical and Community Services of PSF.

The Resource Centers offer tailored support and preventive services, such as food banks, clothing closets, job-readiness training, parenting classes and academic activities for children. Each service that is offered aligns with one of the five Protective Factors, which, when present in families, are shown to reduce the likelihood of abuse and neglect. The efficacy of this framework is backed by community-level data that shows a 44-58% reduction in the rates of verified child maltreatment from 2009-2015 in the zip codes served by the three Resource Centers.

“Our Resource Center Model has had tremendous success in offering these critical services and resources to families thanks to the collaborative efforts of community partners and patron involvement,” stated Stephen Pennypacker, President/CEO of PSF. “Casey Family Programs has been an integral partner in this endeavor, along with more than 40 other local partners and providers.”

Since 2007, Casey has facilitated the growth and efficacy of each center and has encouraged PSF to share their model with similar communities across the nation.

“The activity and the partnership in Gainesville are exemplary,” affirmed Paul DiLorenzo, Senior Director of Casey Family Programs. “Communities around the country are looking at what's going on there and exploring ways to do something very similar.”

To learn more about the success of Partnership for Strong Families' Resource Center Model, download "The Evolution of Hope: Safe Children, Strong Families, Supportive Communities" or visit www.pfsf.org/resource-centers.

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About Partnership for Strong Families:

Partnership for Strong Families is the lead community-based care agency for Florida Judicial Circuits Three and Eight, including Alachua County. PSF is contracted by the Florida Department of Children and Families to deliver comprehensive child welfare services to children who are victims of abuse and neglect. Partnership for Strong Families also works with at-risk families to prevent child abuse and to decrease the risk of children entering the foster care system. PSF serves more than 5,000 children in 13 counties annually.

About Casey Family Programs:

Casey Family Programs is the nation's largest operating foundation focused on safely reducing the need for foster care and building Communities of Hope for children and families across America. Their mission is to provide and improve — and ultimately prevent the need for — foster care. Casey Family Programs works in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and two U.S. territories and with more than a dozen tribal nations to influence long-lasting improvements to the safety and success of children, families and the communities where they live.