



PARTNERSHIP CONNECTION NEWSLETTER



Collaborating to Uplift Families: How PSF's Family Resource Centers Are Transforming Lives, by Toni Spoliansky

The results are in—and they're powerful. An in-depth, five-year evaluation of the Family Resource Centers (FRCs) reveals what many in our communities have long felt: FRCs change lives.

This project's evaluation involved 245 patrons, 76 of whom agreed to share their prior involvement with the Florida Department of Children and Families. Findings revealed dramatic reductions in child welfare involvement for families engaged with Family Resource Centers (FRCs). The most critical findings included an Out-of-Home Placement reduction of 98.6%, (only 1 removal occurred involving 1 child after FRC engagement, compared to 20 patrons with 51 children involved in removals prior to engagement); Alleged Maltreatments Investigated were reduced by 65%, from 7.78 allegations per patron to 2.74 post-engagement; and Screened-In Hotline Calls were reduced by 64%, from 2.18 calls per patron to 0.78 calls per patron post-management. This means more children are staying safely with their families.

But these numbers tell only part of the story- Qualitative feedback from patrons paints a vivid picture of what makes these centers unique and special. Parents described the FRCs as "safe," "calming," and "nonjudgmental." They highlighted everything from parenting classes and tutoring to emotional support, job assistance, and food security services. Staff were frequently referred to "like family," offering personalized, culturally responsive care rooted in respect and trust. *Continued on page 5.*

*July,
August,
September
2025*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

FEDERAL GRANT REPORT & FINDINGS	1
A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO	2
ADOPTIONS SPOTLIGHT & CASE MANAGEMENT INTRODUCTION	3
FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION	4
FEDERAL GRANT REPORT & FINDINGS CONTINUED	5
AMAZING GIVE & GRANT AWARDS	6
KELSEY'S CORNER	7
PSF AROUND THE AREA	7
SAVE THE DATE!	8



A Message from our CEO: *Working Together to Protect Children and Empower Families*

Dear Partners,

As we continue our mission to enhance the community's ability to protect and nurture children, I want to take a moment to reflect on the power of prevention and the importance of community.

Strengthening families remains at the heart of everything we do. We know that when families are supported and communities are strong, children are safer and healthier. Child Abuse Prevention isn't just a program, it's a commitment to ensuring every child grows up in a nurturing environment where they can thrive. From physical supports to families in need to early intervention services, we continue to expand our efforts to reach families before crises occur.

One of the most effective ways we prevent abuse and neglect is by strengthening families through community, in their community. Our family resource centers are built on the belief that strong families don't exist in isolation; they need connections, resources, and encouragement. Thanks to the in-depth evaluation funded by the Children's Bureau, we can say with certainty that our belief and commitment to strengthening families indeed reduces child abuse and neglect. I encourage each of you to read the full report available on our website and be encouraged that these efforts are working!

I also want to extend my deepest gratitude to our foster families. Your compassion, patience, and resilience provide not only temporary care but a sense of stability and love during a child's most uncertain moments. You step into a child's life and offer safety, hope, and healing, and for that, we are profoundly grateful. You are everyday heroes, and our community is stronger because of you.

As we look ahead, our commitment to protecting children and empowering families remains firm. We cannot do this alone. It takes all of us; community partners, foster parents, teachers, neighbors, and supporters like you; working together to build a safer, more supportive world for our children.

Warm regards

Ginger Griffeth
President and CEO

Partnership for Strong Families

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ms. Kay Ayers,
Chair

Ms. Kitty McElhaney,
Chair Emeritus

Mr. Guy Jopling,
Treasurer

Mr. Kenny Brighton,
Secretary

Ms. Elizabeth Mitchell,
Chair-Elect

Mr. Patrick Allen

Ms. Lashone Surrency

Mr. Denny George

Dr. Timothea Jackson

Ms. Lisa Lee

Mr. Will Halvosa

Rev. Sharon Surrency,
RN

ADOPTION FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

We had the pleasure of talking with Tosha, who welcomed two daughters into her family through adoption. She shared with us the wonderful memories they're making, as well as their hopes for the future.

What inspired you to pursue adoption?

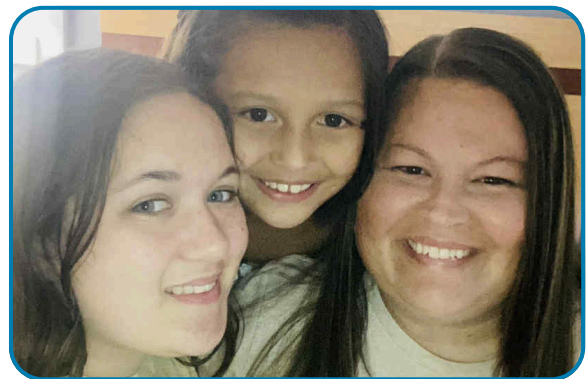
"I was adopted at 9 years old. When I became a little older, I realized just how much my parents changed my life by adopting me. It was at that moment that I hoped one day I could have such an impact on someone else, and I wanted to adopt!"

