



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



CHILDREN'S TRUST
OF ALACHUA COUNTY





CHILDREN'S TRUST
OF ALACHUA COUNTY

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Children's Trust of Alachua County funds and supports a coordinated system of community services that allows all youth and their families to thrive.

VISION STATEMENT

Facilitate equitable access and opportunities for all children, youth and families in Alachua County to ensure every child reaches their maximum potential.

HISTORY

The Campaign for the Children's Trust of Alachua County started as a grassroots movement made up of parents, grandparents, child advocates, and local activists. They knew in their hearts there was more our community could do to support our local children and youth. Local data collected and shared by experts who serve children and youth in Alachua County supported those citizens' beliefs and lived experiences.

As early as 2002, the idea of creating a Children's Services Council (CSC) in Alachua County was being considered. None of those early efforts gained sufficient momentum to move forward. By 2015, however, certain projects helped crystalize the concept of a CSC. Community members, leaders, and stakeholders, including the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC), the Greater Gainesville Chamber of Commerce, the University of Florida, Santa Fe College, the Alachua County Children's Alliance, United Way, Partnership for Strong Families, and the Alachua County Public Schools, began to revisit the idea. These citizens and organizations hosted many community input sessions and public meetings to discuss the path forward.

In 2016, the BoCC contracted with the Well Florida Council (wellflorida.org) to conduct a children's needs assessment, with a focus on children prenatal to 5 years old. The BoCC also voted to establish a dependent Children's Services Advisory Board (CSAB). The CSAB was tasked with recommending innovative and creative programs to serve young children, gather data, consult with existing programs, and ultimately make a recommendation to the BoCC regarding the advisability of creating an independent CSC in Alachua County.

The Campaign for the Children's Trust of Alachua County conducted polling to ascertain the level of commitment from the community. That polling showed residents supported the initiative, with local voters perceiving literacy, after-school learning, nutrition, and vocational opportunities as the most important things which could be funded, with early learning and return on investment messages receiving the strongest support. In February 2018, the BoCC unanimously voted to move forward with a voter referendum to create and fund the Children's Trust of Alachua County.

Through these efforts, the Children's Trust of Alachua County was established according to Section 125.901 Florida Statutes and Alachua County Ordinance 18-08. In November 2018, the voters approved the Trust referendum by over 61% of the votes. As a Special Independent District with taxing authority, the Trust can levy up to .5 mil, resulting in annual estimated revenues over \$8,000,000.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Building Together: Year of Progress & Partnerships

Dear Friends and Partners,

This year has been filled with tremendous progress, collaboration, and shared purpose as we continued our work to create a stronger, more connected system of support for children and families in Alachua County. Together, we have taken important steps toward ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

In March, we had the honor of welcoming more than 200 residents, community leaders, and partners to our Open House event, celebrating the opening of our new building. This milestone symbolized not just growth in space, but growth in collaboration bringing together the many people and organizations that make our mission possible.

Among our proudest accomplishments this year was the establishment of the Childcare Tuition Assistance Program, developed in partnership with the Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County. This initiative is helping reduce the cost of childcare for eligible families, ensuring that more children can access high-quality early learning experiences while supporting parents' ability to work and provide for their families.

We also invested in the Doula Friendly Initiative, resulting in UF Health becoming the first hospital in the nation to earn the Doula Friendly Designation - a groundbreaking achievement that creates a stronger system of support for families during one of life's most vulnerable and important moments.

Our first publication, The Parenting Playbook, debuted this year as a new family resource magazine, reflecting our commitment to equipping caregivers with the information, tools, and encouragement they need to thrive. In addition, we launched two new platforms to strengthen community dialogue our podcast, Community Conversations: Real Talk, Real Impact, and our monthly Morning Show with Tu Fiesta Radio, creating spaces for honest discussion and shared learning about issues that affect children and families across Alachua County.

Collaboration remained at the heart of our work as we joined with the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners and the Center for Nonprofit Excellence to launch the Literacy Collaborative, an initiative focused on developing a countywide Literacy Plan that builds upon the recommendations outlined in the Literacy Needs Assessment Report. In response to rising concerns about youth and community safety, we also joined with the City and County on gun violence prevention initiatives, investing in youth councils, the development of a countywide strategic plan, and grants for community organizations providing prevention programming and support for young people. Each of these efforts reflects what is possible when we come together as public agencies, nonprofits, educators, families, and residents with a shared vision for our community's children.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for your continued trust, collaboration, and commitment. Together, we are building the foundation for a healthier, safer, and more hopeful future for all of Alachua County's children and families.

Sincerely,



Ken Cornell, Board Chair



Marsha Kiner, Executive Director



CHILDREN'S TRUST
OF ALACHUA COUNTY

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Executive Director



Ken Cornell
Chair, County Commissioner

OUR SERVICE REACH IN 2025

GOAL 1

Children and Youth are Healthy and Have Nurturing Caregivers and Relationships

21 post-partum doulas trained by the **BEAM Birth Network**

171 professionals engaged by the **Doula Friendly Initiative**

495 parents served by **Maternal Health Perinatal Navigator**

1,978 families served by **NewboRN**

88 children served by **Child Advocacy Center**

451 youth served by **PALS**

49 adolescent girls served by **Pace Reach**

13 children with special needs served by **Dance Alive!**

4,269 children served by **Saving Smiles**

1,691 children served by **Wellness & Healthcare Navigation**

1,176 parents served by **Family Resource Centers**



GOAL 2

Children and Youth Learn What They Need to be Successful

69 children served by the **Childcare Tuition Assistance Program**

94 children served by **Head Start Summer Bridge**

94 children served by the **Neighborhood Innovation Grant**

24 owners/directors served by the **Business and Leadership Institute for Early Learning**

366 children served by **Afterschool Programs**

1,117 children served in **Summer Camps**

7,510 children served by **Enrichment Programs**

1,608 children served by **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**

75 children served by **PEAK Literacy**

189 children served by **Swampbots Robotics**

102 children served by **Freedom School**

270 youth served by **TeensWork Alachua – Summer Youth Employment**

45 youth served by **TeensWork Alachua – Fall Civic Leadership**

20 youth served by the **Mirror Image Evolving Leaders Academy**

15 youth served by **Amplified Student Voice Coalition**

44 youth served by **AMI Kids Gainesville**

237 youth served by **3DE by Junior Achievement**



Total Served

22,251 Children

4,221 Parents

661 Professionals

27,133 Total Served*



GOAL 3

Children and Youth Live in a Safe Community

147 youth served by **Level Up Youth and Teen Enrichment Nights**

275 youth served in **Mentoring Programs**

13 youth served in **Youth Leadership and Conflict Resolution Program**

65 youth served in **Community Youth Dialogues**

5 professionals served in **River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding training**

62 professionals served in **Genesis Family Enrichment Center trainings**

27 professionals served in **Child Advocacy Center trainings**



*Numbers may reflect some duplication across programs.

GOAL 1

Children and youth are healthy and have nurturing caregivers and relationships

Goal 1 Programs

- Healthy Start of North Central Florida -NewboRN Home Visiting Program
- UF Maternal Health ACCESS Program
- A&A Doula -Doula Friendly Initiative
- Doulio Inc-Flourish Alachua
- PACE Center for Girls - REACH Community Counseling Services for Adolescent Girls
- UF Health Shands -Partners in Adolescent Lifestyle Support (PALS)
- Child Advocacy Center- Reducing Trauma to Abused Children Therapy Program
- Partnership for Strong Families- Family Resource Center, Community Resource Navigators and Help Me Grow
- Partnership for Strong Families- Consulting for Family Resource Center
- Family Resource Center at Willie Mae Stokes Community Center
- One Community Health & Wellness Resource Center



Goal Reach and Outcomes

Annual Investment:
\$3,029,100

Served to date:

- **9,835** children
- **4,068** parents
- **174** professionals



GOAL 1 SUCCESS STORIES

University of Florida - School of Dentistry

Saving Smiles Program

During a recent school-based dental screening event, a third-grade student was identified as having urgent dental needs. The child was promptly scheduled for care through our program—along with their younger sibling, who was also experiencing tooth pain.

During their appointments, dental exams and X-rays revealed that both children had severely decayed baby teeth with abscesses requiring extraction. Their mother shared that she had been trying for months to secure dental appointments elsewhere without success. As a result, both children had been missing school due to persistent toothaches. She also expressed concern about their dental anxiety, noting that their last dental treatments required sedation.

Dr. Olga explained that while our clinic does not offer sedation, we could provide sensory comfort items to help ease the children's anxiety. The extractions were completed successfully, and follow-up visits were scheduled. As the family prepared to leave, the children gave Dr. Olga a hug and thanked her for helping them.

During the March 2025 Saving Smiles clinic at the Archer Community Center, we met a 7-year-old boy for a dental exam accompanied by his parents. The child had four baby teeth with

such severe decay that only the roots remained. We discussed the need for tooth removal with his parents and strategized behavioral support techniques to ensure a positive experience. We provided noise-canceling headphones and a weighted blanket for the child, sang songs from his favorite movie, “The Lion King,” and applauded his bravery throughout the appointment. At the end of the visit, he selected a prize from our toy box and received a toothbrush goodie bag. They will return for continued care.

Below is a photo that shows examples of the behavioral supports we utilize in our program, including a weighted blanket, headphones, and a chairside stand for a child to watch a video on a phone or tablet.



Partnership for Strong Families

Family Resource Centers

A single father of four came to one of the Family Resource Centers seeking assistance with his utility bill after experiencing major life changes.

He met with staff, shared his situation, and together they brainstormed a solution. Through our partnership with the Children's Trust of Alachua County, we were able to assist with his utility costs, helping him maintain stability for his family.

Thanks to community resources and the father's determination, he left with one less worry and a little more peace of mind.

A few days later, he returned, not for more help but to say thank you. He shared that the kindness and support he received gave him hope, inspired him to focus on his own mental health, and motivated him to connect with other agencies. With a clearer headspace, he felt more positive and committed to making changes to avoid future setbacks.



