Our Mission

Building the foundation for playful, healthful, and hopeful living for children, families, and communities.
2018 was a year of unprecedented, deliberate growth for us. Center for Child Counseling served more than 3,500 children through a range of prevention, early intervention, and treatment services. We also provided training to thousands of engaged caregivers and professionals through workshops and other methods. We expect to serve more than 4,500 children in 2019 across our six programs.

We started the year with just over 40 employees and grew to a team of almost 60 by the end of December. We remain strongly mission-focused and vision-aligned. We exist to provide care for children and caregivers impacted by the abuse, violence, and toxic stress that can thwart healthy development. We are also focused on prevention with a vision to build the capacity in our community to effectively address these issues.

In 2018, we grew into our role as a thought leader and change agent in the field of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). Increasingly, we are driving the conversation around this issue in Palm Beach County. In April, we hosted our 2nd Annual "Lead the Fight" event attended by over 125 leaders from throughout Palm Beach County. In October, we facilitated an ACEs Think Tank with over 130 in attendance from 25 different sectors including government, education, funding, healthcare, law, and business. Both events featured speakers who are leaders in the field: Darcy Lowell, MD, renowned pediatrician and developer of the Child First Program, and Eugenia Millender, Ph.D., who discussed neural plasticity and the biological basis of resilience.

Now in the 4th year of our Fighting ACEs initiative, we continue to train thousands of professionals and caregivers to bring skills, compassion, and understanding to all the children in their lives. This work is made possible by our strong partnership with Quantum Foundation, who continue to fund our efforts. They are currently supporting development of a White Paper based on the Think Tank and the findings from a Community Readiness Survey. The paper will be released in May 2019 at our 3rd Annual "Lead the Fight" event.

In 2018, we also developed our School Mental Health Program to meet the mental health needs of children in local elementary schools. Funded by the Children’s Services Council (CSC) of Palm Beach County, we are co-located in ten new elementary schools in the CSC BRIDGES neighborhoods, which include the most high-need areas in Palm Beach County. Our goal is to acquire funding to fully implement our unique three-tiered prevention, early intervention, and treatment framework at each site.

Other major grant funding this year came from the Florida Blue Foundation, Farris Foundation, Lost Tree Foundation, Town of Palm Beach United Way, and the Healthcare District of Palm Beach County. Through the ongoing generosity of Ruth Hartman, we continue to train our staff in EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing), better equipping them to bring ever greater skills to their work with children who have experienced significant trauma.

In 2018, the quality and importance of our work was recognized by others. We were named Nonprofit of the Year by Nonprofits First at their “Hats Off” Awards and recognized as a Hero in Medicine by the Medical Society of Palm Beach County.

The work we do is, and will continue to be, challenging. To sustainably and effectively meet the challenge, our Board of Directors (along with our CEO and Program Directors) updated our strategic plan. This plan will help guide our decisions and actions for the next three years.

Strong, well-trained, dedicated people are needed to work with children who have been the victims of abuse, neglect, or trauma. We are fortunate to have people who share our vision and are focused on helping children and families. We are grateful to our staff, board members, volunteers, funders, partners, and donors for their tireless passion for this vital calling. Without you, we cannot realize our dream of a Palm Beach County where children are playful, healthful, and hopeful.

With gratitude,

Bill Lynch
Renée Layman

Message from our Board Chair & CEO
Staff and Board of Directors

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Madeline Morris, CPA, Director
Jennifer Rodriguez, Director
Jennifer Konsker, M.D., Director
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Herdis Spierto, Operations Manager
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Anne-Marie Brown, Director, Childhood Trauma Response Program
Joan Kieffer, Director, School-Based Mental Health Program

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Jane Robinson, Founder
Cynthia Rosenbaum, Finance Consultant

Board Member Spotlight

Eugenia Millender  Ph.D., RN, PMHNP-BC, CDE currently works at the Florida State University College of Nursing’s Center for Indigenous Nursing Research for Health Equity. Dr. Millender is a psychiatric nurse practitioner and a doctorally-prepared nurse scientist.

