

January 2026



THE MCS INSIDER

Holiday edition



Our History and Mission

Preventing child abuse, restoring healing, and strengthening all children and their families through advocacy, treatment, and shelter.

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.

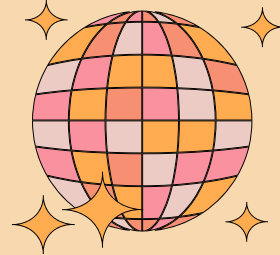
We provide a full spectrum of programs serving over 12,000 children and families annually. We offer programs in treatment, prevention, intervention, and residential services. Such programs include an emergency shelter, long-term group homes, mental health services, parenting education and training, forensic medical and specialized child victim interview services, support services for relative caregivers, teen pregnancy prevention, and children's personal safety. Visit our [website](#) to learn more.

In this edition:

- Groovin for Good gala
- Holiday joy at MCS
- Cresswind pickleball tournament fundraiser
- Agency news
- Community spotlight
- Program and staff success stories



GROOVIN' FOR GOOD



70S GALA FOR MCS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS



When children walk through our doors, they are scared, unsure, and wondering if anyone will truly listen. For some, this is the first place they feel safe enough to speak. At MCS, these children experience compassionate, confidential spaces where their voices can be heard and protected when it matters most. Groovin' for Good directly supports this lifesaving work. With only one week left to purchase tickets, this is your moment to be part of a story that changes a child's future. One night. One decision. A lasting impact. Secure your tickets now before time runs out.

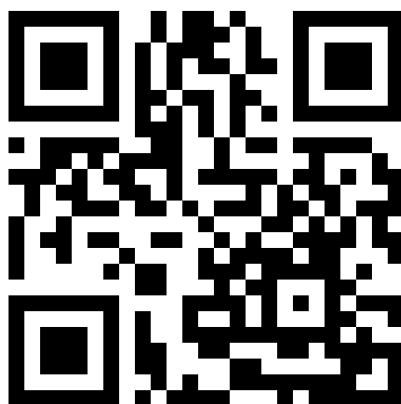
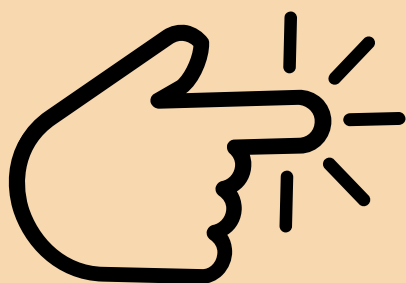
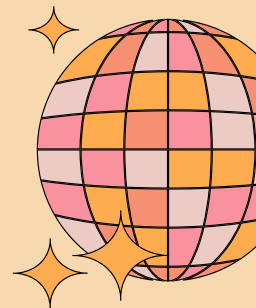
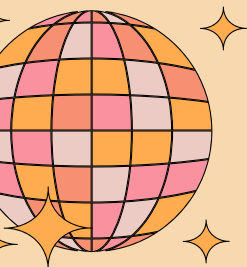
SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 2026

Palmetto Marriott Resort & Spa

600 US-41, Palmetto, FL 34221

6:00 to 10:00 pm

\$150 per person

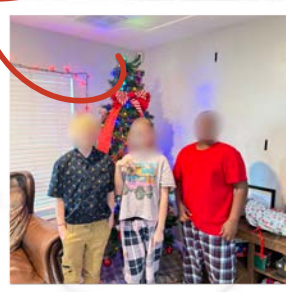


Premier event sponsor



Click here for sponsorships,
tickets, and more event details

Happy Holidays from MCS staff and families



THIS SEASON WAS FILLED WITH GRATITUDE AND CONNECTION AT MCS, FROM CELEBRATING OUR DEDICATED STAFF AT THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY, TO A JOYFUL "GRANDPARENTS AS PARENTS" HOLIDAY CELEBRATION MADE POSSIBLE BY GECKO'S GENEROUS CATERED MEAL SERVED TO FAMILIES, AND A COZY, LOVE-FILLED CHRISTMAS FOR CHILDREN IN OUR SHELTER AND GROUP HOMES.

Thank You

2025 HOLIDAY PROJECT SPONSORS



AND
MANY
MORE!



ROSEDALE LADIES GOLF ASSN.



