



CHILDREN'S TRUST
OF ALACHUA COUNTY



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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and Emergent Needs

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*Our front cover artwork
portrays an interpretation of
peace and was created by a
talented high school student
from High Springs. Learn more
about **Jaden Alfonzo** inside
the back cover.*



The Children's Trust of Alachua County's new building at 4010 NW 25th Place in Gainesville.

ABOUT US

Mission:

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:

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

Our Strategic Plan (2024-2026)

The Strategic Plan is a roadmap to guide service delivery planning and to inform funding investments for children, youth and families in Alachua County. It is informed by the wisdom of youth, parents, service providers, community partners and the staff of the Children's Trust of Alachua County, actively solicited through a 10-month Listening Project that concluded in 2023.

Our Impact Framework aims to ensure all children and youth are Healthy, Thriving and Safe. Programs are evaluated regularly to ensure processes and infrastructure are yielding meaningful progress in child well-being.

The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process is our method to systematically review, share results and support improvements. Conducted on a cyclical basis, CQI evaluates contract performance based on fiscal, operations, and program performance expectations. The Trust's program performance evaluation leverages the Results Based Accountability framework and examines whether the delivery of service, its quality, and benefits to children and families occurred as expected.

A Brief History

The Children's Trust of Alachua County was born from a grassroots campaign, with interest developing as early as 2002 for creating a Children's Services Council.

The movement really got off the ground in 2015, and by November 2018, over 61% of voters approved the Children's Trust referendum. The newly formed Children's Trust board convened its first meeting in March 2019 and approved its first budget in June of that year.

As a Special Independent Taxing District with taxing authority, the Children's Trust can levy up to .5 mill, resulting in annual estimated revenues over \$8 million.

***All figures in the report that follows reflect the most up-to-date, unaudited information as of Nov. 30, 2024.**

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GROWING AND GROWING

Dear Friends and Supporters of the Children's Trust of Alachua County,

We're excited to share highlights from this past year at the Children's Trust. In just our fifth year as an organization, we're always expanding with new ideas, bigger achievements, and a very bright future ahead.

We're operating under our new Strategic Plan, which cemented last year our three main goals through 2026: that all children and youth 1) are **Healthy** and have **Nurturing Caregivers**, 2) can **Learn** what they need to be successful, and 3) live in a **Safe Community**. You'll notice the sections of this annual report highlight each goal and the programs that fall under each category. As we bring on new programs and conclude others, our funding will more closely align with the priorities laid out in the Strategic Plan. We've continued to grow our number of funded agencies, and we are proud to say that **21,118** young lives were touched by at least one of our now nearly **80** funded programs this past year.

In addition to continuing funding for programs that have become a cornerstone of our portfolio — afterschool programs, summer camps, and TeensWork Alachua, to name a few — we also completed two Requests for Proposal (RFPs) this year. These include an expansion of Enrichment offerings, for youth to gain new extracurricular skills, and our first Youth Health programs, targeting dental health and coordination of care services. The new Enrichment and Youth Health providers will begin offering their services in FY2025. We also invested in building the capacity and development of those in the community who work with children and



youth through our partnership with the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, part of the Community Foundation of North Central Florida.

Of course, we would be remiss to not mention a major location change this year. The Children's Trust purchased its permanent home, at 4010 NW 25th Place in Gainesville. After moving in late January and commencing renovations of our training room in September, we are excited to soon welcome the community

and become a gathering place. In addition to being a meeting space for staff, board members, and our funded programs' use, this space will also be available to community organizations.

At the core of who we are is our **commitment to the wellbeing and success of children, youth and families throughout Alachua County**. We thank each of you, our partners, providers and community stakeholders, for joining us on this journey to ensure that every child reaches their fullest potential.

Sincerely,

Lee Pinkoson, Board Chair

Marsha Kiner, Executive Director



CHILDREN'S TRUST
OF ALACHUA COUNTY

BOARD



Lee Pinkoson

Chair

Gubernatorial Appointee



Ken Cornell

Vice Chair

County
Commissioner



Cheryl Twombly

Treasurer

Department of
Children and Families



Shane Andrew*

Superintendent
of Schools



Tina Certain

School Board
Member



Mary Chance

Gubernatorial
Appointee



**Hon. Denise
R. Ferrero**

Circuit Judge



Dr. Nancy Hardt

Gubernatorial
Appointee



Dr. Maggie Labarta

Gubernatorial
Appointee

*outgoing

OUR PATHWAY | TO IMPROVING

Goal 1

All children and youth are healthy & have nurturing caregivers.



- ◉ 473 pregnant women served by **Family Partner**
- ◉ 762 families with newborns served by **NewboRN**
- ◉ 32 adolescent girls served by **Pace Reach**
- ◉ 55 children served by **Child Advocacy Center**
- ◉ 450 youth served by **PALS**
- ◉ 533 children served by **Wellness Coordinator**
- ◉ 3,174 children served by **Saving Smiles**
- ◉ 684 children served by **Hunger Backpack Program**
- ◉ 12 professionals served by **Flourish Alachua Postpartum Doula Training Initiative**
- ◉ 50 parents served by **Project YouthBuild**
- ◉ 1,718 parents served by **Family Resource Centers & Community Navigation**

TOTAL SERVED

21,118 Children
3,859 Parents
606 Professionals

25,583*
TOTAL



*Numbers may reflect some duplication across programs.

CHILD OUTCOMES

FISCAL YEAR 2024

Goal 2

All children and youth can learn what they need to be successful.

- 14 owner/directors served by the Business & Leadership Institute (BLI) for Early Learning V'Locity® Master Class
- 12 owner/directors served by BLI's Accreditation Academy
- 110 children served by Head Start Summer Bridge
- 415 children served by Afterschool Programs
- 1,174 children served by Summer Camps
- 8,252 children served by Enrichment Programs
- 830 children served by Imagination Library
- 128 children served by Bridge Literacy Program
- 1,047 children served by Operation Full STEAM
- 83 children served by Freedom School
- 251 children served by New Tech Now
- 315 youth served by TeensWork Alachua - Summer Youth Employment
- 39 youth served by TeensWork Alachua - Fall Civic Leadership
- 14 youth served by AMIkids of Gainesville
- 236 youth served by 3DE by Junior Achievement