Her area of expertise and the focus of her research is stress and trauma which is often expressed through mental illness, genetics, and/or substance abuse among minority and underserved groups. She also works on improving systems of care by integrating primary care and behavioral health in community settings.

Dr. Millender has been at the forefront of developing methods for community-engaged, translational research to improve health disparities in underserved populations. The goal of her work is to build community capacity to deliver culturally-suitable, evidence-based care.

Dr. Millender has published several papers that describe mental health and substance use among minorities in South Florida. Her work has helped to illuminate important facts about morbidity and mortality among minority populations. Work with vulnerable populations has taken Dr. Millender to Haiti, Panama, and Peru where she and others provided comprehensive health care for individuals and communities. In addition, she is bilingual in Spanish and English. She brings a wealth of experience, passion, and dedication to her role at Center for Child Counseling.

We are proud to have Dr. Millender on our Board of Directors.

“Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.”
— Peter F. Drucker
Committed to Service Excellence and Transparency

In 2017-2018, we received the following awards and recognition for our work:

2018 Nonprofits First "Hats Off" Award: Nonprofit of the Year

2018 PBC Medical Society "Heroes in Medicine" Award: Best Community Organization

Four of our programs were included in: 'A Showcase of Florida's Cutting Edge Trauma Initiatives' published by Florida State University's Center for Prevention and Early Intervention.

2018 Great Nonprofits "Top-Rated" Nonprofit: Awarded for the 6th year in a row. This award is based on consumer and stakeholder ratings.

2018 GuideStar Rating: Platinum Rating
This reflects our commitment to transparency as well as our sound business and financial practices.

2018 Nonprofits First Accreditation: Excellence Standards

2018 Extraordinary Charities: Member for 5 years (Organization founded by Beverlee Raymond Miller)

In 2017, our CEO, Renée Layman, was named Nonprofits First Executive of the Year at their “Hats Off” Awards. In 2018, she completed the Leadership Florida program, Cornerstone Class of XXXVI.

Our Chief Program Officer, Lauren Scirrotto, was accepted into Leadership Palm Beach County's Class of 2019.
Our Programs

Child and Family Center: Provides a safe place for children and families to heal, resolve problems, learn new skills, and find the joy in being a family again.

Child First Program: A national, evidence-based model that works with vulnerable young children and their families, providing intensive, home-based services.

Infant Mental Health Program: Counseling for pregnant women, new mothers, and young children experiencing stress and trauma.

Childhood Trauma Response Program: Assessment and counseling for children, aged birth to 6, entering the foster care system or relative caregiving.

Children's Behavioral Health Collaborative (CBHC): Counseling and support for at-risk children and families in need of behavioral health services throughout Palm Beach County.

Institute for Clinical Training: Clinical workshops for professionals, a year-long internship program for students, and community-wide workshops for teachers, parents, and caregivers.

Childcare and Community Social-Emotional Wellness (CCSEW) Program: Prevention, early intervention, and treatment for children in childcare centers, schools, and shelters throughout Palm Beach County.

Fighting ACEs Initiative: Education, advocacy, outreach, and intervention that focuses on Adverse Childhood Experiences which impact physical and emotional health throughout the lifespan.

School-Based Mental Health Program: Counseling in elementary schools for children living in high-risk communities, including the Glades.

"Our foster son was only 13 months old when he came to live with our family. After 14 months of caring for him, he was reunited with his biological mother. Four short months later, we received a call telling us that he was being removed from his mother’s care for the second time. We welcomed him back with open arms. We grieved when we learned of the neglectful, high-risk situation he had been living in and noticed some new behaviors emerging. He was really struggling at school: acting out, having tantrums, showing defiance, and being rough with other children. Thankfully, our case manager referred us to Play Therapy at Center for Child Counseling.

