



Tackling the Challenges of Foster Families Together

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, US, November 28, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As a member of the [Tampa Bay Charity Coalition](#), for her dedicated volunteer hours given to foster parents and children in Pinellas County, she was awarded alongside fellow Charity Coalition members at the 5th Annual Charity Coalition Anniversary in the Fort Harrison auditorium.

Established by the Church of Scientology Flag Service Organization in 2014, the Charity Coalition has grown to over 200 members of nonprofits across the Tampa Bay area.

"It was great to stand up there with people who are all there with the same purpose," says Starling, "to make the world a better place." Two of her sons were also awarded, alongside other children who volunteered in their spare time, as Certified Smile Makers.

"What foster children go through, no one should have to go through," says Dora Starling, president and former board member of the Pinellas County Foster and Adoptive Parents Association ([PCFAPA](#)), who describes foster children as unique compared to other youth.

"They get the brunt of the bad choices made by their parents. Imagine if someone came into your home, took you away from your family and put you with a bunch of strangers. They don't realize that they're being kept safe."

Founded in 1974, PCFAPA is a nonprofit organization started by a group of foster parents who wanted to help support other foster parents. According to Starling there are 142 foster families that are members of PCFAPA.

PCFAPA's mission is to provide quality training, support and activities for member foster and adoptive families and to provide parents with the necessary resources to deal with the many challenges they face in raising the future of the community.

Being a foster parent of six children herself, adopted five, Starling knows the challenges firsthand. She says that one of the most common challenges today is time. "It's our enemy," says Starling. "These kids need so much more of it," between undiagnosed medical conditions and then taking them to school "and spending extra time in school with them.

"Then there are our resources. If anyone says that foster parents do it for the money, they're wrong. We get minimal amounts for each kid and I know foster parents that end up buying a three to four bedroom home," just to make room for the kids they already have. "Foster children deserve people that will pour their hearts out into them."

To help PCFAPA with their purpose of providing different activities to alleviate foster parents of different challenges in raising their child, the [Clearwater Community Volunteers](#) (CCV) has hosted several events for foster families.

For 27 years, CCV has been putting on events for the Clearwater community for all families and children to enjoy and as a way to come together. "CCV exists to help children and provide hope for their future," says Pam Ryan Anderson, president of CCV. "So when we found out about the Back to School Bash for foster children, we knew what we had to do---we voted unanimously

to buy the backpacks and hundreds of notebooks. It's out hope that every child has the basics that they need to help them get a good education."

All 240 backpacks were filled with supplies and distributed to children in the Osceola Courtyard which had a wide variety of endless entertainment: live music, face painting, a carousel and a bouncy house.

Another special event was PCFAPA's annual baby shower in July, which was hosted in the CCV Center on Fort Harrison Avenue and Drew Street. Foster families got to exchange gifts of diapers, clothing and baby formula and kids painted window ornaments for their parents.

"We had so many of our foster parents there," says Starling. "It was nice to have a day with your family and relax and to be around people you know genuinely care."

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