

Good News

from our funded partners

**Regular Board Meeting
June 1 2025**



Children's Board
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

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Children's Home Network

Supporting and Empowering Educational and Developmental Services (SEEDS)

The SEEDS program hosted its annual literacy event at Lowry Park on May 17 to kick off a summer of reading with children and families. This year's theme was The Reading Road Trip, and the event featured a variety of activities to promote literacy, along with community providers who shared valuable resources with families.

Tampa Bay Lightning's ThunderBug greeted families as they arrived and engaged them in fun, interactive activities. Community service providers—including the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, MyOn, The Skills Center, Early Childhood Council, Challenge Island, Tampa Police Department, and local educators—were on site to support families and promote learning.

Children had the chance to create driver's licenses for their road trip, collect books for summer reading, and participate in engaging literacy activities throughout the "Reading Road Trip." Attendees enjoyed refreshments and Kona Ice on a warm spring day. Families expressed their gratitude for a fun and memorable time at the park, and many shared their commitment to making reading a part of their summer routine. Happy Reading!!!



Children's Home Network

Supporting and Empowering Educational and Developmental Services (SEEDS)



During a recent home visit, Tristen was thrilled to share some exciting news with his SEEDS Family Support Coordinator (FSC). He had completed a school assessment and could not wait to talk about his progress. Tristen began the school year reading at a kindergarten level (he is currently in third grade), but his most recent assessment showed he is now reading at a second-grade level. He was overjoyed when his teacher confirmed that he will be promoted to fourth grade for the 2025–2026 school year.

Leading up to this milestone, the SEEDS FSC worked closely with the family to help Tristen get evaluated to rule out a learning disability and to connect him with tutoring support. Tristen's mother later shared that he will have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and will continue to receive school accommodations. She also noted that Tristen is enrolled in the school's summer reading program to help him feel more prepared for fourth grade.

Just a few months ago, the school had begun discussing the possibility of retention in third grade. Through SEEDS services, the family was connected to the Administrative Services Organization (ASO), which helped provide access to weekly individual tutoring. Since then, Tristen and his family have embraced daily reading, a habit encouraged by their SEEDS FSC. His mom shared that Tristen is now much more confident when reading and looks forward to their reading time together.

We are so proud of Tristen and his family's dedication. Their commitment to reading is paying off, and we're celebrating his continued growth and success in school!

Children's Home Network

Reaching and Inspiring Students Everywhere (RAISE)

The Bell Family Success Story; A Letter from Mr. Bell (Father)



"We just completed the RAISE Program, and I have to say—it was truly life-changing to have both RAISE workers in our home. I've seen a huge improvement in my son, both at school and in his social life. He now has friends, which is wonderful to see. Earlier this year, he was diagnosed with two behavioral disorders, and since then, I've witnessed such a positive turnaround.

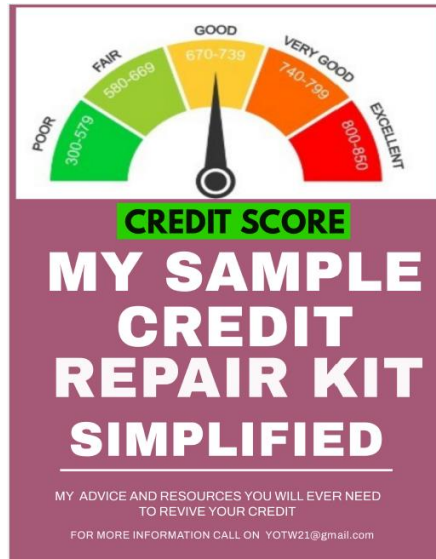
The staff helped bring more structure to our home, and I was able to apply the rules and strategies they taught me to better support my son's behavioral needs. I will absolutely recommend this program to anyone facing similar challenges. The bond we created with the two workers was fantastic—my son already misses them very much. He's a really good and sensitive boy, and he understood that they were here to help him become the best version of himself.