Dominika began working with our son on a weekly basis and we saw great improvement. During the most difficult days trying to parent our foster son, I leaned on Dominika, calling and texting her for help. She was a steady source of wisdom, comfort, and encouragement. Having her as a lifeline has made all the difference in helping our little guy learn how to process his emotions and find stability again."
In 2018, we served more children and families than ever before in our history. We provided early intervention and mental health treatment for over 3,500 young children and their caregivers. Center for Child Counseling is currently co-located in 25 partner sites (childcare centers, schools, and shelters) throughout Palm Beach County and we are expanding the impact of our work through our School-Based Mental Health Program.

2018 was especially challenging for so many young children. The opioid crisis resulted in many removals from parental care, often into the homes of relatives. In response, we expanded our Childhood Trauma Response Program to meet the need of helping those relative caregivers who now have a young, traumatized child in their care. Many of them are grandparents who are overwhelmed and in need of support.

In addition to providing trauma treatment, our clinical team continues to actively train other agencies, caregivers, and providers on the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). These training sessions encourage attendees to employ a trauma-informed approach with children, adults, and even their own staff.

**Breaking the Chain of Abuse**

*In our Childhood Trauma Response Program, 88% of non-group home clients and caregivers reported an improved relationship with the child in their care, a decrease in conflict, a decrease in behavioral problems, and an increase in positive behaviors and coping skills.*

2018 Program Outcome Data

Funded by...

"My daughters receive therapy services through the Center of Child Counseling. I can honestly say that I don't know where we would be without their help.

Right when I was ready to give up, after seeing multiple doctors and therapists who were not giving me any support or answers, our therapist from the Center of Child Counseling called. She has been our biggest support system. I owe her our future and appreciate her more then she will ever know!

Thanks to her I know that my girls have an ACE score of 7. Even though they have a high score, with the help from everyone they are doing so much better.

Our adoption journey has been a difficult one. We have shared tons and tons of sad and happy tears, but my husband and I both agree that our girls are worth it. We will change their family history of drug and alcohol abuse, crime, violence, and poverty. We are determined to provide them both with a loving and stable environment where they will not be exposed to their biological family’s history.

We will break the cycle and give them a brighter future. Our hopes and dreams are for them to graduate college and live forever DRUG FREE."
The Long Path to Healing

Patricia, a 25-year-old mother of three, was introduced to Center for Child Counseling’s Child First program at the beginning of 2017. Her children were all under the age of six and she was on the verge of homelessness. She was facing enormous challenges. Patricia has a long history of attempting to get services for herself and her children. Would this attempt be just like all the others, full of good intentions but offering nothing concrete?

Patricia’s 5-year-old son presented with developmental concerns and behavioral issues which compounded her own mental health and added to her economic challenges. At intake, this exhausted mother expressed that she was feeling overwhelmed, stressed, and sad because of her pressing financial issues and her long history of domestic violence. Patricia had symptoms of PTSD and depression.

Her family were not supportive emotionally or financially. She was working but struggling to meet her family’s basic needs. Her son’s aggressive behavior, especially towards his sisters, was escalating and he was throwing temper tantrums. Patricia often shared: “I have tried everything but nothing works.” For the first 10 months of services, there were countless missed appointments. The family was “couch surfing” and there were times when the Child First team had to go out and look for them. During these chaotic months, the team was always present - holding that safe space open, at times being a shoulder to cry on, at times a guide through the system. Patricia’s team encouraged her to reflect on her wants and desires, her dreams for her family. Ultimately, they provided hope through hopeless times.

For the first time in her life, Patricia learned what it felt like to be nurtured and supported. She had people in her life she could trust and who accepted her unconditionally, people who had faith that she could accomplish a better life for her children, breaking the cycle of her past. The team worked with the family, helping them understand the impact of domestic violence. Our clinician explored the “angels” in Patricia’s life and the body-centered quality of these memories. They also examined the “ghosts” that negatively influenced her capacity to care for her children.

