

# 2019 Impact Report



**Playful. Healthful. Hopeful.**

# Message from our Board Chair & CEO

In 2019, we were privileged to directly serve over 3,800 children and their families in Palm Beach County through our early intervention and treatment services. Thousands more were indirectly served through prevention activities, including workshops and consultation for teachers, support groups for relative caregivers, our classroom curriculum, and training for professionals.

Increasingly, we are seen as thought leaders in the area of children's mental health, but, even more importantly, we are doers focused on action and results over talk and services over theory. We work every day to realize our vision of a community where our children are cared for and nurtured, free to grow up playful, healthful, and hopeful.

Throughout 2019, we grew our capacity in response to community need and by the year's end, Center for Child Counseling employed more than 65 dedicated staff who work in our offices in Palm Beach Gardens and West Palm Beach, schools, and homes throughout Palm Beach County. Throughout the year, we focused on securing administrative functions and processes to facilitate this planned growth. We also expanded our development efforts, with events like our 6th Annual Black Ties and French Fries gala, which provides critical funding for our programs.

In March, we hosted our 3rd Annual Lead the Fight breakfast, the flagship event of our Fighting ACEs Initiative launched in 2016 with funding from Quantum Foundation. This effort, tackling the intergenerational impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), addresses a public health crisis by equipping professionals and caregivers with the skills, compassion, and understanding to build resilience for the children in their lives. With an 'ACEs to Action' theme, the breakfast resulted in strong community engagement and the formation of our Fighting ACEs Action Team. The release of our White Paper about and for our community: "A Public Health Approach to Fighting ACEs in Palm Beach County: Opportunities for Levers of Change and Innovation" was an event highlight.

Spearheaded by Board Director and Board-Certified Family Law Attorney, Eddie Stephens, we proudly hosted Palm Beach County's first Family Law Mental Health Summit to help educate legal and judicial professionals about the causes and effects of trauma on the families they serve.

In 2019, we continued the expansion of our School-Based Mental Health Program funded by the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, now co-located in ten elementary schools in close partnership with the School District of Palm Beach County. Additionally, our Childcare and Community Social-Emotional Wellness (CCSEW) Program is embedded within 20 childcare centers and schools. This comprehensive prevention and early intervention framework provides an innovative model for supporting vulnerable children facing ongoing stress, including ACEs and Adverse Community Environments.

Other major grant funding this year came from the Florida Blue Foundation, Farris Foundation, Lost Tree Village Charitable Foundation, McFarlane Foundation, Town of Palm Beach United Way, and the Healthcare District of Palm Beach County. The work we do is necessary and challenging. Seeing playful, healthful and hopeful children, families and communities motivates us. We are deeply grateful to our staff, volunteers, donors, friends, and Board of Directors. Our mission is made possible because of you.

Thank you.



*William H. Lynch*

**Board Chair**



*Pamela E. Sage*

**President & CEO**

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Elizabeth Truong, Chief Financial Officer  
Herdis Spierto, Operations Manager  
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Karen Haag, Clinical Director, Child First Program  
Stephanie De La Cruz, Clinical Director, Clinical Services  
Dominika Nolan, Director, Institute for Clinical Training  
Nida Paul, Director, CCSEW Program  
Hilary Jacques, Director, Child and Family Center  
Anne-Marie Brown, Director, Childhood Trauma Response Program  
Joan Kieffer, Director, School-Based Mental Health Program  
Amber Payne, Director, Community Education & Development  
Kerry Jamieson, Director, Community & Media Relations

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## Board Member Spotlight

Eddie Stephens, Esq. has been a dedicated member of the Board of Directors at Center for Child Counseling for the past three years.

As an equity partner at Ward Damon, Eddie is uniquely positioned to bring a leading law firm's perspective to childhood mental health. A tireless champion of our work on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Eddie often speaks at our events, sharing his own story of childhood adversity as well as the protective buffers who allowed him to survive and thrive. He is an inspiration and priceless resource for the organization, as well as an ambassador for our work. Eddie now serves as the newly appointed chair of our Fund Development Committee.