GOAL 1

Program Reach and Outcome

Investment: \$49,197



Doula Friendly Designation

UF Health is the First Hospital in the Nation to be Named “Doula Friendly®”

Mothers and families do better when they're able to follow their birth plans. Programs supported by the Children's Trust of Alachua County, including the Doula Friendly® Initiative, help parents and their doulas feel welcomed and involved during the birth process. This support leads to less stressful births on the child and a better experience for everyone involved.

Helping Families Have Healthier Births

The Children's Trust of Alachua County proudly provided funding and community partnership for the launch of the nation's first Doula Friendly® Designation at UF Health, delivered by A&A Doula Consulting.

“We are thrilled to fund the nation's first Doula Friendly Designation here in Alachua County,” said Marsha Kiner, Executive Director of The Children's Trust of Alachua County. “Ensuring doulas are welcomed at hospitals and available to assist families is central to our mission. We see this initiative as an investment in and a commitment to the well-being of our community's most valued resources—our children and their families. Healthy births and empowered parents will develop healthy and thriving babies in Alachua County. And that's our goal.”

The Doula Friendly® Initiative (DFI) provides the tools and standards to support healthcare facilities in integrating doula care into the labor and delivery process. Hospitals earning the designation commit to systems that ensure doulas are welcomed as trusted partners in the delivery room, alongside nurses, physicians, and families. The Children's Trust helped enable this designation through its early investment and commitment to improving maternal and infant health in Alachua County.

Advancing Community Health Through Doula Integration

The Doula Friendly® Initiative champions a new model of collaborative care by building bridges between doulas, hospital staff, and families. Since receiving the designation, UF Health and its affiliated care sites have implemented institution-wide shifts by updating culture, policies, and workflows to formally include doulas as trusted care partners. Regular coordination meetings, doula education workshops, and ongoing communication between doulas and clinical teams ensure that care is seamless, patient-centered, and aligned with hospital standards. This innovative integration improves community health by supporting healthier births and empowering families through comprehensive, system-supported care during pregnancy, labor, and postpartum.

Strengthening Collaboration and strenth Engagement

Over the past year, the DFI has seen a marked increase in collaboration between hospital staff and the local doula community.

- 8** engagement events (virtual discussions, leadership sessions, and hands-on education opportunities)
- 149** clinical and non-clinical hospital staff member participation
- 22** community doulas contributed feedback to improve policies and care practices

“This designation reflects our ongoing dedication to enhancing perinatal health and ensuring families receive the highest quality care during their birth journey.”

— Joanne Tanner, MSN, RNC-EFM,
Nurse Manager of Labor and Delivery and
Antepartum, UF Health Shands Hospital

Deepening Shared Understanding

DFI emphasized two-way learning and continuous feedback to make sure the program reflects the needs of both clinical teams and doulas. This year, 116 hospital staff members and 21 doulas completed in-depth surveys. Their responses offered important insights into program strengths, workflow challenges, and opportunities for better integration and education. These efforts, along with regular meetings and facilitated sessions, show growing alignment and stronger relationships. Together, they signal that both systems are becoming increasingly ready to advance doula integration in ways that improve family experiences and outcomes.

Alignment with Broader Health Priorities

This DFI supports Alachua County’s maternal and infant health improvement objectives and aligns with state and national efforts to reduce disparities in birth outcomes through community partnerships and culturally responsive care models. The Children’s Trust contributes to this program to help achieve these goals and expand access to doula services for more families.

The designation honors hospitals that fully integrate doulas as essential members of the birth team, promoting a more supportive birth environment. For many years, doulas were often not welcomed in hospital settings despite evidence showing that doula support reduces complications, strengthens patient autonomy, improves patient satisfaction, and promotes healthier births. This initiative seeks to improve these perceptions and create more respectful, patient-centered birth experiences for families across Alachua County.



“Working in a Doula Friendly® hospital makes a powerful difference. My clients feel truly seen, heard, and supported, and I’m welcomed as an essential partner in their care. When a hospital embraces doulas, it creates a space where families feel safe and understood, and where real collaboration can happen. That collaboration leads to calmer, more confident, and more empowered births. And as someone who has also given birth in a Doula Friendly® hospital, I know firsthand how deeply comforting and transformative that support can be.”

— Stephanie Romelus,
Doula and Alachua County Parent



GOAL 1

Family Resource Centers

In every community, families face different challenges. Sometimes it's figuring out afterschool care, putting food on the table, finding steady work, or navigating parenting on a tight budget. Family Resource Centers (FRCs), supported by the Children's Trust of Alachua County, make sure families have a partner close to home—a place to turn when life gets tough.

Strengthening Families Where They Live

At their heart, these centers connect parents and caregivers to tools, knowledge, and local resources that help families and neighborhoods thrive. From emergency food and clothing to after-school programs, job support, and financial literacy workshops, each center is a trusted hub for stability and growth.

A Network That Reaches Every Corner of the County

The FRC network is spread across Alachua County:

- One Community Health Family Resource Center (East Gainesville)
- SWAG Family Resource Center (southwest Gainesville)
- Family Resource Center at Willie Mae Stokes Community Center
- Library Partnership Resource Center

Program Reach and Outcomes

Total Investment: \$1,355,500

4,088 community members served

44,629 total visits recorded

7,510 services requested

97% of services requested were successfully delivered

95% of participants would recommend the program to others

92% of participants were satisfied with support received



FRC and CRN Services

Necessity assistance
Academic assistance
Financial literacy
Employment support
Parenting workshops
Health and wellness programs
Childcare referrals
Connections to social services



"The most important thing I want our community to know is that there's help out there. You don't have to suffer or struggle in silence. There are people who really do care and want to see our community and people do better. Our community is only as strong as its community members. Finding people who will support the work not just with their dollars, but also with their time is a great resource for the resource center."

— Bishop Stokes, Executive Director at the Willie Mae Stokes Community Resource Center

For families in rural or underserved areas, Community Resource Navigators (CRNs) bring services directly to local libraries and community centers. Together, these centers and mobile services served 4,088 community members across the county in the past year.

Each resource center is run by trusted local organizations, like the Partnership for Strong Families, the Pleasant Street Civil Rights and Cultural Arts Center, and the Willie Mae Stokes Community Resource Center. In rural Alachua County, families no longer have to travel far for essential services. The Willie Mae Stokes Community Resource Center acts as a local advocate, bringing programs and support normally available only in urban areas to small towns.

Bishop Christopher Stokes, Executive Director of the Willie Mae Stokes Community Center, said, *"The Children's Trust was a lifeline and lifesaver for our community. Because our resource center is 11-13 miles away from Gainesville, transportation is a real challenge. The support allows us to provide food every Tuesday, help families with assistance, and meet basic medical needs. It's been a tremendous blessing."*

More than 80 community partners, including schools, nonprofits, and government agencies, help expand services where they might not otherwise exist. Partnerships with entities like Bread of the Mighty, CDS Family Services, Alachua County Library District, and the Department of Children and Families expand program reach, enhance service quality, and strengthen the county's safety net for families.

Turning Challenges Into New Beginnings

Some of the most powerful moments happen when residents find the help they need to move forward. One young woman came to the center looking for opportunities. She started volunteering, and with guidance from staff, she landed a job, bought her first car, and built confidence in her independence.

Bishop Stokes calls these "light bulb moments"—times when people realize they can meet their goals and overcome barriers. Whether it's finding work, enrolling in classes, or accessing healthcare, these breakthroughs can change lives.

The FRC network works because of a dedicated team of managers, family support coordinators, and navigators backed by trained volunteers who are committed to helping families without judgment. They keep track of visits, services, and goals, making sure families get the support they need. The results speak for themselves: families are more stable, have better access to resources, and kids are thriving. Having places like these in our communities is essential. These centers give families a chance to succeed, grow, and feel supported in their communities.

GOAL 1

Program Reach and Outcomes

Annual Investment: \$220,000

Served to date:

- **59** children
- **84** screenings
- **115** referrals to needed services

Help Me Grow Alachua

Supporting Early Childhood Development

Every child deserves the chance to start school ready to learn. But identifying developmental or behavioral challenges early and connecting families to the right support can be complex.

Launched just this year, the Help Me Grow Alachua staff works directly with families, like one mother who was unsure how to support her son's speech development. After connecting with Help Me Grow Alachua, she was referred to a local pediatric rehabilitation center where she learned effective strategies to help her son communicate and strengthen his speech skills.

Funded and supported by the Children's Trust of Alachua County, this evidence-based program helps families find free developmental and behavioral services. They also help organize screenings, provide guidance, and make connections to healthcare, childcare, and parenting support.

Help Me Grow Alachua is operated by professional coordinators and healthcare providers through Partnership for Strong Families.

Connecting Families to What They Need Most

Help Me Grow Alachua is more than a single program. It's a system model that builds on what already works by connecting existing community services into one collaborative network of support. Families can access free screenings, developmental information, and referrals.

Access to these programs is available through Family Resource Centers, like the Library Partnership Resource Center and the SWAG Family Resource Center, and through an online system available anywhere at any time.

Visit helpmegrowfl.org to start a short 10–15-minute free screening for your child.



Screenings are meant to give parents peace of mind and help providers spot developmental needs before they become barriers to learning. Whether it's a question about speech, motor skills, or behavior, Help Me Grow coordinators guide caregivers through every step, connecting them to the right specialists and ensuring follow-up so that no family falls through the cracks.

Since the program launched in April 2025, Help Me Grow has served 59 children and 54 families across Alachua County, with 96% of children successfully connected to developmental or early intervention services. Families report increased confidence in supporting their child's growth, and partners note stronger collaboration between early childhood agencies and healthcare providers.



Linking Literacy and Early Childhood Development

Recognizing that not all families have access to early support, Help Me Grow Alachua emphasizes outreach and service to all families and caregivers across the county. Efforts include multilingual materials, staff training, and partnerships with trusted community organizations to ensure families feel seen and supported in their own neighborhoods.