This program didn't just help my son—it helped me too. I've made improvements in my own health and how I manage daily life with my two children. The tools and equipment we received are used every single day. My son now wants to eat healthier, drink healthy drinks, and is eager to learn more at school. Even my three-year-old daughter is joining in—she wants to earn five stars to get a reward! 😊

I can't thank you enough for this wonderful program. It's made a lasting difference in all of our lives."

Housing Authority of the City of Tampa (THA)

Building Family Financial Skills



During one of my classes, a student approached me with concerns about credit repair. He shared that his girlfriend was \$30,000 in debt and was considering hiring a lawyer to file for Chapter 13 bankruptcy to manage her financial situation. At 32 years old, she wanted to buy a house but felt overwhelmed by her debt.

I asked him how much the legal services would cost, and he said she was paying \$2,000 to retain the lawyer. I suggested that instead of spending that money on bankruptcy proceedings, she could use it to pay down some of her debt or negotiate settlements with her creditors.

He had previously encouraged her to take my class, believing it would help, but she dismissed his suggestion, feeling he lacked the knowledge to advise her. In every class I teach, I emphasize the importance of maintaining good credit and share strategies for building financial stability. To support my students, I created a sample credit repair kit that includes dispute letters and references to Fair Credit Reporting Act statutes. These tools help individuals request debt validation, seek goodwill adjustments, and negotiate settlements with creditors.

The student was excited to receive the information and shared it with his girlfriend. As a result, she changed her approach—deciding against filing for Chapter 13 and instead focusing on improving her credit. She is now on the path to homeownership, avoiding the long-term impact of bankruptcy, which would have remained on her credit report for seven years and made getting a mortgage far more difficult.

This experience reinforced the power of financial literacy. Not only did the class benefit the student, but it also empowered him to positively influence someone close to him. This program continues to make a meaningful impact—strengthening financial stability, encouraging savings, and protecting credit and identities for a more secure future.

Seniors in Service of Tampa Bay

Foster Grandparent Program with Readers in Motion

When Erick walks into his classroom, the day can often feel overwhelming. Diagnosed with autism, he struggles to keep up with lessons and connect with his classmates. Frustration sets in quickly, leaving him feeling isolated and defeated. For his mother, each morning brought worry: Would Erick have another hard day? Would he feel out of place again?

Everything changed when Ms. Thomas, his Classroom Grandma from the Foster Grandparent Program, came into his life. With her calm and reassuring presence, she provides the one-on-one support Erick needs—offering patience, encouragement, and steady guidance during his toughest moments. Under her care, Erick has transformed. He's more engaged in class, taking pride in his work, and making social strides that once felt out of reach.

“She’s always calm, even when Erick has his tough moments,” his mother shared. “I know it’s a challenge, but I’m glad that he’s improving and learning just like his classmates.”

Thanks to Ms. Thomas’s unwavering support, Erick is now thriving in ways his family once only dreamed of. Classroom Grandparents like her bring time, compassion, and belief in every child’s potential—making all the difference, one student at a time.



Pictured left to right: Grandma Rubio and Grandma Everett at Bricks 4 Kidz Event and Ms. Frisby and Grandma Rubio at Oak Grove Elementary

In Ms. Frisby’s first-grade classroom, Grandma Rubio is a steady source of warmth and encouragement, helping students grow both academically and emotionally. Her care and consistency have made a lasting impact—families have noticed real improvements in their children’s confidence and success thanks to her support.

But her influence doesn’t stop at the classroom door. Whether cheering at school events like Bricks 4 Kidz or simply sharing a smile in the hallway, Grandma Rubio’s presence lights up every moment. Her enthusiasm and dedication show that learning is about more than academics—it’s about connection, love, and the power of showing up.

Through the Foster Grandparent Program and the Readers in Motion initiative, Grandma Rubio is changing lives and creating meaningful bonds that extend far beyond the school day.

