

GOOD NEWS

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

FEBRUARY 2026

from our funded partners



Children's Board
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

www.ChildrensBoard.org

Family Health Care Foundation CONNECTING KIDS TO CARE

A moment this month that reminded you why your work matters?



From Connecting Kids to Care Navigator Nina: "I had the opportunity to help a young mother who needed assistance in applying for health insurance for her newborn. Her baby was uninsured and in the hospital at the time due to being born prematurely. We completed the application together and submitted the requested documentation, streamlining the process. Knowing that she would benefit from additional community programs, I referred her to the Healthy Start Coalition for support as a new mother. I know my job matters because I connected the baby to healthcare coverage and connected the family to resources that support their broader needs."

A moment this month that reminded you why your work matters?

I had a family that came in and did not understand why her baby got denied Medicaid after she had applied herself. I met with the mom to review her application, and together we realized some of the information had been entered incorrectly. We went through the entire form step-by-step and completed a new, accurate application. My work matters because I'm able to support members of the community in navigating the application process for affordable health coverage. I ensure families understand each step, answer their questions, and help them access the coverage they need.

Gulf Coast JFCS

GOOD AFTERNOON FRIENDS AND AMIGOS PROGRAM

Prompt: A Success Story

For almost 10 years GAFA students have been practicing mindfulness, paying attention with curiosity to the present moment through breathing exercises, yoga and daily affirmation practices. When students transition from their very busy academic day upon arrival you can walk into the classroom and find children saying “Peace begins with me” or using their listening skills paying attention to the sound of the mindfulness bell, waiting till they can no longer hear the smallest hum, placing their hands over their heart or in the air.

This month students have been following the news of a group of monks and their little dog Aloka, walking for peace from Texas to our nation’s capital. The monk’s intention is to inspire all of us to walk peacefully in the world, practice mindfulness and understand that peace comes from within. Children follow the live map and track where the monks are each day. The children have been working on large paintings that will be brought to Fredericksburg Virginia by GAFA staff, in honor of the monks to inspire and thank them for their valiant efforts. Alongside these meaningful masterpieces Students at the Robinson School are painting alongside a muralist, commissioned by Principal Delgado, and hired by HCPS.



Seniors in Service

READERS IN MOTION PROGRAM

Behind the Scenes: Staff or volunteers share why they love what they do.



The Foster Grandparent Program proudly completed our January Orientation on January 22, 2026, welcoming six new volunteers who are now ready to begin their journey as foster grandparents. Over the course of the required two-day, in-person orientation, these volunteers didn't just learn about the program—they built meaningful connections with one another. Through shared discussions and experiences, they quickly formed a close bond and even requested copies of a contact sheet so they could stay in touch, support one another, and share their classroom experiences as they begin volunteering. What started as an orientation became the foundation of a genuine friendship.

One volunteer, Annie, was the first from the group to meet her assigned teacher. She was eager and excited going into the meeting and couldn't wait to share how well it went with the rest of the January Orientation group. Her enthusiasm and encouragement reflected the strong sense of community that had already formed among the volunteers. Moments like these remind us why this work matters—because our programs don't just support students and classrooms, they also create lasting connections, purpose, and joy for the volunteers who give so much of their time and heart.



St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital

MOBILE HEALTH AND SAFETY EDUCATION

Prompt: A moment this month that reminded you why your work matters?

This past holiday season, BayCare Kids Wellness and Safety Center along with BayCare Integrated Service Center (BISC) teamed up with the Children's Board Family Resource Centers (CBFRC) to meet an important need of the community - providing diapers and wipes to families. Diapers and wipes are essential items in many households. With the cost of grocery items increasing, this purchase can often bring added stress. Over 180 cases of diapers and a large pallet of wipes were packed into the cars of the FRC staff. The distribution wasn't simple; but this showed that we can make anything possible with teamwork and collaboration. It is always a pleasure working with the Children's Board to serve families in Hillsborough County, and we look forward to continuing to meet our community's needs as they arise.



University Area CDC GET MOVING! PROGRAM

Success Story:

On Saturday, January 24th, the Get Moving Taekwondo Competition Team participated in their first challenge tournament of the season in New Port Richey. This event marked an exciting start to the competitive year for our students.



All team members represented themselves and the Get Moving! program with excellence, demonstrating strong sportsmanship, discipline, and confidence throughout the tournament. Their hard work and dedication were evident in their outstanding performances, resulting in first, second, and third-place finishes.



This success would not have been possible without the exceptional preparation and guidance provided by Master Montesino and our coaching staff. Their commitment to training and mentoring the students played a vital role in the team’s achievements. Congratulations to our students and coaches on a successful tournament and a great start to the season.

Positive Spin

EMPOWERING A COMMUNITY WITH HOPE

Success Story:

Completing the Positive Spin program has been a truly life-changing experience for me and my family. When I first entered the program, I was struggling with my confidence and facing several difficult moments in my life. Positive Spin, along with my dedicated worker, Mrs. Lawana, became a source of strength, support, and stability when I needed it most

Mrs. Lawana went above and beyond for me. Whenever I felt anxious or overwhelmed, she was only a phone call away, ready to listen, guide, and reassure me. Her kindness and patience helped me rebuild my confidence and reminded me that I wasn't alone on my journey.