Without his wise counsel and cheerful commitment, we could not continue to grow so confidently and so successfully.

## Founding Members & Expert Volunteers

Jane Robinson, Founder  
Cynthia Rosenbaum, Finance Consultant



Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.  
— Warren Bennis





# Programs That Work



**Center for Child Counseling currently operates nine 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 18, 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.





# Recognized for Excellence



- **Nonprofit Professional of the Year:** Our Chief Program Officer, Lauren Scirrotto, won the award at Nonprofits First 2nd Annual "Hats Off" Awards.



- **Great Nonprofits 2019 Top-Rated Award:** This nationally recognized award is based on both consumer and stakeholder ratings.



- **GuideStar's Platinum Rating:** Reflecting our commitment to transparency, and sound business and financial practices.



- **Nonprofits First Accreditation:** Under its Excellence Standards, showing our commitment to excellence.



Our reach in 2019...

# over 5,525 children

Our programs expanded to serve children throughout Palm Beach County. On average, more than 90% showed improvement on outcomes measuring social-emotional wellness and resilience.

Our trauma-informed classroom curriculum, designed to enhance self-regulation and positive behaviors, was implemented in

## 39 classrooms



If a task is worthy of our attention, it is worthy of our best.  
- Jack Hyles



# Fighting Childhood Adversity

## What are ACEs?

ACEs stands for Adverse Childhood Experiences. These are situations where a child faces some sort of trauma or extreme, sustained stress.

ACEs typically fall into three categories:

- Abuse – physical, emotional, or sexual
- Neglect – physical or emotional
- Household dysfunction

The most common ACEs children face come from:

- Financial hardship
- Issues around divorce
- Seeing or being a victim of violence (like domestic violence)
- Living with someone who has a mental illness
- Living with someone who abuses drugs or alcohol
- Having a parent or caregiver in prison

ACEs can change or damage a child's developing brain. The harm can be so bad that it only shows up decades later. ACEs can cause mental illness and physical diseases. ACEs are at the root of most violence. Sadly, it is not rare for a child to experience these situations. **It's estimated that nearly half of U.S. children (45%) have experienced at least one ACE, while 10% have experienced at least three of these traumatic events.**

## Damage from ACEs

A young child who lives with violence, abuse, and neglect is exposed to what is called "toxic stress". In the absence of healthy relationships, this puts them at high risk for problems that lead to poor health and behavioral choices for their whole lives.

Toxic stress caused by ACEs can:

- Interfere with a child's brain development which can lead to learning difficulties
- Alter a child's body functioning, increasing the risk of cancer, heart disease, arthritis, and many other conditions
- Change how a child's genes are coded which can be passed from generation to generation



# Our Evidence-Based Approach

## There is Hope...

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.

**The good news is that children are generally adaptable and resilient.** Studies indicate that the presence of just one positive adult in a child's life can *buffer* against toxic stress and trauma, reducing the effects of ACEs. Childhood trauma isn't something you just "get over" as you grow up but the effects of ACEs can be lessened or even prevented by introducing positive influences and ensuring appropriate care.

**Our work focuses on building adult buffers, which in turn builds community capacity to promote childhood resilience.**

## In 2019, our impact was big...

- **97.6%** of 657 caregivers in local schools demonstrated increased knowledge about ACEs, trauma, and strategies to promote child social-emotional wellness and resilience;
- **95.3%** of these caregivers were able to model appropriate behavioral strategies with children; and
- **4,005** children, living in stressful environments, received some level of prevention, early intervention, or treatment, including support in the classroom.



Join the Conversation: #FightingACEs

## Over 3,500 trained

Attorneys, police officers, judges, childcare workers, teachers, parents, therapists...and many more received training on ACEs and trauma-informed care to build community capacity to support childhood resilience.

Our ACEs educational blog reached over 25,000 people in 2019.

