



# Heartland for Children

## FOSTER CARE NEWSLETTER

January 2025

Page 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2025

As 2025 begins, I want to thank you for being amazing foster caregivers.

Your commitment and support to children and families is valued and very much appreciated. I hope you had a wonderful holiday and enjoyed quality time with family and friends. Please make sure that you reach out to our staff here at HFC in 2025 as needed.

We are here to serve you and help you navigate the system of care.

Hope you have a fantastic year ahead.

Happy New Year !

Kim Daugherty, CEO  
Heartland for Children



We hope this message finds you well and that you had a truly wonderful Christmas filled with joy and cherished moments. As we reflect on the holiday season, we are incredibly grateful for the love and warmth you provide to the children in your care.

This year's Rudolph Round-Up was made possible by the generosity of hundreds of donors who are eager to hear how their contributions made a difference. We would love for you to share your "Rudolph Stories" with us—whether it's a special moment, a heartwarming experience, or the joy it brought to your family. Your stories not only inspire us but also create a ripple of positivity among our community of supporters.

Please [click here](#) to submit your story and any photos you wish to share.

Thank you for being the heart of what we do. Your dedication and kindness make all the difference. We look forward to hearing from you and sharing your stories with those who help make it all possible.



## HFC's Recruitment Goal for January - June 2025

Our goal for this fiscal year is to license 70 new families and we are only about 25% of the way. The number of referrals that come in January, February, and March will be a major determining factor of our ability to meet that goal.

Our Recruitment team is working with schools, businesses, churches and civic groups to get the word out about fostering through presentations, posters, brochures, and signs. They are also setting up advertisements and posts on social media.

You can also make a major impact on this goal by just doing one small thing one time!

- Share your recruitment ideas with Tracy Deal at (863) 746-6517 or [tdeal@heartlandforchildren.org](mailto:tdeal@heartlandforchildren.org).
- Share social media post about fostering, especially those on Foster Care Information Nights
- The most effective effort is to just share your foster story with another person. "The 60 Second Recruiter" article from our December 2024 edition (page 4) has tips for doing this.

The combined efforts of 166 families sharing one small thing with others will be a powerful force for providing safety, permanency and well-being for the children of our community. Whatever you decide to do, we greatly appreciate your efforts!

### December Leader Board For Recruitment Campaign

K.L. - 13 points	T.F. - 8 points	A.S. - 2 points
M.V. - 11 points	G.Z. - 8 points	S.H. - 1 point
T.A. - 9 points	S.T. - 3 points	

The gift card winners for December and for the Campaign will be announced in the 1/10/25 edition of the Weekly News!

# Foster Home Score Board

FY 2024 - 2025

Goal:

70

New Homes

Current Homes

164

Newly Licensed Homes

16

Relicensed Homes

78



## Teachable Moments: Setting Goals

A new year brings a fresh start and a vision of all the possibilities that the future can hold! That's why New Year's Resolutions are very popular AND that makes this a great time to talk with children and teens about goal setting.

**Goal setting is an important life skill that can**

- Give them a sense of purpose and responsibility
- Improve their confidence and self-esteem
- Fosters their resilience
- Helps them focus on what is important
- Enhances critical thinking skills

Here are some quick tips for teaching your children and teens about goal setting.

- Don't start by asking them to set a goal for themselves. Keep conversations emotionally safe by focusing on family goals.
- Look online for age-appropriate tools, templates and resources. Find something that can be customized for each child and teen in your home. For example: One might enjoy creating a vision board while another might prefer using a treasure map (that maps out goals and steps to achieve).
- Find ways to incorporate the terminology into everyday conversation. Ask if something is realistic or when does this need to be done?
- Keep it fun.
- Ask for their opinion. (Don't forget to thank them for it.)
- Start small – like tomorrow's to-do list. Oops! I mean: tomorrow's goal list.
- Keep it positive and be supportive when things do go as planned. "I know we didn't get everything done as planned, but we still accomplished a lot!"

## Resource: Clothes Closet at First United Methodist Church

First United Methodist Church of Lakeland has a wonderful clothes closet that they have had for many years. The church owns a house on their property that is full of donated clothes that has been neatly organized by size and gender, all intended for children in care and on case plans. Only case managers are allowed to put in requests and come to the house to pick up clothes for children on their caseload. Pick up is Monday 1-4p and Wednesday 9:30a-1p. They even have plenty of school uniforms available!

Foster parents, if you would like some clothes or school uniforms for your foster kiddos, let your case manager know so that they can put in a request!



## From the TLC Association

### January Happenings



Please make plans to join TLC Association on Friday, January 17th at 6:00 pm for our monthly T.L.C. ASSOCIATION, INC. dinner, social time, and training meeting. As always, TLC will provide a free dinner for your family and free childcare for your children during our training. Please contact Lori Chapman Peacock at [loriapeacocktic@gmail.com](mailto:loriapeacocktic@gmail.com) to reserve your childcare with ages of the children and to let us know how many to prepare dinner for.

We will be meeting at:  
Trinity Baptist Church  
6633 Old Rd 37  
Lakeland, FL 33811

### Care Closet

TLC was blessed with a large donation of clothing, toys, and supplies. Our Care Closet will soon be updated with new items for you!

TLC Care Closet is open on Wednesdays (10:00 am - 1:00 pm) and the 2nd Saturday (10:00 am - 1:00 pm) each month.



### Become a Member!

Our goal for 2025 is for every foster home to know about us, join our Association and see all the benefits! Becoming a member is as easy as scanning the QR code on the left to go to our website for details on how to join.



## Provider Spotlight: Worthy & Known



Happy New Year to our Heartland families! The Worthy & Known Family Project is grateful to partner with Heartland for Children. Our mission is for everyone to grow up knowing their God-given dignity and worth. We facilitate both online and in person classes that help our community understand the needs and the why behind

behaviors. Our goal is to have a trauma informed community so that we can be in healthy relationships with one another. We have several opportunities for you to jump in and learn more about how the brain and body works when faced with adversity or hard times.

-**Trust Based Relational Intervention - (TBRI)** is a therapeutic model that helps caregivers support children and youth who have experienced trauma or adversity. We offer weekly classes on Thursday's that last 2 hours each for 4 weeks. We have morning or evening available. Next class starts January 9th, 2025.

-**Making Sense of Your Worth - (MSOYW)** is an 8 week program that is designed for any individual desiring to obtain positive self-worth or secure attachment. Participants will go through a series of sessions in a group format designed to help them understand how the events in their lives have contributed to low self-worth. These sessions focus on rebuilding a new life based on positive self-worth as well as how to maintain these gains. Our next women's class starts on January 5, 2025.

**Grands Raising Greats - (GRG)** is a welcoming space for grandparents and non-relative caregivers who are caring for children the second time around. It's a time for connection, camaraderie, and sharing among fellow "Grands" who are raising "Great" kids! Our next luncheon is Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at noon.

For more information, scan the QR code below, go to our website @ [www.worthyandknownfp.org](http://www.worthyandknownfp.org) Or email us: [amberlee@worthyandknownfp.org](mailto:amberlee@worthyandknownfp.org), [hannahb@worthyandknownfp.org](mailto:hannahb@worthyandknownfp.org)





# Kin Connect

CAREGIVER SUPPORT COMMUNITY

**1/17/25-12:00PM-1:00PM**  
**1/22/25-7:00PM-8:00PM**  
ON ZOOM

*Kin Connect is a support group for people caregiving the second time around to build camaraderie and be empowered by Trust-Based Relational Intervention parenting tools.*

**REGISTER AT**  
[worthyandknownfp.org/TBRI](https://worthyandknownfp.org/TBRI)



## Sunshine Health Care Grant

Sunshine Health offers an additional benefit to support services or supplies for each member. The Care Grant is a fund that can be utilized for activities that support social, physical, and educational development of the member and are not Medicaid covered benefits.

### CARE GRANT ELIGIBILITY & CRITERIA

- Is enrolled in the Sunshine Health Child Welfare Specialty Plan at the time of request.
- Service or supply must be used for the member directly.
- Care Grant funding is \$150 per member per calendar year.
- Care Grant funds not used within one (1) calendar year cannot be carried over to the next calendar year.

### REQUEST PROCEDURE

Requests for Care Grant applications and completed applications must be submitted to **both** HFC Nurse Care Specialists, Deborah Cauffman, [dcauffman@heartlandforchildren.org](mailto:dcauffman@heartlandforchildren.org) and Maria Castro, [mcastro4@heartlandforchildren.org](mailto:mcastro4@heartlandforchildren.org).

### ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting documentation describing services and/or supplies, along with verification of cost, must be submitted at the time of initial request. Examples of supporting documentation are receipts, printouts of cost from websites, flyers from school or other programs, or written estimate of services to be provided. Documentation should clearly demonstrate the cost of the services or supplies to be equal to the amount requested.

### EXAMPLES OF EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL OR PHYSICAL SUPPLIES OR SERVICES

Activity or Registration Fees For: Camp, Daycare, Sports Clubs, Dance Lessons, Tutoring, Field Trips

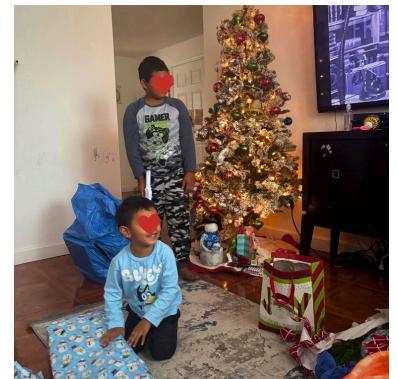
Supplies: Football Uniforms, Cheerleading Uniforms, Musical Instrument Rental, Sporting Goods

### Items that do not meet criteria and will not be approved:

- Electronics: Kindle Fire, Cell Phones, Gaming Systems, iPads
- General clothing Items: School Uniforms, General Clothing Items not associated with an activity
- Medical equipment, car seats, strollers, or diapers



## 2024 Holiday Celebrations in Photos



Photos from: TLC's Holiday Party, What's Your Rudolph Story submissions, Rudolph Warehouse, HFC Holiday Door Decorating Contest, HFC's Angel Shoebox Christmas Project and HFC's Holiday Party.





Community Based Care: Hardee, Highlands & Polk Counties

**Date:** December 12, 2024  
**To:** Foster Parents  
**From:** Finance Department  
**Re:** Foster Care Board Payments for the Calendar Year 2025

I trust this message finds you well. As we approach the end of the calendar year, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the payment schedule for foster care board payments in the upcoming year, 2025. The outlined dates are also available on our website, [www.HeartlandForChildren.org](http://www.HeartlandForChildren.org)

Please be advised that payments will be credited to your designated direct deposit bank accounts on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, apart from instances where this day is preceded by a federal bank holiday.\*

Below is the schedule for the monthly payment dates throughout the year 2025:

Month of Service	Payment Dates
January	01/14/25
February	02/11/25
March	03/11/25
April	04/08/25
May	05/13/25
June	06/10/25
July	07/08/25
August	08/12/25
September	09/09/25
October	10/15/25*
November	11/12/25*
December	12/09/25

Should you have any inquiries or concerns regarding your accounts or payments, please feel free to reach out to me using the contact information provided below. Additionally, I would like to request that you promptly inform us of any future changes to your direct deposit bank accounts, or email addresses.

We greatly value our partnership with you and express our sincere appreciation for your commitment to the foster care program. Wishing you and your loved ones Joy, Peace, and Love during this festive season. Happy holidays and a prosperous New Year!

Sincerely,

**Shibani Kyani**

Director of Business Affairs  
Tel: (863) 519-8900 extension 203  
Email: [SKyani@HeartlandforChildren.org](mailto:SKyani@HeartlandforChildren.org)



[www.heartlandforchildren.org](http://www.heartlandforchildren.org)

1239 E. Main St. Bartow, Florida 33830 | 863-519-8900

Heartland for Children is a community-based care lead agency contracted with the Department of Children and Families.





## Important Dates in January

JANUARY 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

1/1 New Year's Day: HFC Offices Closed

1/14 Board Rate Payments Disbursed

1/17 TLC Meeting (6:00 pm)

1/20 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: HFC Offices Closed

TLC Care Closet is open on Wednesdays (10:00 am - 1:00 pm) and the 2nd Saturday (10:00 am - 1:00 pm) each month.

## POLK COUNTY

### Free Trainings for Parents & Teachers

Early Learning Coalition of Polk County is hosting classes in multiple locations providing tools and resources and food. Space is limited. Register here: <https://bit.ly/3A-Jgnkz3>

### Peer Recovery Center

Center for Behavioral Health Annex  
1501 1<sup>st</sup> Street South, Winter Haven, FL 33880  
Hours: Monday – Friday from 9AM-3PM  
The center is a place for adults with a mental health diagnosis to receive education, support, resources and socialization.  
Contact: (863) 293-1121 x 205789 for more info

### Florida Children Museum

400 Bonnet Springs Blvd.  
Lakeland, FL 33815  
Contact: (863) 687-3869  
<https://explorefam.org>

### Carol Jenkin Barnett United Way Resource Center

Offers weekly classes for children from infants through age 5 where parents and children will learn and socialize as they participate in fun, stimulating, developmental activities. These classes are FREE and a great opportunity to meet other moms and caregivers.

- Breast Feeding Support Group
- Autism/ASD Support Group
- Child Development Classes
- Free Tax Prep
- Healthcare Navigator
- Free Child Development Screenings (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday each month)
- Infant Massage Classes

Location: 400 Bonnet Springs Blvd. Lakeland, FL 33815  
<https://lwvcf.org/resourcecenter/>

## HIGHLANDS COUNTY

### Swimming Lessons at YMCA

<http://www.highlandsymca.org/aquatics.htm>

### Champion for Children

Provides child abuse and neglect prevention programs and early-intervention services to children and families in Highlands County.

Contact for more info about the documentary **RESILIENCE: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope** which talks about the connection between trauma and health.

Office: (863) 382-2905

<https://www.championforchildren.org/>

### Children's Museum of the Highlands

Hands on Learning for Ages 1-12  
Cost: \$8/per person (ages 1+) for all day play.  
219 N Ridgewood Dr. Sebring, Florida  
(863) 451-5385 (contact museum for updated hours)

### Preservers of Life

Highlands County Community Nursing Organization  
This organization provides prevention healthcare and helps businesses and individuals integrate holistic health and wellness practices.

Kasey Pacheco, Community Nurse Collaborator  
[Kasey@preserversoflife.com](mailto:Kasey@preserversoflife.com) | (863) 420-5255

### FREE GED Prep & ESOL Classes

South Florida State College is offering free classes for adults in Highlands and Hardee Counties to improve adult literacy.  
Contact: Sari Crews  
863-784-7473 | [sari.crews@southflorida.edu](mailto:sari.crews@southflorida.edu)

<https://www.southflorida.edu/future-students/general-educational-development-program-ged>

## HARDEE COUNTY

### Hardee County Swimming Resources

Swim Lessons | Florida Department of Health in Hardee [floridahealth.gov](http://floridahealth.gov)

### Hardee Help Center

A Christ-centered community service organization bringing hope & healing to Hardee County families in difficult seasons of life.  
713 E Bay Street Wauchula, FL 33873  
Contact: [info@hardeehelpcenter.com](mailto:info@hardeehelpcenter.com) | 863-773-0034

### Visit Hardee

Website for upcoming events, community updates and resources: <https://www.visithardee.com/events>

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<https://www.southflorida.edu/future-students/general-educational-development-program-ged>



# SCAN ME



**For additional resources and county events, check out our most recent Parent's Corner Newsletter.**

