

FEBRUARY 2025

YOUTH

STATION

The one-stop-shop on the track to success

Dear caregivers,

February is the month of love and Black History. In this edition you will find information on events throughout Central Florida to celebrate Black History Month. In addition, we have included resources to help educate our youth on healthy relationships and attachments with others. We hope you will join us in a collaborative effort to educate our youth on healthy love, as well as the impact of black history on our nation.

With Love,

Your Youth Services Team

LIFE SKILLS

newsletter

FEBRUARY 2025

LIFE SKILL TARGET: HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

A relationship can be defined as a close connection between two people; it is how two or more people are connected. A relationship can be positive or negative, intimate or platonic, romantic or friendship-based. There are four basic types of relationships: family, friendships, acquaintances and romantic relationships.

Characteristics of Healthy Relationships

Trust. People in a good relationship should know they can rely on each other. They know they can count on this person to come through for them and be supportive. They feel their secrets are safe with this person and they can believe what the other person says to them. They believe the other person will not do anything intentional to hurt them.

Respect. In healthy relationships, people talk to each other in ways that don't put down, insult or belittle. They value each other's time and opinions. They protect each other's privacy and personal space.

Honesty. Each person should always be truthful and open. They can express what they want or discuss their hopes without fearing how the other person will respond. They don't feel like the other person is hiding things from them.

Growth. In a healthy relationship, people want each other to enjoy their favorite activities, learn new things, and spend time with family and friends. In life, our hopes, fears, goals and interests will constantly change, and people in good relationships will understand and even embrace those changes.

Empathy. Each person should be willing to understand and validate the other person's perspective.

Balance of Power. In a healthy relationship, both people feel on equal footing. They can make their own decisions without fear of retaliation or judgment. They feel physically safe. They respect each other's opinions and independence. No one pressures the other person to do something that makes them feel uncomfortable. And they put equal effort into their relationship.

Compromise. Conflict is bound to arise in every relationship. People should be able to compromise and negotiate a mutually agreeable solution when there are disagreements.

Communication. In a healthy relationship, each person can share their feelings, even when they disagree, in a way that makes the other person feel safe, heard and not judged.

Qualities of a Healthy Relationship

The Equality Wheel describes the qualities involved in healthy relationships. Healthy relationships are an essential part of our overall well-being, and they can show us that we are valued, supported and respected as human beings. Life has many great things to offer, and healthy relationships help us share that joy with others. Remember that a healthy relationship should always provide more joy, happiness and personal growth than sadness, fear or stress. There is no power or control over another person in any relationship, and everyone should be treated equally. Below is the healthy relationship wheel, which outlines a healthy relationship's six most important elements. Remember that healthy relationships exist in all our relationships, not just romantic ones.



RESOURCES:

HEALTHY VS UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS VIDEO:

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=UB9ANEZX9LU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UB9ANEZX9LU)

BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS (FOR TEENS) VIDEO:

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=ELLAMPIQPM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELLAMPIQPM)

LIFE SKILLS PROGRESS

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LIFE SKILLS *newsletter*

FEBRUARY 2025

SEL CORNER

(SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CORNER)

Boundary Affirmations

I do not need take responsibility for others

Setting Boundaries is about loving myself

It is NOT up to me to fix others

It is OK to put myself first

Others don't have to agree with me & that is OK

Boundaries allow me to take better care of myself

I have the right to feel me own feelings

I do not need to justify my boundaries to anyone

Healthy boundaries are not walls

Boundaries are my gates that I get to open & close when I choose

I can respect the feelings of others & still honour my own

Boundaries will help me align with my values

Boundaries protect my inner core & my rights to choices

Each day I am becoming stronger with my boundaries

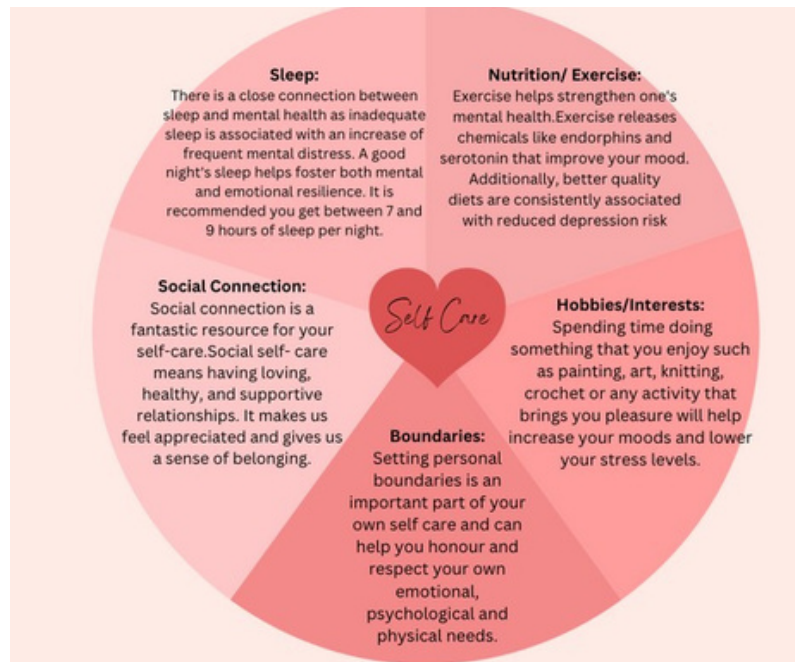
I refuse to please others at the expense of my own wellbeing

Setting boundaries may feel uncomfortable to start with, but it will get easier

Givers need to set limits, because takers never do

SELF-CARE

Self-care is an essential survival skill. Self-care refers to things we practice or engage in regularly to reduce stress and maintain or enhance our physical and mental well-being. Self-care is anything you do for yourself that makes you feel better or cared for. There are various aspects to self-care that offer a simple action plan to manage stress and help you live a more balanced life, including sleep, nutrition, exercise, social connections, hobbies/interests and maintaining healthy boundaries.



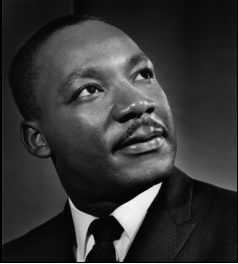
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Black History Month

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history.



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

One of the most well-known civil rights leaders, Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Baptist minister and activist who fought against racial inequality. History remembers him as a hero and one of the most influential leaders in the world.



SHIRLEY CHISHOLM

The first African American woman elected to serve in Congress in 1968, Shirley Chisholm was the first African American woman to seek the U.S. presidential nomination from a major party. She co-founded the Congressional Black Caucus, which is designed to guarantee equal rights, opportunities and access for African Americans and other marginalized groups.



HARRIET TUBMAN

A brave leader during the Underground Railroad movement, Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery and spent 11 years guiding other enslaved people to freedom through the Underground Railroad as a "conductor." Tubman was also a spy, scout, nurse and soldier during the Civil War for the Union Army.



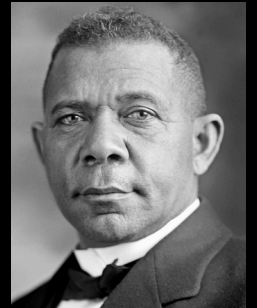
BESSIE COLEMAN

Bessie Coleman, or "Queen Bess," was the first African American and Native American woman to be a pilot. But as a Black woman in the 1920s, she faced many obstacles because of her race and gender. She would say that "the air is the only place free from prejudice."



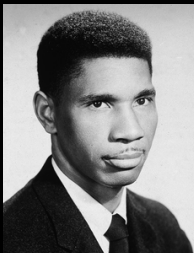
ROSA PARKS

Rosa Parks was a civil rights activist in Alabama and the secretary of the Montgomery chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Parks is known most for her refusal to give up her seat to a white man on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, which inspired the Montgomery Bus Boycott. This boycott brought about the ruling by the Supreme Court that segregation on public buses is unconstitutional.



BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

Born into slavery, Booker T. Washington overcame many barriers that were blocking him from getting an education. After his family gained freedom through the Emancipation Proclamation, there were no schools in his area, but he didn't let that stop him. He walked 500 miles to enroll in school at the Hampton Institute. Washington excelled academically and became the first teacher and principal at the Tuskegee Institute. In addition, he was an author, adviser to several presidents, and one of the most influential African American public speakers in his day.



MEDGAR EVERS

Medgar Evers was a World War II veteran and Civil Rights leader. He was the NAACP's first field officer in Mississippi. He helped lead protests against the segregation of public primary schools, beaches and parks and at the University of Mississippi.



FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Frederick Douglass taught himself to read and write at a young age. After escaping slavery, he became an author, public speaker and prominent leader of the abolitionist movement. In addition to his that work, Douglass supported and advocated for women's rights.

Black History Month Events

City of Orlando's Black History Month Community Celebration Event

This free event honors the lasting contributions and positive influence of African Americans in our Central Florida community.

Feb. 11 | 5:30-7:30 PM

New Covenant Baptist Church of Orlando
2210 South Rio Grande Avenue, Orlando, FL 32805

ZORA! Outdoor Festival of the Arts

Where culture, music and legacy unite to inspire.

Jan. 31-Feb. 2

344 East Kennedy Boulevard Eatonville, FL 32751

Black History Month Art Exhibit 2025

The display showcases art pieces of 33 local visual artists inspired by this year's national Black History Month theme, "African Americans and Labor."

