



Family Partnerships of Central Florida

BREVARD | ORANGE | OSCEOLA | SEMINOLE

Family Partnerships Connections

Families Impact

Community Events

Partners

Giving Back

Families Impact

Podcast Episode Nine



Family Partnerships President and CEO Phil Scarpelli recently spoke with adoption and foster parents Donna and Thomas Todd from Osceola County. Parents of eight children, the couple discussed their experiences raising a family in Florida.

[Listen and Follow on Spotify](#)

IT'S

ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

POD CAST

BATTING CLEANUP FOR THE TODD TRIBE



PHIL SCARPELLI
HOST



**DONNA AND
THOMAS TODD**
GUESTS

**LISTEN
NOW**

More than 25 Percent Increase in Golfers for 2026 FPOCF Tournament

We had 75 golfers and more than 20 FPOCF volunteers turn out April 17 for the sixth annual Fore Our Kids Golf Tournament. The event raised funds for Family Partnerships Foundation and our programs and services, bringing in many new sponsors.

**Thank You To
Our 2026 Fore
Our Kids Golf**

Thank you to this year's incredible community partners: [DEX Imaging](#), Robbie and Rachel Vogan, Central Florida Public Affairs, Windsor Services, [i-tech](#), [Erdman Automotive](#), [Thompson](#), [Cumberland International](#), [Elevation Church](#), [RSM](#), [Health First](#) and [Mindshare](#).

Tournament Sponsors

We look forward to growing our event and seeing you again in 2027!



OUR SPONSORS

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HOLE PARTNERS



ROBBIE &
RACHEL VOGAN

Foster Families



Osceola Family Answers the Call to Serve Central Florida Children

For more than 36 years of marriage this upcoming September 1, Michael and Nancy Troisi have trusted in each other and their shared Christian faith. It's what carried them through 9-11 and Michael's days as a New York City police officer. As a first responder when planes struck the World Trade Center towers, Michael was initially one of the estimated 3,000 first responders missing, with Nancy eventually locating him in a hospital after five hours where he was suffering from vision and hearing injuries due to the devastating search and recovery efforts.

Originally skeptical about her husband wanting to foster children at their age, Nancy came around to the idea and now Michael says she's the pillar of their strength. "I like to say I focus on transportation and meal preparation while she handles everything else," said Michael, who retired from New York City law enforcement in 2006 and worked as a police officer in the Osceola County Sheriff's Department. "We talked over the decision and prayed a lot about it."

To date, the couple have fostered seven children and currently have two sibling boys with them: one 8-year-old and an infant 10-month-old. They attend [Faith Assembly](#)

Church and credit the church with helping inspire them to foster and also supporting them in the journey. The church has a special-needs program for children that the Troisi family say is invaluable.

They add that the church's support really helped them with a previous foster child who had developmental struggles when he arrived at their home. "We ended up taking in his sister too, and they've since been reunited with their mother. It wasn't always easy but we knew God put them in our life for a reason," she said.

Those siblings were with them for over a year, originally arriving during a "down break time" when they didn't have a child in the home. "We were looking forward to vacation, but then the phone rang," she says smiling.

Nancy advocated for testing of the boy who was eventually diagnosed with special needs. "It was challenging at first because we didn't know if we were equipped to help with the support he needed," she says. "Our philosophy is we are never going to turn a child away. After learning that the church had a special needs ministry, and with help from my daughter who works as a special needs teacher, we knew we could do this and had the resources and support network."

The Troisi family maintains a picture wall in their house that says, "We are blessed because you came" with names and photos of their foster children. "We still communicate with the family and saw them at Christmas. The hardest part was how fast the reunification happened. We had two hours to pack and say goodbye," says Nancy tearing up, remembering the boy had the most precious way of expressing love. "He would put his nose up to yours."

Known to their foster children as Mr. Mike and Nonna (for her Italian heritage), the couple feels blessed to be able to give back and assist families and children. "It's heartbreaking to know what these children have gone through," says Nancy.

With their current siblings, the older boy was being protective of his baby brother when he first arrived in their home. "We learned that he had been watching over his brother in an almost adult capacity," she said. "We told him that was our job now and his was to just be a little boy. He cried for 30 minutes afterward from a sense of relief."

Describing himself as parent 2.0, Michael says he's thrilled to finally being able to devote 100 percent of his time to children. He and Nancy raised four children of their own and have three grandchildren with one on the way. "I missed so many birthdays and holidays working, so it's now wonderful to be fully available."

Nancy recently assisted with securing tutoring approval for the older boy currently with them. "He loves school and says he is the happiest he's ever been," she says. They cite other resources as being essential to their journey, including the **Reeves Initiative** who helped them set up their home to foster and for respite, Nemours Hospital staff, and a local World Wide Wrestling star named the Samoan Werewolf who helped them make a visit wish come true. Their extended family has also fully embraced the children, spending time with them at family gatherings and holidays.

Pictured below is Michael during rescue and recovery operations in New York City on 9-11.



Foster Parent Appreciation Month



Click [here](#) to watch our first Two Minute Timeout message from Phil Scarpelli on the importance of respite in foster care.

Family Partnerships Board of Directors



FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH

*Thank
you!*



"Jesus calls us to care for the least among us, and foster parents quietly answer that call with remarkable courage and love. There are children in our communities right now who need a stable, nurturing home, and foster parents make that possible. Thank you for answering such a profound call to action!" - Eric Austin, FPOCF Board Chair



FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH

*Thank
you!*



"Anything can happen at any time. When we fall, how much easier it is to get up if there is someone there to catch you. Many do not have a large extended family; some have none. Foster parents are there to catch our most vulnerable. Foster parents are an integral part of the community, and every month, but this one especially, we thank you!" Tony Harris, Foundation Board Director



FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH

*Thank
you!*



"Foster parents don't just provide a home — they provide a future. Their dedication to children who need it most is one of the most profound acts of service in our community. Today and every day, we're thankful for foster parents who offer not just shelter, but family, hope, and the chance to heal. The ripple effect of that gift reaches far beyond any single child."
Stephanie Larkin, Board Director



FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH

*Thank
you!*



"Foster parents provide more than a safe place to stay—they offer stability, care, and hope when it's needed most. Their impact can last a lifetime, shaping not just one child's future, but generations to come." Jennifer Muntz, Board Secretary



FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH

Thank
you!



" I am not going to say it was easy, but the payoff is so worth it to watch the children grow up. As a foster parent, I think no one realizes how one small act can have such an impact. I tell people all the time it is the small things that have the biggest impact on people's lives." Tracy Newman, Brevard CARES Board Director with her family at the adoption of her son in 2008.



FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH

*Thank
you!*



"Foster parents are some of the most selfless and impactful people in our communities. They open their homes and their hearts to children who need stability, safety, and love, often during incredibly uncertain times. The difference they make isn't just in the moment; it's something that stays with a child for a lifetime and can shape generations." Kristen Johnson, Board Director and Foundation Chair

**Orange County Foster and Adoptive Parents
Share Lessons Learned from Their Journeys**



The Guzewicz family.

Orange County residents Krista and Dan Guzewicz consider flexibility and perseverance two of the most important mindsets in life. Married since 2008, the couple knew they wanted children and a good-sized family which included adopting since before they met, but later they learned biological children weren't possible. What they didn't realize at the time was that fostering and adopting children would be a large part of the evolving plan.

Relocating to Florida in 2020, the Pennsylvania natives began their fostering journey in 2013. Today, they have fostered eight children and adopted two: Kaylee, who turns 16 this summer, and Colton who is 11. Colton was a baby when placed with them. This summer, they are also adopting Cam, who is 16, and was fostered by the couple while in Pennsylvania when he was three.

Strong advocates of the need for fostering older, teenage children, the two say their lives have been immeasurably changed for the better since adding children to their family. "It's been so incredible to have these children in our lives – they have given us a deeper capacity to love, new understanding of resilience, and a purpose we didn't expect," says Krista. "If people saw fostering and adoption as a relationship that raises mutual transformation, they may change their maybe to yes."

To pass on their knowledge and encourage others to get involved with child welfare, Krista and Dan speak about their experiences. Krista has delivered six multi-state presentations and is about to give her 7th at the company where she works, a global organization of more than 50,000 employees. She also writes a weekly [Substack](#) article to help inspire others to foster and adopt and is working on completing a book titled "The Gift Goes Both Ways."

“Throughout our multi-state experience, we’ve learned so much about the fostering and adopting, and we want to pass on that knowledge and increase awareness and understanding of the foster and adoptive journey -- the joys, the struggles, and the incredible rewards,” says Krista. “This journey changes you and shows you gifts in yourself that you never knew you had.”

She adds that adoptions and the number of foster homes have been declining across the country; adoptions from foster care alone are down 26 percent since 1999.

“We want to do all we can to help encourage others to get involved and see the truth, not the horrors that scare so many away,” she says. “Remove the stigma. Kids in foster care are not broken. They are hurt. They are adapting. And they are capable of extraordinary love. And they don’t need someone perfect, not someone rich, not the perfect home, and not someone with all the answers, just someone willing to say: ‘I choose you. And I’m not going anywhere.’”

Noting that their children have adapted well to life in Florida, Krista notes that the effects of trauma remain with their children but all are now thriving. They say that a Camelot caseworker has been particularly great to work with during the adoption process of Cam.

“Florida child-welfare professionals take their work seriously!” says Krista. “Part of what we have learned is that the experience can vary across states and counties, from operational details and efficiency to government requirements.”

The couple say they also have great support from neighbors and friends in Orange County and her cousin who lives nearby. The extended families in Pennsylvania and Virginia are also very supportive and will be there the day we adopt Cam.

“We’re not necessarily done adding to our family,” adds Krista with a smile.



Presents

LUAU



FUN-raiser

Saturday, June 6th, 2026 | 4:00 – 6:30 PM

Frank T. Forester Recreation Center, **960 Cogswell Street, Rockledge, FL 32955**

(Part of the McKnight Family Sports Complex)

Get ready to trade your everyday routine for island vibes at our Luau Bingo FUN-raiser—an exciting afternoon filled with festive fun, great prizes, and a whole lot of community aloha!

Whether you're a bingo pro or joining for the first time, everyone is welcome! Come dressed in your favorite Hawaiian shirt, and enjoy an afternoon supporting a great cause.

Feature Highlights:

- 10 bingo games (10 chances to WIN!)
- Fantastic prizes for each round (average value of \$100)
- Island-inspired snacks & non-alcoholic refreshments

Admission:

- \$40 per person (*Adults 21 and over*)

Attire:

- Dressy casual, Hawaiian shirts encouraged
- (*Please no swimsuits or beachwear*)

Click [here](#) for more information.

National Fatherhood Awareness Month in June

24/7 DAD Curriculum

- Case Management
- Collaboration
- Tangible Support and Community Partnerships

• The Fatherhood Engagement Program was created as part of a state-funded initiative designed to strengthen father involvement within Florida's child welfare system.

• This is a statewide program, with positions located in every Community-Based Care (CBC) lead agency across the state.

• The program was developed and designed to support case management by engaging and empowering fathers involved in the dependency process, ensuring they are active participants in their children's lives.

Family Partnerships of Central Florida
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Fatherhood Engagement Program

Contact

Kendall Wyatt-Fatherhood Engagement Specialist
Tri-County (Orange, Osceola and Seminole)
4001 Pelee Street, Orlando, FL 32817
(407) 412-2508
Kendall.wyatt@familypartnerships.org or
fatherhood@familypartnerships.org

The importance of fathers is emphasized nationally in June. In support of awareness activities, Family Partnerships is launching a campaign around the theme "The Power of Presence." Throughout the month, we'll be highlighting opportunities for fathers in our communities to strengthen their relationships and parenting skills. Information on FPOCF fatherhood support and programs is available on our website [here](#).

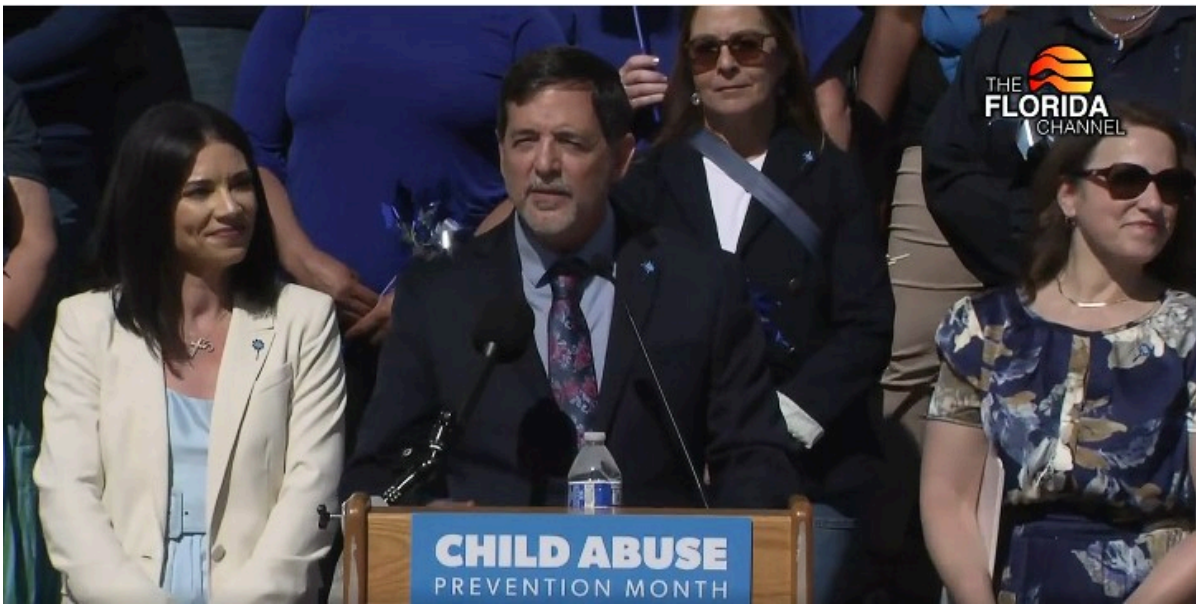
Partners



Telemundo 31 News Story – Originals – “In Search of a Home”

Family Partnerships of Central Florida recently participated in an interview for this Telemundo 31 Originals broadcast. Telemundo news producer Ariana Figueroa interviewed Gabriella Colon (Cruz), Independent Living case manager at Family Partnerships, for the show, discussing the Step into Success Program for youth.

In this special program, Telemundo discusses the foster-care system in Florida and how becoming a foster parent can change a child’s life. They explore stories, challenges, and the impact a family can have by providing support, stability, and love to those who need it most. Click [here](#) to watch the program.



In April, Family Partnerships President and CEO Phil Scarpelli delivered remarks at a Department of Children and Families press conference on Child Abuse Prevention Month. Click [here](#) to view footage of the event.

Community Events

The Month of May is
**MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS
MONTH**

National Mental Health Awareness Month aims to educate the public, reduce stigma, and highlight the importance of mental well-being.





A CARING, PEER-LED CRISIS SUPPORT CENTER

The Living Room

A program of STEPS, Inc. · Serving Central Florida

A safe, supportive alternative to the emergency room.

Immediate, compassionate care when you need it most — no appointment needed.

What is The Living Room?

The Living Room is a safe, supportive space for individuals experiencing mental health challenges, substance use concerns, or personal crisis. Our peer recovery support specialists — who have lived experience with mental health and substance use — provide crisis intervention, recovery support, and connections to community resources in a welcoming, non-judgmental environment.

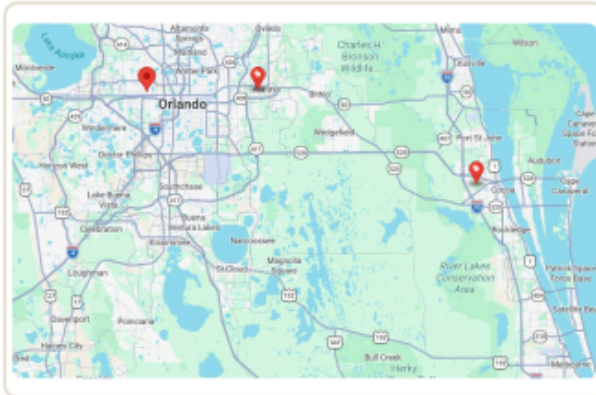
Quick Facts

- ◆ Adults 18 and older
- ◆ No appointment needed — walk-ins welcome
- ◆ Same-day access and referrals available
- ◆ Confidential & supportive environment
- ◆ Peer-led recovery support

We Help With

- ◆ **Mental health challenges** — anxiety, depression, overwhelming emotions
- ◆ **Substance use concerns** — including opioid use disorder support
- ◆ **Emotional or personal crisis** situations requiring immediate support
- ◆ **Referrals & connections** to ongoing treatment and community resources

Our Locations



Pine Hills — Orlando
1033 N. Pine Hills Road
Orlando, FL 32808
☎ (407) 715-0637

East Orlando
12050 E. Colonial Drive
Orlando, FL 32826
☎ (407) 255-0449

Cocoa
803 N. Fiske Blvd
Cocoa, FL 32922
☎ (321) 616-6514

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS ALONE

Call or Walk In Today

Reach any of our three locations above for immediate help.

info@flsteps.org

www.flsteps.org

Sponsored in part by **Orange County, Central Florida Cares Health System** & the **State of Florida Department of Children and Families**.

Services provided regardless of age, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.

Giving Back

2026 HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SUCCESS FUND

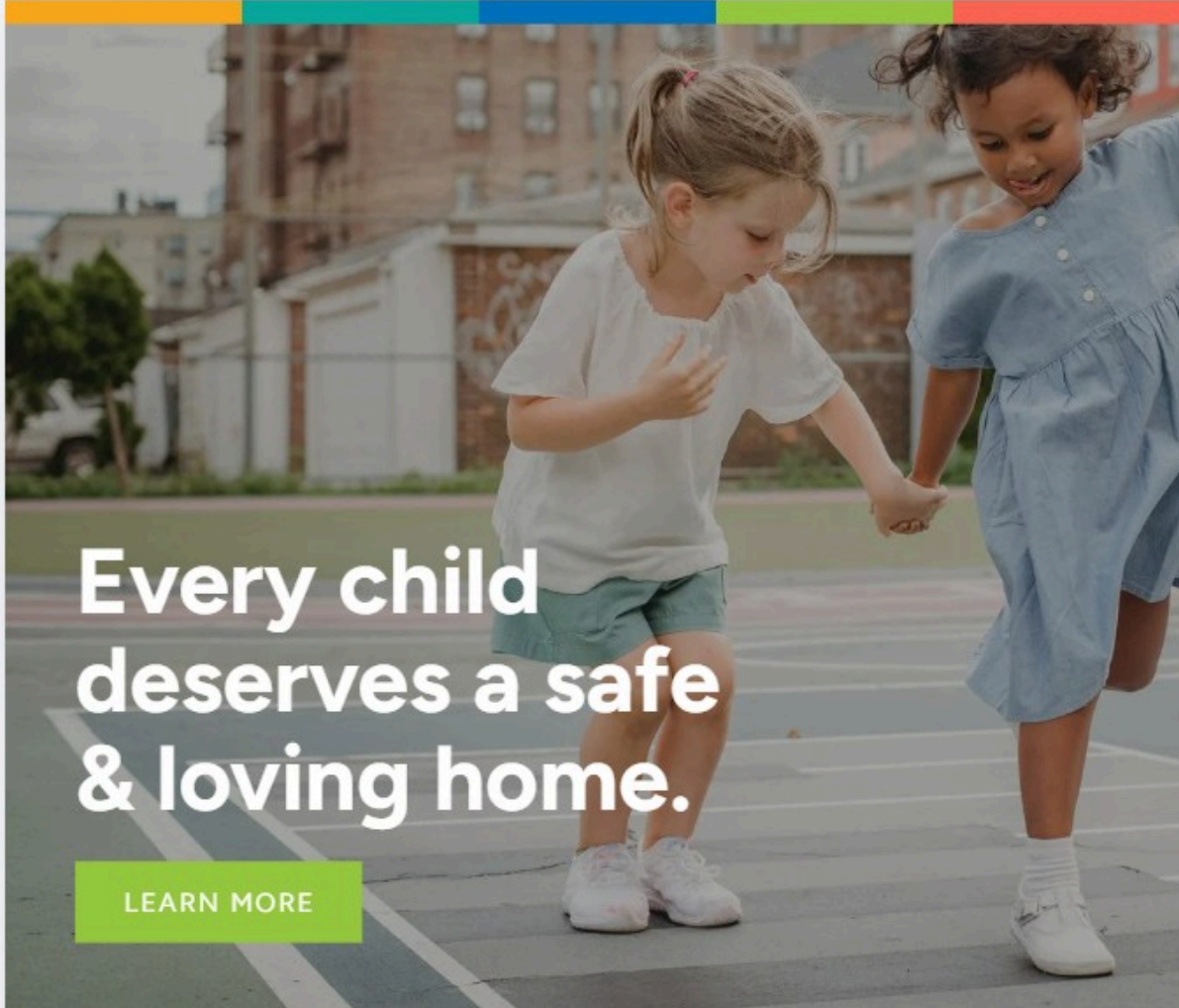
Helping 2026's Foster Youth High School Seniors Graduate with Confidence



Supporting Foster Youth Seniors Through Graduation Season

High school milestones like prom, yearbooks, and graduation are moments students remember for a lifetime. For many high school seniors in foster care, however, these experiences can feel out of reach because of financial challenges beyond their control. Through Family Partnerships of Central Florida's first annual High School Senior Success Fund, we are working to ensure that 50 foster youth seniors across Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties can fully celebrate these important milestones.

Thanks to the generosity of our community, we have already raised \$3,792 toward this initiative. Donations directly support essentials like prom tickets, prom attire, yearbooks, and cap and gowns, helping students create lasting memories and celebrate their achievements with confidence and joy. Thank you for supporting our foster youth and making these meaningful moments possible. Click [here](#) to donate.



Every child
deserves a safe
& loving home.

LEARN MORE



Foster Hope • Foster Love • Foster a Child

If you'd like to make a difference in your community and in the life of a child, consider becoming a foster parent. There is currently a shortage of available foster homes in Central Florida. The steps to explore fostering are **easy**. They start with attending an information session - a great way to see if fostering is for you.

To learn more, contact foster@familypartnerships.org, visit our website at: www.fpocf.org/foster-care, or contact us [here](#).

There are also other impactful ways to support Central Florida children and families, including [mentoring](#) or [donating](#).

Donate

Expanded FPOCF Location in Brevard County



We're all moved into our new headquarters in Rockledge, Florida. Please make note of our new address: **4050 Riomar Drive in Rockledge.**



[About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#)



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