Building on this commitment, the program is actively integrating a literacy assessment component to help children develop early reading skills, an essential predictor of later academic success. This initiative, led by the Children's Trust of Alachua County in partnership with local schools, nonprofits, and organizations like the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning, is already underway. Families are being introduced to activities, resources, and programs they can use at home and online to strengthen reading skills, starting with a small pilot group.

As the initiative expands, it will engage community partners, including churches, tutoring programs, and after-school groups, to extend literacy support throughout Alachua County. Community feedback is guiding the effort, ensuring it addresses barriers like mental health and food insecurity that can affect learning.

By linking Help Me Grow Alachua's developmental screenings and family support services with literacy assessment and outreach, the program provides families with guidance, connects them to resources, and creates a coordinated system of support across schools and community organizations.

This evolving, community-wide effort is designed to give every child the best chance to learn to read well, succeed in school, and thrive in life through early, coordinated support for families and children.



GOAL 2: Educated

Children and youth learn what they need to be successful.

Goal Reach and Outcomes

Annual Investment:

\$6,851,516

Served to date:

- **11,915** children
- **153** parents
- **239** professionals



Education and Access to Quality Care

- Business Leadership Institute for Early Learning - V'Locity Master Class Series & Accreditation
- Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County - Childcare Tuition Assistance Program
- Episcopal Children's Services - Summer Bridge for Head Start
- Gainesville Thrives, Inc.-Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Peak Literacy
- The Education Foundation-Alachua County Amplify

Career Exploration

- Goodwill Industries of North Florida-TeensWork Alachua (TWA)
- Junior Achievement of Alachua County-3DE Program

Summer Programming

- Akwaaba Freedom School-Gainesville
- Akwaaba Freedom School-Hawthorne

Enrichment Programming

- All Well Health Services
- CE's Underground Kitchen
- Crafty Gemini Youth Development
- Cultural Arts Coalition
- DJ ELO Global
- Dream on Purpose
- Gator Junior Golf
- IGB Education
- Infinite Dream Builders
- Lee's Preschool Center
- Motiv8U of North Central Florida
- Music & Arts Program for Youth
- Santa Fe College
- UF Museum of Natural History

Afterschool Programming

- Boys and Girls Clubs of Alachua County
- Deeper Purpose Community Church
- Gainesville Area Community Tennis Association
- Aces in Motion
- Gainesville Circus Center
- Girls Place
- Kids Count in Alachua County
- Willie Mae Stokes Community Center



SUMMER CAMP & AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Learning, Growing, & Staying Safe

The most dangerous times for youth are between 3 and 6 p.m., the hours after the school day ends but when many children are unsupervised. Accessible afterschool and summer camp programs provide care where issues like lack of transportation, high cost, or a lack of options exist.

By offering scholarships and responsive programming, the Children's Trust of Alachua County and their partners can offer children programs that also benefit them academically, socially, and emotionally. Programs funded by the Children's Trust for afterschool show measurable gains in literacy, math, and social-emotional skills for Alachua County children..

Families consistently praise the programs for their quality, accessibility, and the dedication of their staff. Children and parents alike have offered feedback that can help the programs grow and serve more effectively, suggesting more activity options, better transportation, and additional staff for personalized support.

Program Investment

Summer Camp: \$2,165,298

Afterschool: \$1,167,886

Total Investment: \$3,333,184



Summer Camp Outcomes:

Number of children served: **1,117**

Number of summer camps: **22**

% served by grade level:

Elementary school: 66%

Middle school: 24%

High school: 10%

Summer Camps 2025

- Traveling Art Camp
- Behavior Bricks
- UF CROP Full Steam
- Limitless Adventures
- UF Veterinary Medicine
- Mirror Image Education and Leadership
- Star Center Children's Theatre
- Hagios Early Learning Center
- Williams Temple
- Greater Duval Neighborhood Association
- I Am Stem
- Gainesville Circus Center
- Girls Place
- Just For Us Education
- Community Impact Corporation
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Alachua County
- Deeper Purpose Community Church
- Camp Makerie
- IGB Education
- Kids Count in Alachua County
- The Concrete Rose Foundation
- Gainesville Area Community Tennis Association
- Aces in Motion



Overall satisfaction: 95% of parents reported their overall experience as good or great.

Proficiency or improvement in social-emotional skills:

92% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that youth gained confidence/self esteem at camp

92% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that youth gained social skills at camp.

GOAL 2



Afterschool Programs 2025

- Boys and Girls Clubs of Alachua County
- Deeper Purpose Community Church
- Gainesville Area Community Tennis Association
- Aces in Motion
- Gainesville Circus Center
- Girls Place
- Kids Count in Alachua County
- Willie Mae Stokes Community Center

Afterschool Outcomes:

Number of children served: **366**

Average age: **9 years old**

% served by grade level:

Elementary school: **69%**

Middle school: **22%**

High school: **9%**

Average household income: **\$43,321**

Outcomes (Social-Emotional & Academic):

- 62%** showed pre-post improvement
- 90%** demonstrated proficiency or improvement
- Literacy: **80%** improved
- Math: **70%** improved

Parent & Youth Satisfaction:

- Parents felt kids were safe: **98%**
- Youth felt safe: **90%**
- Youth felt cared for: **87%**
- Overall youth experience: **99%**

The children are expressing their developing knowledge and curiosity of the sciences, and our program is playing a part in it! We've gotten calls and emails from parents, staff, and even those who just so happened to come across us at a session where we had our science bus out, and we're congratulated on what we're providing for and to the community.

— Cultural Arts Coalition



PREPARING YOUTH TO LEARN, LEAD, AND SUCCEED

Alachua County youth thrive when they have opportunities to learn, explore, and grow outside the traditional classroom. The Children's Trust of Alachua County-supported programs, including Amplified Student Voice, summer camps, afterschool programs, and TeensWork Alachua, help children and teens develop academically, socially, and professionally.

By providing safe, enriching spaces, leadership opportunities, and hands-on work experience, the Children's Trust of Alachua County ensures young people gain the skills, confidence, and support they need to succeed in school, career, and life.

Amplified Student Voice Giving Students a Seat at the Table

The Amplified Student Voice program provided opportunities for students to develop their voice and participate in educational advocacy. The program empowered students to collaborate, plan, and share thoughts about their educational experience along with learning about the operation of educational institutions and local government.

During FY2025, 15 students from five local high schools participated in monthly meetings, college tours, and civic engagement activities that build leadership, communication skills, and confidence. All Amplified youth reported feeling empowered or very empowered through their experience in the program. They gained the opportunity to offer their perspective, feedback, and possible solutions to important issues within their schools and community. The program also facilitated three college tours to the University of South Florida, University of Florida, and Santa Fe College for 125 local high school students.

Program impact is measured through attendance, student-led surveys, and the completion of student-set goals. Early results show increased engagement, leadership development, and positive contributions to school environments.

Program Reach and Outcomes

Numbers reflect performance measures for Amplified Student Voice.

- Total investment: **\$125,000**
- Teens engaged: **15** district-wide

Student satisfaction survey:

- **100%** report that Amplified was “extremely valuable” or “very valuable” to them.
- **84%** report they are “extremely likely” to continue to participate next year
- **72%** report they are “extremely likely” to ask a friend to participate next year



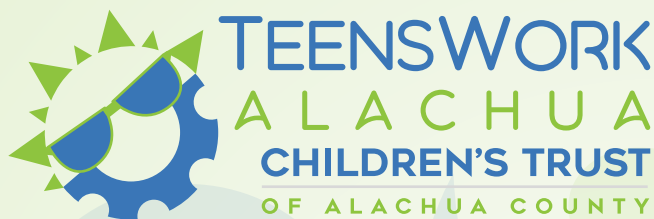
Amplified Student Representatives participated in School Board Meetings and provided updates for the ACPS School Board during their sessions. Charity took part in multiple Amplified meetings, helped formulate student survey questions, attended virtual College Boot Camp planning sessions, and went on college tours. Through these experiences, Charity enhanced her speaking skills, advocacy abilities, and overall confidence. Unlike other participants, Charity's younger sister also joined the Amplified program and plans to continue next school year as Charity begins her studies as a first-year student at the University of Central Florida.

During the trip to the Museum of Science Industry (MOSI) and the University of South Florida in Tampa, Charity expressed how the experience heightened her enthusiasm for starting a new journey at the University of Central Florida as a new Knight.

Next fall, current Amplified students will lead efforts to recruit more participants. Our goal is to have two representatives from each grade level in every high school, totaling 8 students per high school and 56 students overall in the Amplified program. We look forward to the continued support of our district and partners.

— Amplified Student Voice Coalition

GOAL 2



Building Career Readiness in Young Adults

TeensWork Alachua is a summer youth employment program funded by the Children's Trust of Alachua County and managed in partnership with Goodwill Industries of North Florida. In its fourth year, the program offers paid internships to teens aged 14 to 18 who live in Alachua County and are enrolled in local schools or GED programs. TeensWork connects teens with local businesses where they can work up to 25 hours per week for six weeks over the summer, gaining real-world job experience and preparing them for future careers.

Goodwill handles employer recruitment, outreach to students, job readiness training for participants, and job coaching for teens and employers. Businesses that hire a TeensWork intern range from corporations to coffee shops to electrical contractors. In a community like Alachua County, the opportunities are endless for getting teens involved in an industry where they may have long-term interest.

Teens receive individualized support from their job coaches, which helps with work habits, problem-solving, and communication, and leads to stronger skills, confidence, and professional growth.

Youth participants reported improvements in career readiness (83%) and financial literacy (88%), and they gained skills in accountability, communication, teamwork, leadership, time management, résumé building, and workplace professionalism. Employers rated teen performance highly, with 97% satisfied and 36% saying they would consider the teens for future employment within the same business.

Alachua County businesses interested in hiring Teenswork interns or eligible high school students can apply at goodwillnorthfl.org/teenswork-alachua.