The agency also stepped in to support my family in meaningful ways. When they couldn't assist me directly, they always provided helpful resources. They made sure my three children had groceries and warm winter clothing, easing burdens that weighed heavily on me as a parent. We were also blessed to receive Christmas gifts from wonderful, generous people, which brought so much joy to my children during the holidays.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to Mrs. Lawana, the Positive Spin program, and the Children's Board. Your support, compassion, and generosity have made a real difference in our lives. Thank you for helping me regain my confidence and for showing such kindness to me and my children.



Girl Scouts of West Central Florida

G I R L S C O U T T R O O P P R O G R A M

Behind the scenes: Staff or volunteers share why they love what they do.

One of our incredible Girl Scout volunteers, Brook, with Troop 93064 in Seminole Heights, shared why she loves what she does—and her words truly capture the spirit of community, and the impact volunteers make in the lives of girls every day.

Brook explained that volunteering allows her to be more than just an extra set of hands; it gives her the opportunity to become an active part of the community and positively influence the lives of the girls she serves. Through her time, energy, and dedication, she makes a meaningful difference every day simply by showing love, support, and encouragement.

She also reflected on how her own experience as a Girl Scout continues to shape her commitment to service.

“As someone who grew up as a Girl Scout, I am always looking back on the lessons and values I was taught during that time. Now, as a volunteer for my local Girl Scout troop, I am able to implement those same values into young girls’ lives. I think it is more important than ever to support these avenues that connect us all as a community and as women, and Girl Scouts allows me to do just that.”



She is a role model, not just through words, but through action. By consistently showing up, engaging with the girls, and bringing positive energy to every activity and event, she hopes to inspire confidence, connection, and a sense of belonging.

Brook’s passion and commitment remind us that sometimes the greatest impact comes from simply being present and leading with heart.

Hispanic Services Council

LA RED DE PADRES ACTIVOS / NETWORK OF ACTIVE PARENTS

Success Story – A Story of Kindness, Friendship, and Family Success

As the new year begins, we are proud to highlight one of our dedicated La Red mothers, Oralia. When she first joined La Red de Padres Activos, she was quiet and reserved, but over time she grew more confident, actively participating in workshops and developing a strong passion for understanding how to support her child academically. At her graduation, Oralia proudly presented her “Project Tree,” created alongside her son, and shared how the program empowered her to better guide his educational journey. She remains committed to continuing her own learning so she can help her son pursue higher education and access the resources he needs to succeed, and her courage and growth have inspired other parents to engage more confidently in their children’s academic paths.



We also had the privilege of welcoming Ms. Miriam, an artist and one of our most dedicated volunteers for the past two years. In collaboration with Franciscan Center, Arts 4 All, and HSC, Ms. Zimm's led expressive arts activities using Zentangle Method techniques with our elementary, middle, and high school students throughout our communities. As a two-time rare cancer survivor, Miriam began a daily healing-arts practice in 2013 through her cancer center’s studio. Through lines, patterns, and color, she transforms stories of pain, resilience, and hope into meaningful artwork. Her sessions encourage students to express their emotions through coloring, dancing and singing. Through this collaboration, 65 students participated and had their artwork featured in an exhibit at the Franciscan Center titled “Finding the Best of Both Worlds.”

As we reflect on our recent Christmas celebration, we are grateful for the joy shared within our communities. Many of our children and their siblings gathered to enjoy their gifts, laughter filled the room, and families connected over sweets and conversation. It was a beautiful reminder that kindness, generosity, and togetherness remain at the heart of our work. Whether through art, family engagement, or community celebrations, we are proud to provide a safe and welcoming space where families can come together and grow stronger as a whole, especially during the holiday season, when connection matters most.



Gazer Children's Museum

LEARN & PLAY TAMPA BAY

Prompt: A moment this month that reminded you why your work matters?

This month, Keisy from Learn & Play Tampa Bay was approached by a caregiver at the end of a play session. The caregiver shared that before joining Learn & Play’s Neighborhood Play Squad, she often felt unsure about how to support her child’s development and was hesitant to participate in group settings. Over the weeks, she noticed her child becoming more confident, curious, and expressive, and for the first time, she felt confident too. She told Keisy that the program gave her the language, tools, and reassurance that what she was doing at home mattered, and that she finally felt seen and supported as a parent.



Stories like this are a powerful reminder that Learn & Play Tampa Bay is about more than activities; it’s about building connection, confidence, and community. Supporting families during such a formative stage helps lay a foundation not only for children’s learning, but also for caregivers’ sense of belonging and empowerment. Keisy shared that knowing that this work creates safe spaces where families feel supported, valued, and capable continues to drive her passion and commitment to this work.

Positive Family Partners, Inc.

LEARNING CONNECTIONS

SUCCESS STORY

Learning Connections is a free program to develop better thinking and learning skills for students in 3rd through 8th grade within specific zip codes. It is funded by the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County and administrated through Positive Family Partners, Inc. (PFP) located at 7402 N. 56th Street, Suite 300B in Tampa. Anyone interested in finding out about this wonderful program need to contact Dr. Pat Grosz, PFP’s Executive Director. Students learn **“how to think, not what to think”** for success in school, everyday routines and even specific challenges. This program changes their lives!



Recently Olivia started the program and wrote the following story:
“When I first started Learning Connections, I felt nervous because I did not know the other students. Now I feel excited and happy because it is fun to do the DOTS and other learning modules. If we do our work, we get to play cards or board games. I used to get upset and frustrated easily but now I have learned to take a breath and make good choices.”