Jan. 31-March 30

Orlando City Hall - Terrace Gallery
400 South Orange Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801

Black History Month Events at Winter Park Library

The Winter Park Library will host a variety of events honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. throughout Black History Month.

Select dates and times Feb. 1-22

1052 West Morse Boulevard
Winter Park, FL 32789

Resource Corner



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org



**VOCATIONAL
REHABILITATION**

Do you know a youth or young adult with an IEP, 504 plan or documented disability?

Let us connect them to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)!

Family Partnerships of Central Florida is a VR provider, supporting employment and career goals for our youth and young adults.

A few of these supports include connecting them with internships, coaching them on job readiness skills, and helping them in their career development.

For additional information and referrals:

Anthony Battles

VR Development Coach

anthony.battles@fpocf.org

Extra, Extra

Connect With Us Today!

 @yfcunited

 yfcunited



We have
Something
for Everyone!



Youth Families and Communities United

We offer fun and engaging trainings and workshops for schools, businesses, and organizations!



Youth

Positive Youth Development Programs

- Resiliency Workshops
- College and Career Readiness
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
- Bullying Prevention and Awareness
- Community Involvement/Service Opportunities
- Awards and Recognition Programs
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Awareness
- Youth Leadership
- Mentoring

Here are just a few of our workshop topics:

Pushing My Buttons

When Life Gives You Lemons

"Keep on Trucking"

Let's Put the Pieces Together

Can We All Just Get Along

Each of these workshops include an art project or a hands on activity.

Families

The Family T.I.M.E C.L.U.B

- Family Field Trips
- Family Workshops/Playshops
- Family Book Club
- Parent Support Groups

Let's Connect
Through Beading
with
The Bead Buffet



The Bead Buffet is great for

- *Team Building
- *Mental Health & Wellness
- *Just for FUN

Communities

Community Celebrations and Events

- The Community Family Reunion
- The Community Family Picnic
- Community Conversations
- Our Children Our Impact Conference
- YFC United Family Days
- The Fun and GAME Unit

Staff Spotlight

Meet our Youth Services Support Team

Amber Barrett, Assistant Director of Youth Services
amber.barrett@fpocf.org

Amber wears many hats, but supporting and leading this team is her biggest!
Fun Facts: She firmly believes a McDonald's coke will turn any bad day around, as well as her golden retriever named Peach.

Elizabeth Sherer, VR EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST
Elizabeth.sherer@fpocf.org

Elizabeth supports the VR program, as well as SSI/SSA, the youth's Instagram page @youthservicesoffpocf and this newsletter.
Fun Facts: She went hang gliding and spent months working in Ukraine.

Anthony Battles, VR Career Coach
anthony.battles@fpocf.org

Anthony supports our youth and young adults with disabilities to find and maintain employment.
Fun facts: He went skydiving and binged all of Grey's Anatomy in one day.

Nadia Belakbir, Youth Services Specialist, Public Ally
nadia.belakbir@fpocf.org

Nadia serves several roles, including supporting our 2024 holiday gift drive and currently manages our 18th birthday partnership with Fostering Kindness.
Fun facts: She speaks five languages and is a proud, self-proclaimed all-around geek.

Staff Spotlight

Meet our Youth Services Support Team

Widley Herard, Youth Services Specialist, UCF Intern **Widley.herard.fpocf.org**

Widley completes applications for birth certificates and Social Security cards for youth ages 15+. Fun facts: She grew up in St. Thomas and enjoys doing hair in her free time.

Deanna Garafola, Youth Services Specialist, UCF Intern **deanna.garafola@fpocf.org**

Deanna supports our Youth Services managers during youth transition plan meetings and will be connecting with caregivers on how to properly document monthly life skills.

Fun facts: She is fluent in American Sign Language, and one of her arms has multiple titanium rods in it.

Naia Merriman, Student Support Coordinator, Public Ally **naia.merriman@fpocf.org**

Naia supports our high school, GED seeking and college students. She is also creating tools and resources for caregivers and case managers to have meaningful conversations with youth about their academic journey.

Jayling Liriano, Student Support Coordinator, UCF Intern **jayling.liriano@fpocf.org**

Jayling supports our high school, GED seeking and college students.

Youth Spotlight

Congratulations on graduating college, Brian! We are so very proud of you and all of your accomplishments.



Brian graduated with his AA degree in December 2024. He will be leaving our program with thousands of dollars in savings and his own car and apartment.

Youth Spotlight

Trinity keeps moving up and forward with her goals! We continue to be so proud of her.



Trinity recently received a promotion at the hospital at which she is employed.