Program Reach and Outcomes

Numbers reflect performance measures for TeensWork Alachua.

Total investment: \$945,000

270 Youth served

Program model:

- **6-8 weeks** of employment
- **11.8 hours** (average) of work readiness training
- **\$13** an hour
- **Job coach** support and mentoring
- **Establish bank** account and set up direct deposit

Opportunity growth:

- **97** employers in 2024 to 125 in 2025
- **98%** of teens agreed they gained valuable work skills
- **95%** of youth demonstrated growth or proficiency in work skills according to their supervisor
- **95%** of teens worked more than 100 hours
- **88%** of teens demonstrated gains in financial literacy
- **83%** of teens demonstrated gains in their career readiness knowledge
- **Employers included:** Santa Fe College, GRU, Gainesville Parks & Recreation, Police Department, City of Gainesville, local nonprofits, the City of Alachua, and more

TeensWork Alachua Alumni Survey will follow program completers after graduation to track their transition to adulthood and long-term outcomes.

GOAL 2 SUCCESS STORIES

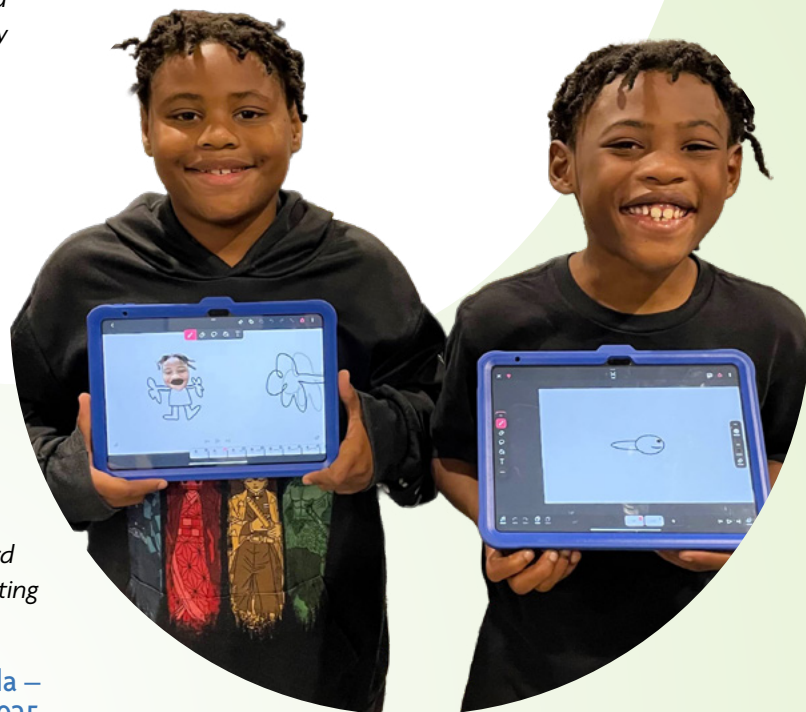
Keaun and Keheir Crawford are passionate about developing their talents as animators, with a long-term goal of launching their own animation studio. They have devoted countless hours to mastering their craft—delving not only into animation itself but also into the creative disciplines that bring stories to life, including storytelling, character design, and digital production.

Thanks to the new state-of-the-art Innovation Lab at Northwest Boys and Girls Club—made possible through the generous support of the James M. Cox Foundation—Keaun and Keheir now have daily access to professional-grade equipment and resources that elevate their work to new heights. In this space, they experiment with film techniques, practice photography, and explore music production—skills that intertwine to enrich their creative vision. Their dedication and use of these tools not only advance their artistic growth but also inspire their peers, demonstrating how creativity, hard work, and opportunity can open doors to bright and exciting futures.

— Boys & Girls Club of Northeast Florida –
Northwest Club Summer Camp 2025

93% of parents agreed or strongly agreed their child was able to explore his/her interests at camp.

90% of parents agreed or strongly agreed their child gained new skills/knowledge over the summer



This summer, our partnership with CTAC helped us nearly double participation, engaging 40 campers in a transformative “Field to Fork” experience. What began as a camp quickly grew into a community-wide effort, bringing together families, schools, local farms, and the university to deliver meaningful learning opportunities.

Campers explored every stage of the food journey—from the farm field to their own dinner plates—through a thoughtfully designed curriculum and hands-on experiences. With the active support of parents, attendance remained strong and engagement consistent. Field trips further deepened learning, offering real-world connections that sparked curiosity and excitement. The program concluded with a Saturday celebration where campers proudly accepted awards and certificates, demonstrating their knowledge and growth.

Our partnerships and aforementioned collaborations transformed a summer camp into a living classroom where youth not only gained knowledge, but also developed an appreciation for agriculture, nutrition, and the community working behind the scenes to bring food to the table.

By investing in this program, funders are helping us nurture the next generation of informed, curious, and engaged young people—youth who leave camp not only with memories, but with lessons that will guide healthier choices and stronger community connections for years to come.

— Williams Temple C.O.G.I.C. Summer Camp 2025



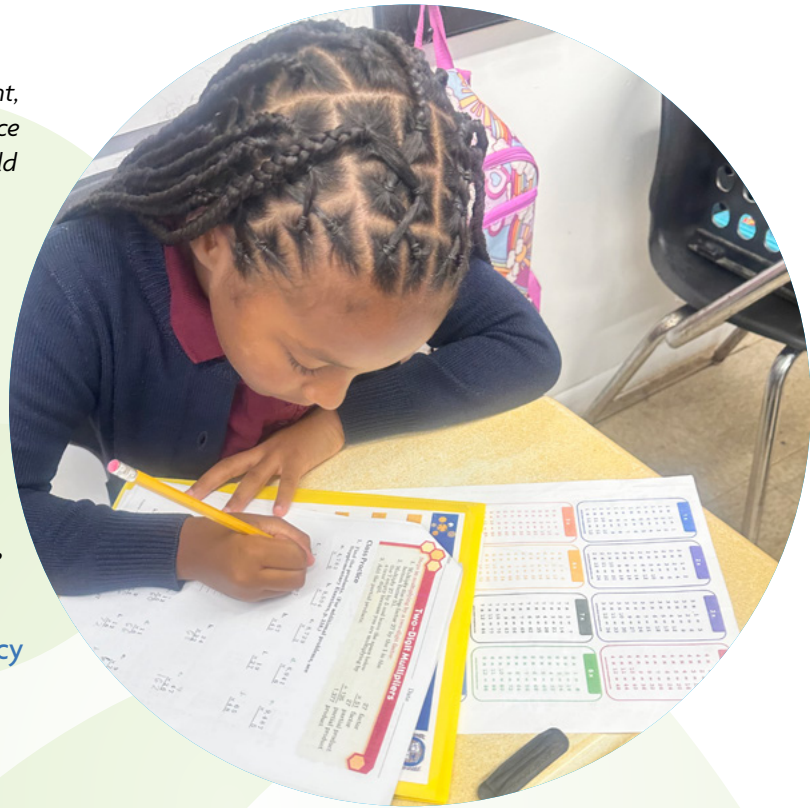
GOAL 2 SUCCESS STORIES

We collaborated with the Guardian ad Litem program to help foster youth access academic resources. One ninth-grade student, who was reading significantly below grade level, received guidance on navigating the school system. The guardian remarked, “I would be so lost in all this without your direction.”

Additionally, a sixth-grade student improved her reading level from 1.9 to 5.5 within one year. Her standardized test scores showed gains in both reading and math, bringing her close to grade-level benchmarks. Her mother expressed deep gratitude for the support and guidance provided by PEAK Literacy.

Lastly, two siblings who joined as English Language Learners made remarkable progress. The younger sibling advanced from a reading level of 1.2 to 2.8, while the older sibling improved from 3.1 to 5.6. Both graduated from the program, reading above grade level.

— PEAK Literacy



Children participating in our Head Start Summer Bridge program made learning gains in **literacy, math, social emotional skills, physical, language, and cognitive areas** that outpaced children who did not participate in the program.

In our current Early Explorers series, “Prehistoric Life,” we have had the great opportunity to teach our young students all about fossils at Head Start. We discovered that many children have never heard of fossils before and could not give a clear description as to what they could possibly be. Throughout our series, we allow students to touch, examine, and play with fossils so that they can grow more familiar with the subject. We enhance their critical thinking skills by asking them to identify animal trackways and the appropriate tools a scientist would use to dig for fossils, as well as by having them match fossils to their prehistoric counterparts.

With hands-on engagement at the forefront, these children end their weeks with us with a heightened understanding of a scientific topic that they will more than likely encounter at school in the years to come. They understand what fossils are, what they look like, and how they are retrieved. These successes contribute heavily to their academic trajectory and lay the groundwork for further curiosity and interest.

— Florida Museum of Natural History



Throughout the semester, students transitioned from guarded and skeptical to open and expressive. One of our team members noted, “They arrived guarded but left with the language to express what they truly felt.”

This trend was observed across both sites. As trust was built, students embraced the opportunity to explore their identities and values. One parent reported to our president, Shareen, that her daughter had shown a noticeable shift in attitude and engagement after completing the DOP REACH program. She attributed the transformation to the safe space, relatable mentors, and structured environment that the program provided.

Stories like this affirm the power of relational programming that goes deeper than surface-level motivation. This kind of transformation is what DOP REACH is all about: helping young people unlock new levels of confidence and self-awareness.

— Dream on Purpose



Enrichment programming is offered outside of school through after-school programs, summer camps, libraries, and community centers at no cost to children or host sites. These programs focus on key areas such as health and wellness, leadership, life management skills, career exploration, STEM, social-emotional awareness, and arts and culture.

