

# RECONNECTION

*Restoring Children's Hope and Health*





**At long last, reconnection. 2021 brought us back together after a crippling time of sorrow, separation and loss. We reunited in hope and held fast for the challenges still to come.**

In our communities and around the world, we once again gathered with friends, loved ones, co-workers, and schoolmates. But it was a strange new place we found ourselves in, the landscape of life unfamiliar and daunting under the domination of COVID-19.

Even with the promise of returning to a more familiar routine, nothing would ever be quite normal again. The state of healthcare, the economy, and the family household remained unstable and kept us wary. Yet babies were born, and children grew, and little ones needed our protection like never before.

Looking back to summarize our work in 2021, we can only do so knowing that champions like you were there with us, doing all we could, to look after our kids. The upward spike in depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, fear and hopelessness in children and teens was terrifying to see. But we knew we could begin to turn this crisis around, and that you'd be there to help, too.

**Restoring children's health and hope was our goal for 2021 and remains our goal now. We're so fortunate to have your unwavering care and support, because kids are depending on all of us for a future full of hope, health, and happiness.**

**We can't take all the credit for the accomplishments in this report; rather, we give it to you.** Without you, there is no Center for Child Counseling. Without you, there is no trauma therapy or training. There's no hope, no healing for our children – without you.

Thank you for the personal impact you brought to *2021: Reconnection, Restoring Children's Hope and Health*. If you are moved by all you see, please visit our website today and make a gift to restore a child's hope and health. It's a gift that changes a future and a future generation.

With grateful hearts,



Renée Layman (President and CEO), Board, and Staff

*2021: 7,270 Children and Teens Served*

# The Pandemic Profile and its Effect

Capturing the Crisis: 8/326

The average age of children between 5 and 11 receiving school-based crisis intervention.

The number of hours spent delivering crisis intervention for 58 clients.

Youth anxiety, depression, and suicide rates were at an all-time high BEFORE the pandemic – now up 150%.

Children and teens face unprecedented social isolation, fear, and stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic, impacting their mental health even more.

6 in 10 teens say their sources of support are harder to reach than normal.

64% of teens believe "the experience of COVID-19 will have a lasting impact on their generation's mental health."

Up to 67% of health, caregiving and mental health professionals experience high levels of fear, anxiety, depression, overload and burnout, with the significant long-term impact of COVID to be determined.

\*sources: CFCC Data Dashboard, AMA Coping with COVID-19 for Caregivers Survey



## *Bridges build connections, showing us the way across*

If the last couple of years taught us what's really important in life, high on the list would be our ability to connect through up-close interaction, expression, and touch – to share around the dinner table, to see unhidden smiles, to offer a handshake or hug, to run hand-in-hand onto the playground.



### **How We Got Into The Bridge-Building Business**

The separation from family, friends, and work or school routines was traumatizing for everyone. But for our children and teens, fear and isolation also disrupted a vital time for growth and development on every level – educational, social, emotional, and physical. Many grieved lost family members. Others became victims of unbearable levels of anxiety and depression, or experienced greater abuse and neglect at home while school, once their safe place, remained closed to them. The bridges that kept us connected had collapsed.

Reopening our community and slowly coming back together offered some

relief, but it seemed to come with a catch: we couldn't just go back to the way things were, and we still didn't have all the answers. For every effort to reunify, we were divided on how to do it. How would we rebuild our bridges with no blueprint to follow?

In 2021, Center for Child Counseling remained steadfast and out front, offering answers and support for an entire community in crisis. But we also did something new. We went into the construction business. We built bridges to reconnect our children and families to the world again and empowered them to get to the other side. We walked with them along the way and stood by them in this new, strange place.

**Answering the Echo Pandemic**

An echo pandemic is a new term that describes the possibility of widespread, long-term mental health issues that resemble COVID-19 in scale. Our goal was to silence the echo as we walked a bridge over the vast canyon where hope, health and resilience could be found on the other side.

**Our Foundational Structure**

Center for Child Counseling’s plan for raising bridges and repairing connections relied on trusted architecture – 20 years of child development research and resources resulting in *A Way of Being With Children: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Building Resilience*. This breakthrough manual and training series was the blueprint for reconnecting children, families, and communities to the help and support needed to cope, heal, and move forward.

**Why “A Way of Being” is the Way Forward**

**IT’S CHANGING COMMUNITY CULTURE:**

*A Way of Being* represents a significant shift in changing our everyday practices to support children’s social-emotional well-being and prevent trauma.

Over **2,700 users** engaged in learning on CFCC’s Learning Management System

**IT’S MADE FOR EVERYONE:**

The online curriculum, manual, live workshops, and public health campaign are designed to support anyone who interacts with children and families.

Since the launch of *A Way of Being* in May 2020, over **220 people** have taken the full **5.5-hour online curriculum**

**IT TACKLES THE TOUGH STUFF:**

New workshops, tip sheets, and videos address COVID-specific stressors and the long-term emotional impact of the ‘echo’ pandemic, including the hardest conversations, like self-harm and thoughts of suicide.

*Identifying & Addressing Suicide: A guide for Parents and Caregivers* **free workshop addresses growing need**

**IT’S HIGH-IMPACT CLASSROOM TRAINING:** Teachers and schools play a significant part in reconnecting students to positive learning, development, and well-being. It’s imperative they are trained to recognize and respond to signs of trauma.

*A Way of Being* curriculum, workshops and consultation was provided for **10,992 frontline caregivers** throughout Palm Beach County

reconnection

## Better Together

As mental health providers, we simply can't address these issues alone. Connecting to the right partners means that more adults are aware, informed, and able to connect children to help when they need it.

### Programs and partnerships that deliver hope and healing.



#### **Pediatric Integration Program**

Center for Child Counseling and Dr. Shannon Fox-Levine of Palm Beach Pediatrics realized their partnership to achieve a vision of healthy, resilient children and families in Palm Beach County, starting with early mental health screening and access in pediatric offices. The program launched in October 2021 under the generous and innovative funding support of Palm Beach County Community Services, Quantum Foundation, and DeLuca Foundation.

Pediatric offices provide the ideal setting for mental health screening, early intervention, treatment, and support – and our goal is to grow greater resources to expand this direct-care model into more practices.

#### **Care Coordination Program**

Homelessness, hunger, unsafe environments, economic stress, and other health-harming disparities threaten the development, wellbeing, and mental health of our children.

Care Coordination supports the overall wellbeing and mental health of children and families through coordination of care and basic needs and a warm handoff to community programs, support groups, advocacy, and resources.

Center for Child Counseling developed the Care Coordination Program to fill a gap we identified for children in our community – the need for access to help BEFORE a formal mental health diagnosis. Our goal is for children and families to get the stability, resources, and care needed to thrive early on, preventing onset or worsening of mental health symptoms.

hope

## Connecting with hundreds of thousands of children every day.



**Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Palm Beach County**  
 In September, CFCC partnered with the community's leading agency for early care for pregnant moms, families, and newborns to present a Symposium called Healthy Babies, Healthy Children, Healthy Life. The agenda featured leading speakers exploring Epigenetics, Adverse Babyhood Experiences, and Adverse Childhood Experiences.



**Opportunity**  
 Palm Beach County's oldest children's nonprofit, child development center, and our long-time partner embraced *A Way of Being with Children* across its programming for high-impact results.

*"With this training, it was as if they were already in our classrooms, and they knew us and were helping us. We think it should be mandatory for all early childhood educators."*



**Early Learning Coalition of PBC**  
 This partnership ensures *A Way of Being with Children* is distributed free to over 700 Pre-K, childcare, and school sites through the Early Learning Coalition. Every teacher, staff member, and parent in Palm Beach County's school district has access to this ground-breaking manual.

*"With the Early Learning Coalition and School District of Palm Beach County as close partners, we are reaching thousands of teachers and childcare staff who impact hundreds of thousands of children every day."*



**Florida Blue Foundation**  
 After its launch in April, *A Way of Being with Children: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Building Resilience* was made free to parents and teachers through Florida Blue Foundation's generous investment in our community's current and future health. The larger vision is to fully integrate *A Way of Being* in Palm Beach County schools, childcare centers, and child-serving systems to fundamentally shift how we work with children. The goal is for all community members to understand and own the idea that we each have a stake and role in child and family wellbeing.

CFCC is working with other communities in Florida to implement *A Way of Being* in their child-serving systems, eventually impacting hundreds of thousands more across the state and eventually the nation.

Hope



# Building Trauma-Informed Communities

Preventing childhood trauma and improving health is actually about connecting adults to awareness and action. The goal is for adults – at home, in schools, and anywhere in our communities where they serve children – to recognize and stop trauma in its tracks and become part of the healing process.

## Fighting ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Initiative

### Won't Back Down

It's a grass-roots to tops approach to transformation: Center for Child Counseling's public health initiative tackles systems change by engaging community adults to respond to children in need and demand policymakers and healthcare systems prioritize our children's wellbeing and mental health.

### Lead the Fight

#### Taking Action

Our largest international gathering on ACEs to date, **Lead the Fight 2021** offered two virtual events, both packed with expert panelists offering insider information and calls to action.

940 Participants

May's *On the Front of the War on ACEs, Statewide Panel and Resource Series* featured former Supreme Court Justice Barbara Pariente as moderator for panelists Dr. Mimi Graham, FSU Center for Prevention and Early Intervention; Dr. Eugenia Millender, FSU College of Nursing; Dr. Shannon Fox-Levine, Pediatric Society of PBC; Judge Kathleen J. Kroll; Kathy Leon, leader in child welfare; and Julie Fisher Cummings, Chair, Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties.

August's follow-up event, *Promoting Resilience in Childcare, School, and Pediatric Settings*, was hosted by board member Eddie Stephens and featured Dr. Mimi Graham, Dr. Shannon Fox-Levine, Mr. Edward Tierney from the School District of Palm Beach County, and Ms. Amber Payne, Director of Strategic Initiatives at Center for Child Counseling.



# Bridging Need and Solutions

**Referrals for mental health treatment more than tripled over 2020. Our essential programs coupled with new intake and service techniques quickly connected children to hope, health, and healing.**

### CFCC Data Dashboard: Innovation in Analysis

A three-year project with WebAuthor, CFCC's new dashboard integrates all screening and assessment tools with ongoing client observation – connecting information, measuring outcomes, and suggesting response in real time. Successes include identifying growing trends such as grief, anxiety, depression, and other behaviors that led us to roll out youth support groups to address these cluster issues.

### WeLearnPlay: 4,000 Smarter, Stronger

Our free training library revolutionized how expert knowledge is accessed, educating 4,000 participants and counting from around the world since the beginning of the pandemic. Trainings address current topics such as Supporting Children during COVID-19, How to Change your Stress to Strength, and Achieving Success with Teenagers, to name a few.

### Clinical Internship Program: Growing Generations of Mental Health Pros to Meet Demand

Since 2013, the program has prepared over 125 future clinicians through a robust, year-long experience for master's level students. By 2018, 22 of those clinicians were hired as full-time staff, with over 100 others hired by organizations in Palm Beach County and beyond.

### University Affiliations: 13 Powerhouse Partners

CFCC proudly holds affiliation with these state and national universities to broaden the field's capacity and professional leadership.

#### Social Work Programs

- Florida State University
- Florida Atlantic University
- Barry University
- University of Central Florida
- University of Kentucky

#### Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

- Lynn University
- Barry University
- South University
- Nova Southern University
- Grand Canyon University
- Lesley University

#### Marriage and Family Therapy Program

- Nova Southern University
- Antioch University New England

health

## Reconnecting, Growing in Strength and Spirit

We exist to care for children. With your support, we work to understand, prevent, and heal the impact of trauma on children's health and relationships. We are building communities of positive support to buffer adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and nurture resilience as part of wellbeing.

### 25 More Schools

Trained in Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)

### 3,599 Parents and Caregivers

Trained on PACEs (Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences). 98% showed strategies gained to promote child wellness and resilience.

### 3,500 Professionals

Received PACEs and TIC Training (attorneys, police, childcare, juvenile justice and educators)

### 5,000 Visit ACEs website

35 ACEs articles published

### 60 Kids and Families

Attended SNAP® (Stop Now and Plan, a juvenile justice diversion program for children ages 6-11). SNAP® addresses behaviors and making better choices including dealing with anger, learning how to cope and practice self-control, engaging in problem solving, and learning not to bully.

"I am in love with this training! Every time they give examples of situations, I can see the face of a teacher who could use that information in the classroom."

**Training Participant**



# Crossing Bridges to Our Community

## Leadership Palm Beach County 2021 President's Award

CEO Renée Layman, Leadership Palm Beach County 2010 alumnus, was awarded the prestigious President's Award for leadership and community impact. Vicki Chouris, President of the LPBC Board and CEO of the South Florida Fair, selected Ms. Layman for her dedication, selflessness, and commitment to the children and families of Palm Beach County.



### Statement of Financial Activities For end of year September 30, 2021

Funding Coming In: \$6,290,338



Change in net assets: \$1,412,505  
Beginning net assets: \$1,933,858  
Ending net assets: \$3,346,363

Impact Going Out: \$4,877,833



## Ready to Cross that Bridge?

You're invited to reconnect to life in a new way – by restoring children's hope and health.

If you're ready to partner with us to build resilient, trauma-informed communities, visit [centerforchildcounseling.org](http://centerforchildcounseling.org) to learn more about our people, programs, and opportunities to change lives with a financial gift.

resilience



Honoring Bill Lynch, Immediate Past Board Chair, for his unwavering dedication and leadership since 2013.

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ACEs Toolkit:

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

A Way of Being with Children:

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



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