Seniors in Service of Tampa Bay

Foster Grandparent Program with Readers in Motion

As the school year comes to a close, we celebrate the remarkable impact of twenty-six Classroom Grandparents who showed up day after day across four Tampa elementary schools to tutor and mentor students. Thanks to their unwavering dedication, students have flourished—benefiting from one-on-one attention, encouragement, and guidance that has boosted their confidence, strengthened their reading skills, and helped them feel seen and supported every step of the way.

Mrs. Stacey Rothfarb, a kindergarten teacher at Seminole Heights Elementary, shared it best:

“As an educator with thirty years of experience, I have always believed in the power of reading to transform lives. Programs like Readers in Motion are essential to this mission. The Classroom Grandparents bring wisdom, warmth, and a deep sense of community into our classrooms. They provide not just academic support, but also vital social-emotional connections that help our students thrive. Their impact is profound and lasting—both for the students and for the seniors who serve.”

We are deeply grateful for the Classroom Grandparents whose compassion and commitment continue to shape brighter futures for our children and communities.



Pictured left to right: Grandpa Sessions at Oak Grove Elementary and Grandma Norton assisting with Bricks 4 Kidz at Booker T. Washington Elementary

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Seniors in Service of Tampa Bay

Foster Grandparent Program with Readers in Motion

At Seminole Heights Elementary, a dedicated team of six Grandmas and one Grandpa has become an integral part of the school community over the past five years. Their warmth and wisdom have provided students with more than academic guidance—they've offered emotional support that has helped shape confident, capable learners.

The story is similar at Oak Grove Elementary, where twelve Classroom Grandparents serving grades Kindergarten through Second have devoted countless hours to fostering a love of learning and building students' self-esteem.

At Booker T. Washington Elementary, four Classroom Grandparents have enriched the lives of kindergarten and first-grade students, even joining in extracurricular activities like Bricks 4 Kidz and Croc Encounters to make learning fun and interactive.

Meanwhile, at Mendenhall Elementary, three Classroom Grandparents have shown exceptional dedication—some spending up to forty hours a week working with kindergarteners. Their presence has created meaningful bonds, nurtured growth, and helped young students reach their full potential.

The impact of these Classroom Grandparents extends far beyond the classroom walls. Their unwavering commitment not only enhances academic success but also provides children with a deep sense of belonging, support, and love—lessons that stay with them long after the school year ends.



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Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services (GCJFCS)

Teen Parent Engagement Program



At our April workshop, our teens had the pleasure of participating in a Drum Circle experience led by Giving Tree Music, Inc. The session was a powerful, hands-on opportunity for self-expression, teamwork, and joy through rhythm and sound.

🎵 Watch the highlights here: <https://youtu.be/jz-1e3yjoSI?si=g7tZulQDgN2spMFt>

We're grateful to Giving Tree Music for creating such a meaningful and memorable experience!



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Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services (GCJFCS)

Padres De Crianza

We chose to hold this special event on Mother's Day—a meaningful occasion for families to come together and honor the incredible women who play a vital role in raising and caring for their children.

During the event, community partners such as the Children's Home Network's RAISE Program, Metropolitan Ministries, and Simply Healthcare provided caregivers with valuable information about available support services.

The day featured inspiring success stories, delicious food, fun games, and thoughtful gifts. A total of thirty-six caregivers attended and shared with our Community Navigators how happy, relaxed, and welcomed they felt throughout the celebration.

The event concluded with a beautiful flower arrangement created by one of the caregivers, along with a heartfelt card filled with messages of gratitude from attendees—each expressing deep appreciation for the program and the support it provides.



Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services (GCJFCS)

Padres De Crianza



A Community Navigator was referred to a caregiver and her grandson who were experiencing significant economic, socio-emotional, and health-related challenges. After relocating to the area about a year before enrolling in the program, the family felt lost and overwhelmed, lacking access to the resources they needed to overcome the difficulties they faced.

