

June 2026



THE MCS INSIDER

Manatee Children's Services' Monthly Newsletter



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:

- **New board member spotlight**
- **MCS in the community**
- **May program updates**
- **Agency news**
- **Upcoming events**
- **Community spotlight**
- **Program success stories**

Welcome to our team

MCS Board of Directors



Julian Germinal

We're thrilled to welcome Julian Germinal, who has a very special history with MCS, to our Board of Directors.

Julian is a Sarasota-Bradenton based real estate broker and the founder of Germinal X Real Estate Authority, serving families across Sarasota, Bradenton, and Manatee County. His work, places him inside homes and communities every day, giving him a clear view of what most people don't see. As Julian explains, "Real estate shows you the ins and outs of family dynamics. The healthy ones and the broken ones. You can't unsee it once you've been in enough homes."

Julian's connection to MCS runs deeper than his work. He is a former foster youth who came up through the very shelter and group home system that MCS operates. "I lived inside this system as a kid. I know what those walls feel like, what those nights feel like, and what it takes to walk out the other side and not become a statistic."

That lived experience is what he brings to the board. Julian represents what's possible on the other side of the system. A husband, a father of four, a business owner, and a community leader. "My story is proof that the kids inside this system right now can build a normal life. They can become productive, whole adults. They need someone who's already walked that road to remind them it's real."

Beyond the brokerage, Julian also hosts the Mix Realities Podcast and operates with a faith-forward approach to business and leadership, believing that platforms are meant to be used for impact. He intends to bring his background in marketing, social media, and real estate to MCS, but more importantly, he intends to bring his story directly to the kids who need to hear it.

Julian lives in the Bradenton area with his wife Kate and their four children. As a father building the kind of family dynamic he didn't have growing up, he sees the mission with rare clarity. "Every kid in MCS's care deserves the same thing my own kids have. Safety, stability, and someone in their corner."



MCS IN THE COMMUNITY



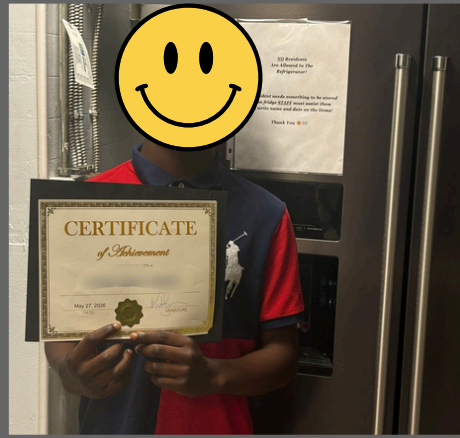
Our development team attended Charitable Gift Planners of Southwest Florida's "Planned Giving 101," gaining valuable insights into helping donors create lasting impact through charitable legacy gifts. We're excited to continue growing our planned giving program that supports meaningful, future-focused giving at MCS.

MCS managers Krista Post and Nadine Kilduff had the honor of attending the Florida Network of Children's Advocacy Centers conference, joining professionals from across the state dedicated to strengthening support for children and families. Opportunities like this ensure our team brings the latest knowledge and best practices back to our community.



Earlier last month, our staff came together for an in-service day focused on learning, collaboration, and growth. These moments help us strengthen the tools that allow us to better serve children and families and remind us of the passion behind our mission.

MAY CELEBRATIONS IN RESIDENTIAL



MCS proudly celebrated several foster children in our residential program whose hard work led to meaningful milestones. "Jonah," a resident of Our Place Group Home, graduated high school, while former client "Mark" marked the same achievement surrounded by his foster parent and Big Brother. We also celebrated group home resident "Liam" on his well-earned promotion. These moments reflect the resilience and bright futures of the youth we serve.

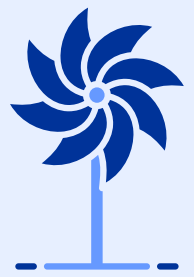


MCS staff members Eddie and Danielle attended the Big Brothers Big Sisters end-of-year BBQ at USF alongside former MCS residents who are now proudly their "Littles." It was a special opportunity to celebrate these meaningful, ongoing connections.



Residents at the MCS Emergency Shelter and Our Place Group Home enjoyed another hands-on cooking session with Coreen, who generously volunteers her time each month. Through these classes, she helps our youth build valuable life skills while having fun in the kitchen.

IMPACT IN ACTION



One of our incredible volunteers, Kat Howser, and her therapy dog Indy were recognized in SRQ Magazine's *Best in Show: Pets We Love!* Thanks to our grant funding from Impact100 SRQ, Indy will soon bring comfort, joy, and healing to our children. We're so proud to work with this special duo.