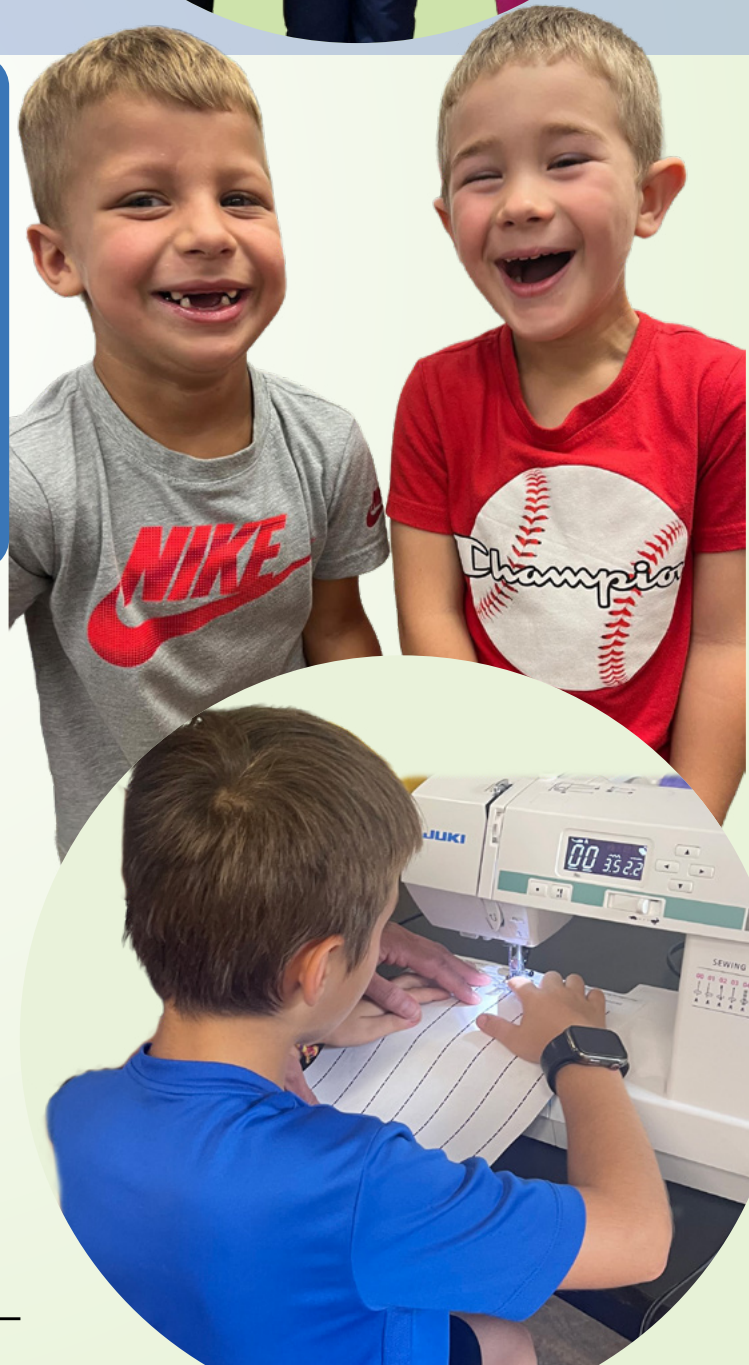
- **92%** of participants gained knowledge
- **91%** developed new skills
- **87%** showed improved behavior
- **85%** were exposed to new topics and experiences.

In early 2025, we began our EDEP sessions at Mebane Middle School. Jack, an 8th grader, initially preferred to stay isolated, quietly sitting apart from the group and declining to participate. Our lead teacher, Vanessa, greeted him each day and consistently offered encouragement without pressure.

During our fifth session, when students designed custom T-shirts using a Cricut and heat press, Jack surprised us by asking to create one with his own acronym. He eagerly explained that it represented an online forum he had started for kids interested in ironworks and soldering. This moment sparked a change—Jack became our most engaged student, sharing how he loved sewing with his grandmother and crafting with family.

Jack's growth illustrates our mission: to provide a safe, supportive space where students feel free to express themselves, explore new interests, and gain confidence in their own creativity.

— Crafty Gemini Youth Development



GOAL 2

Program Reach and Outcomes

- **13** businesses
- **100%** reporting growth in leadership skills

Total Investment: \$360,000

Business and Leadership Institute (BLI)

V'locity Master Class for the Childcare Industry

High-quality childcare is about more than caring educators; it also requires strong leadership, business practices, and sustainable operations. The Business Leadership Institute (BLI) V'locity program, funded by the Children's Trust of Alachua County and delivered in partnership with local experts, equips early learning centers and family home-based childcare business owners with the tools, training, and mentorship they need to lead and successfully run their childcare businesses.

For Heather Doles, the BLI Master Class became a turning point for her program at the Santa Fe College Little School. As a new director, the program armed her with skills and confidence, leading to a market survey that allowed her to understand competition tuition policies—changes she feared might drive families away but ultimately strengthened their commitment. She streamlined staffing without losing a single teacher and collaborated with Human Resources to create a “senior child care teacher” role that rewarded degreed educators. She also guided her staff through clarifying their mission, vision, values, and norms, aligned the scholarship process with community systems, and led the school through accreditation—unlocking the 20%

Graduates of the **BLI** program leveraged an additional **\$184,376** from the State of Florida to support early learning in Alachua County

increase in reimbursement rates. After 18 months, the Little School is a success story in improving business processes and management to benefit both families and staff. As Heather puts it, BLI gave her the tools and support “to save my school.”

Through targeted business education, BLI empowers participants to strengthen both the quality of care they deliver and the sustainability of their operations. Participants gain skills in finance, marketing, human resources, and real estate, learn to navigate the complexities of childcare management, and receive ongoing guidance through peer cohorts, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

“Stepping into the director role at the Little School at Santa Fe College uncovered operational challenges I had never been trained to solve. I am an expert at early childhood education, but I had never run a business. The BLI V'locity Master Class gave me the tools, confidence, and industry-specific strategies to strengthen our operations, enhance our systems, and lead with clarity. Eighteen months later, we are thriving as an early childhood education center—with stronger programs, refined processes, new opportunities for staff, and a clear vision for our future.”

— Heather Doles, Director, Santa Fe College Little School Accreditation Academy



Strengthening Early Childhood Education Through Business Leadership

BLI also supports childcare business owners and management to pursue national accreditation, including Florida's Gold Seal designation, through the Accreditation Academy. The academy recognizes programs that meet high standards for quality and professionalism and can unlock additional funding opportunities, including 20% tuition increases for those children receiving childcare subsidies. Through the Florida Gold Seal 20% tuition increase and other monetary incentives, business owners are able to support competitive wages and the impact of inflation, as well as plan for future growth.

Accredited centers differentiate themselves as committed, educated, and family-focused, giving parents confidence in choosing high-quality programs. The Accreditation Academy guides providers step-by-step through the process, helping them implement best practices while expanding access to professional resources. A Sustainable Model for Quality Care

The Children's Trust provides funding, stewardship, and strategic support to childcare centers and professionals, ensuring leaders have access to training and resources that drive business sustainability and quality improvement. In 2025, BLI programs engaged 13 Alachua County early learning businesses with 100% reporting growth in key business and leadership skills. Common challenges addressed include financial sustainability, enrollment management, and service expansion, with measurable improvements in operations and program reach.

These support programs foster community partnerships, leverage local expertise, and attract new investment, helping Alachua County's early learning sector grow stronger and more resilient. 16 early learning businesses have achieved accreditations through this initiative, signaling an upward trajectory in both quality and business performance.

By strengthening childcare programs at both the business and educational levels, these initiatives ensure children have access to stable, nurturing, and professionally run learning environments, supporting success for families and communities for years to come.



GOAL 3

Children and youth live in a safe community.

- City of Gainesville-Gun Violence Initiative
- AMI KIDS Gainesville- AMI KIDS Gainesville Workforce Development Program
- YMCA-Teen and Youth Engagement
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay, Inc.
- Community Impact Corporation, Inc.
- The Education Foundation
- IGB Education Corporation
- Made for More Foundation, Inc.



Goal Reach and Outcomes

Annual Investment: \$1,099,953

Served to date:

- **500** children
- **248** professionals

SUCCESS STORY

One success story that stands out involves twin sisters, Maria and Miracle, who share a mentor in our Take Stock in Children program. Not because they had to — but because their mentor wanted both of them. From the very beginning, their mentor saw how close the sisters were and believed they could both benefit from having a shared space for encouragement, accountability, and support.

Typically, our mentoring sessions pause during the summer, which can make it difficult for students to stay connected and supported. However, thanks to funding from the Children's Trust, Maria, Miracle, and their mentor were able to continue meeting throughout the summer in safe and engaging environments.

This extra time together allowed their mentor to strengthen the bond with both girls as they prepared to transition from middle school to high school — a period that often brings uncertainty and change. During these sessions, the sisters gained confidence about starting high school, set new academic goals, and talked openly about their dreams for the future.

As the summer came to an end, their mentor shared that she might not be able to continue with them in high school due to changes in her schedule. While this could have been an emotional setback, the continued support from the program and the time they spent together during the summer helped provide closure. Maria and Miracle understood that sometimes life changes are beyond their control — and that it's okay.

Today, both sisters have entered high school with excitement, resilience, and readiness to welcome new opportunities. Their experience shows how the partnership between Take Stock in Children and the Children's Trust not only keeps mentorships strong through transitions but also empowers students to face change with confidence and hope.

— Take Stock in Children

*Names have been changed

Children and youth live in a safe community

Empowering Teen Leaders

Investing in Youth Dialogue, Workshops, and Empowerment

Creating a community where children and youth can thrive starts with safety. For some teens in Alachua County, persistent exposure to violence and trauma, limited structured outlets for young adults, and growing social pressures pose serious challenges.

It's important that young people feel secure in their neighborhoods, schools, and daily lives. When that happens, teens are more likely to reach their potential and contribute positively to those around them.

The Children's Trust continues to invest in initiatives that make this possible by partnering with the City of Gainesville and local organizations to reduce youth exposure to gun violence and strengthen opportunities for leadership and advocacy

Youth Councils: Building Tomorrow's Leaders

Youth Councils are groups designed to give teens a voice in shaping the future of their community. The Gainesville Youth Services Council (YSC), made up of ten young leaders, represents a powerful model of civic engagement. This year, 44 young people participated in peer-to-peer dialogues, to not just learn about leadership, but to practice it.

Young voices are shaping solutions:

- 44 youth, ages 14 – 24
- Peer-to-peer dialogues on youth gun violence
- Full committee of 10 members
- Contributed to the Gun Violence Prevention Strategic Plan
- Teens presented their ideas publicly to city officials

Through leadership workshops, advocacy, conflict resolution training, and community forums, participants gain skills that help them navigate challenges and influence real change. Events like the **CommuniTEEN Kickbacks** provide a safe space for youth to connect, share experiences, and collaborate on ways to address issues that directly affect their lives. Insights from these students are being heard, and youth feedback has informed city and county planning processes to shape the local Gun Violence Prevention Strategic Plan.



"Working with my students has helped me realize that we can be very optimistic about the positive impact today's youth can have on our future. I'm proud to be part of this program."

— Kenneth, mentor at Lincoln Middle School



GOAL 3

Addressing Gun Violence for Safer Communities

Gun violence remains one of the most pressing safety challenges facing Alachua County. Youth continue to experience exposure to violence, social pressures, and the easy accessibility of firearms. The City of Gainesville's Gun Violence Prevention Strategic Plan, developed with CTAC's partnership and youth input, focuses on addressing these issues at the root through prevention, mentorship, and community engagement.

The plan prioritizes the creation of safe spaces, the strengthening of support systems, and the development of leadership pipelines that keep young people engaged and hopeful.

Youth council members have co-developed prevention priorities and presented their ideas publicly to city officials, ensuring that the strategies being implemented reflect the realities of their experiences.

Children's lives have been impacted through:

- Leadership workshops
- Civic engagement
- Mentorship
- Conflict resolution training
- Amplifying youth voices
- Safe outlets
- Community support

Investing in Prevention, Empowerment, and Leadership

Supported by CTAC's funding and collaboration with the City of Gainesville and partners like the Alachua County Alliance, IMPACT – GNV, schools, and community organizations shows that meaningful progress requires long-term investment in young people.

These efforts are already making an impact through enhancing leadership, civic engagement, and overall well-being among participants. More importantly, they're building a generation of youth who feel heard, valued, and empowered to make their community safer.

Prevention begins not with punishment, but with opportunity. This is just one avenue that's helping to give young people the skills, support, and confidence to lead the way toward a safer, stronger Alachua County.



Award-Winning Mentorship

Take Stock in Children Celebrates 30 Years

Through its partnership with the Education Foundation, the Children's Trust of Alachua County plays a key role in expanding the reach and impact of Take Stock in Children, the only state-supported mentoring program for students. Youth are provided a foundation of support, through mentorship and financial assistance that fosters long-term success.

This year marks a remarkable milestone for Take Stock in Children: 30 years of transforming the lives of high school students in Alachua County.

For the community, this anniversary represents more than academic achievement; it stands as a symbol of safety, stability, and opportunity for local students and their college dreams. Each year, Take Stock in Children opens doors for students who might otherwise face barriers to higher education and offers scholarship matching, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) support, and personalized college planning tools to prepare for their futures.

It Begins with 61 Mentors— But It Doesn't End There

In 2025, 63 students participated in Take Stock in Children, supported by 61 active community mentors who met weekly with students to talk through goals, grades, challenges, and life beyond high school. The Children's Trust invested more than \$75,000 in mentoring activities, college readiness workshops, and leadership development sessions.

The Children's Trust's funding helps strengthen mentor recruitment and training, increase college readiness programming, and enhance enrichment opportunities for students. The program's structure centers on consistent, meaningful mentorship where volunteers meet with students weekly to discuss goals, track academic progress, and develop essential life and leadership skills. These relationships offer more than academic guidance; they create a sense of belonging and safety for youth navigating critical years of growth.

"My mentor meetings are very productive. My mentor has helped me better understand how I can pursue my future endeavors. I'm looking forward to more summer opportunities."

— Amina, Take Stock in Children student

Families are also deeply engaged with Take Stock, attending orientation events, college prep nights, and maintaining open communication with mentors and staff. These shared experiences help families feel more connected, informed, and supported throughout their child's educational journey.

Alana's Story of Mentorship and Growth

When Alana Seals joined Take Stock as a seventh grader, she didn't know how much the program would shape the years ahead. She had just lost her father to COVID-19, and she and her mother moved to Gainesville looking for a fresh start. She remembers feeling nervous, unsure about a new school, a new city, and an uncertain future.

But that changed the day she met her mentor. "My mentor, Brianna, helped me in more ways than I can count. She showed me how to manage stress and balance school, extracurriculars, and life by taking things one step at a time. Her support made all the difference as I juggled dual enrollment, leadership roles, and volunteer work. I've had the joy of being a drum major, competing in the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Talent competition, participating in jazz band, Infinity Percussion, color guard, and earning my vet certification," Alana said.

This steady helping hand encouraged Alana to grow more confident as she took on bigger responsibilities in her life. "Take Stock has been more than a scholarship—it's been a home," she said. This year, Alana was named the 2025 Take Stock in Children Outstanding Senior and earned a \$2,000 scholarship from the Alachua County Business League. She is now attending Santa Fe College with plans to transfer to the University of Florida to pursue a career in the medical field.

Take Stock in Children: Helping High Schoolers Go the Distance

\$75,000 Children's Trust
investment in mentorship programs
(2025)

63 students served in
2024-2025

61 active mentors

Families engaged
through orientation
events, college
prep nights, and
ongoing mentor
communication

Mentor
recruitment and
training



GOAL 3

The Children's Trust Receives Education Foundation Award

In October 2025, the Children's Trust of Alachua County was honored with the Education Foundation's 30th Anniversary Legacy Award for a New Outstanding Community Partner. As a historically school-based program, Take Stock was not previously active during the summer months, but with the Children's Trust's support, Take Stock is now able to provide year-round mentorship to students. This award symbolized the exceptional collaboration between the Children's Trust and local education leaders to meet the needs of our community's students.

"The Children's Trust Mentoring Grant has helped us to stretch ourselves in new ways," shared Sean Johnson, Director of Take Stock in Children. "Our mentoring program traditionally pauses in the summer, as our mentoring mainly happens in the schools during the school day. As schools are typically closed in the summer, our team had to think differently, and due to this, we have grown as a program. With the requirements of the mentoring grant, we created some summer opportunities to bring together students, staff, and mentors and get them acclimated to the program much sooner than before."

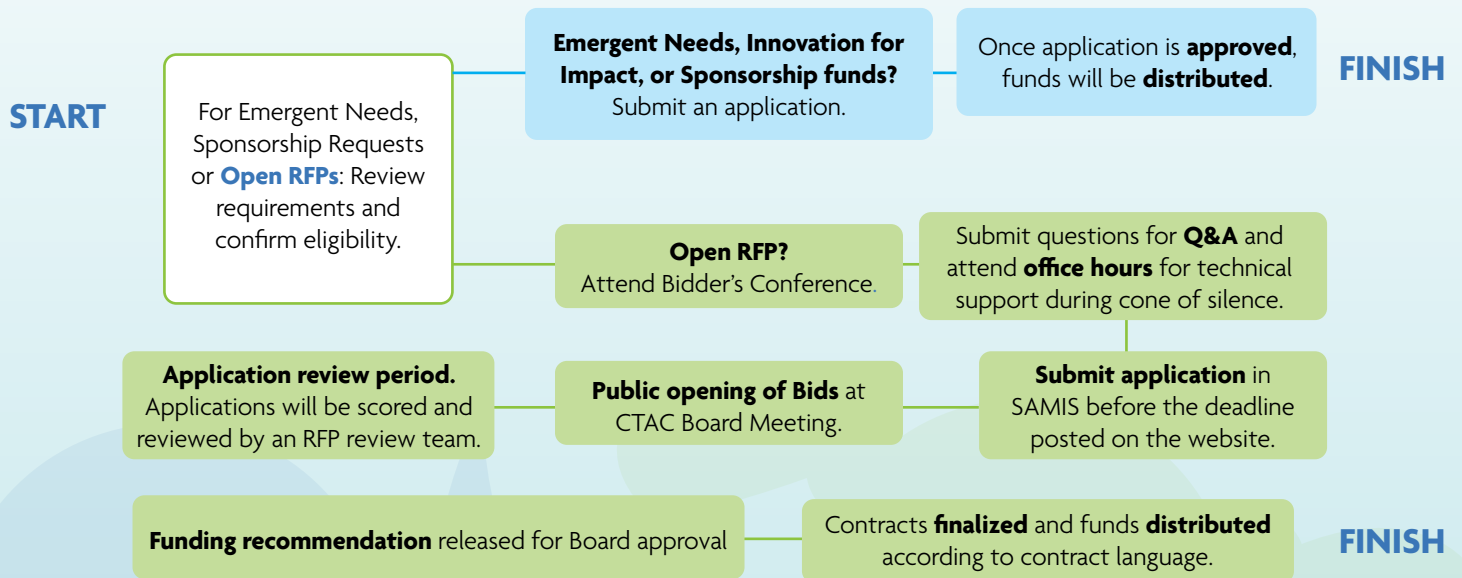
Support That Changes Families and Futures

For the Children's Trust and its partners, the Education Foundation's recognition affirms the strength of collective effort. It highlights how mentorship and educational opportunities can directly contribute to a safer, more supportive community. This 30-year milestone of Take Stock in Children serves as both a celebration and a call to continue investing in programs that help youth and families thrive. When students succeed, the whole community grows stronger.



PATHS TO FUNDING

There are several paths providers can take to receive funding from the Children's Trust of Alachua County. All paths to funding start at the Children's Trust website: [ChildrensTrustOfAlachuaCounty.us](https://www.ChildrensTrustOfAlachuaCounty.us).



EMERGENT NEEDS

FY 24-25

- ACCORN Alachua County Organization for Rural Needs, Inc.
\$2,427
- Little Sprouts
\$10,937
- Partnership for Strong Families
\$1,127
- NCFCC/YMCA
\$20,000
- Xavier House
\$20,000

Total \$54,491

The Emergent Needs Fund enables the Children's Trust of Alachua County to respond quickly when **unexpected crises** threaten the ability of local providers to deliver essential services to children and families. Through this fund, providers may request up to **\$20,000** to address urgent challenges and maintain continuity of care. This special funding category is limited and may only be accessed once per fiscal year, ensuring timely support when unforeseen circumstances arise.

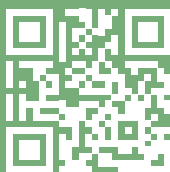


WHAT'S NEW at the Children's Trust of Alachua County?

Reaching More Families



The Children's Trust of Alachua County (CTAC) responds to emerging community needs with creativity, compassion, and collaboration. This year, CTAC expanded its reach by launching and supporting several new programs and outreach initiatives. From dance and outdoor learning to new media and family wellness, each effort reflects CTAC's mission to help every child thrive in Alachua County.



Expanding Access for Children with Disabilities

To serve children of all abilities and needs, three new programs launched this year—each with specialty services and professionals capable of care needed to help all children thrive.

Dance Alive brings adaptive dance and movement classes via **Let's Dance!** to 13 students with disorders or disabilities, such as autism, Down Syndrome, and cerebral palsy. These classes help improve confidence, motor skills, and social interaction

- **Investment: \$15,000**

Behavior Bricks Summer Camp addresses a need for structured activities for children with disabilities and provides a space to build emotional regulation and social-emotional skills.

- **Investment: \$159,626**
- **Children Served: 66**

Limitless Adventures Summer Camp opens doors to inclusive outdoor learning experiences that foster teamwork, creativity, and resilience.

- **Investment: \$50,785**
- **Children Served: 22**

These programs, hosted in partnership with schools, parks, and community centers, have shown positive results and continue to expand.

Strengthening Support for Families Affected by Substance Use

Originally founded in response to the county's adolescent addiction and overdose rates that rank among the highest in the State of Florida, CTAC deepened its partnership with the Alachua County Opioid Taskforce, now named HOPE (Health & Opioid Prevention Effort) of Alachua County. An investment of \$227,000 is committed to strengthen local prevention, education, and family support. Together, we are combating the dangers of opioid and fentanyl use.

More Opportunity Through Further Reach

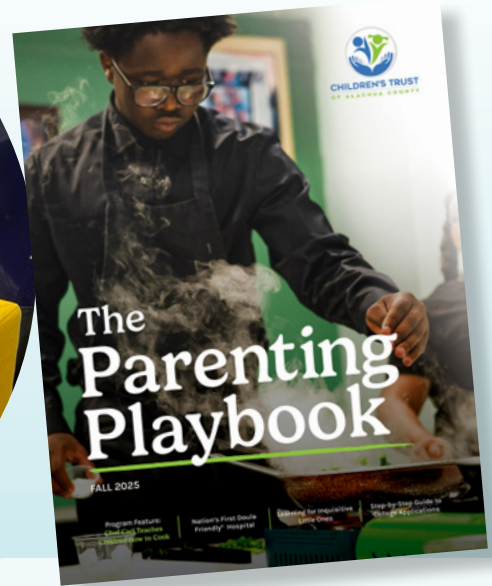
Altogether, these new initiatives represent a powerful step forward in CTAC's mission. We don't stand still; we move and act on the needs of Alachua County. As we reach more people, we create more opportunities, more involvement, more awareness, and a stronger future for our growing community.



Task Force Members

Tristan Grunder, Mayor of High Springs
Jiana Williams, Mayor of Micanopy
Kathy Penny, Commissioner, City of Archer
Jennifer Ringersen, Commissioner, City of Alachua
Jordan Marlowe, Newberry City Manager
Bryan Eastman, Commissioner, City of Gainesville
Joy Glanzer, Community Leader, Newberry
Anna Prizzia, Commissioner, Alachua County





Engaging Families Through New Media

The Children's Trust of Alachua County is committed to accessible family education and resources through digital, video, and print media.

The Parenting Playbook print magazine was launched this past Spring and is now in its second issue, bringing the total to **10,000 copies printed and distributed** in the community. Each issue is packed with expert advice, local stories, and a peek inside Children's Trust-funded programs, with details on how to participate or get involved in your community.

- **A Spanish-language digital edition** expands the reach of the publication to more of our local community.
- **Digital and print issues** are available to the community to reference and share.

Monthly Live Morning Show with DJ Elio on Tu Fiesta Radio brings awareness to CTAC-funded programs and initiatives. Each month a partner organization is featured as a guest and listeners get a chance to have conversations with local leaders about the resources available in the area.

Community Conversations – a CTAC Podcast is available on the Trust's YouTube channel and gives an in-depth look into the initiatives and priorities of the Children's Trust of Alachua County.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

TOTAL SPENDING:

\$59,743 of a budgeted \$60,000

MUNICIPALITIES REACHED:

Alachua, Archer, Gainesville, Hawthorne, High Springs, Micanopy, Newberry, Waldo

Alachua County is a community that is deeply invested in its children, as evidenced by the many organizations working to provide resource fairs, community celebrations, and safe activities for families to make new memories together. Children became entrepreneurs, received essential wellness checks, read to kittens, competed in robotics, met local authors, and so much more, and our team was there to share resources and facilitate partnerships along the way. Through CTAC sponsorships, these events were able to reach larger audiences, foster collaboration, and further our collective missions of improving the lives of families in Alachua County.

The Children's Trust of Alachua County reached all corners of the county in 2025, as our team supported community events for children and families that directly align with our goals.



SPONSORSHIPS BY GOAL:

GOAL # 1: Children and youth are healthy and have nurturing caregivers and relationships

- Cultural Arts Festival + Health Fair (Archer Cultural Progressive Organization)
- Gainesville Walk Against Suicide (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)
- What's Love Got to Do with It: Orange you Empowered? (Delta Sigma Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority)
- PinkFest Children's Corner (Blossoming Butterfly1, Inc)
- Stomp the Swamp for Autism 2025 (UF Center for Autism and Related Disabilities)
- Tiny Heroes Program (Children Beyond Our Borders)
- Celebrate the Child (Alachua County Child Abuse Prevention Taskforce)
- 3rd Annual Biggest Heart Giveaway (Carolyn's Heart Incorporated)
- Self-Care at the Fair (CDS Family and Behavioral Health Services)
- Run for Your Life Color Run and Community Resource Fair



"Thank you, Children's Trust of Alachua County, for believing in our young entrepreneurs. Your sponsorship didn't just support an event — it helped dreams take root, confidence grow, and opportunities blossom. We are truly grateful."

— Edwennia Moore/owner, Trinity Day Spa



FY 2025 SPONSORED EVENTS

GOAL #2: Children and youth learn what they need to be successful

- Shoot for Success: Basketball Skills Camp & Educational Opportunity Fair (399 Sports and Recreation, Inc)
- Cultural Arts Expression: Youth on the Move (1000 Voices of Florida, Inc.)
- ELCAC Story Book Village (Early Learning Coalition)
- FAFSA and Scholarship Support Workshop (Education Equalizer Foundation)
- 5th Annual Kidpreneur Pop Up Shop (Trinity's Day Spa Pampering for Kids)
- Beautillion Cotillion (Wishful Thinking, Inc)
- Youth Empowerment Day (Hawthorne Quarterback Club)
- STEM Spring Break Road Trip (Manhood Youth Development Foundation)
- Mr. Wonderful (Historic Cameliaettes Club of Gainesville, Inc.)
- Back to School BBQ and Hygiene Bash (Dare to be Different Empowerment Org)
- Purrs and Tails Summer Reading (Humane Society of North Central Florida)
- Strong-MINDED Mentoring Awards Banquet (Strong-MINDED Mentoring)
- Backpack/School Supply Giveaway (Shekinah Glory Family Worship Center) (Concerned Citizens of Newberry)PAVE Stop the Violence Back to School Rally (Community Impact Corporation)

"The Children's Trust of Alachua County's support made it possible for 46 children to participate in our Purrs & Tales summer reading program, where young readers built literacy skills while helping our shelter cats feel more socialized and comforted. Families and volunteers loved the experience, and we saw firsthand how this simple act of reading with animals strengthens both confidence in children and human-animal bonds. The feedback has been so positive that we are now considering making the program year-round."

— Franziska Raeber, Purrs and Tails

GOAL #3: Children and youth live in safe communities

- Fall Festival (City of Waldo)
- Sensory Circus (Gainesville Circus Center)
- Family Fun Day (Free Canaan UMC of Waldo, FL)
- Safe KIDS Day (Just Between Friends)
- Women United Holiday Luncheon: ALICE (United Way)
- Sunshine State Book Festival (Writer's Alliance of Gainesville)
- 2025 Daddy Daughter Dance (Florida A&M Alumni Alachua County Chapter)
- Valentine's Day Celebration @ Brookside Apartments (Brookside Partners, Ltd)
- HYS Community Build (Hawthorne Youth Sports)
- Spring Carnival and Egg Hunt (Deeper Purpose Community Church, Inc)
- Community Easter Egg Hunt (Atkins Warren Chapter of NOBLE)
- Ballin in the Beach (Committed Dreams Dream Team)
- Water Safety Day (Williams PTA)
- Children's Latino Film Festival (Latina Women's League)
- National Night Out (City of High Springs Police Department)
- Waldo Sweet Potato Festival Kids Zone (Waldo Area Historical Society)
- PAVE Stop the Violence Back to School Rally (Community Impact Corporation)
- Waldo Community Homecoming Festival (Waldo Community New Vision Coalition)



CAPACITY BUILDING IN OUR COMMUNITY

The Center for Nonprofit Excellence: Strengthening Organizations

Even the most passionate missions need structure, strategies, and strong leadership to thrive. That's where the Center for Nonprofit Excellence (CNE) comes in, acting as a hub for education, collaboration, and growth. Designed for executive directors, staff, and board members, it offers hands-on training and expert resources to help small and mid-sized nonprofits overcome common challenges in governance, funding, and operations.

Members can participate through tiered memberships or à la carte options, accessing in-person workshops, newsletters, online tools, consultant databases, and on-demand learning resources.

This support ensures that nonprofits are not only able to meet today's needs but are also equipped to grow strategically for the future..

The partnership between CTAC and the CNE demonstrates our broader philosophy: to invest not only in programs, but in the people and structures that make them possible.

By supporting the growth and efficiency of local nonprofits, CTAC ensures that its funding reaches further, its programs run smoother, and its community continues to thrive.

Empowering leadership with weekly workshops that teach:

- Grant compliance
- Budgeting
- Human resources
- Governance
- Volunteer management
- Strategic planning
- Financial management

109 organizations engaged, including:

- Dream on Purpose
- Grace Marketplace
- Unity Family Resource Center
- Matheson Museum

What we've heard:

Thousands of nonprofit professionals have participated in CNE workshops.

Participating organizations report improved strategic planning, board engagement, financial stability, and successful grant acquisition. Further proven by a 90% membership renewal rate.

Investment:

- \$100K (Year 1 – 2023)
- \$85K (Year 2 – 2024)
- \$70K (Year 3 – 2025)



CAPACITY BUILDING

mySidewalk: Turning Data into Action for Alachua County

We use data every day to check the weather, track home prices, or follow the economy. But behind every statistic lies a deeper story about how our community is growing, changing, and where it needs the most support. The Alachua County Indicators Program, powered by mySidewalk, brings those stories to life through a first-of-its-kind public data platform.

Developed through a partnership between the Community Foundation of North Central Florida, the Children's Trust of Alachua County, and mySidewalk, the platform provides access to more than four billion data points from over 40 trusted sources.

This tool gives local leaders and residents a clear, visual understanding of how Alachua County is doing and where it can improve. It includes:

- Health
- Housing
- Education
- Workforce readiness
- Environment
- Transportation

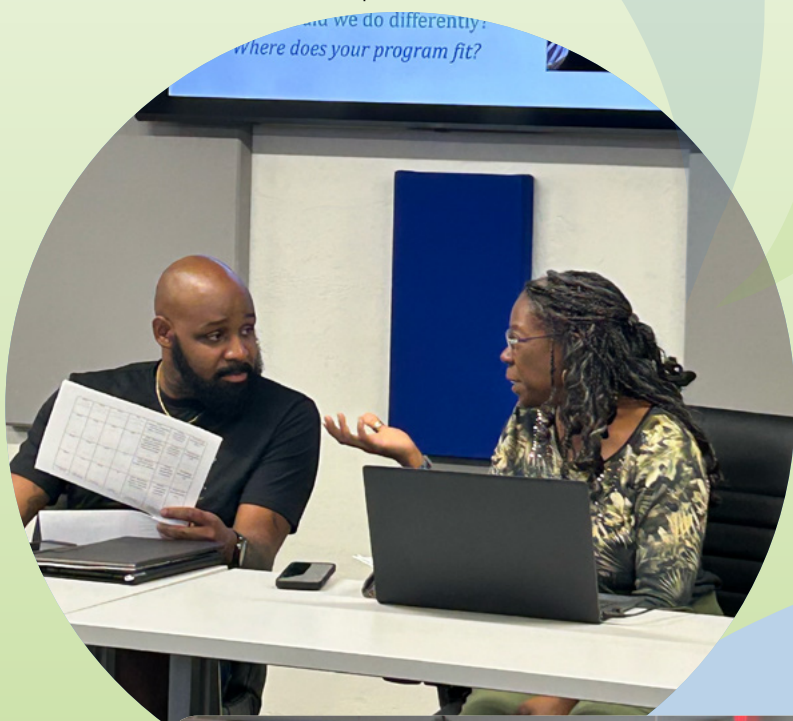
This powerful tool helps funders, nonprofits, and policymakers make data-driven decisions, giving CTAC the insights needed to guide investments, evaluate outcomes, and strengthen collaboration across the county.

For additional information please contact the Community Foundation of North Central Florida at [CFNCF.org](https://cfncf.org)



Investment:

This three-year partnership began in 2024, with CTAC contributing \$15,000 annually toward a \$34,850 per-year program.



Ideas That Change Lives

The Innovation for Impact Grant: Awarding Big Ideas

Every big change begins with a small idea and, sometimes, all it takes is a little support to bring that idea to life.

The Innovation for Impact Grant provides up to **\$20,000** in one-time funding for organizations with operating budgets under \$1 million. These grants are designed to launch, expand, or enhance programs that align with CTAC's strategic priorities – supporting healthy, safe, and successful children. By investing in creative and community-driven ideas, CTAC helps small organizations take bold steps that can lead to lasting, scalable solutions.

Innovation Worth Investing In: Swampbots

For Swampbots, innovation is quite literally in their DNA. This student-driven robotics team fosters a love of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) through hands-on learning, teamwork, and real-world problem-solving. With CTAC's Innovation for Impact Grant, Swampbots expanded its programming to reach younger students in Alachua County by introducing robotics to children who might not otherwise have access to this type of technology education.

Beyond technical skills, Swampbots teaches collaboration, perseverance, and confidence. Students not only learn how to code, build, and troubleshoot, but they also how to lead and communicate effectively. These experiences don't just prepare them for competitions; they prepare them for life.

STEM Opportunities Add Up

- Grades K – 12
- Expanded robotics/STEM programming to rural areas
- Served **189** students
- Completely volunteer-run and operated
- Approximately **160** volunteers

Swampbots Team Frogmen traveled to South Africa to compete in an international tournament



Evolving Leaders Academy By Mirror Image Leadership Academy

An extension of the Mirror Image Leadership Academy (MILA), Evolving Leaders Academy is a year-round leadership development initiative for 10th–12th grade scholars who have completed MILA's core three-year program. The Innovation for Impact Grant of up to **\$20,000** funded more immersive weekend retreats, service projects, and mentorship for these students.

Participants were given the chance to deepen their leadership, communication, and college readiness skills. Furthering MILA's True Leadership Model, students blend practical training with personal reflection to prepare them to lead confidently in school, career, and community life.

Program Highlights

Retreats, workshops, service projects, and college prep

100% of participating scholars complete a personal statement or résumé

87% of participants reported they developed communication skills and the program made them feel welcome, valued, and like they belong in this community



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



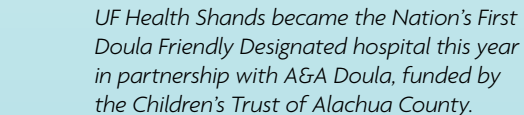
Executive Director Marsha Kiner receives the Lights on Afterschool Proclamation from Gainesville Mayor Harvey Ward and the Gainesville City Commission.



Children's Trust of Alachua County Staff celebrates Children's Week in Tallahassee with Florida After School Alliance.



Executive Director Marsha Kiner with County Commission Chairman Charles "Chuck" Chestnut IV receiving a proclamation recognizing Lights On Afterschool.



UF Health Shands became the Nation's First Doula Friendly Designated hospital this year in partnership with A&A Doula, funded by the Children's Trust of Alachua County.



Chief Operating Officer Kristy Goldwire and Community Engagement Coordinator Emily McCauley with the Safe Kids North Central Florida Coalition at Walk to School Day at High Springs Community School.



The Children's Trust of Alachua County is proud to partner with Gainesville Empowerment Zone. Kristy Goldwire and Emily McCauley pictured with James Lawrence, Director Gainesville For All, and Yolanda Hagley, Gainesville Thrives Executive Director.



CTAC Executive Director Marsha Kiner with Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County CEO Xaviera White and United Way CEO Amber Miller.



The UF Women's Basketball team visited Limitless Adventures, a CTAC-funded summer camp for children with disabilities.



The Children's Trust of Alachua County is proud to support Goodwill of North Florida in career development programs for Alachua County youth.



Children's Trust of Alachua County Board Members and Staff pose with the University of Florida College of Dentistry Saving Smiles van.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Preliminary year-end report

Total Expenditures
& Investments
In 2024-2025
\$12,744,331.66

Program Funding & Support

Capital Expense



General Administrative & Operating

Revenues

Ad Valorem Taxes	\$10,143,466.00	86%
Interest	\$ 653,351.00	6%
Other Revenue	\$ 988,688.00	8%
Total Revenue	\$11,785,505.00	100%

Expenditures and Investments

Program Funding & Support	\$10,893,052.51	85%
General Administrative & Operating	\$1,696,590.52	13%
Capital Expense	\$ 154,688.63	1%
Totals Expenditure	\$12,744,331.66	100%

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Program funding, which makes up more than 85% of our total expenditures is distributed primarily through our priority funding areas, but also includes other categories that focus on furnishing education to our community and supporting professionals working with children and families.

Priority Funding Areas



All Children and Youth are healthy and have nurturing caregivers and relationships
\$ 2,904,773.53



All Children can learn what they need to be successful
\$ 6,954,313.95



All Children live in a safe community
\$ 744,941.37

Emergent Needs
\$ 54,491.98



Sponsorships
\$ 57,993.00



Capacity Building
\$ 176,538.68



Additional Areas of Support



STAFF PHOTO

Standing (L-R): Keturah Bailey Acevedo, Jocelyn Mayberry, Amalie Bethune, Linda Means, Max De Zutter, Bonnie Wagner, Amy Wagner, Tram Li (Intern), Mia Jones, Demetrica Tyson.

Seated (L-R): Emily McCauley, Molly Greenwald, Belita James, Marsha Kiner, Kristy Goldwire, Tara Major, Nicole Odom

Not pictured: Thomas Hill, Jeannine Seider and Ava Wherley (Intern)

Follow us on social media



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