

March 2024



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.

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- Child Abuse Prevention Month



COMMUNITY NEWS



Lakewood Ranch Music on Main was a huge success! Thanks to our generous community and amazing volunteers, we raised approximately \$4,000 from the event. We are so grateful!

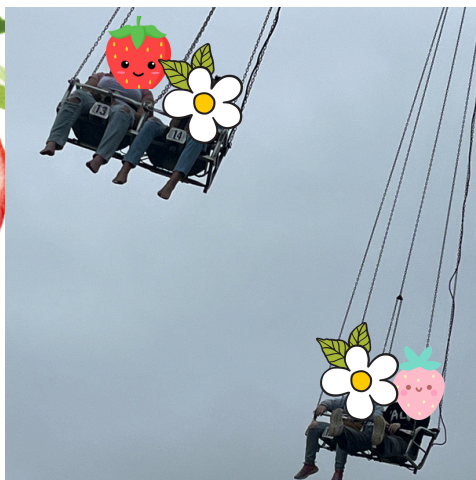


“Welcome to Our House” Project Announcement

We are so excited to share that, thanks to the help of our community and a major gift from an anonymous supporter, we have raised \$50,000 for the “Welcome to Our House” project and, thus, met our goal to receive \$100,000 from the William G. and Marie Selby Foundation. This project will transform our agency headquarters to provide greater support for more than 20,000 families who deserve our compassionate services.

This incredible gift will allow us to begin the initial phases of our project, but we have lots more to do to reach completion. To schedule a tour or discuss a gift toward this important initiative, please contact Krista Post at kristap@mcsfl.com.

OUR FOSTER CHILDREN HAD A BLAST
LAST MONTH AT THE FLORIDA
STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL. THESE
OUTINGS MEAN SO MUCH TO OUR
CHILDREN, AND YOUR SUPPORT GIVES
THEM MEMORIES LIKE THIS THAT WILL
LAST FOREVER.



FLORIDA STRAWBERRY
FESTIVAL



KIDS PERSONAL SAFETY



We are so proud of the work our KIDS Personal Safety Coordinator, Britney Guerra, has been doing in Manatee County to keep children safe. This program delivers classroom presentations to elementary schoolchildren in the county to educate them about personal safety threats, focusing on child abuse and bullying. In addition to providing knowledge about these issues, the program empowers children to report potential threats to their safety at a level suitable for their age.



Britney delivers presentations in both English and Spanish as needed, allowing her to more effectively reach our Spanish-speaking schoolchildren.

Pictured here: Britney's recent presentations at Tillman Elementary.



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



The Goddard School for Early Childhood Development

The Goddard School of Sarasota is deeply committed to not only providing exceptional care and education to the children in their center, but also to making a positive difference in the broader community they serve. They provide a safe and nurturing environment for children with working parents; promote early childhood development through a carefully designed curriculum and experienced educators; support local organizations through participation in community events, organizing donation drivers, or partnering with charities; contribute to the community's economic vitality by creating jobs and investing in their team of qualified educators and staff; and create a welcoming, inclusive space for diverse families by promoting acceptance and understanding among children, families, and staff.

Staff at the Goddard School strive to instill a sense of social responsibility and empathy in their children while making a positive impact in the community. Their community impact was especially apparent in the 2023 MCS Holiday Project, where they sponsored 22 at-risk families in need.

"When we learned about the critical work being done by Manatee Children's Services to provide emergency shelter and comprehensive services to abused and neglected children, we were profoundly moved," Director Kiera Campbell said. "We believe that every child deserves to feel safe, supported, and loved, and we recognize the urgent need to address the trauma and challenges faced by children who have experienced abuse or neglect. By partnering with MCS, we aim to play a meaningful role in supporting their mission to provide a safe haven and essential services to children in crisis. We are committed to fostering a culture of empathy, kindness, and social responsibility among the children in our care. We believe that our collaboration with MCS provides a valuable opportunity to instill these values from a young age."



» HAPPENING
APRIL 9-10
NOON TO NOON
GivingChallenge.org

Save the Date

The Giving Challenge is an exciting 24-hour online giving event that connects about 700 nonprofit organizations with passionate donors and community members to support diverse causes and create enduring impact in Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, and DeSoto counties.

Since 2012, the Giving Challenge has acted as a catalyst for connection and provided more than \$75 million in unrestricted funding over eight challenges.

Being a part of the Giving Challenge can transform nonprofit organizations through meaningful relationships and partnerships, all while strengthening their potential reach.

The Giving Challenge is hosted by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, with giving strengthened by The Patterson Foundation.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! Please choose Manatee Children's Services in the 2024 Giving Challenge to support our lifesaving programs dedicated to breaking the cycle of child abuse.





APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



Since 1983, April has been recognized as a time to raise awareness in helping break the cycle of child abuse and recognizing essential community support systems dedicated to prevention. Community support is essential in helping us continue to provide education and respite to child victims of abuse and those at risk of becoming victimized.

Individuals and businesses use the blue pinwheel to decorate their lawns and show support for Child Abuse Prevention Month during April. The pinwheel is recognized as the national symbol for child abuse prevention and represents the happy, carefree childhood all children deserve.

THIS YEAR, IN LIEU OF PINWHEEL PACKAGE SPONSORSHIPS FOR \$25 EACH, WE ARE ASKING FOR PLEDGES OF \$25 OR MORE TO THE 2024 GIVING CHALLENGE WHERE YOUR GIFT WILL BE DOUBLED BY THE PATTERSON FOUNDATION.

Anyone who makes a pledge commitment prior to April 1, 2024, will receive a free pinwheel package for their lawn. Please contact kristap@mcsfl.com or (941) 812-9361 to secure your pledge and pinwheels. Thank you in advance for supporting Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Manatee Children's Services, Inc.
A Child Advocacy Center
1227 9th Avenue West
Bradenton, FL 34205
(941) 345-1200
info@mcsfl.com

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