**Our Fighting ACEs Initiative is Funded by...**





# Our Impact

Unfortunately, 2019 was especially challenging for so many children and families. The opioid crisis and other stressors resulted in increased removals from parental care, often into the homes of relatives. In response, we expanded our Childhood Trauma Response Program to support relative caregivers, many of them grandparents, who now have a young, traumatized child or teenager in their care. We developed and facilitate the first support group specifically for relative caregivers in Palm Beach County.

In 2019, our Childhood Trauma Response Program expanded to serve children ages birth to 18 coming into foster and relative caregiving. Of 177 children and adolescents, with significant abuse and trauma histories, served by the program during the year:

- **88%** demonstrated an increase in social-emotional and behavioral functioning.
- **91%** demonstrated a decrease in trauma symptoms.



## One Aunt's Story

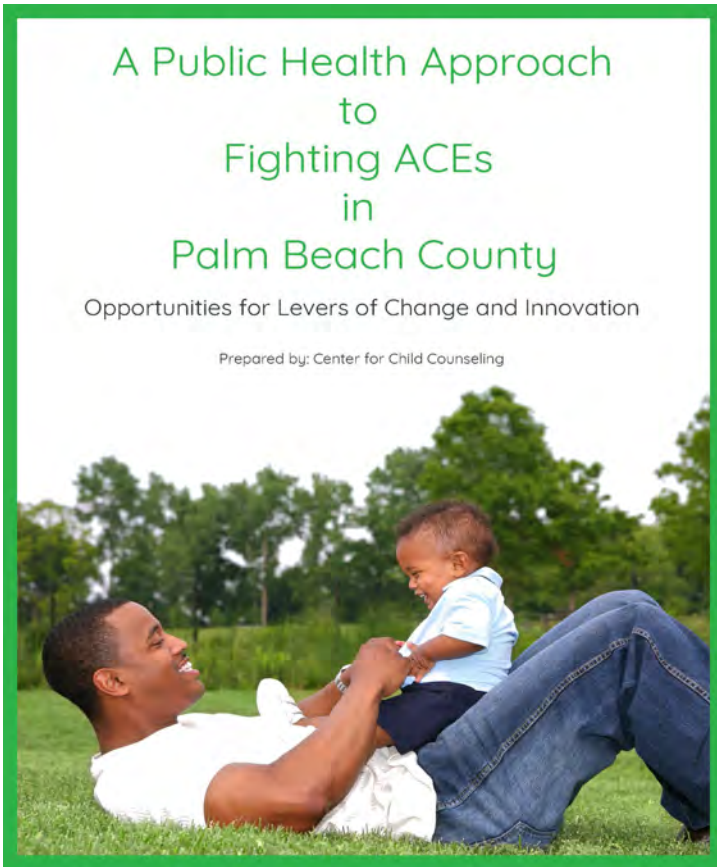
Max was referred for services when he was 4 years old. His mother had recently died; his father was actively using substances. Max moved in with his Aunt Lydia but she was concerned because of what he had witnessed during his early years of life. She didn't know what he was feeling or how his experiences would affect his future. Max was starting to ask for his mother and had trouble sleeping at night. Lydia wasn't sure how to talk to Max about his mom and why he was no longer seeing his father. She heard about Center for Child Counseling through a friend and came to our Child & Family Center for Play Therapy and a special modality called EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), which helps people process trauma and regulate the emotions attached to negative experiences. Max's therapist has also used a dyadic approach to help him form a secure attachment to his aunt. Max was able to process his grief over the loss of his mother. His aunt now knows how to help him when he is feeling sad or has questions about his mom. Max is now 5 years old and in the process of successfully ending treatment.

Funded by...



THE  
**JIM MORAN** FOUNDATION  
"THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO PREPARE FOR IT!"

# Our White Paper



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) carry lifelong physical and mental health implications and result in exorbitant costs to taxpayers, financially and in terms of social ills.

Funded by Quantum Foundation, Center for Child Counseling spent a year gathering information through a community-wide survey, think tank, and multiple conversations and gatherings. The information for Palm Beach County was compiled into a report which includes a summary of the ACEs research, Palm Beach County's readiness to address this public health crisis, and quick wins and solutions for the various child serving sectors.

The White Paper entitled: "A Public Health Approach to Fighting ACEs in Palm Beach County: Opportunities for Levers of Change and Innovation" was released at the 3rd annual Lead the Fight Breakfast in May, 2019.

## Honoring Judge Ron Alvarez

The Honorable Ronald Alvarez, retired judge of the 15th Judicial Circuit Court in Florida, was honored at Center for Child Counseling's inaugural Family Law Mental Health Summit with the Resiliency Award.

Judge Alvarez is a known advocate in the community for children's welfare and is a frequent speaker on the subject of children and youth in the justice system. In fact, he was 'trauma-informed' before the term was popular. He has been an active part of our work addressing ACEs.

Judge Alvarez has been honored for his service by many organizations including the Bar Association, Guardian Ad Litem, and more.





# Harnessing the Power of Data

In 2019, Center for Child Counseling formed a data committee comprised of organizational staff and researchers from Florida State University (FSU) and Florida Atlantic University (FAU).

Through a data sharing agreement between FSU and FAU, the goal is to evaluate our 80-point evaluation framework for our CCSEW Program model, co-located in childcare centers and schools, and the foundation of our approach to effectively addressing the impact of ACEs.

This partnership will allow for research, publication, and replication of this model in other communities to tackle serious issues, from school shootings to community violence, all at the heart of our prevention work.



## Making a Difference in Times of Tragedy

How do we step in to provide support to the community in the darkest times? An opportunity to make a real impact sadly presented itself in 2019 when two young boys and their grandmother died when their SUV was hit by an Amtrak passenger train at a crossing in northern Palm Beach County.

Valery Jo Rintamaki and her grandchildren, 8-year-old Skyler Prestano and 10-year-old Tristan Prestano were killed near Jupiter as they drove near to a Cub Scout camping event. Tristan and Skyler attended New Horizons Elementary School and were members of Cub Scouts Pack 208, both in Wellington. The Boys and Girls Club in Wellington asked Center for Child Counseling to provide crisis counseling at their site for children and staff affected by the tragedy. Our staff was there that week to offer support to the grief-stricken children and continued to provide support on multiple occasions through November 2019.

This approach is at the heart of our work. Addressing the impact of trauma early and supporting our partners in helping children cope.





# Double the Impact



In 2019, Center for Child Counseling was awarded grants totaling \$200,000 from two women's giving organizations, Impact the Palm Beaches and Impact 100 Palm Beach County.

Co-located in 4 elementary schools with high levels of family and environmental adversity, our therapists have been able to fully implement all tiers of our research driven model, looking at 80 data points that measure outcomes at the child, family, teacher, classroom, school, and community levels.

The goal of this work is to provide a comprehensive, data-driven framework for intervening early with children experiencing stress and adversity, building adult buffers in their lives that promote lifelong resilience and social-emotional wellness.

Science shows that this approach is at the foundation of lifelong resilience. We don't have to wait until a child falls apart. We can intervene early and buffer the impact of adverse experiences and environments.



Funded by...



# Institute for Clinical Training



## Building professional skills, our Institute for Clinical Training:

- Live Community Workshops: over 500 trained
- Online 'WeLearnPlay' Workshops: over 100 trained
- "Resilience" Documentary Screenings: over 170 registered

## Workshops featuring outside experts in 2019:

- "Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy" with Dr. Debbie Ellis
- "Case Conceptualization" and "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy" by Dr. Jon Sperry
- "Working with Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder" with Dr. Ali Cunningham
- "Circle of Security" by Dr. Neil Boris
- "Working with LGBTQ Youth and Families" by Adaptive Connection Consultants
- "Burnout Prevention and Recognition" and "How to Help a Traumatized Client: Art and Play Therapy for Children, Youth, and Families Dealing with Death, Loss, and Trauma" by Marla Berger

Clinical Professionals  
Trained  
**1,024**



Amazing training! Thank you for being so joyful and animated.  
You're a real model for working with heavy issues like grief  
and loss in a supportive way!



- workshop attendee



# Impact in Hard-to-Reach Groups

Center for Child Counseling was awarded a grant from The Catherine McFarlane Foundation to work with two population groups that have traditionally been very hard to reach with therapeutic services: families experiencing homelessness and/or working to overcome substance abuse or misuse.

Through this grant, we developed a specialized screening tool to identify families struggling with substance misuse and/or homelessness, in addition to other traumatic circumstances. In 2019, 120 families were screened and 63 received care under this grant, working with therapists who specialize in treatment modalities to address specific issues and underlying trauma.

Funded by...

CATHLEEN MCFARLANE  
FOUNDATION

In addition to home-based services, our Infant Mental Health (IMH) Program is co-located at Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies (HMHB) in West Palm Beach. Pregnant women are comfortable visiting HMHB for an array of services, enjoying a safe, familiar environment. This partnership means they only have to travel to one office, where they can collect diapers and formula, and get their mental health services! In addition, it allows our agencies the opportunity to communicate better, increase referrals, and manage issues efficiently as they arise. Teamwork and effective, rapid solutions have benefited both agencies and our mutual clients.

In 2019, our IMH Program made a difference...

- **80% of women** showed improvement after treatment, and
- **100% of children** demonstrated improvement on post-test assessments.



In partnership with...



Funding provided by...



## Levi's Story

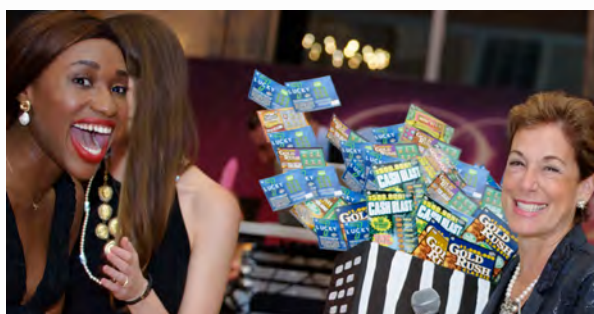
Levi\* is an 11-year-old boy referred to counseling for past trauma and PTSD symptoms. Levi showed signs of sleep disturbance, low self-esteem, and maladaptive coping techniques. During treatment, Levi experienced the deaths of several loved ones and then his family lost their home and moved in with relatives. Despite these circumstances, Levi has been able to make significant progress. Our therapist worked with Levi and his mother throughout treatment to address his trauma, the parent-child relationship, and their housing instability. Levi is successfully meeting his treatment goals and is preparing to be discharged from services in the coming weeks.

## Angela's Story

Angela\* was 7 months pregnant when she started sessions via our Infant Mental Health Program. Angela had experienced childhood trauma. Her mother was harsh, belittling, and verbally abusive. Angela feared that she would not develop an attachment to her own baby and had high levels of anxiety and low self-esteem. Our specialist therapist focused on Angela's attachment issues, calming her fears, and encouraging her to believe that when she held her baby for the first time, the love would flow. Faith in this outcome was slow to build but with constant positive reinforcement and confidence building, Angela felt prepared. When she finally delivered, Angela sent dozens of photos from the hospital thanking us for our help and acknowledging the intense love she was already feeling for her new baby girl. Angela continues to work with us. She is an excellent mom, gainfully employed, and always learning new parenting skills.



# Black Ties & French Fries... Goes to Paris







# Lead the Fight







Atlas Peak Foundation  
 Cathleen McFarlane Foundation  
 Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties  
 J.M. Rubin Foundation  
 John & Nellie Bastien Memorial Foundation  
 Leo Claire and Robert Adenbaum Foundation

Leslie L. Alexander Foundation  
 Marni & Morris Propp II Family Foundation  
 The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation  
 The David Minkin Foundation c/o J.P. Morgan  
 The Jorgensen Foundation  
 The Mary Alice Fortin Foundation

# Funding & Corporate Partners



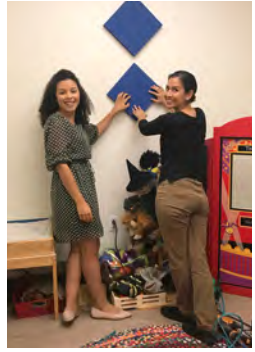
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 Goldman, Sachs & Co. Matching Gift Program  
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 South Florida Fair  
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The GEO Group Foundation  
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 Caler, Donten, Levine, Cohen, Porter & Veil, P.A.  
 Gordon & Doner  
 Larry Shrier Counseling Office

You Make Our Mission Possible.  
 Thank You.



# Teamwork!





# Statement of Financial Position

## ASSETS

Cash (non-interest-bearing)	\$24,648
Savings and Temporary Cash Investments	\$1,412,886
Accounts Receivable	\$252,563
Prepaid Expenses and Deferred Charges	\$2,444
Land, Buildings, and Equipment	\$44,590
Other Assets	\$14,270

**Total Assets: \$ 1,751,401**

## LIABILITIES

Total Liabilities	\$138,999
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$1,369,142
Temporarily Restricted	243,260
Total Net Assets	\$1,612,402

**Total Liabilities and Net Assets: \$1,751,401**



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

The firm rendered an unqualified opinion (typically called a "clean opinion") on the financial statements for the fiscal year ending 9/30/19. Highlights of financial position and results of operations are presented here.

# Financials

For Fiscal Year 10/1/2018 - 9/30/2019

## Statement of Activities

### Revenue and Support

Government Grants/Contributions	\$334,530
Contributions, Gifts, and Grants	\$968,794
Program Service Revenue	\$2,582,004
Investment Income	\$20,423
Fundraising Events Income	\$41,909
Rebates and Cash Back	\$2,947

**Total Support and Revenue: \$3,950,607**

### Expenses

Program Service Expenses	\$3,304,923
Management and General Expenses	\$335,402
Fundraising Expenses	\$54,112

**Total Expenses: \$3,694,077**

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](http://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.



# Individual Donors

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Generosity is the most natural outward expression of an inner attitude of compassion and loving-kindness.

—The Dalai Lama XIV



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You cannot do a kindness too soon because you never know how soon it will be too late.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson







Impact  
in  
Action



Obviously, you would give your life for your children . . .  
but the trick in life is to take that generosity of spirit and apply it  
to your neighbor, your village, and beyond.

- Tom Stoppard





# Ways to Give

## Donate at Any Time

Give online at: [www.centerforchildcounseling.org](http://www.centerforchildcounseling.org) and click the "Donate Now" button.

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

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

## Doing Well? Do Some Good!

### CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

Learn how your business can make a big impact.

Your sponsorship dollars will help children and their families in Palm Beach County.

Contact us at 561-244-9499 ext. 1.

## Leave a Legacy of Love...

### PLANNED GIVING

Leave a legacy of healing and hope for thousands of children in Palm Beach County.

Please consider including Center for Child Counseling in your will.

For more information, call our CEO at 561-244-9499 ext. 1.

## Give the Gift of Time...

### VOLUNTEER

Volunteers don't get paid...Not because they're worthless but because they're priceless!

Giving your time and talent can be one of the most rewarding things you'll ever do.

Email us about current volunteer opportunities: [info@centerforchildcounseling.org](mailto:info@centerforchildcounseling.org)

## Make a Wish Come True!

### WISH LIST

We offer Play Therapy to help heal childhood trauma.

We often need toys and other materials to equip our Play Therapy rooms.

Contact us at 561-244-9499 for our current wish list.

## It's Free to Click to Share!

### CONNECT WITH US

Join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Follow our educational blog series.

Share information with your friends and colleagues to help promote awareness.

## Amplify Your Giving...

### 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 HR department to get specific details and/or to obtain a matching gift form.

**Administrative and Child First Offices**

8895 N. Military Trail, Suite 303C  
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410

**Child and Family Center**

5205 Greenwood Avenue, Suite 105  
West Palm Beach, FL 33407

**Phone: 561-244-9499**

**Fax: 561-345-3800**



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

*Building the foundation for playful, healthful, and hopeful children, families, and communities,*