



FLORIDA UNITED METHODIST
CHILDREN'S HOME®

ESTABLISHED 1908

THE HERALD

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Empower children and families to experience the transforming love of Christ through evidence-based care and holistic services.



A *word* FROM FOSTER CAR SERVICES
Cedric Davis
Vice President, Foster Care Services
Florida United Methodist Children's Home

Foster Care Services at the Children's Home continues to recruit, license and support foster families in Volusia, Flagler, Broward and Palm Beach Counties. There have been several state policy changes made in recent years to enhance the system of care, most notably is the Family First Preventions Services Act (FFPSA).

The (FFPSA) was signed into law in February 2018, and went into effect in Florida 2021. Where this legislation most impacts the Children's Home is the emphasis on in-home parent skill-based programs like our Foster Care Services. The overall goal of the legislation is to provide support for keeping families together. The passage of the bill provided additional funding for at-home parenting classes, mental health counseling, and substance abuse treatment. This not only provided additional resources for foster parents in the counties we serve, but also allowed us to launch our Family Foster Cottages on our Enterprise campus.

This program repurposes existing group care cottages into foster homes. The Children's Home recruits and trains foster parents for the cottages and then assigns children into their care. Since the inception of the Family Foster program with two cottages, we have cared for 13 children, ages 10-17, and are planning to open a third cottage. Benefits to the Family Foster parents include access to all of our existing programs on campus such as our Legacy Scholars Academy and Spiritual Life. In addition to therapeutic counseling, foster families on the campus also enjoy access to the wide range of recreational facilities such as the pool, gym, and ropes course.

At the same time we launched the Family Foster Cottages, we expanded our Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) for those children requiring around-the-clock licensed care. The bottom line is that FFPSA places a higher priority on foster care homes while also recognizing that there are children who need a higher level of care than the traditional group care setting. This also creates additional need for foster care beds in the state.

The Family Foster program on the Enterprise campus is in addition to the foster care provided in the counties we serve. In total, the Children's Home cared for 240 children in 71 homes for a total of 35,268 days of care in 2022. Even so, the need remains great. There are currently 30,000 in the state dependency system with roughly 10,000 in foster placements. These numbers have been increasing each year and are expected to continue increasing. Your continued support allows the Children's Home to continue its growth in foster care and give hope to more children each year.

**ON THE
COVER:**

One of our youth participating in a Day Of Service

WHAT TO DO WITH UNSPENT RETIREMENT SAVINGS

We all want security for the future, which is why we are told to plan for retirement. Most of us hold retirement savings in assets such as IRAs, 401(k)s, 403(b)s and pensions. If you are like many people, you've held these assets for a long time and have seen them grow.

Because of the way these funds are distributed, you likely will not use all of your retirement money during your lifetime. So, the question for many individuals is, "What will I do with my unspent retirement savings?"

While most people would like to care for family members after they are gone, the problem with giving your unspent retirement savings to your family (other than your surviving spouse) is that the majority of your savings will be taxed. When your family members (other than a spouse) receive retirement accounts such as a 401(k) or IRA, your family members will pay tax at their ordinary income rate resulting in less of your remaining money actually going to your family.

The better solution is to give your family the assets that step-up in basis at death such as stock and real estate or life insurance. Unlike your retirement assets, these assets may be received and sold by your family with little or no tax due. Your retirement assets actually make a better gift to charity. This is because a charitable organization like the Children's Home can receive the entire asset tax free and make use of the entire amount to care for the children.

You can also make a gift to the Children's Home after your passing and care for your loved ones by creating a testamentary charitable remainder Unitrust funded with your retirement assets. You can actually put this plan into motion now by creating the trust and making the trustee the beneficiary of your retirement funds. At your death, the trust will be funded and begin paying income to your loved ones. You will rest easy knowing that your family and chosen charities are well cared for.

Perhaps the easiest way to make a gift of your retirement assets through your estate is with a beneficiary designation. You will need to complete a beneficiary designation form provided by your retirement account custodian. The benefit is twofold. If you designate the Children's Home, we will benefit from the full value of your gift because your retirement assets will not be taxed at your death and you will be happy knowing your gift will enable us to continue caring for children into the future.



For information about how you can use your unspent retirement savings or estate planning, contact

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Going on an outing in 1982

A Conversation With Stacy Jackson

We recently reconnected with Stacy, who lived at the Children's Home from 1977 to 1982. She came into our care at only eight years old after being removed from an abusive home and subsequently being molested in a foster home elsewhere in the state.

What were your first thoughts when you arrived at the Children's Home?

"At first I was very scared and confused, especially considering what I had been through. Thanks to the amazing house parents, who were very supportive, I adjusted fairly quickly. I remember living in Gilbert and Blanton Cottages there on the Enterprise campus."

What was your biggest challenge, and how did you overcome it?

"As a result of the trauma I had been through, I developed anorexia prior to coming to the Children's Home. My therapist and house parents worked together to help me through it. Even though I was a very scared and troubled child at that time, they always showed me love – no matter what."