Recognizing how quickly these stressors could escalate into a crisis, the Community Navigator acted swiftly to provide support. She connected the family with a dental office for the child's treatment, a free community clinic where both could receive medical care, and a therapist to support their emotional well-being and behavioral needs. Additionally, the family received information on local resources that offered food and clothing assistance to help ease financial burdens.

With the support of the Community Navigator and Program Counselor, the caregiver gained tools to manage stress and care for her family with greater confidence. Both the caregiver and her grandson expressed deep gratitude for the Padres de Crianza Program, provided by Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services and generously funded by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County.

Thanks to the dedication and teamwork of the professionals involved, the family has overcome many of their challenges and now feels hopeful and supported in their new community.

Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services (GCJFCS)

Padres De Crianza



This loving and protective pair of caregivers is doing everything they can to give their granddaughter the best possible life and future. When they came to the Padres de Crianza Program, they were seeking support across several areas—socio-emotional, financial, academic, clothing, medical, and holiday needs.

Recognizing the unique challenges grandparents face when stepping into a parental role, and the urgency required to help stabilize families, the Community Navigator quickly took action. She connected the family with local resources and secured additional financial assistance in areas where community support was limited at the time.

Thanks to the guidance of the Community Navigator, the family gained access to services and information they can continue to use in the future. With support from the Program Counselor, they also learned valuable skills in stress management, coping, and communication.

The family is deeply grateful for the support provided by Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services and the Children's Board of Hillsborough County. Through the combined efforts of a dedicated team, they were able to reach their goals and now look toward the future with renewed hope and confidence.



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Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services (GCJFCS)

Padres De Crianza



The caregiver is a humble, strong, and dedicated grandmother raising four grandchildren. Despite facing significant challenges—including health issues, language barriers, and financial hardship—she remains motivated and open to receiving support, doing everything she can to provide her grandchildren with a safe, loving, and stable home.

Padres de Crianza has had the privilege of walking alongside this family for many months. During that time, they formed a strong bond with their Community Navigator, who has provided vital referrals and connections to help the family navigate difficult circumstances. With the support of the Children's Board and ASO funding, the Navigator was able to secure beds for the children, assist with utility payments, provide Thanksgiving meals, Christmas gifts, and school supplies, and help the family access affordable housing—

ensuring safety, stability, and comfort for all.

The Program Counselor also played a key role by offering parenting guidance and counseling to help the children process the emotional toll of their biological mother's absence. Throughout this journey, the grandmother has remained active and engaged, faithfully attending monthly support groups, offering encouragement to other families, and introducing new families to the program.

This caregiver and her family have been a true blessing to the Padres de Crianza program. It has been an honor to support them and witness their resilience, love, and unwavering commitment to each other.

Positive Family Partners, Inc.

Learning Connections



Learning Connections is a free program designed to strengthen thinking and learning skills for students in third through eighth grade who live within specific zip codes. Funded by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County and administered by Positive Family Partner, Inc. (PFP), the program is located at 7402 N. 56th Street, Suite 300B in Tampa. To learn more about this valuable opportunity, interested families can contact Dr. Pat Grosz, Executive Director of PFP.

The program uses the Feuerstein Instrumental Enrichment (FIE) Method, delivered by specially trained providers, to help students struggling with challenges related to learning, focusing, processing, and organization. These difficulties often affect not just academics, but also self-esteem, emotional regulation, and the ability to complete homework, chores, and daily tasks.

Through Learning Connections, we help turn struggles into achievable goals. We teach students how to think, not what to think—setting them up for success both in school and in life. We turn frowns into smiles as students gain the tools they need to confidently manage their educational journey.



Hispanic Services Council

La Red de Padres Activos / Network of Active Parents

Ruskin Area



Ms. X is a devoted mother raising a young daughter on the autism spectrum. When she arrived in the Wimauma community in September, she was facing tremendous challenges. At the time, she shared that she and her daughter were living in the nail salon where she worked. Despite these difficult circumstances, we immediately began working to find ways to support her and her child.