It was a rocky path with many failures along the way but slowly Patricia began to make the shift. Through the fierce advocacy of her Care Coordinator, Patricia was able to gain better employment, stable housing, and the support she needed. With this economic stability, her emotional well-being improved and this impacted her children’s well-being. She was able to nurture and support her children. As her capacity increased, the challenges with her son’s behavior decreased.

Services for Patricia ended at 19 months and, although she is still experiencing stress as a single parent, she is better able to handle her challenges. There is hope now. There is a future.

Child First Program is funded by...
A Public Health Approach to Fighting Childhood Adversity

The American Academy of Pediatrics calls the impact of ACES "the greatest public health issue of our time..."

So, our unique model uses a Public Health Approach to prevent and heal childhood trauma and adversity. Why? Because the science shows that this approach works.

We refuse to wait until a child falls apart emotionally before we do something. Research tells us what puts a child at risk for future problems: exposure to abuse, violence, neglect, poverty, and other circumstances children should never have to endure.

Our model is comprehensive. It targets everyone in a child’s life to promote the kind of responsive adult relationships that stimulate healthy brain development. These relationships provide the buffering protection needed to prevent challenging experiences from producing a toxic stress response.

We provide therapeutic services to support the healthy development of sturdy brain architecture.

We provide individual, classroom, small group, and family therapy and support.

We provide treatment, education, and training to promote emotional competency, self-regulation strategies, social-emotional wellness, and healthy attachment.

We provide training for system partners who serve children. This training includes information on trauma, its effects, and how to adopt a trauma-informed lens.

Funded by...

Children of different races and ethnicities across the country do not experience the same exposure to ACEs. In the United States, 61% of black children and 51% of Hispanic children have experienced at least one ACE, compared to 40% of white children.
Our work is based on the latest research on ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences), the neurobiology of toxic stress, and the brain architecture of a developing child.

Information on the impact of ACEs is based on multiple studies that show the effect of traumatic experiences on the developing brain and life-long health.

Research shows that people with higher ACE scores are at much higher risk for:
- Heart disease, cancer, alcoholism, attempted suicide, and serious mental illness.
- Divorce, unwanted pregnancies, prescription drug abuse, broken bones, and obesity.

Without positive intervention, people with 6 or more ACEs (out of 10) die, on average, 20 years younger than those with no ACEs. High doses of exposure to ACEs dramatically increases the risk for 7 of the 10 leading causes of death in the United States.

Frequent or extreme experiences that cause excessive stress can be toxic to the architecture of a child's developing brain. Significant adversity early in life sets up the body's systems to be more susceptible to stress throughout life, with long-term negative consequences for physical and emotional health, educational achievement, economic success, social relationships, and overall well-being.

**Brain Architecture and Brain Plasticity: The First 1,000 Days of Life**

- Brain architecture is comprised of trillions of connections among neurons across different areas of the brain. These connections enable lightning-fast communication between neurons that specialize in different brain functions.
- The basic architecture of the brain is constructed through a process that begins early in life and continues into adulthood. Simpler brain circuits form first and more complex circuits build on them later. Genes provide the basic blueprint, but experiences influence how or whether genes are expressed.
- Working together, this circuitry shapes the quality of brain architecture and establishes either a sturdy or a fragile foundation for all future learning, health, and behavior.
- Plasticity, or the ability for the brain to reorganize itself and adapt, is greatest during the first 1,000 days of life. This plasticity decreases with age.
The Center for Child Counseling is dedicated to improving how therapists, teachers, and pediatric providers work with children. Through our Institute for Clinical Training, we offer a variety of training, internship, and supervision opportunities. We focus on helping professionals and students learn to work with children and their caregivers.

In 2018, we provided training for more than 3,500 professionals, students, and adult caregivers. Our live workshops include hands-on experiences to enhance the learning process. Participants leave with skills and strategies they can immediately implement into practice. Our online learning platform, weLEARNplay, offers easy access to an array of educational topics, including Play Therapy.

