

February 2023



# 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 12,000 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](https://www.mcsfl.com) to learn more.

## In this edition:

- **New employee spotlights**
- **Residential program outings**
- **"Cruisin for Charity" Spring Fundraiser**
- **"Pinwheel Pals" Monthly Giving**
- **Community Spotlight of the Month**



# W E L C O M E

# TO OUR TEAM



We are so proud to introduce you to the new MCS Grandparents as Parents (GAP) Coordinator, Kathy Bartz. Kathy was previously a Deputy County Executive in Michigan, where she gained extensive knowledge of government operations through handling legislative affairs and collaborating with Senators and House Representatives. She also learned how to help give others a voice by advocating for county residents and businesses.

The true testimony to Kathy's expertise comes from her own experience as a GAP client. She stated she felt inspired to work at MCS after personally experiencing how the agency and program can change lives. As a former client, she also knows which resources can benefit clients and improve their lives in the most impactful ways.

"I understand their challenges firsthand," Kathy said. "I look forward to growing the GAP kinship program and serving some of the most vulnerable population (children) and their relatives in caring for them."



# W E L C O M E

# TO OUR TEAM



Please welcome our new Clinical Intake Coordinator at MCS, Crystal Alvarez. Crystal was formerly a recruitment coordinator for a clinical research team and Marketing Coordinator and Liaison for Coral Reef Nursing and Rehab Center in Miami, where she gained her first experiences with social work. She decided to get her Bachelor of Social Work and, while earning her degree, began interning with MCS.

“By being here with all the therapists and seeing what they do and the kids they work with, I just knew this is where I wanted to be,” Crystal said.

*Crystal Alvarez:  
Clinical Intake  
Coordinator*

Crystal was hired as full-time MCS staff upon completion of her BSW. She is hoping to continue her education by gaining her Master of Social Work and become part of the MCS clinical team.

“I’m so excited to utilize my skills to actively further the mission and purpose of MCS in our community,” Quendi said. “I’m proud to contribute to our community and our children and hope to give as much as I receive in fulfillment!”





# MCS RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM: FUN AT THE FAIR

Our foster kids had so much fun last month at the Manatee County Fair. Thank you to our wonderful staff for organizing and supervising fun activities like these, which help lift the kids' spirits during tough times.





# SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR SPRING FUNDRAISER

**MANATEE CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

## **CRUISIN' FOR CHARITY**

**A CAR SHOW FUNDRAISER TO HELP BREAK  
THE CYCLE OF CHILD ABUSE**

**MARCH  
11  
2023**



**CLICK HERE TO RSVP**

**FREE  
ADMISSION**



**BUBBAQUE'S BBQ**

**6581 STATE ROAD 70 E, BRADENTON FL 34203**

**11:00 AM TO 3:00 PM**

**50/50 RAFFLE**

**FOOD & BEER**

**BEST CAR AWARDS**

**RSVP THROUGH QR CODE ABOVE OR AT [HTTPS://FB.ME/E/4AXPVD2R8](https://fb.me/e/4AXPVD2R8)**





# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH



## *Barbara Sato: Sato Real Estate*

Barbara Sato, longtime supporter of MCS, said our mission spoke to her after she first learned about us at a fundraiser years ago.

"I have ALWAYS loved children," Barbara said. "Every child deserves a loving environment. It breaks my heart when I hear their stories."

Barbara raised her five boys on Anna Maria Island and has been selling real estate in AMI for almost 40 years. She opened her real estate company in 2006 and said it has been one of the best decisions of her life.



"Unfortunately, my husband died very young which forced me to dive head in to my career to provide for my children" she said. "They are all doing great, and I now have six grandbabies that are now growing up on Anna Maria. I pinch myself every day that all my children and grandchildren live within a mile of me! I am blessed beyond words."



# MAKE GIVING SEASON LAST ALL YEAR WITH MONTHLY GIFTS

## MANATEE CHILDREN'S SERVICES



## "PINWHEEL PALS" MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

### GIVING MONTHLY HELPS DAILY

EACH YEAR, WE GIVE SHELTER TO OVER 80 ABUSED CHILDREN. WE STRIVE TO MAINTAIN A SENSE OF NORMALCY FOR THEM DURING THIS MOST TRAUMATIC TIME BY CREATING POSITIVE MEMORIES DURING BIRTHDAYS, HOLIDAYS, AND SCHOOL BREAKS. FOR ONLY \$10 A MONTH, YOU CAN CHANGE THE LIFE OF ONE CHILD.

**\$10/  
MONTH**

A BIRTHDAY  
FOR A CHILD

**\$50/  
MONTH**

SUMMER CAMP  
FOR A CHILD

**\$100/  
MONTH**

ANNUAL MOVIE  
PASS FOR 5  
CHILDREN

**\$300/  
MONTH**

BIRTHDAYS FOR  
30 CHILDREN

FOR OTHER SPONSORSHIP LEVELS, CALL OR EMAIL US



(941) 345-1200

info@mcsfl.com

<https://www.manateechildrengsservices.com/donate/>



# JANUARY SUCCESS STORIES

**We are so happy for our success stories last month. Because of support from our generous community, happy endings are a reality for the children and families we serve.**

*We are proud to announce that our "Grandparents as Parents" program celebrated an adoption! These caregivers had been raising their grandchild after removal from the home due to substance use and were ready for adoption. Our staff helped them set up a lawyer and gain a village of support from other kinship caregivers in the program. Children who receive kinship care experience less trauma, more stability, improved mental health, and stronger support into adulthood. We can't wait to see this family thrive and make happy memories together.*

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**A Child Advocacy Center**  
**1227 9th Avenue West**  
**Bradenton, FL 34205**  
**(941) 812-9361**  
**info@mcsfl.com**

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



*We love caring for foster children at MCS, but we love it even more when they get to reunite with family. Our staff are especially proud of one boy who came to the Emergency Shelter in August 2022. With the help of staff, he received weekly therapy and school support. He transitioned from shelter status to our Boys Group Home when it was determined that he would require more extended foster care. He excelled in school and blossomed under the care of the Boys Group Home house parent. While in the home, he continued weekly family visits, therapy, and Guardian Ad Litem visits. After four months in our care, he reunified with his mom right before Christmas. Since his reunification, he visited our shelter to thank the staff for being there for him and helping him accomplish his goals while at MCS. We are so proud of this young man!*