Although attending our workshops was challenging—she lived in Apollo Beach and relied on Uber rides to reach us—Ms. X remained in regular contact, and we continued to offer support however we could.

Through the HSC Puentes de Salud program, she received assistance applying for Medicaid and food stamps. She was also referred to the RAISE program through the Children's Home Network. Over time, her determination paid off, and she was able to secure a room for

herself and her daughter—a significant milestone on their journey to stability.

In February, when our new community site opened in Ruskin, I called to share the news. Ms. X was overjoyed to learn it was just two blocks from her home. She expressed heartfelt gratitude for the organization's continued support and was thrilled to finally begin attending workshops in person on a regular basis.

Today, her daughter is receiving care through the RAISE program, and the school is effectively implementing her Individualized Education Plan (IEP). She is thriving—and Ms. X is filled with hope and appreciation for the positive changes that have taken place in their lives.

Hispanic Services Council

La Red de Padres Activos / Network of Active Parents

Gibsonton Area



A deeply moving story is that of Mrs. X, a mother of three living in a mobile home in the Gibsonton area, who lost everything during Hurricane Helen—her home, furniture, household items, appliances, and car.

Despite these heartbreaking losses, Mrs. X remains remarkably cheerful and positive. Her family has faced numerous challenges: her teenage daughter dropped out of school three years ago due to bullying, and her husband was recently hospitalized for alcohol-related issues.

Still, Mrs. X never gave up. She faithfully attends our workshops, often walking there with a baby in her arms and bringing her daughter along. In the beginning, her daughter was completely disengaged—she avoided social interaction, resisted participation in activities, and was adamant about not returning to school.

But over time, with patience, consistency, and support from the program, a transformation began. Today, her daughter is back in school, regaining her confidence and hope for the future. Her husband has made significant strides as well, overcoming his personal crisis and now actively participating in *La Red de Padres Activos*.

Thanks to Mrs. X's unwavering resilience and the collective support of the community, this family is moving forward—stronger, more united, and full of renewed possibility.



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Hispanic Services Council

La Red de Padres Activos / Network of Active Parents

University Area

Ms. X is a devoted mother of four children—ages two, three, five, and thirteen—two of whom have been diagnosed with autism. Despite the daily challenges she faces, Ms. X remains a vibrant and steady presence in our community. She participates in our workshops with unwavering dedication, always eager to learn how to better support her children. She listens with intention, shares with sincerity, and grows alongside other families with grace.

What inspires us most about Ms. X is her spirit. She carries a smile wherever she goes and rarely shows the exhaustion that must come from her demanding days.

Her openness in sharing the realities of her children's educational journeys brings depth and connection to the group. Her insights create a space of understanding and solidarity that other parents deeply value.

Whenever she is unable to attend, her absence is truly felt. We look forward to her return each time—because Ms. X is the very definition of resilience and a shining example of strength in our community.



Hispanic Services Council

La Red de Padres Activos / Network of Active Parents

Town 'N County Area



The X family participated in a recent vision screening event organized in our community through the Preserve Vision program. During the event, they received assessments and valuable guidance, and they expressed heartfelt gratitude to HSC and La Red de Padres for the opportunity.

“We are extremely thankful and happy to have participated in the program. We have learned so much. I feel more at ease and better adjusted to this country,” shared Mrs. X, who also expressed her desire to volunteer with the program in the future.

Like many families, they have faced financial challenges and were recently referred to Housing HSC for assistance with their water bill.

The family graduated from the program on April 8, 2025, and shared this message during the celebration:

“Thank you to Hispanic Services. Participating in *La Red* has truly been an incredible experience. We are very satisfied, and my daughter Valery has greatly enjoyed it as well,” said Mrs. X.

