



THE MCS INSIDER

The official newsletter of
Manatee Children's Services, Inc



Our History and Mission

"To advocate for and provide the resources, skills, and shelter to alleviate abuse through prevention and intervention for all children and their families."

Manatee Children's Services was founded in 1977 by Carol Chamberlain: a librarian, teacher, and social worker with a passion for child advocacy. Through her work in social services, Carol learned that Manatee County had a dire need for shelter to house abused children removed from their homes. She rallied a group of citizens to make the shelter a reality and, to this day, MCS continues to operate as Manatee County's only emergency shelter for child victims of abuse and the county's only Child Advocacy Center.

We provide a full spectrum of programs serving over 16,000 children and families annually. We offer programs in treatment, prevention, intervention, and residential services. Such programs include an emergency shelter, long-term group homes, mental health services, parenting education and training, forensic medical and specialized child victim interview services, support services for relative caregivers, teen pregnancy prevention, and children's personal safety. Visit our [website](http://www.mcsfl.com) to learn more.

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PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR UPCOMING OPEN HOUSE

Manatee Children's Services was recently the proud recipient of an Equity Access grant from the Verena and Peter Gowa Fund II of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, Inc., Unrestricted Fund to support the "Manatee Youth at Risk" program, a multidisciplinary team approach in which professionals with similar goals and specializations provide intervention for children ages 10-17 who are at risk of first-time or repeated criminal charges, residential facility placement, mental health crises, and/or removal from the home due to behavioral issues. We will be celebrating this wonderful opportunity with an open house.

Multidisciplinary teamwork leads to a significantly increased use of mental health services, referrals, and child protection responses. As Manatee County's only Child Advocacy Center, MCS recognized the benefits of launching this previously unfunded program in 2018 to meet our community's needs and alleviate stress for the children and families we serve.



MANATEE "YOUTH AT RISK" PROGRAM OPEN HOUSE

August 17 • 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM

Manatee Children's Services

1227 9th Avenue West, Bradenton FL 34205

Please join us to learn about the Manatee Youth at Risk program and celebrate important community members who have helped make YAR a success.

Refreshments and prizes will be provided.

RSVP at Eventbrite:

<https://manateeyar.eventbrite.com>

Program funded by the Verena and Peter Gowa Fund II of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, Inc., Unrestricted Fund.



W E L C O M E

TO OUR TEAM

Donna



Our newest BRIC Parenting Coach, Donna Hodgdon, holds a background in early childhood education, teacher training, technical assistance, early intervention, and case management. She has served as a children's minister and offers coaching to churches in need of help with children's ministries. Donna is also a certified court appointed Guardian Ad Litem. Her wide array of experience has given her firsthand knowledge of the struggles parents face.



Our new Child Protection Team Support Specialist, Kim Rhodes, got her start in social services as an aid for the Stark County Welfare Office in Ohio while completing her sociology degree at Kent State. Her career path took a different direction when she moved to Bradenton in 1979, but Kim found herself once again in social services when her longtime friend, MCS employee Susan Ford, encouraged her to apply for a position in the agency. In her spare time, Kim enjoys spending time with her family and rescue dogs. Fun fact: she is also an expert pool player for more than 25 years!



Christine

Our new Sarasota BRIC Parenting Coach, Christine Miles, holds a Bachelor of Social Work, with the goal of a Master of Social Work in counseling. Originally from Maryland, Christine has lived in Florida since 2005. Her primary focus is working with adults with mental illness and children with disabilities.



Terry



Terry Smith has also joined the parenting team as a Parenting Coach with the Family Preservation and Reunification program. He comes from a diverse past of teaching and preaching. Terry says he is excited to be here because he wants to help families.

MCS FOSTER CHILDREN HAD A PAWS-ITIVE SUMMER!



Children in the MCS residential program enjoyed some pet therapy during a visit from “Captain” and Ms. Kathryn of P.A.W.S. Captain is trained to provide love and kisses to children missing their own pets and needing more cuddles from a furry friend. The P.A.W.S. (Pet Advocates Working in the Suncoast) program provides comfort to children affected by abuse and neglect. We are so grateful for their ability to put a smile on our foster kids’ faces during a time when they most need it.

But the pet fun didn't end there. Our group homes also enjoyed outings to Petland where they were able to play with puppies, pet pockets, ferrets, and bunnies. Thank you to Petland and their furry friends for welcoming our residential children with open arms (and paws!).



MANATEE CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY

Lakewood Ranch Child Abuse Prevention Series: "Strategies to Help Children Recognize and Report Threats to Personal Safety"

MCS Clinical Director Celeste Martens, KIDS Personal Safety Coordinator Stephanie Solorzano, and Master of Social Work Intern Katy Wilkinson led an information session as part of our ongoing Child Abuse Prevention Series funded by the Lakewood Ranch Community Fund of the Manatee Community Foundation. In this session, "Strategies to Help Children Recognize and Report Threats to Personal Safety," participants learned how to understand various child abuse types, recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse, report child abuse, and support children. Participants also learned how to teach children about the five safety rules, bullying, and safe adults.

Thank you to our presenters for helping educate our community and to all participants who came out to learn about this important topic.



MANATEE CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY

Anna Maria Island Chamber of Commerce July Luncheon

Thank you to Harry's Grill and the AMI Chamber of Commerce for hosting a wonderful luncheon in July. We are proud to be members of this great group of kind, caring professionals.



Want to help with Back-to-School items? Please consider donations of gift cards or checks to help our families and residential staff with last-minute supply purchases.



Sisterhood for Good Back-to-School Drive for MCS



Thank you to Sisterhood for Good for organizing a Back to School Drive to benefit the MCS Grandparents as Parents (GAP) program. The sisters collected school supplies, backpacks, clothing, and monetary donations at their July Happy Hour.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH



Widows Sons: Knights of the Eagle

MCS would like to recognize the Widows Sons Knights of the Eagle Chapter in Sarasota for their dedication to helping the children and families we serve at MCS. Some of these generous efforts include their annual charity benefit, holiday donations, and helping hands to renovate our clinical building. We are truly honored that this caring group has given so freely of their time and resources.

The Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association is a group of Master Masons who have gathered together to promote Freemasonry within the motorcycling community. As Freemasons, they are committed to "Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth." The Widows Sons hold events and rides as fundraisers for many charitable causes.

*Thank
You!*



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Click on links below to view our website and follow us on social media:

