

Foster Care Services



Every Child Deserves a Family

Every child should live with a family that will **love and guide them**, and every family deserves a chance to **become stronger and more resilient**. Foster Care Services licenses and supports foster family homes to care for children that have been temporarily removed from their families. Foster Care Services provides interested families with training and support **to provide temporary care for a child**. Foster parents help to nurture the child and mentor the family so **the child may be safely reunified or adopted**. These dedicated families receive the following support:

- Parent training
- Comprehensive support during foster care licensure or placement
- Ongoing and regular consultation, including 24/7 on-call support
- Clinical services
- Ongoing monthly support, home visits and training



Healing a Broken Family

Cathy and Jerry Denton have **fostered over 170 children** in 26 years. They have two biological children and have adopted six of their foster children.

Their life's work is **a legacy of their love and commitment**. One of the Denton's success stories was the reunification of a sibling group. Two brothers, ages three and two, were being fostered by the Dentons. **Both had experienced trauma**. Evaluations, counseling and therapy were needed to address their behaviors and development. The three-year-old acted out with inappropriate sexualized

behavior, an indicator of what they had been exposed to.

The Dentons addressed their needs, helped them learn healthy behaviors and taught them how to be successful in a healthy, loving family environment. Meanwhile, an out-of-town couple expressed an interest in adopting the brothers and began travelling on weekends to visit the boys. After the brothers were adopted, Cathy soon learned that the boys had **two additional siblings in the foster care system**.

The Dentons fostered one of the siblings, and the adoptive family began their weekend visits again. They wanted to **preserve the brothers' connection** with each other. After a period of time, they were able to adopt the third and then the fourth brother. Almost six years since the brothers were fostered by the Dentons, the adoptive family has a **full house with four boys**. Cathy said, "They couldn't be happier. The couple has learned how to parent children with trauma and provide the boys with love and support. You can never erase the trauma, but **you can help heal and restore the child.**"

How Do We Benefit Children, Families and the Community?



- Serve an average of **400 children in foster care and 113 foster homes** annually in Hillsborough County.
- Support children, including sibling groups, ages birth to 17 years old, who are **victims of abuse, neglect and abandonment.**
- Length of stay in foster care can vary from a few days to a few years with **the goal being 12 months** and outcomes being children reunited with parents or relative caregivers or being adopted.
- Children entering foster care receive a **medical check-up within 72 hours** to identify and begin meeting often neglected medical, dental and vision needs.
- Program provides **ongoing training and support to foster parents** to prevent burnout and maximize their ability to meet children's needs and help them heal.
- Foster homes receive **monthly visits and are re-licensed annually.**

Realized a dream. Became a foster parent.

Stable environment. Child feels safe.

Medical services received. Health and well-being.

Foster home with siblings. Bond intact.

Child and family stabilized. Safely reunified.

Tools and resources. Confident foster parent.

I'm not alone. Found help.



Residential Program



Healing the Trauma of Abuse and Neglect

At our **accredited therapeutic residential program**, the children who live on our campus begin their journey toward healing. Since 1892, we have focused on helping abused and neglected children through services that **can heal the trauma** of their circumstances. The **Residential Program** offers each child an individualized and comprehensive care plan that focuses on therapy for **emotional and mental healing**; recreational and vocational activities for **physical well-being and relationship building**; and education to address learning challenges and prepare them for age-appropriate **schooling and independent living**.

Services Provided to Children:

- Safe, Warm Home
- Primary Caregiver
- Meals
- Clothing and Personal Care Items
- Counseling and therapy
- Education and Academic Support
- Medical and Dental Needs Management
- Transportation
- Recreation and Activities
- Events and Holiday Parties
- Athletics
- Summer Camps



Photo By: Dan Weisburg
Adoption Contact: www.heartgallerykids.org

Alexis is Writing a New Story

Alexis was a resident at The Children's Home for eight months. She arrived just after the Christmas holiday and was angry and hostile.

She experienced two unsuccessful adoptions and ran away frequently. Alexis was angry at being let down by the adults in her life, who were supposed to love and be there for her. During her time in the Residential Program, **she received counseling and support**. She began to soften and accept new adults into her life. Alexis shares, "The best part of this program is the staff. They've been there for me, and my favorite is Ms. Francis."

Alexis talks about her struggle with making friends, keeping relationships and trusting others. She explains her depression and that she's **learned healthy coping skills** like watching a comedy or writing in her journal. Now, Alexis is writing a new story.

She has changed. You can see it in her eyes – new possibilities. Her appearance is different. She smiles. "I'm leaving tomorrow to go live with my new foster parents," she explains. "They have a big family, and I'm looking forward to that." She has struggled but continues to work hard on herself and looks forward to the next happy chapter of **unconditional love and support that she so deserves**.



How Do We Benefit Children, Families and the Community?

- Average of **124 children served** with 16,799 days of service to children annually.
- **Therapeutic residential group home** for children, including sibling groups, ages 7 to 17 years old, who are victims of abuse, neglect and abandonment.
- Average **length of stay is five months**. Children are discharged to be reunified with parents, a relative caregiver, foster care homes, adoptive homes or alternative placements.
- Caregiver relationships and structured environment help children **develop tools for successful** reunification with parents or placement in foster or adoptive home.
- **Quality of care exceeds standards** to meet individual needs and provide best support possible.
- True to our mission with a 122-year history of dedication to the well-being of children placed in our care.

Running away. Not the answer.

I can trust. I am safe.

I deserve self-love. No more self-harm.

Played first baseball game. Confident!

Someone cares about me. There is hope.

Understanding anxiety. Gaining coping skills.

I'm not alone. Found help.





The Children's Home Story

**"Open the door for the children;
Tenderly gather them in."**

These words were spoken by one of our founders, Sarah McCampbell, more than a century ago and continue to hold true today. The Children's Home, Inc. is a child and family-centered organization that is



positioned to care for struggling families and children. Since 1892, we have been a beacon in the community providing a safe haven for children who have suffered abuse, neglect or abandonment.

- Founded in 1892, The Children's Home is the oldest charity on Florida's west coast and is **accredited by the Council on Accreditation**.
- Impacts the lives of **15,667 children and adults annually** through programs and services that strengthen children and families, offer prevention and outreach, find and support foster families and help heal the trauma of abuse and neglect.
- Operates a variety of child-focused, family-centered programs in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco counties.
- Committed to ensuring the highest quality of care, organization-wide **Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI)** process is implemented regularly to measure key indicators of success and improvement needed.
- Of \$12 million annual operating budget, over 30 percent provided **by private donors** and over 83 percent **goes direct to services for children and families**.
- Supported in part by Hillsborough County, Children's Board of Hillsborough County, Healthy Families Hillsborough, Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas, Eckerd Youth Alternatives and United Way Suncoast.

Our Mission

The Children's Home strengthens communities through programs that support, serve and protect children and their families.

Our Vision

The Children's Home will be a recognized leader in innovative programs and services in the field of child and family well-being, and as an exemplary model for the governance, management and operation of non-profit entities.

Programs and Services

- Family Resource Centers
- Healthy Families
- Kinship Services Network
- SEEDS
- Residential Program
- Foster Care Licensing and Support
- Pinellas Support Team

A 501 (c)(3) tax exempt,
non-profit organization,
The Children's Home, Inc.

The Children's Home Beginnings



- 1887 Founder Carrie Hammerly moves to Tampa from Leesburg, Virginia; she works at the Tampa Journal and aids victims of yellow fever outbreak.
- 1892 Hammerly begins taking in orphaned children and home on corner of Washington and Marion Streets is purchased.
- 1893 Hammerly creates formal organization known as The Children's Home of Tampa.
- 1894 Mission is carried on despite worldwide economic depression and regional economic devastation caused by a freeze.
- 1898 Spanish-American war ends and economy improves. The Children's Home incorporates and Sarah McCampbell named president.
- 1904 Relocation to home on two acres on North Florida Avenue.
- 1920 Home on Florida Avenue is damaged by fire and new home is designed by renowned architect M. Leo Elliott and is first self-contained building in U.S. with its own hospital.
- 1967 Groundbreaking at Memorial campus location on 88-acre property donated by City of Tampa.