Their journey reflects the positive impact of community-based support and the strength that comes from connection, learning, and hope.

Hispanic Services Council

La Red de Padres Activos / Network of Active Parents

Dover Area



Mrs. X is a devoted participant from the Dover community—a hardworking farmworker and mother of two children: a kindergartener and an eighth grader.

From the very first workshop, Mrs. X stood out as a committed and engaged mother. She attended each session with enthusiasm, consistently sharing her insights and experiences related to her children’s educational journey. Her passion for learning and growing as a parent was evident in every discussion.

She expressed deep gratitude for the valuable information and resources she discovered through the program—tools that helped her establish effective study routines and create a more supportive learning environment at home.

The confidence Mrs. X has gained throughout the workshops is truly inspiring. She now feels empowered to advocate for her children’s needs and to actively collaborate with school staff. Currently, she volunteers twice a week at her daughter’s elementary school, supporting both the library and cafeteria.

Perhaps most notably, Mrs. X has become a source of inspiration for other mothers. She has encouraged new parents to attend school events and participate in our program. Her vibrant presence has transformed the group dynamic—fostering an atmosphere of joy, support, and mutual encouragement. Her willingness to share and connect has helped others find the confidence to speak up and engage.

At our graduation celebration, Mrs. X beamed with pride, bringing her husband along to witness the incredible progress she has made. Her dedication to her children’s education and to the community is both admirable and uplifting.

Children's Board Family Resource Centers (CBFRC)

Central

Testimonial



"It all started with a simple referral from our public school to see if we could get immunizations for our kids. But to our surprise, the Children's Board turned out to be so much more—and now we consider it an extension of our home.

From the very first time we stepped through the doors, we felt a strong sense of inclusivity, especially from Ms. Leo and the entire team.

Since then, we've made it a point to participate in the activities offered by the Children's Board—and they've been exactly what our family needed. Through the Explorer's Club, our child made new friends, and the language course introduced them not only to a new language but also to a new culture.

What stood out the most is the unwavering support we received as a family starting fresh in a new country. The team has guided us in so many ways, and we are incredibly grateful.

We hope the Children's Board continues to support other families just like ours. Our experience has been truly special, thanks to the kindness and dedication of the amazing staff."



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Children's Board Family Resource Centers (CBFRC)

Plant City

Testimonial



Ms. Tamarria brings her daughters to as many activities as possible at the Children's Board Family Resource Center (CBFRC) in Plant City. When she learned the Center would be hosting a Community Baby Shower, she was overjoyed—especially since she is currently expecting a baby boy.

Though she wasn't sure what to expect, Ms. Tamarria was deeply moved by the care and thoughtfulness that went into the event. She shared that attending the *Safe Baby* presentation by the Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County was incredibly informative and eye-opening. It helped ease some of her pregnancy concerns and even inspired her to make important changes in her plans for future caregivers.

So impacted by what she learned, Ms. Tamarria took detailed notes and shared them with her family members—encouraging them to participate in Center activities as well. This baby shower was especially meaningful to her, as she had never experienced one with any of her other children.

Ms. Tamarria expressed her sincere gratitude for the beautifully presented gifts and the warm, welcoming atmosphere of the Center.

"I am so thankful to the Center for making me feel special," she shared. "This baby shower was a first for me, and the information I learned has truly helped me and my family."

Just Initiative

Woven Empowerment –WE Program

Testimonial

When “M” and her family first connected with us, she was overwhelmed. A single mother to a nine-month-old baby, she had also just become the legal guardian of her niece and nephew—both in foster care. As a former foster child herself, M’s greatest hope was to keep her brother’s children together and provide them all with a safe, stable home. Practically overnight, her household doubled in size, now caring for three young children—all under the age of five.

It wasn’t easy. M was starting over completely. A survivor of domestic violence, she had recently emerged from homelessness and was navigating a complex system of social services without a clear understanding of how to access the help she needed. She was seeking childcare, employment, and a sense of stability—but more than anything, she was craving connection and support.