TERRY ABBAS



BERLIN, PATTEN, EBLING



SANCTUARY COVE





CRESSWIND LAKEWOOD RANCH CHARITY

PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

Benefiting Manatee Children's Services
offering help and shelter for abused Children

**JAN
2026**
50 AND OVER

MEN 50-60, 61+
WOMEN 50-60, 61+

**3 GAME
MINIMUM**

DUPR RATINGS

2.5-3.24 Starts at 10:30 am

3.25-3.74 Starts at 12:40 pm

3.75-4.49 Starts at 2:50 pm



**AWARD
MEDALS**



\$70
PER PERSON

**MUST REGISTER
BY JANUARY 5TH**



**MEN
JANUARY 19**

**WOMEN
JANUARY 25**



FOOD TRUCKS

10 AM CHECK-IN | START TIME 10:30 AM

Cresswind Lakewood Ranch Clubhouse

17115 Cresswind Terrace
Lakewood Ranch, FL 34211



SCAN TO REGISTER

Agency News and Updates



Thanks to the Community Foundation of Sarasota County Suncoast Disaster Recovery Fund, we restored our campus landscaping and security lighting damaged by last year's Hurricane Milton. We are so grateful for the ability to bring back its safety and beauty!

We are deeply appreciative to the Bishop Parker Foundation for their generous \$30,000 grant, which supports critical improvements to our main building, including a new HVAC system, soffit, gutters, fascia repairs, and exterior doors. These upgrades ensure a safe, comfortable, and welcoming environment for the children and families we serve.



We also extend our sincere thanks to the Wawa Foundation for their \$2,500 grant to provide nutritious food for families in our Grandparents as Parents program and children in our residential care. Thanks to these community partners, we are able to meet both immediate needs and long-term stability for those who depend on us.



Another heartfelt thank you goes to the "Manateam" student volunteers at Ringling College of Art and Design for the generous donation baskets they organized for our much-needed hygiene items in our residential program. We are especially grateful for Ringling College's continued support of MCS over multiple years; this ongoing partnership reflects a shared commitment to caring for and uplifting our community's most vulnerable children.



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



For more than a century, the Bradenton Woman's Club (BWC) has been a cornerstone of service in Manatee County. Founded in 1913 by a small group of 16 local women committed to making a difference, the Club has grown into a dynamic 501(c)(3) organization guided by the motto "Unity in Diversity" and the spirit of volunteerism. Their historic clubhouse, built in 1921 and now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, stands as a symbol of their long-standing commitment to community improvement.

BWC's mission focuses on enhancing lives through service, with members from diverse backgrounds united by a shared desire to create positive change. As part of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, BWC supports initiatives in education, civic engagement, health and wellness, and social services: especially those benefiting women, children, and veterans.

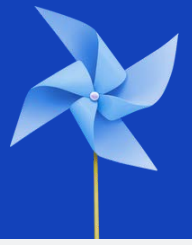
The Club partners with a wide range of local organizations, providing volunteer support, monetary contributions, and in-kind donations to address critical needs such as education access, food insecurity, and family stability. This year, BWC extended that generosity to MCS, recently supporting our annual Holiday Project.

BWC's support of MCS reflects a shared commitment to protecting children and strengthening families. As community needs continue to grow — particularly around child safety, mental health, and economic hardship — the Bradenton Woman's Club remains a powerful example of how collective compassion and service can create lasting impact.

We are deeply grateful for their partnership and dedication to making our community stronger for generations to come.



STAFF AND PROGRAM TESTIMONIALS



For nearly 26 years, one dedicated staff member has been part of the heart of MCS: Jocina Newsome.

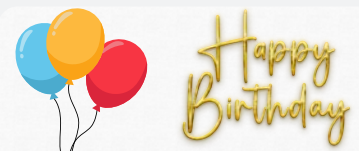
She didn't begin her career planning to work in child services, but once she walked through our doors, everything changed. Starting as a foster care advocate, she was exposed to realities many never see. Her commitment to protecting children only deepened.

Today, she supervises four prevention programs serving youth, caregivers, and families before crises escalate. These programs support teens navigating relationships and online safety, elementary students learning personal safety, at-risk youth in need of early intervention, and grandparents and relatives who suddenly step into parenting roles.



The last program, "Grandparents as Parents," holds a special place in her heart. She remembers a grandmother who had recently lost both her husband and daughter and suddenly found herself raising two young grandchildren. Through patient listening, connection to grief counseling, and ongoing support, the family found stability and hope. Today, the children are thriving, and the grandmother still walks through our doors with a smile.

After more than two decades, she remains because prevention matters, listening changes outcomes, and sometimes sitting with someone when their world is falling apart is what keeps a family standing.



Candace Allison
Monica Cruz
Melinda Thompson
Elizabeth Villalvazo

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:

