

Irene M. Toto  
CEO



Don Martin  
Board Chair

## NEWSLETTER

May 2017

### Message from the CEO

Greetings. It's been a busy month with many events occurring in recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month. If you've driven by our office, you may have noticed the "Pinwheel Garden" in front of our building on Kingsley Avenue. The garden was designed to bring awareness to child abuse prevention. A blue and silver pinwheel is a symbolic reminder of the happy childhoods and bright futures that all children deserve. On April 7<sup>th</sup>, KFF and our partner agency Clay Behavioral Health Center, hosted our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Community Event Fundraiser. Dinner at the Hilltop provided the opportunity to share time with familiar faces, to meet new friends and to most importantly raise awareness about the issues of child abuse and neglect and its impact on children, families and the community. On April 11<sup>th</sup>, KFF staff joined Sheriff Daniels and our partners from the Department of Children and Families to accept the official proclamation from the Clay County Board of County Commissioners declaring April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Child Abuse Prevention month has provided the perfect time to remind each of us that we all play a vital role in protecting children and strengthening families. We are so encouraged by the commitment of the many agencies and community partners who continue to support children's issues in Clay County. By ensuring that parents have the knowledge, skill, and support they need to care for their children, we can all help to prevent child abuse and neglect in our communities. Research shows that when these factors are present, the risk of child abuse and neglect is markedly reduced:

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of parenting and of child development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports for parents
- Social and emotional competence of children

Many of you are already involved but you can help spread the word to others about how they can help.

- Volunteer in your community to help a child or family
- Support prevention programs by advocating for them
- Encourage community leaders and employers to invest in children
- Support other parents, share resources, babysitting, carpooling, etc.
- Learn about child abuse prevention and share the information with others

KFF is grateful for the many partners, including you, that join us every day as we work to keep children safe. Take Care. ~Irene

### A Special Thank You

KFF would like to thank St. Vincent's Hospital in Middleburg and Deacon Stephen Arnold for the 75 Easter baskets donated to our agency. KFF is grateful that St. Vincent's ministry continues to focus on the children we serve.



[Please Join KFF in Welcoming Our Newly Licensed Foster Parents](#)

Todd & Miyuki Gunn

## Building Community, Building Hope Event Held

The inaugural Clay County "Building Community, Building Hope" event took place on Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> in Green Cove Springs. The event, sponsored by the Clay County Sheriff's Office, recognized April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month and included fun, family friendly activities. Key feature of the event were the Pinwheels for Prevention® and the Pinwheels for Prevention® Truck. The pinwheels were introduced in 2008, as the new national symbol for child abuse prevention. The Pinwheels for Prevention® Truck traveled around Florida, during the month of April, to spread the message that all children deserve great childhoods because children are our future.

The event also served as a way for Clay County residents to see the resources that are available in the community and for local organizations to connect with each other in the fight to prevent child abuse. Many Clay County organizations, including Kids First of Florida and Clay Behavioral Health Center participated.



Pictured from left to right: KFF Board Member Roy Buncome, CEO Irene Toto, COO Joanne Robertson & CCSO Sheriff Darryl Daniels



## Kids First of Florida Receives a Unique Donation From a 10-Year-Old Girl

Kids First of Florida recently accepted a very thoughtful donation from a very special young lady. Charlotte Googin was so moved after her mother, Tiffany, took her to a presentation of the Broadway show "Annie," that Charlotte decided that she wanted to do something to help area children who are awaiting adoption. The actors, who portrayed the orphans in the production, opened Charlotte's eyes regarding some of the challenges that many of these children face. When she invited her friends and family to her 10th birthday party, she requested that they bring gifts, not for her, but for some of the kids in the community who are hoping to find a loving home. Her birthday guests listened and brought toys, games and money to the party. Charlotte used the money to buy more gifts and donated more than 20 gifts to Kids First of Florida. Kids First of Florida would like to thank Charlotte for her donation.



Pictured from left to right: Tiffany Googin, KFF Board Member Roy Buncome, COO Joanne Robertson, CEO Irene Toto, Community Liaison Ernie Cohen and Charlotte Googin (bottom front)

## Financial Assistance for Summer Camp

It is getting near that time of the year to register your children for summer camp. We have limited funds available for children in out-of-care with KFF and children adopted through KFF that are in financial need and/or meet certain other criteria/ requirements. If you are interested in summer camp, please contact your assigned Family Services Counselor for children in out-of-home care, or Tiffany Morales at [tmorales@cbkn.org](mailto:tmorales@cbkn.org), for adopted children. The deadline to complete the application process is Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

### May is National Foster Parent Month

We all play a part in enhancing the lives of children in foster care and KFF is particularly appreciative of the foster families that open their hearts and homes to the children we serve. We are elated to show them that much deserved appreciation by holding a Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner in their honor. This year's dinner will be held on May 8<sup>th</sup>. The theme is "Because of You" and is expected to be a very inspirational evening. Invitations to the dinner will be mailed to current KFF foster parents. We hope to see all of our foster families at the dinner.

### Post-Adoption Support Group

The next Post Adoption Support Group meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30pm-8:00pm at the KFF office located at:  
1726 Kingsley Avenue, Suite 2, Orange Park, FL 32073.

Guest Speaker: Lillie Switanek, LCSW, will be discussing family therapy and the tools that parents can utilize to help their children cope with challenges.

Light refreshments will be served. No childcare will be available.

Please RSVP to Tiffany Morales at [tmorales@cbkn.org](mailto:tmorales@cbkn.org) or 904.278.5644 ext. 2083.

We look forward to seeing you at this meeting!

### Post-Adoption Services Available to Clay County Residents

KFF provides services to families in Clay County who are in the process of or have adopted children, including children adopted by relatives/non-relatives, foster parents, through the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) and private adoptions. Pre and post-adoption services consist of case management, including referrals to community resources, crisis intervention and counseling. For those in the process of adopting, "Core Adoption" classes are also provided. These classes offer an overview of the adoption process. For those who have already adopted, post adoption support group meetings are held monthly at the KFF office.

To access these services, or to obtain more information, please call 904.278.5644 ext. 2083 or email: [tmorales@cbkn.org](mailto:tmorales@cbkn.org)

### Caregiver Support Group

**Foster Parents, Adoptive Parents, Relative Caregivers, this group is for YOU!**

Monthly meetings will be held the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month from 6:30pm – 8:30pm at Russell Baptist Church, 2299 Sandridge Road, Green Cove Springs, Florida.

This is a great opportunity to network, receive important updates and get your training hours.

**Please contact Tracy Watford for more information:** [watfordtracy@yahoo.com](mailto:watfordtracy@yahoo.com)

### Help a Child and Earn a Little Extra Spending Money

Current KFF Foster Parents, Refer a Friend!

**That's right current KFF foster parents, refer a friend to be a quality foster parent with KFF and you will receive \$100 after they are licensed.**

Call 904.278.5644 ext. 2016

### Alert: Foster Homes Needed for Teenagers and Large Sibling Groups

#### Interested in Becoming a Foster Parent?

**There is an urgent need for foster homes that can accommodate teenagers and sibling groups so that teenagers do not have to be placed in group homes and siblings do not have to be separated.**

**Please contact Diahann Sutton for more information at 904.278.5644 ext. 2100**

**Main Office:**  
1726 Kingsley Avenue  
Suite 2

Orange Park, Florida  
32073

Phone 904.278.5644

Fax 904.278.5654

**Because every child  
deserves a loving home!**

### KFF Contacts

Main Office: 904.278.5644

Irene M. Toto, CEO, ext. 2013

Kevin Davidson, CFO  
Ext. 2006

Joanne Robertson, COO  
Ext. 2007

Jennifer Clark

Program Director, ext. 2111

Vanessa Byerly

Program Director, ext. 2080

Robin Briseno

Program Director, ext. 2019

Willie Davis

Foster Parent Payments

Ext. 2091

Christie Brady

Licensing, ext. 2066

Diahann Sutton

Licensing, ext. 2100

Sarah Bridges

Placement, ext. 2072

Eric Wetzel

Independent Living, ext. 2047



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**Did You Know?  
You Can Apply for Public Assistance  
On-Line at:**

<http://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/>

Or at the KFF Office by Contacting  
Tanya Miller at 904.278.5644 ext. 2040

**Florida Kinship Center Warmline  
800.640.6444**

A toll-free listening line for grandparents and other relatives raising children in Florida. The Warmline provides caregivers with emotional support and informational services.

### **Online In-Service Training Hours**

As a licensed foster parent, you are required to receive 8 hours of ongoing training per year to be eligible for re-licensure. Free training opportunities can be found at:

<http://www.qpiflorida.org/justintime/pages/training.html>

*\*\*Don't forget to provide all certificates of completion to your Licensing Counselor\*\**

### **Dental Provider in Clay County**



The Baker County Health Department, in cooperation with the Clay County Health Department and the Clay County School District, provides dental treatments to local children and young adults ages 3-20. For an appointment, call 1.866.617.8708 ext. 2283 or 2311. Children can be seen at the Green Cove Springs office or on the dental van which serves 4 schools in Clay County. The program serves children who have Medicaid, Access Health Solutions, or KidsCare Atlantic Dental Insurance. If a child in your care, who is served by Kids First of Florida, does not have the above-mentioned insurance and needs dental treatment, please contact Mary Elwood at 904.278.5644, ext. 2043.

### **Preventive Health Care Periodicity Schedule**



**Physical Exam:** 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, 30 months, 3 years of age and annually thereafter

**Dental Exam:** every 6 months, beginning at age 3

**Vision Screening:** 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 15 years of age

### **Prevention in Florida**

For more information about:

**SAFE SLEEP  
HOT CAR SAFETY  
WHO IS REALLY WATCHING YOUR CHILD?  
WATER SAFETY**

Visit: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/childfatality/prevention.shtml>.

### **Free Food Distribution**

Food is available for foster and adoptive families and families of children in relative and non-relative care. Waste Not, Want Not is a great program. Each month, food is distributed and available for pick-up from foster/adoptive parent, Tracy Watford. Items often include white & wheat bread, specialty breads, bagels, cakes, cookies, donuts. Sometimes they have juices, salads, sodas, etc. Please call Tracy Watford at 904.704.6012 for more information and to get on the distribution list.