When M joined Woven’s Family Support Services, she found more than just resources—she found community. Since enrolling, she and her children haven’t missed a single *Tuesday Night Live*.

Tuesday nights with Woven have become a cornerstone of support for M’s family. She enjoys a warm, home-cooked meal and time to connect with other parents who are also working toward their goals. Her three children participate in age-appropriate programming and love spending time with kids their age. M often shares how much she values the consistency and safety that Tuesday nights offer—a space where her family can grow, set goals, and be part of something greater.

Since becoming part of the Woven community, M has secured daycare for her children, received developmental referrals, and recently started a new job. She shares that when she first joined, she was consumed by stress—but now, she feels she can finally exhale. With every week, she sees her own progress and is starting to believe in what’s possible for her and her children.

We at Just Initiative and the Woven team are incredibly proud of M’s journey. Her strength and commitment are inspiring, and we look forward to celebrating the many successes still ahead for her and her family.

Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA

Operation Strong Families



Launched in November 2024 with funding from the Children's Board of Hillsborough County, the Tampa YMCA's Operation Strong Families (OSF) is a free, 10-week program that supports active military and veteran families by providing tools for stress management, wellness, and a strong sense of community.

The program is offered at three YMCA locations: Spurlino Family YMCA in Riverview, North Brandon Family YMCA in Seffner, and South Tampa YMCA. Participants gather two evenings a week for sessions that include small group discussions focused on the real-life experiences of military families, as well as group workouts that support both physical and emotional well-being. While adults take part in their

sessions, children engage in their own age-appropriate group activities. The curriculum—developed by the Armed Services YMCA—is tailored specifically to address the unique challenges of military life.

Nicole Kettermann, Youth Health and Wellness Director at Tampa YMCA, explains the program's impact:

"Operation Strong Families brings small groups of military and veteran families together in the safe, resource-rich YMCA environment. Frequent family moves and deployments impose unique stresses on military families—particularly the children and the parent providing care while the service member is away. OSF aims to equip families with tools and resources to reduce stress, boost youth self-esteem, and build their confidence through the many social and community supports available to them."

Marine Master Sergeant Rosmell Mejia Escobar, who has served nearly twenty years and is a father of four, praised the program:

"My wife now understands what I do and the structure that comes with being a Marine," he said. "OSF gave us a community of people who get it. My kids and my wife are happier—and so am I." Nicole added, "I'm excited to see this program grow and its continued impact. We want to be the place where military families connect, feel supported, and build community."

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay (BBBS)

1-to-1 Mentoring (Middle)

We recently received some heartwarming news from Krina, a volunteer Big at IEL Shipping Solutions, who participates in our School-to-Work (STW) program. Krina proudly attended her Little Sister Rebecca's graduation from Jefferson High School and shared this beautiful reflection:

"Just wanted to share and again thank everyone at BBBS. I went to Becca's graduation and met her entire family, which was amazing. Her mom and I were lowkey tearing up together—it was the sweetest thing ever! I genuinely want to thank you all for this program. I truly did gain a lil sister for life through this, and we're already making plans!"

She added a heartfelt message directly to Rebecca:

"To my Little Sister: I am so beyond proud of you. Being your mentor and watching you grow over the past three years has been such an honor. I can't wait to see you flourish in this next chapter."

Krina and Rebecca were first matched in December 2022 through the School-to-Work program and have since developed a meaningful, lasting relationship. Rebecca shared that her favorite part of the program was simply "being able to talk with Krina about life—past, present, and future."

Rebecca has been accepted to Florida Atlantic University (FAU) and will begin her next journey this fall. And the best part? Their story doesn't end here—Krina and Rebecca are already planning to continue their connection through our Big Futures program.

Congratulations, Rebecca—and thank you, Krina, for being such an incredible mentor and friend!