What was social life like at the Children's Home?

"There were always fun activities on campus like swimming, softball, and kickball. We also went on outings, like the time we went to see the play Annie. I remember one time in Chapel when the chaplain acted like we were all in trouble for talking and not paying attention, then marched us all to the gym. Along the way, the chaplain said that maybe we would listen better in the gym. When we arrived at the gym, we found that the staff had set up a surprise party for us – how wonderful!

How did your stay at the Children's Home help you in later life?

"When I left the Children's Home, I was reunited with my mother. However, it turned out to be a bad situation again and I turned to drugs to suppress the memories and pain of being molested. I did learn about God while at the Children's Home, and of the love Jesus had for me, and that's what gave me the strength to seek a rehabilitation program and get clean. Now I'm working in a ministry that helps female prisoners quit their drug additions.

The Children's Home was the only place that I felt truly safe during my childhood. I know that the love and care I received, along with learning about God's love, is what got me through the darkest times in my life. And I have no doubt that if I had not been returned to my mother and was allowed to age out of the Children's Home, I never would have had a drug addiction problem."

Eating Disorders and Childhood Trauma

Millions throughout the United States suffer from eating disorders such as Anorexia Nervosa, Binge Eating Disorder (BED), and Bulimia Nervosa. Several factors can contribute to the onset of an eating disorder, such as genetics and family history. However, one of the most common factors linking eating disorders is a history of childhood trauma. Children who experience emotional, physical, or sexual abuse are more likely to develop psychological issues, including body image and eating disorders.

A recent study demonstrated that the prevalence of eating disorders among adult childhood abuse survivors ranged between 21% and 59%, as compared to 1%-35% among individuals without a history of abuse, and that these disorders were more severe and had an earlier onset age among abuse survivors.*

Eating disorders are seen in the youth at the Children's Home, and our comprehensive care plans address them as well as other trauma related issues. The care plan established by our therapy team is shared with the teaching parents in the child's cottage as well as their teachers so everyone is working together for the child's benefit.

**Source: Rosenberg, Tamar, et.al., Childhood abuse and eating disorder symptoms: Shedding light on the contribution of identification with the aggressor. Child Abuse & Neglect, Volume 135, January 2023.*

DAY OF SERVICE



For most of the youth in our care, therapy initially focuses on helping them cope with the trauma they have suffered and to fully realize that it was not their fault. A unique care plan is developed for each resident by their therapist and supported by the teaching parents in their cottage as well as other staff. As the youth develops their coping skills, they learn ways that they can help themselves to succeed. They see their success in their school work and their social interactions. At the Children's Home we go beyond teaching the youth to help themselves. We empower them with the knowledge that they can make an impact by helping others.

Our youth had a day off from school recently because of a teacher workday and took the opportunity to help others in the local community. Those participating in the Day Of Service divided up into teams along with staff members, and were given their volunteer assignments. A wide range of projects were taken on by our youth allowing them to apply their skills and interests in a meaningful way.

One group performed landscaping and lawn maintenance at the Enterprise Preservation Society,

the local history museum. Another group of our youth assisted at the food bank at First UMC Orange City. They cleaned and organized the pantries, which included cutting and installing shelving paper. A third group put their artistic skills to work at First UMC Sanford, priming and painting walls in some of the Sunday school rooms. A fourth group of young volunteers were able to apply their love of writing by spending time at the VFW Debarry, writing 150 thank you letters for veterans ahead of Veterans Day.

The final group of youth spent time with the residents of Orange City Nursing and Rehab Center. This is not the first time the youth have volunteered at this location, and they really love spending time with the rehab residents. On this day, our youth also participated in some holiday recreation for the residents as they did candy corn bowling for Halloween.

We have found that it is very empowering for our youth to learn that they can make an impact in the lives of others, despite the trauma they've been through in their own lives. Your continued support is not only providing for their daily needs, therapy, and education, but it is providing them the opportunities to grow as they help others.



Writing thank you letters to veterans



Assisting at the food bank



Candy corn bowling with rehab residents

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51 Children's Way
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The Heart & Home Resale Shop supports the Florida United Methodist Children's Home while providing an affordable way for individuals to buy items they may need.

Tuesday – Saturday 9:30 am to 5:00 pm

Located in the Big Lots Shopping Center
2460 South Volusia Avenue
Orange City | 386.960.7678



Keep up to date with everything at the Florida United Methodist Children's Home by following us on Social Media. We are on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.



The Florida United Methodist Children's Home does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other status protected by law except where such protected category is a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ), to the extent that someone's needs can be addressed and cared for within the scope of program services with the financial resources of the agency.

FUMCH makes services accessible and available for persons with communication challenges. An equal opportunity employer. Pursuant to Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, any disabled person wishing to access services who may be in need of special assistance should contact operator@fumch.org at least 48 hours in advance of the service or meeting. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please call FUMCH at (386) 668-4850 (TTY) or the Florida Relay Service at (800) 955-8771 (TDD).

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