In 2018, we provided trauma-informed care training to numerous organizations, including Healthier Delray and the Medical Society of Palm Beach County, and mentors through a grant from the United Way of Palm Beach County.
Lead the Fight

Using the Neuroscience of Early Adversity to Advance Economic and Community Development

April 26, 2018

The Manatee Lagoon – An FPL Discovery Center

FIGHTING ACEs
Growth and Growth Up
**Statement of Financial Position**

**ASSETS**

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<th>Account</th>
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<td>Deposits and Other Assets</td>
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<td>Property and Equipment</td>
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**Total Assets** $1,114,172

**LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS**

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<td>Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses</td>
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**Total Liabilities** $58,973

**Net Assets:**

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<tr>
<td>Temporarily Restricted</td>
<td>$48,140</td>
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**Total Net Assets** $1,055,199

**Total Liabilities and Net Assets** $1,114,172

Center for Child Counseling is audited by the independent CPA firm Schafer, Tschopp, Whitcomb, Mitchell, & Sheridan LLP, which conducted its examination in accordance with established Government Auditing Standards.

The firm rendered an unqualified opinion (typically called a "clean opinion") on the financial statements for the fiscal year ended May 31st, 2017. Highlights of financial position and results of operations are presented here.
Financials
For Fiscal Year 6/1/17 - 5/30/18

Statement of Activities

Revenue and Support

- Monthly Reimbursement Contracts $1,236,796
- Government Funds $227,691
- Other Grants $475,747
- Contributions $80,257
- In-Kind Contributions $918,172
- Program Fees $893,886
- Other Income $7,684
- Special Events $63,332
- Interest and Dividend Income $6,436

Total Support and Revenue $3,910,001

Expenses

- Program Services $3,150,896
- Management and General $410,094
- Fundraising $131,860

Total Expenses $3,692,850

Contributions benefit the Center for Child Counseling, Inc. a not for profit organization.
A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION OF THE CENTER FOR CHILD COUNSELING, INC., CH21286, MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES AT www.800helpfla.com OR BY CALLING 1-800-435-7352. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. The Center for Child Counseling, Inc. receives 100% of each contribution.
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A heartfelt thank you to our major donors, corporate partners, and funders for helping us build the foundation for playful, healthful, and hopeful living for children and families.

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You Make Our Mission Possible. Thank You.
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Matthew Benzon
Matthew Martin
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Paul Pilcher
Paul Shalhoub
Peter Alfieri
Peter Culotta
“Since you get more joy out of giving joy to others, you should put a good deal of thought into the happiness that you are able to give.”

– Eleanor Roosevelt
Get Involved!
Join us in our mission to support the youngest, most vulnerable children in our community. Your gift ensures that a child gets the support needed to heal.

Donate
Give online at: www.centerforchildcounseling.org and click the "Donate Now" button.

Make a checks payable to: Center for Child Counseling
8895 N. Military Trail, Suite 300C
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410

Call us at 561-244-9499 ext. 1 to donate by phone.

Other Ways to Give

Corporate Sponsorship:
Contact us at 561-244-9499 ext. 1 to learn how your business can make a big impact on the lives of children and their families in Palm Beach County.

Planned Giving:
You can leave a legacy of healing and hope for thousands of children in Palm Beach County by including Center for Child Counseling in your will.
For more information, call our CEO at 561-244-9499 ext. 1.

Volunteer:
Giving your time and talent can be one of the most rewarding things you can do.
Email us about current volunteer opportunities: info@centerforchildcounseling.org

Connect With Us:
Join the conversation on Facebook and Twitter follow our blog.
Share information with friends and colleagues to help promote awareness.

Corporate Matching Gifts:
You may be able to double or even triple the value of your contribution!
Take advantage of your employer's matching gifts program.
Consult your personnel office to get specific details and obtain a matching gift form.

Wish List:
We often need toys and other materials to equip our Play Therapy rooms.
Contact us at 561-244-9499 for our current wish list.

“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”
- Winston S. Churchill