What family activities do you enjoy that bring you closer together?

"Fishing is so much fun in our family! Emmy catches the fish, and Remi is always right there to net the fish! BUT our favorite spot has always been on some beach, playing in the sand, collecting seashells and making the best memories."

What are your hopes and dreams for your children as they grow up?

"I hope they will continue to grow, knowing how much they are truly loved and wanted. I want them to chase their dreams, set goals, and go after them because nothing is impossible!"



CASE MANAGEMENT INTRODUCTION - JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES



As of January 1, the LJD Jewish Family & Community Services (JFCS) has been providing comprehensive case management services for PSF in Alachua, Baker, Bradford, and Union Counties.

"JFCS has demonstrated incredible expertise in child welfare and has done amazing work in Jacksonville. We're thrilled to have them enhance our collective efforts in these new counties," said Ginger Griffeth, President and CEO

JFCS is committed to building upon the strong foundation of services that Partnership for Strong Families has established. By enhancing existing programs and introducing new approaches to prevention and intervention, JFCS will empower families with the tools they need to bring hope and sustainable change. JFCS is also employing staff who live in the local communities to better understand the needs of the families they will be serving.

FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION EVENT

Appreciating our Foster Parents, by Melissa Law

In May, we take the time to celebrate our current foster families and raise awareness of the acute need for more. We held our annual Foster Parent Appreciation event, taking an afternoon amidst the busyness of life to simply celebrate our families and say a huge THANK YOU! We are so grateful for the churches, businesses, and other community partners who committed to joining us in showing appreciation through their contribution of gift baskets and gift certificates. Each family was given a basket as a token of our gratitude.

Although we have increased our number of homes and are so thankful to each partner family, we still need 65 additional foster homes. This would both ease the demand on our current foster families and enable us to provide an even higher level of service to our children and families. If you are interested in learning more about foster care or would like us to speak to your church or other community group, reach out to our Recruitment and Outreach team at (352) 244-1615 or HopePartner@pfsf.org.



FEDERAL GRANT REPORT AND FINDINGS

Collaborating to Uplift Families; *continued from Page 1*

Central to the FRC model is a commitment to community voice and continuous quality improvement to address each unique community's needs. Through the Strengthening Families Self-Assessment, each center developed targeted action plans and expanded offerings—such as youth enrichment programs, job readiness and life skills trainings, and enhanced access to concrete supports to better meet families where they are.

Together, these efforts are proving that when families are supported with dignity and compassion, they thrive, and so do communities.

As we look to the future, the success of this initiative offers a roadmap—not only for strengthening and preserving families, but for how together, through community collaboration, we can go farther. Stay tuned to our Research Outcomes site for more stories and data from this project!

[Pfsf.org/resourcecenters/evaluationandexpansion](https://pfsf.org/resourcecenters/evaluationandexpansion).

PSF AROUND THE AREA



Alachua Help Me Grow Tabling Event



***Child Abuse Prevention Month
Pinwheel Planting***



***Columbia County
National Foster Care Month Proclamation***



Tri-County Hurricane Preparedness Expo

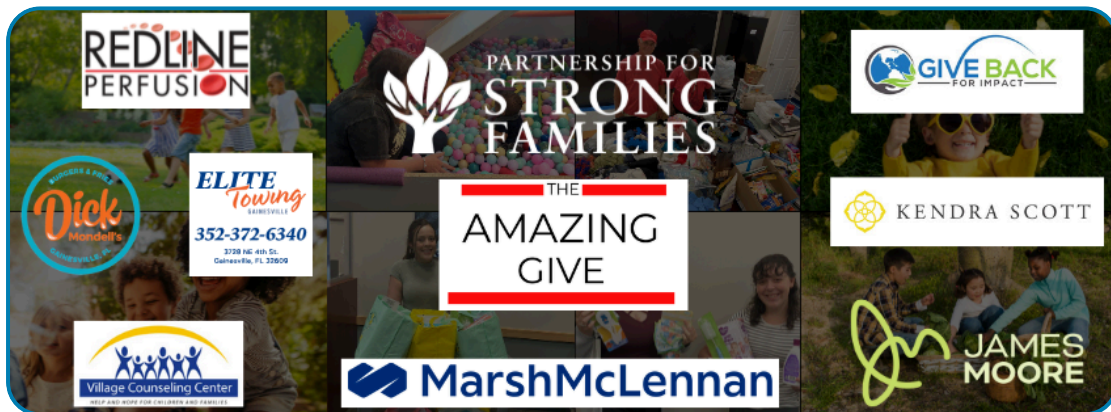
AMAZING GIVE

Fundraising Goal Doubled in Record-Breaking Amazing Give, by Brianna Peterson

Our 2025 Amazing Give was a resounding success. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our community, we more than doubled our \$10,000 goal, raising \$21,257.73, and making 2025 our second most successful Amazing Give yet!

Your support is already making a difference: funds are providing foster youth with enriching experiences like summer camps, swimming lessons, and daycare programs, while also helping combat food insecurity by covering transportation costs for food distributions at our resource centers.

With 143 donors, our highest ever, we're celebrating a powerful show of community support! We look forward to utilizing our Amazing Give funds to encourage joy, confidence, and security among our resilient foster youth.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

We are proud to highlight our collaboration with United Way of North Central Florida and the meaningful impact of their support. United Way has partnered with us through a \$40,000 grant to support our Rural Emergency Assistance Program in the Tri-County area and Rural Alachua County. These funds will be used to assist individuals and families facing unexpected crises; helping them stabilize, access essential services, and move toward sustainable futures.

We are also proud to once again partner with United Way of North Central Florida for our annual Back-to-School Drive. Each year, United Way generously provides space for PSF staff and volunteers to fill backpacks as part of our Back-to School program. Thanks to their ongoing support, we're able to ensure each student receives a backpack packed with the tools they need to thrive in the coming academic year.





Overview of the 2025 Florida Legislative Session, by Kelsey Burnette

The 2025 Florida Legislative session has been an interesting one. It was supposed to end in early May but was extended until June 30 to allow additional time for the House and Senate to work out the annual budget. Here are highlights on bills that are most relevant to child welfare:

Recruitment Program and Specialized Foster Care for High Needs Youth

If signed by the Governor, Senate Bill 7012 will go into effect July 1, 2025, and create a child protective investigator and case manager recruitment program. The program would be designed to recruit people with public safety and service experience, including former law enforcement, first responders, military service members, teachers, healthcare practitioners, and emergency management professionals. SB 7012 also would require the Department of Children and Families to create a pilot program for “treatment foster care,” which would consist of specially trained foster parents to meet the needs of high acuity youth.

Streamlined Requirements for Foster Parents Relocating within Florida

House Bill 989 charges the Department with adopting rules to streamline the foster care licensure application process for licensed foster parents in good standing who relocate within the state of Florida. If signed by Governor DeSantis, this law will take effect October 1, 2025.

Housing Supports for Former Foster Youth

Senate Bill 584 will take effect July 1, 2025, if signed by the Governor. This law is designed to provide housing supports for young adults, including youth who were previously in foster care. It requires state colleges and universities to develop a plan to prioritize placement in housing for former foster youth and youth experiencing or at risk for homelessness. In addition, it focuses on other housing supports for former foster care youth, including utilization of federal housing vouchers.

Definitions of Harm, Neglect, and Abuse

Finally, Senate Bill 1286 revises the definitions of harm, neglect, and abuse to make clear that these terms should not be construed to prevent children from engaging in activities like walking to school, bike riding, playing outside, or staying at home alone for reasonable periods of time when they are of sufficient maturity and physical condition to do so safely. If signed, this law will take effect July 1, 2025.

Partnership leadership have reviewed these legislative changes and do not anticipate any significant impact to operations. The common sense changes are positive in their focus on understanding and addressing important issues such as housing for vulnerable youth and specialized care for high acuity youth, and systemic challenges like availability of residential treatment beds and recruitment and retention of case managers.



PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG FAMILIES

PSF Headquarters
5950 NW 1st Place, Ste.300
Gainesville, FL 32607
352.244.1500

Learn more about
how our innovative
services are keeping
our community's
children safe.
Visit us at
www.pfsf.org



Partnership for Strong Families is a community-based care lead agency contracted with the Department of Children and Families.



Scan Here to
View Our Wishlist!



Presented By:



Scan Here
to Volunteer!

Partnership for Strong Families is gearing up for our annual *Back-to-School Drive* sponsored by VyStar, and we need your help to prepare our foster students for the upcoming school year! We're now collecting new school supplies to provide each youth in care with necessary materials for academic success. Scan the QR code to view our wish list or to sign up to volunteer assembling backpacks.