We were honored to participate in Serve Week 2026 alongside Bayside Community Church and their amazing volunteers. Their team generously gave their time to support important projects at MCS, helping strengthen the work we do behind the scenes. We are so grateful for community members who show up and serve with heart!

We are so grateful to the Community Foundation of Sarasota County for their generous support. Funding from the Donald and Patricia Savage Fund and the Walter Francis Conniff and Phyllis Sloat Conniff Memorial Fund IV will help us create a Community Engagement Plan to expand outreach efforts, strengthen partnerships, and connect more children and families with vital services.





YOU'RE INVITED

JUNE 13TH | 7:30 PM

PREMIER SPORTS CAMPUS
AT LAKEWOOD RANCH



30% OF EVERY TICKET GOES BACK TO MCS

Join us June 13 at 7:30 PM for a Sarasota Paradise match at Premier Sports Campus and turn your night out into something meaningful.

30% of every ticket goes directly back to MCS.

Want to sponsor an MCS family or a foster child for tickets to an experience they'll never forget? Contact kristap@mcsfl.com.

Grab your crew, bring the energy, and let's fill the stands for a cause.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Since 1965, the Osprey Nokomis Chamber of Commerce (ONCC) has been a dedicated advocate for local businesses, residents, and visitors throughout our community. What makes ONCC especially unique is its all-volunteer structure, operating without salaries or office overhead, allowing every effort and resource to be focused on supporting the community. This distinctive model reflects their long-standing commitment to what they proudly call “The Spirit of Business & Community Care.”

In May 2023, the ONCC expanded its impact by launching the ONCC Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit designed to secure grants and donations that support critical matching programs. With a focus on three essential areas — health, hunger, and housing — the Foundation is working to address some of the most pressing challenges facing families in Southwest Florida today.

This mission is what inspired ONCC to support organizations like MCS. By helping provide access to essential health services for children, ONCC is directly investing in the wellbeing of our community’s most vulnerable members. Their dedication aligns deeply with their core values, recognizing that when children’s needs are met, families and communities can truly thrive.

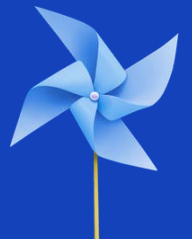
Today, the need for accessible resources in health, hunger, and housing is more urgent than ever. Many local families are striving not just to get by, but to build stable and sustainable futures. Through advocacy, community partnerships, and charitable initiatives, ONCC continues to play a vital role in helping bridge these gaps.

Community members can support the ONCC’s mission in a variety of meaningful ways—by staying informed about local needs, contributing financially to the ONCC Foundation, or volunteering their time and talents. Every act of support helps strengthen the network of care that uplifts our region.

To learn more about the Osprey Nokomis Chamber of Commerce and how to get involved, visit [OspreyNokomisFlorida.com](https://www.OspreyNokomisFlorida.com).



MCS PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: PARENTING



At MCS, our parenting programs empower caregivers with the knowledge and confidence needed to create safe, stable, and nurturing homes. Through education, one-on-one coaching, and strong community connections, parents build on their existing strengths while learning practical strategies to reduce stress, strengthen relationships, and support their children’s emotional wellbeing.

When one family first entered the program, both parents struggled with emotional regulation and had difficulty showing empathy toward their child’s mental health and identity. Initially hesitant and resistant to change, they found it challenging to connect with their child in supportive ways. As the sessions progressed, however, meaningful transformation began. By the fifth session, both caregivers started sharing their challenges more honestly and actively engaging in the process. One parent began practicing empathy, working to better understand and validate their child’s experience, while the other focused on improving communication and building stronger connections within the home.

By the end of the program, the results were profound. A parent who once reacted with frustration shared that they had learned to pause, process emotions, and respond calmly. The other expressed newfound confidence in supporting their child’s needs and reported noticeable improvements in their relationship. What began as a difficult situation became a powerful success for the family.

The impact of these programs is both immediate and long-lasting. In the most recent year, 97% of families continued to keep their homes stable without any verified findings of child abuse in their homes up to 18 months after completing the program: demonstrating that parents continue to apply what they’ve learned well beyond the program’s conclusion.

By equipping families with skills, support, and confidence, our parenting programs are not only changing behaviors; they are strengthening relationships, reducing risk factors for abuse, and creating safer, more hopeful futures for children and families throughout our community.

Cheryl Andrews Lucy Eisenhard
Krista Post Alyssa Erickson
Gretchen Micheaux Veronica Ugarte

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