Goal 3

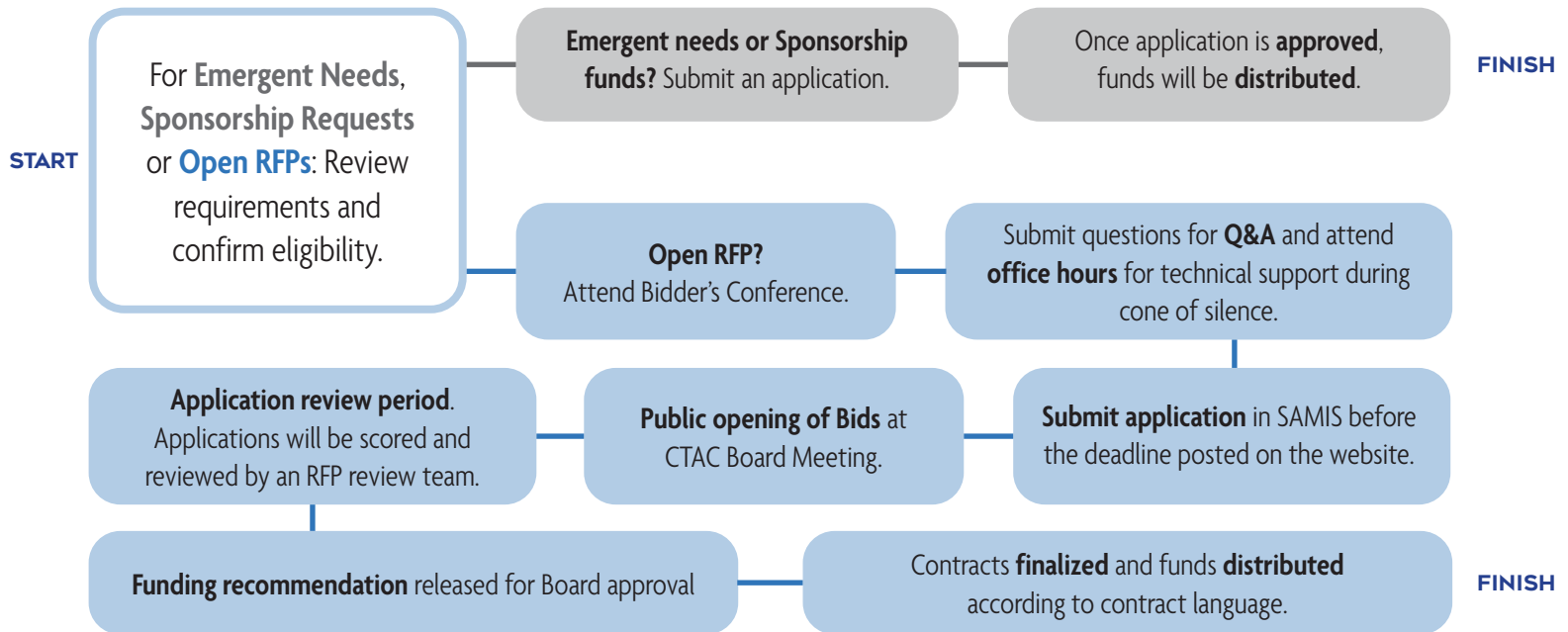
All children and youth live in a safe community.

- 76 youth served by Level Up Youth & Teen Enrichment Nights
- 409 youth served by Mentoring Programs
- 146 youth served by Midnight Basketball
- 1,434 children served by Peaceful Paths Prevention Program
- 20 professionals served by River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding trainings
- 33 professionals served by Child Advocacy Center trainings



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.



EMERGENT NEEDS

Emergent Needs Funds offer local providers support when crisis situations may jeopardize their services.

When these situations occur, any local child-serving organization may apply for funding. It is important to note that funds in this special category are limited and on a one-time-only basis during any fiscal year.



\$6,576.76



\$20,000



\$8,506.67



\$4,600

ORGANIZATIONS SERVED:

4

TOTAL AMOUNT:

\$39,683.43



GOAL 1

HEALTHY & NURTURED

All children and youth are healthy and have nurturing caregivers.



The Saving Smiles program offers free, on-site preventive and limited dental care services for children. The Children's Trust funds the program along with the Rotary Club of Gainesville, and it is affiliated with UF Health and the UF College of Dentistry.

Untreated dental problems can cause more than just a toothache. Pain can lead to infection, which can lead to missed school days and lower classroom performance. Families without dental insurance often turn to emergency room services when the pain becomes too much, creating longer wait times for emergency care and increased financial burden. Preventive dental care and earlier treatment of problems aim to alleviate these issues at the root.

2024 INVESTMENTS:

- Partnership for Strong Families Family Resource Centers
- **Healthy Start of North Central Florida's Maternal Family Partner and NewboRN Home Visiting Program**
- UF Health Shands' Partners in Adolescent Lifestyle Support (PALS) Thrive
- **PACE Center for Girls, Inc.**
- Child Advocacy Center's Reducing Trauma to Abused Children Therapy Program
- **UF College of Dentistry's Saving Smiles**
- Catholic Charities Weekend Backpack Program
- **Children's Home Society of Florida Wellness Coordinator at Howard Bishop Middle School**
- Willie Mae Stokes Community Center's Family Resource Center
- **One Community Health & Wellness Resources Center**
- A&A Doula Consulting Services
- **BEAM Birth Network Doula Consulting Services**

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

\$2,283,378.⁶⁷

SERVED:

6,159 CHILDREN

3,664 PARENTS

128 PROFESSIONALS

GOAL 1 SPOTLIGHTS: Doula Services

Doula Friendly Initiative®

INVESTMENT:

\$16,700

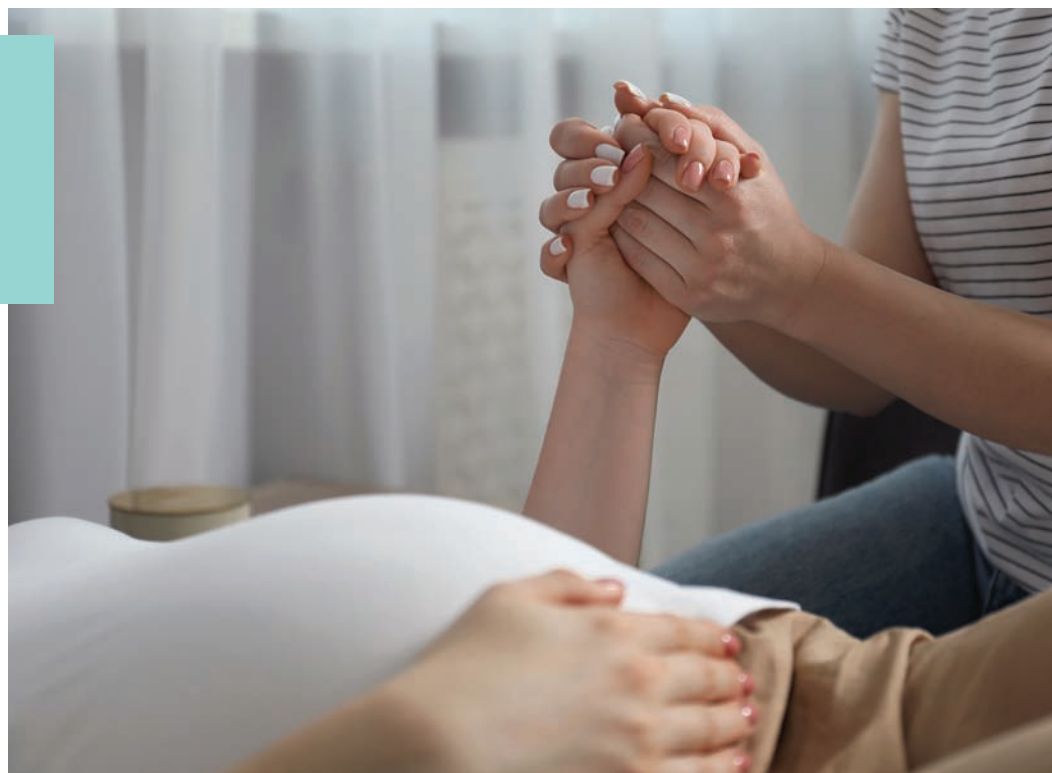
NUMBER SERVED:

2 HOSPITALS

The Doula Friendly Initiative®

(DFI) is a nationwide initiative designed to integrate doulas as essential members of healthcare teams and promote evidence-based, community-focused best practices.

Both HCA Florida North Florida Hospital and UF Health Shands are part of the local initiative, which is administered through **A&A Doula Consulting** and funded by the Children's Trust. The DFI team partners with each facility to conduct a thorough assessment, tailoring the steps needed to achieve a Doula Friendly designation. Facilities earning the designation demonstrate their commitment to excellence and equity in maternal healthcare by meeting comprehensive criteria across four key areas: access, marketing, training and reporting. This includes developing



policies, providing staff training, distributing educational resources, coordinating data collection, and ensuring the standards for best practices are upheld. By helping facilities build systems rooted in evidence-based care, the DFI aims to shape a future where maternal and infant health care is equitable, accessible, and exemplary nationwide.

Any prenatal patient who expresses

interest in doula services can be connected with a local network of providers.

When labor begins, the patient's doula is welcomed as a support person and advocate, in addition to any familial support. By centering the birthing person's desires and needs, doulas help create a more inclusive and supportive birthing environment, ultimately improving patient satisfaction and outcomes.

WHAT IS A BIRTH DOULA?

- Provides physical, emotional and informational support before, during, and shortly after childbirth.
- Coaches through relaxation and breathing skills, serves as an advocate for the patient with medical staff, and supports the non-birthing partner through the process.
- Studies show that when birth doulas are involved, labor is shorter, results in fewer C-sections and fewer requests for pain medications, and leads to more positive birth experiences.

WHAT IS A POSTPARTUM DOULA?

- Provides non-medical support in the crucial days after birth, assisting with newborn care, breastfeeding education, coping skills and more.
- They may also assist with light housework, prepare a meal, or facilitate positive bonding experiences with older siblings. Services can extend to the entire family.
- Studies show postpartum doulas can improve health outcomes and reduce disparities in maternal health.

AND

Flourish Alachua

POSTPARTUM DOULA TRAINING INITIATIVE

Flourish Alachua Postpartum Doula Training Initiative

began in August 2024 with its first cohort. Facilitated by Brittany Fadiora, founder of **BEAM Birth Network**, the program is training 12 dedicated Alachua County residents in the needed skill sets to provide postpartum support to new parents.

The group came to the program with existing skill sets, whether from their own experience in motherhood, or training as nurses or other related medical professionals. The program began with a two-day, in-person session and the remainder is conducted virtually. The first cohort is scheduled to conclude in March 2025.

Katie Herd started her career as a NICU nurse, later became a lactation consultant, and then transitioned into a parent educator.

I was always interested in the role of a doula. I think that being able to support a woman during that time in her life is really magical. There's not enough support for women in our community, as well as globally."

—**Katie Herd**,
Flourish Alachua participant

Herd first participated in the G.R.O.W. Doula program, which the Children's Trust previously funded through Healthy Start of North Central Florida. That program focused on birth doula training. When Flourish Alachua began recruiting applicants, Herd felt like it was a next step for the business she hopes to build. Her LLC currently serves clients with lactation consultation or postpartum doula needs, and she plans to expand to the birth doula side when her children are older.

Like Herd, Amber Riess first participated in the G.R.O.W. Doula program before

applying for Flourish Alachua. Her interests lie in helping women who would otherwise not be able to afford doula care.

"The G.R.O.W. Doula program was so eye-opening for me," Riess said. "There is such a maternal health disparity between women of color and Caucasian women. And so I left that program asking, 'How do we help close that gap?'"

Riess started a birth doula business, affiliated with The Doula Network, and accepts Medicaid and sliding pay scale clientele. She hopes that one day extended postpartum doula coverage will be available for Medicaid recipients, but for now, she's enjoying learning about the additional postpartum care she can provide in the three visits currently allotted.

Not all of the cohort came in with prior doula experience, though.

Lindsey Corbett learned of the new program through a friend. The mom of five has spent much of the past 11 years raising her kids, subbing at their schools and doing other part-

time work.

"I've always had a heart for moms and babies, and I was driven by not having that kind of support when I was having my babies," she said. "I started second-guessing myself about applying, but I interviewed and was chosen, and I'm so glad I put myself forward."

So, why seek out a postpartum doula?

"A lot of families don't know postpartum doulas exist," Riess said. "They're there to help support you. Maybe you've had a traumatic birth; maybe you're a first-time mom who has no idea how you should be feeling or how baby is doing; or maybe you have other children and no idea how to incorporate a new baby into an already busy lifestyle."

My goal is to make that transition as smooth as possible because it's hard. Babies do not come with instruction books."

—**Amber Riess**,
Flourish Alachua participant

INVESTMENT: \$60,000

***BLENDED WITH PRITZKER
CHILDREN'S INITIATIVE GRANT FUNDS**

NUMBER SERVED: 12



GOAL 1 SPOTLIGHT

NewboRN Home Visiting

The NewboRN Home Visiting Program

offers free postpartum visits from a registered nurse for all Alachua County families who welcome a baby in the county.

Every visit can be a little different, based on the needs of the family. If you have a mom, for example, who's struggling with breastfeeding, that becomes the priority. Other families may need mental health support or car seat safety or something like that."

—**Sandee Muir**,
Nursing Supervisor,
NewboRN Home Visiting

Muir says the registration process can occur before birth or after, with many learning of the program in the postpartum unit of the hospital where their baby is born. However, the services are available to all families, including adoptive and foster parents.

"The only criteria is that they reside in Alachua County," Muir said. "We have literature for dads, infant CPR classes that are available to grandparents... Anyone who may be a caretaker for the baby can take part in our services."

The family and the nurse who will visit their home are put in contact shortly after birth, with the goal to visit within a week after baby comes home. Each visit includes a physical exam on baby and mom, mental health assessment, and plenty of education on everything from general newborn care to safe sleep practices.



Services are available to every member of the household. Even the family dog joined in this visit!

"The final component of the visit is determining whether the families need additional assistance; for example, help with things like food or clothing, financial assistance, a car seat, or a pack-and-play because there's no safe place for baby to

INVESTMENT:

\$442,624

NUMBER SERVED:

762

sleep," Muir said. "We will also make referrals for mental or physical health follow-ups."

Muir's team now includes two full-time nurses and two part-time nurses. All have received additional training in subjects like mental health and lactation.

"It's been proven to me in the three-and-a-half years that I've done this program

how important these visits are in terms of screenings for physical health issues — in particular, weight gain, blood pressure and mental health issues," Muir said. "For first-time parents, it also gives them a sense of empowerment, that they feel more confident they're doing things correctly, their questions have been answered, and that they have the knowledge now that helps them do a better job."

SERVICES OFFERED:

- Wellness checks for mom and baby.
- Feeding support.
- Safety checks on sleep spaces and car seat fit.
- Additional baby care education, from diaper changes to tummy time.
- Empowerment for the entire family unit.

GOAL 2

EDUCATED

All children and youth can learn what they need to be successful.



New Tech Now brings tools like 3-D printers and circuit boards into afterschool programs, summer camps, and other community events. Children not only have the opportunity to get hands-on exposure to these technologies, but they learn about their operation through simple guided projects.

At WUFT's Fanfares & Fireworks event on July 3, New Tech Now joined the Children's Trust as one of our partner guests. The festive circuit light-up "wands," right, were a hit with children of all ages.



2024 INVESTMENTS:

- Cade Museum's Operation Full Steam
- Early Learning Coalition
- Gainesville Thrives and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Junior Achievement
- New Technology Made Simple Now, Inc.
- PEAK Literacy
- UF Lastinger Center
- Afterschool Programs, see page 10
- Summer Programs, see page 14
 - Episcopal Children's Services' Head Start Summer Bridge
 - Summer Camps
 - TeensWork Alachua
- Enrichment Programs, see page 23

TOTAL INVESTMENT:
\$5,501,249

SERVED:
12,894 CHILDREN
147 PARENTS
248 PROFESSIONALS

AFTERSCHOOL

2024 PROGRAMS:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida
- Deeper Purpose Community Church, Inc.
- Gainesville Area Tennis Association (Aces in Motion)
- Gainesville Circus Center
- Girls Place, Inc.
- Kids Count in Alachua County, Inc.
- Willie Mae Stokes Community Center, Inc.

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

\$1,174,177.⁶⁶

CHILDREN SERVED:

415



Spinning plates, hanging upside-down and walking on stilts — **Gainesville Circus Center** is not your average afterschool program.

Youth ages 6-13 learn the ropes for acts you might see in a circus performance: juggling, acrobatics, dance and more.

At the core of the program is a focus on artistic self-expression, physical discipline, collaboration and cooperation.



WHAT PARENTS ARE SAYING

*Some responses have been edited for length. Parent responses are not necessarily about the pictured youth.



"It's the most flexible schedule that allows me peace of mind while I work and the people there actually care. My son has benefited from this program greatly, which affects us at home."

— a parent about **Boys & Girls Clubs**

"It helped me find more learning and enjoyment for my child. It made her open up more."

— a parent about **Kids Count in Alachua County**

"We've been able to go to work in peace knowing our child is safe and happy."

— a parent about **Deeper Purpose Kids Academy**

"It's a safe place for my kids to go after school with homework resources, therapy provided and college tours. The program reinforces what I'm instilling at home."

— a parent about **Aces in Motion**



"My child knows she is cared for by the staff and has formed close relationships with many counselors. As working parents, having reliable, quality afterschool programs is paramount."

— a parent about **Girls Place**

"We have seen our kids' self-esteem grow since being in the program."

— a parent about **Willie Mae Stokes Community Center**

"I love how it supports inclusion and character development along with artistic expression. It allowed me to pursue attending college and gave our children a safe space to be."

— a parent about **Gainesville Circus Center**



IMPACTS

Numbers reflect performance measures across all afterschool programs, except where denoted.

1,578
PROGRAM DAYS

74%

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE RATE

ELEMENTARY: 80%
MIDDLE: 63%
HIGH: 56%

95%

OVERALL
EXPERIENCE



91%

HOMESCHOOL
HELP



81% PROFICIENCY OR IMPROVEMENT
IN SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

AFTERSCHOOL SPOTLIGHT Boys & Girls Clubs

INVESTMENT:

\$185,406.³⁰

CHILDREN SERVED:

97

Alachua County is home to two **Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida**, and both serve students year-round with afterschool and summer programming funded by the Children's Trust.

The sites follow the same program schedule and curriculum, with the main difference being that the Woodland Park site serves elementary schoolers, while the Northwest site serves all the way through high school age.

Since the first day Deonte Lee, the Northwest unit's new director, stepped foot into the Northwest facility, he envisioned a teen lounge space that's accessible and exclusive for the club's oldest students. Part of this initiative is to give the teens an area where they can feel safe and work alongside each other, learning how to build resumes, apply for jobs and more.



Youth at the Boys & Girls Club Northwest location's afterschool program.

Across the hall is a new podcasting room, where the teens can share their thoughts on pop culture, community events, school, future goals and other topics of greatest concern for their age group.

"We're going to have to depend on our own strength and the help from the community to be able to re-paint our facility," Lee said of another upcoming plan. "We, as a community, must come together for the children."

Across town, the Woodland Park staff works to ensure that their younger students get the developmental structure that they need while also supplying them with mentorship and fun.

There are no typical average days when it comes to programming. Anything can happen at any moment, and we must be able to pivot. There's no average here; there's love here and pivoting to make it work and to make sure that each child can experience our core programming, which will never change. The love, support, and safety we offer will never change."

—**Shari Battles**,

Woodland Park unit director

AFTERSCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

Aces in Motion

Aces in Motion (AIM) offers afterschool and summer programs for middle and high schoolers. Its programming is dedicated to the health, education and social-emotional development of the youth.

The program originated with a focus in tennis instruction, and students still head to the courts biweekly to learn the fundamentals and more. AIM is equally devoted to fostering educational growth and combining community engagement.

For two years, Aldreka Everett was the mental health counselor for AIM. This year, to her surprise, the founder shared he would be stepping down after 10 years and offered her the role of executive director, which she assumed on March 1, 2024.

“Before we do anything, we do an opening and closing circle every day. This allows everybody the opportunity to look at each other and ask how their day went, and express their ‘highs’ and their ‘lows’.”

—**Aldreka Everett**,
Executive Director of AIM

With her background, AIM continues to put special focus on mental health of the students, families and staff members. The program has a certified mental health counselor on site, along with a college and career coordinator and an academic and volunteer coordinator.

Under Everett, AIM is investing in students’ around-the-clock mental health, extending counseling services to the families of the youth in the program. Additionally, community partners visit on a regular basis to educate the youth on topics such as character building, healthy relationships and enhancing social and emotional learning.

“There was a time when Aces in Motion was just in a parking lot,” Everett added. “But the more funding we get, including from the Children’s Trust, the more opportunities we get to structure experiences and a strong staff for our students.”



INVESTMENT:

\$259,583.⁶⁸

CHILDREN SERVED:

67



SUMMER PROGRAMS

2024 CAMPS:

- Aces in Motion (AIM)
- Akwaaba Freedom School
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida
- City of Alachua Legacy Park
- Community Impact Corporation
- Cultural Arts Coalition
- Cuscowilla Day Camp
- Deeper Purpose
- Gainesville Circus Center
- Girls Place
- Good News Arts
- Greater Duval Early Learning Academy
- I Am STEM
- Just for Us
- Kids Count
- Santa Fe College for Kids
- St. Barbara Leadership Institute
- Star Center Theatre
- Traveling Art Camp for Kids
- University of Florida College Reach Out Program (CROP)
- YMCA (locations in Archer, Gainesville, Hawthorne, Micanopy)

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

\$2,171,185.³⁹

CHILDREN SERVED:

1,174



Akwaaba Freedom School weaves music and cultural experiences into a six-week reading enrichment program. The attendees are known as “scholars” and begin each morning with an energetic Harambee musical celebration, captured above. Scholars also participate in a Day of Service and a Finale performance for their families and the community.

This year, the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF), which developed the Freedom Schools model nationwide, selected Akwaaba Freedom School to receive the Ella Baker Excellence Award. The annual award is given by CDF to one of the 150+ Freedom Schools across the nation that exhibits excellence in all areas of programming. Akwaaba Freedom School is funded by the Children’s Trust in partnership with the University of Florida College of Education, Alachua County Public Schools, and P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School.

WHAT PARENTS ARE SAYING

*Some responses have been edited for length. Parent responses are not necessarily about the pictured youth.

“My son learned new skills, gained confidence, made new friends and thoroughly enjoyed himself during the summer. The final performance is amazing. The Star Center Theatre is one of a kind. Our community is incredibly lucky to have such a program.”

— parent of a **Star Center Theatre** camper



“The camp helped me financially and gave my child a chance to meet new people and continue learning all summer. Thank you for providing funding for children to enjoy organized play and learning in a safe environment.”

— parent of a **Community Impact Corporation** camper



“Please continue to fight for this program. It has tremendous value for the children, the families, and the community. The parents are able to earn income and not worry about their kids while they do many creative activities and are taught by amazing teachers. Thank you from the bottom of my family's heart.”

— parent of a **Good News Arts** camper



“My child absolutely loved the hands-on experiments and the chance to work with kids his age. The scholarship allowed our child to explore new interests, build lasting friendships, and develop important life skills in a nurturing environment, all without the financial strain we might have otherwise faced. The experience has enriched our lives, leaving us with cherished memories and a deep sense of gratitude for the generosity that made it possible.”

— parent of an **I AM STEM** camper

“It introduced my son to a world of possibilities in ‘COLLEGE’ he hadn’t thought of at 10 years old. I greatly appreciate the community investing in children phasing out of child care between ages 8-17.”

— parent of a **Santa Fe College College For Kids** camper

SUMMER CAMP SPOTLIGHT

Camp Just for Us

INVESTMENT:

\$36,515

CHILDREN SERVED:

25

Camp Just for Us is a community-centered camp that allows youth who live in the Lewis Place at Ironwood neighborhood to attend an enriching program in their own backyard.

A neighbor and educator, LaToya Jennings-Lopez, director of the Community Partnership School at Howard Bishop Middle School, had noticed the children in her community with little to do over the summer four years ago. She envisioned a camp just for them, and shortly after dreaming it up, the community's leasing office presented her with an opportunity to use the Lewis Place community center for a summer camp. There was one condition: that it would be cost-efficient for families.

Around the same time, the Children's Trust of Alachua County was just getting started and released its first call for funding of summer camp programs. Without hesitation, Jennings-Lopez took a leap of faith and applied to become one of the Children's Trust's first funded summer camps.

With the funding secured, she established Camp Just for Us from the ground up. Over the past three summers, the program has flourished, with the ongoing support of the Children's Trust.

Families have never paid for the program, where each child is walked from their home to camp and back each day.



Campers at Just for Us enjoy supervised pool time one hot July day.

The program focuses on fostering safety and enjoyment for young participants. Each week, the members participate in a variety of activities that aid opportunities for them to form strong

bonds with one another and develop into confident leaders. The youth also participate in educational activities, preparing them for success in the upcoming school year.

"We always do one clean-up day to teach them how to be good citizens, but to also teach them to be grateful for what they have," Jennings-

Lopez said. "We also have staff members who are certified to teach elementary students, as well as work with children with special needs."

In addition to providing families with a safe, fun place for their children to be during the summer, campers also receive lunch, snacks, field trips, and more – all free of charge. Their structured days are filled with games, educational lessons, and fun with friends.

And at the end of the day, the tired campers return home, excited to return again the next morning.

Without the Children's Trust, this program would have never happened. The Trust has allowed us to be innovative, grow personally and put trust in the community. It has helped me keep integrity and help my staff be true to who we are as a program."

— **LaToya Jennings-Lopez**,
founder of Camp Just for Us

IMPACTS

Numbers reflect performance measures across all summer camp programs.

772 PROGRAM DAYS

80%

ATTENDANCE RATE

96%

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

93%

COMMUNICATION

95%

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

96%

PROGRAM SAFETY

96%

CAMP ACTIVITIES

95%

CHILD ENJOYMENT

SUMMER CAMP SPOTLIGHT

Girls Place

For over 35 years, **Girls Place** has been a place to empower young girls to grow into strong, independent, confident young women.

Serving participants from kindergarten through eighth grade, the organization emphasizes the development of social, emotional and intellectual skills. A diverse team of counselors, athletic directors, academic instructors and facilitators work together to support the girls on their journey of growth and self-discovery.

At the helm is executive director

Christi Arrington, who served fifteen years as the organization's program director before the previous executive director left seven years ago.

"I love being with the kids and working hands-on with them, so I never saw myself as executive director," Arrington said. "When the past director left, I was concerned that whoever was going to fill the position wouldn't have a heart for the

INVESTMENT:

\$99,535

CHILDREN SERVED:

107

kids, and so I went through with the application and was fortunately selected."

Each day in the program features tailored lesson plans designed for specific grade levels. With a diverse age range, these structured plans help maintain organization and ensure smooth day-to-day operations. They also facilitate a seamless transition for younger participants as they engage with older girls, fostering a sense of community and support.

"With our younger ones, some of them have not been exposed to a place like this yet, so we follow our lesson plans and ensure we are being developmentally appropriate. We don't diminish the opportunities that they have, even though they're young."

— **Nevada Smith,**

Program Director, Girls Place



"We like the staff, the activities, and having a good summer with friends. The scholarship was a weight lifted off of my shoulders. One less worry for this single mom!"

— parent of a
Girls Place camper

The Children's Trust supports Girls Place year-round, through its afterschool and summer camp programs. Arrington says this funding ensures the staff can create a nurturing environment where all girls can thrive.

"Ever since becoming Children's Trust-funded, we've been able to serve more girls, Arrington said. "More importantly, we get to go out into the community and say, 'We have assistance for you.' With the Trust's support, more families can put their children first."

SUMMER CAMP SPOTLIGHT

Traveling Art Camp

The **Traveling Art Camp** began as a small summer gathering of just 12 students. Jennifer McClure was a mom with an art passion who often hosted playdates filled with creative art projects. One day, as another parent dropped off her kids, she said, “You should start an art camp.” That simple suggestion was the spark that led to the creativity-filled program that dozens of children now enjoy each summer.

In the early stages of establishing the camp, McClure didn’t have a permanent location, hence “traveling” in its name.

The program focuses on capturing the cultural and socio-economic significance in art. Each week, the youth engage in three different art projects, exploring painting, sculpting, pottery, resin work, jewelry design, multimedia design and much more. Throughout the summer, they develop essential techniques and skills tied to each art form, fostering both creativity and personal growth.

“Since becoming Children’s Trust-funded, we have been given the opportunity to give scholarships to more students that haven’t been able to afford it in the past. It has also opened our eyes to the communities in need. Parents feel confident and comfortable to talk about the needs that they have. They are very grateful and so am I.”

— **Jennifer McClure**,
founder of Traveling Art Camp

In preparation for the following summer, McClure ensures that she reflects on the recently concluded program, seeking ways to enhance the experience. She places great importance on engaging with the community, utilizing all available resources to ensure her camp thrives.

“We need more programs like this that can accommodate the behaviors of children with ASD, PTSD, ODD, etc.”

— parent of a
Traveling Art Camp camper

“This year, I wanted to incorporate social and emotional art. One need we incorporated this year was a classroom for kids who are neurodivergent,” McClure said. “These kids can excel with higher-level art. If you give them the tools and time, they’ll do things that will blow your mind.”

Although Traveling Art Camp is an

INVESTMENT:

\$187,567

CHILDREN SERVED:

87

artistic space, it also prioritizes the health and well-being of its participants. Each day, the youth enjoy outside free play, where they can play on the playground, create with chalk and engage in various activities. This balance of creativity and play fosters a holistic environment that nurtures both artistic expression and physical health.



Campers creating self-portraits and (above) a miniature house.

SUMMER PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

TeensWork Alachua



Aniya Williams speaks to the crowd at the TeensWork event, and, left, at her summer job at Boys & Girls Club.



TOTAL INVESTMENT:
\$900,000
YOUTH SERVED:
315

Aniya Williams is an experienced **TeensWork Alachua** intern at this point, previously interning at Girls Place and GRU, and most recently at the Boys & Girls Club.

She put some of her soft skills to the test at the close of the 2024 program, sharing her experience at a podium (pictured at left) in front of nearly 200 attendees at a celebratory wrap-up event.

This experience has shaped the way I will work with others in my future career, problem solve and have an open mind.”

— **Aniya Williams**,
TeensWork Alachua intern

During the summer of 2024, Aniya served as a teen camp counselor, where she engaged with youth ranging from preschool to secondary grades. Through leading homework assistance, organizing interactive events, facilitating art activities, and participating in field trips, Aniya gained invaluable experience.

“I was able to learn

transferable skills and different ways to work, teach and help others who are younger than I am, while also being able to work with coworkers who are older than me,” she said.

As a dedicated senior in high school, Aniya is committed to maintaining her place on the ‘A’ honor roll while actively seeking opportunities to accumulate additional service hours. She recognizes the importance of academic excellence and being involved with her community. Her future aspirations include attending college, pursuing her career goals in dentistry, and eventually obtaining further education to become an orthodontist.

“I would encourage other students to take all jobs and opportunities seriously as they never know who they could currently be working with that could lead them to their dream job through connections and networking,” Aniya said.

PROGRAM MODEL:



6-8 WEEKS OF EMPLOYMENT



UP TO 25 HOURS PER WEEK



**14 HOURS OF WORK
READINESS TRAINING**



\$12 AN HOUR



**JOB COACH SUPPORT
AND MENTORING**



**ESTABLISH BANK ACCOUNT
AND SET UP DIRECT DEPOSIT**

IMPACTS

Numbers reflect performance measures for TeensWork Alachua.

OPPORTUNITY GROWTH:

49 EMPLOYERS
IN 2023 TO
85 IN 2024, WITH
31 RETURNING

97% 
OVERALL
TEEN SATISFACTION

126 HOURS

WORKED ON AVERAGE

\$1,605
AVERAGE TEEN
EARNINGS OVER
THE SUMMER

97% 
EMPLOYERS
FELT TEENS GAINED
VALUABLE SKILLS

94% 
TEENS FELT THEY
GAINED VALUABLE
WORK EXPERIENCE

38,220
TOTAL HOURS OF
WORK CLOCKED FOR
LOCAL ECONOMY

AT WORK – THANK YOU, EMPLOYERS!



TeensWork interns were all across the county in summer 2024. Here, at the City of Gainesville's Public Works Department.



From left: Demari working at Curia on the Drag; James with Gainesville Fire Rescue; and Jaimyla at Newberry Animal Hospital.



The 2024 TeensWork job coaches from Goodwill Industries of Northeast Florida. Garyel, at far right, interned with State Rep. Yvonne Hayes Hinson's office.



And the Children's Trust's own pair of interns: Addyson, at far left, and Miyah, near left.

EARLY CHILDHOOD



Head Start Summer Bridge programs offer preschool-aged children development of their social-emotional skills and early academics. Above and below, children play on the playground at I Rise Head Start Center.



A 4-year-old class at the CHILD Center for Early Learning practices name writing.

SUMMER BRIDGE

TOTAL INVESTMENT:
\$218,394.⁹⁰

CHILDREN SERVED:
110

Head Start Summer Bridge

is an eight-week voluntary program designed for families to take advantage of continued early learning during the summer, when Head Start programs are normally closed. Five centers participated in the Summer 2024 program: Just a Blessing Head Start Center, I Rise Head Start Center, Building Dreams Head Start Center, Martin-Rochelle Learning Center, and CHILD Center for Early Learning.

In Alachua County, the program is administered by **Episcopal Children's Services** with funding from the Children's Trust.



From summer's beginning to the end...

85% OF CHILDREN IMPROVED
LITERACY SCORES

75% OF CHILDREN IMPROVED
MATH SCORES

73% OF CHILDREN IMPROVED
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SCORES

EARLY LEARNING SPOTLIGHT

Business & Leadership Institute

for Early Learning (BLI) V'locity® Master Class and Accreditation Academy

The **Business & Leadership Institute for Early Learning (BLI)** helps local home- and center-based childcare leaders to reinforce the business side of their profession. These dedicated individuals often enter into the field for a love of children, but there's so much more involved in building and maintaining a successful program.

When BLI came along, I was at a point where I was just drowning financially, and I was exhausted. BLI saved our business.”

— **Dietra Sherman**,
owner of Pattie-Cake Christian
Academy and member of the
first BLI Master Class cohort

Sherman now serves as a mentor for the V'Locity® Master Class cohorts, where she aims to share the knowledge she's gained since her time in the course.

“A lot of times we get trapped in planning for the day, and not looking at tomorrow,” she said. “I want them to see themselves as an entrepreneur, a business owner, to capitalize on what's available to better serve the families and themselves.”

Another mentor, Tamika Rutledge, helps with the Accreditation Academy part of the program. This is an optional second step, following the completion of the Master Class program. Those who choose to take this step are walked through the process to obtain an official childcare accreditation.

“I've been accredited for 15 years,” Rutledge said of her home-based business, Rutledge Large Family Childcare, “but I had never thought about a business plan, or an exit strategy.”

Rutledge was also in the first BLI Master Class cohort with Sherman and said the networking with other childcare business

owners was one of her favorite aspects. She is a first-time Accreditation Academy mentor, starting with the Spring 2024 Master Class graduates. She also brings a unique perspective with her decade of service as an observation specialist with the National Association for Family Child Care, which provides accreditation for home-based businesses.

Three years since participating in the program, Sherman said she's now in “phase two” of her business plan. She recently acquired a center in Alachua that will serve children over the age of 1, while her home-based facility will continue to serve infants up to age 1. She was also able to produce another stream of income this year by

INVESTMENT:

\$295,000

NUMBER SERVED:

26

publishing her first children's book, “Coffee, Coffee, Coffee: A Book of Opposites.”

“Just thinking about the revenue aspect, which in the past is something I never would have thought of,” Sherman said of the biggest lesson she took from BLI. “For many of us, we get into this business on pure passion, but now I'm able to think about the long-term goals.”



The Spring 2024 Cohort of BLI Master Class graduates. Above, Dietra Sherman with another mentor, Russell Scoates.

ENRICHMENT



2024 PROGRAMS:

- Chef Empowerment's Underground Kitchen
- Child Advocacy Center
- Cultural Arts Coalition
- Gainesville Chamber Orchestra
- MOTIV8U of North Central Florida
- UF Florida Museum of Natural History

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

\$183,098.⁰⁷

CHILDREN SERVED:

8,252

SITES SERVED:

47

SESSIONS:

613

Enrichment programs offer youth an opportunity to explore extracurricular activities that may spark an interest and even lead to potential future careers. The services are brought to locations such as afterschool providers, camps, community centers, and more. FY2024 marked the final year of a three-year funding opportunity, with each of the six providers offering a diverse range of experiences, from culinary arts to science to social-emotional wellbeing. Or, in the case of **Gainesville Chamber Orchestra**, pictured above, putting real orchestral instruments in the hands of young, budding musicians.

"The children love the fact that they get to learn and play a real violin."

— Partner organization response about **Gainesville Chamber Orchestra**

"They really enjoyed role playing and receiving special bracelets for being positive role models."

— Partner organization response about **MOTIV8U**

100%

QUALITY OF PROGRAMMING

100%

YOUTH ENJOYMENT & ENGAGEMENT

ENRICHMENT SPOTLIGHT

UF Florida Museum OF NATURAL HISTORY

At its core, **Science Surprises** relies on the fun of exposing youth to science. Beyond that, though, the program functions to inspire youth to dream past limitations and pursue their fullest potential.

“All our activities are fun, engaging and interactive. They challenge our students by problem solving and learning how to use critical thinking skills. Activities are all hands-on science learning experiences in which they have an opportunity to build something that will enhance their learning experiences. We also use inquiry-based learning experiences, in which the students are always actively participating in learning discussion.”

— **Alberto Lopez Torres**,
Manager of Museum Education

The program serves diverse audiences throughout Alachua County by partnering with community organizations — many also affiliated with the Children’s Trust — that share the same mission. To name a few: Cultural Arts Coalition, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, and Girls Place.

“Students become better observers, problem solvers, critical thinkers and better science communicators,” Torres said. “It is always so amazing to see students explain in their own words the science concepts that they have learned in our programs. Seeing them use their creativity to solve problems, like an engineering challenge that we put in front of them, and seeing their faces light up when they solve these challenges.”

The skills that youth learn at Science Surprises translates into their academic and social-emotional success. The program serves children in grades K-6 and is offered to schools, homeschool groups and community organizations in Alachua County. For homeschool students, the program sends a hands-on science kit to the youth to virtually follow along with all the tools accessible to them.

“Thanks to the generous support of the Children’s Trust of Alachua County,

we have been able to drastically increase the number of children that we are able to reach,” Torres said. “We estimate that we have gone from reaching around 32 individual children with Science Surprises [without CTAC funds], to a bit over 200, once we received initial CTAC support for the summer programming three years ago, to now close to 650 individuals for year-long programming with 3,000 children in attendance.”

INVESTMENT:

\$24,397.⁵⁶

CHILDREN SERVED:

2,984 (DUPLICATED)



ENRICHMENT SPOTLIGHT

MOTIV8U of North Central Florida

MOTIV8U's **Character Development Enrichment Program**, which brings its curriculum to requesting groups across the county, is committed to enhancing the social-emotional components of youth development.

The program serves children from kindergarten to high school, each curriculum tailored to the different age groups and developmental needs. Each day in the program is filled with energetic welcomes, followed by curricula that provide activities for the youth to follow and gain social-emotional skills.

Our programs are designed to transfer skills that I've identified as critical to an individual's success. We focus on emotional regulation and well-being as well as self-efficacy and self-esteem. Our programs provide interactive activities that reinforce learning points in the areas of leadership, attitude development, relationship building and sustaining, goal setting and plans to attain those goals, and what we call 'excellence' or decision-making."

— **John S. Rollins**,
President and CEO
of MOTIV8U

Thankful for all the love and support in his life, Rollins is passionate about giving back to youth in the community by providing them with support, structure and mentorship. He started the program

after recognizing others do not have the same fortune he did to grow up with an amazing support system.

"One of the things that we do is we try to guide the students to their own outcomes as opposed to sharing with them what we think they should say or how they should respond," Rollins said. "It has proven to be very effective as we celebrate their personal discoveries of the points that we're trying to share with them."

MOTIV8U has a core message, U*R IMPT (You Are Important), which connects to its mission and vision. The Character Development Enrichment Program allows participants to recognize and take ownership of their personal value and worth. Guiding them every step of the way, staff members encourage and inspire students to reach their maximum potential.

INVESTMENT:

\$49,793.⁵¹

CHILDREN SERVED:

2,419 (DUPLICATED)



Students love the "U*R IMPT" (You Are Important) wristbands that remind them to value themselves.



GOAL 3

SAFETY

All children and youth live in a **safe** community.



The Children's Trust put a new emphasis on **Teen-Centered Programming** this year. This includes the City of Gainesville's Midnight Basketball, above, taken during a themed event to raise awareness for Gun Violence Prevention; and North Central Florida YMCA's Youth & Teen Enrichment Nights, pictured below, which provide free activities once a month, with music, games and food.



2024 INVESTMENTS:

- Peaceful Paths
- AMIkids
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Community Impact Corporation
- IGB Education Foundation
- Made for More Foundation
- Motiv8U Mentoring
- The Education Foundation of Alachua County's Take Stock in Children
- City of Gainesville's Midnight Basketball
- North Central Florida YMCA Teen Center and Youth Engagement

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

\$709,795.³⁶

SERVED:

2,065 CHILDREN

48 PARENTS

230 PROFESSIONALS

MENTORING SUCCESSES

*Some responses have been edited for length. Responses are not necessarily about the pictured youth.



Nadia (Little) and Asha (Big) were matched in March 2024 and wasted very little time connecting. Asha understood the pressure Mom was experiencing trying to move through nursing school while caring for her family. Asha said, “It has worked out well for Nadia and I because she loves to eat and so do I.” They’ve also gone to the trampoline park, gotten Mani/Pedis to prepare for back-to-school, and go swimming often. Nadia’s mom said, “I can honestly say my daughter has found someone she enjoys hanging out with just as much as me. We are so grateful to Asha.”

— Big Brothers Big Sisters

Prior to enrolling in the mentorship program, one of our senior mentees was timid, introverted and not sure what to do beyond high school. He participated in the life skills sessions, pre-employment skills, which included compilations on completing applications, interview processes and resume writing. He decided to apply and was accepted to Full Sail University. He is now in his first semester of college and is the first in his family to attend.

— Community Impact Corporation



A shy fifth grader was referred to our program to help build his confidence and social skills. After several months of participating in our activities and receiving consistent mentor support, we saw

a remarkable transformation during one of our group outings. When an activity called for volunteers, this once-reserved student boldly stepped to the front to go first, in front of all his peers. This moment highlights how our supportive environment and structured activities help participants build confidence and overcome personal challenges.

— IGB Education Foundation



IMPACTS

Numbers reflect performance measures across all mentoring programs.

279 MENTEES

162 MENTORS



PARENT ENGAGEMENT

90%

MENTORS RECEIVING MONTHLY SUPPORT



YOUTH MATCHED WITH MENTORS FOR >9 MONTHS

97%

NO JUVENILE JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT



MAINTAINED OR IMPROVED SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

100%

MAINTAINED OR IMPROVED SCHOOL PERFORMANCE



YOUTH SATISFACTION

MENTORING SPOTLIGHT

Community Impact Corporation

INVESTMENT:

\$40,953.⁸⁷

CHILDREN SERVED:

26

Community Impact Corporation

– Youth Mentorship Program

was established to offer personalized mentoring services for youth in middle and high school. Recognizing a vital need in the community, Upper Room Ministries aimed to create a safe space that provides guidance and support for young individuals.

During Covid time we saw a need: Children were not looking forward to going to school or completing assignments online. There was an increase in violence, and we saw that there were groups of youth who needed to be rescued. These kids needed to find a better way out and meet role models who came from similar scenarios and were able to excel.”

— **Pearlie Shelton,**

Pastor of Upper Room Ministry

The program emphasizes the importance of educational, social and emotional development. Mentors are dedicated to meeting weekly with their mentees, with some offering additional meetings based on the individual needs of the youth. Additionally, mentors are encouraged to connect with their mentees’ teachers, collaborating



Community Impact Corporation mentors and mentees enjoy a day at the Florida Gators’ Orange and Blue Spring Game.

to identify and address specific needs effectively.

Mentors are recruited through community events, social media outreach, and Shelton’s network as a former educator. By engaging with schools, the program can offer services to interested youth, as well as match mentors to the best of their ability.

“Since becoming Children’s Trust-funded, we can continue adding more to our mentorship program,” Shelton said. “Most importantly, we are able to give the youth new experiences and take them to new places.”

MENTORING FEATURE

Made for More

Made for More was founded on the principles of inspiring and mentoring young student-athletes in middle and high school. To empower these young men – and more recently, young women – Made For More offers a variety of activities, including workshops, camps, trips and Bible studies.

The program offers both group and one-on-one mentoring. Staff members collaborate with local schools to gather recommendations for up to 20 participants, per school. After reviewing the recommendations, program directors meet with the youth and match them with mentors who provide weekly support.

“Made for More is a voluntary program.

INVESTMENT:

\$63,681.²⁰

CHILDREN SERVED:

68



We make sure to tell the youth this all the time: we want to help them as much as they want to be helped,” said David Singleton, Mentorship Program director. “The youth can leave the program at any point that they would like. Our program focuses on kids from middle school to high school, and most kids stay throughout that duration.”

Mentors are essential to the success of the program, and staff members actively recruit within the community.

They engage with churches, organizations and community events to find suitable candidates.

Potential new mentors must review the program overview and confirm they meet the necessary qualifications before completing an application and passing a background screen. They are then paired with a mentee. Mentors are required to attend an orientation and participate in at least two training sessions each year.



Being in Made For More has benefited me in many ways. One of the ways it has benefited me is teaching me about brotherhood. Before this program, I didn't know how important it was to have someone there for you, guiding you through personal trials. And along with that, it has taught me that there are people who have been through similar experiences, have the same goals and aspirations, and you just aren't alone. And the mentors really help me feel that, too. They will talk to us whenever we need, and even go places to talk with us and bond and see how we are doing in life, along with giving advice.”

— **Cour'ven G.**, Made for More Mentee

CAPACITY BUILDING

Expanding child-serving organizations' reach and success.

2024 INVESTMENTS:

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Community Foundation and Center for Nonprofit Excellence
- WebAuthor
- Child Advocacy Center
- LanguageLine
- Florida Afterschool Network memberships

MINI GRANTS

- 100 Black Men of Greater Florida
- The Concrete Rose Foundation
- Gator Junior Golf
- Greater Bethel
- Just for Us
- Old Town Ministries
- Wake Up & Dream
- Willie Mae Stokes Community Center

TOTAL INVESTMENT:

\$321,476.⁵⁰



This year, the Children's Trust formed a strategic partnership with the **Community Foundation of North Central Florida** to empower local nonprofits to build capacity and sustainability. Theresa Beachy was selected to head the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, a position the Trust funds. In addition, the first-ever **Grants Conference** brought together 100 representatives of local nonprofit leaders for a free day-long training in August. Beachy presents there in the photo above; other scenes from the day are below. The goal is to fill a gap among the nonprofit sector for professional education and strengthen the CORE: Capacity, Operations, Responsiveness and Excellence.



OUTREACH



Community outreach is a core element of the Children's Trust mission: Meeting with stakeholders, attending events, and most importantly, interacting with the families and youth we serve. Our Community Engagement Manager, Elizabeth Cayson, can frequently be found near a Children's Trust of Alachua County table on the weekends. She's a cheerleader for the many children who love to come up for a game of cornhole, a source of information for families seeking services, and most importantly, an advocate for all things Children's Trust.



2024 SPONSORSHIPS:

- 1000 Voices of Florida's Cultural Arts Expression: Youth on the Move
- 399 Sports and Recreation's Shoot for Success Basketball Skills Camp and Educational Opportunity Fair
- Alachua County Child Abuse Prevention Task Force's Celebrate the Child
- Aqua Angels Artistic Swimming's The Little Mermaid Swimming Show
- Bee a Blessing's Pamper Me Pink Symposium
- Blossoming Butterfly's Pinkfest 2024
- Children Beyond Our Borders' Health Fair
- City of Gainesville Parks & Recreation's Greatest Graduation Party & Teen Culture Event
- City of Newberry's AA History Trip to Montgomery, Alabama
- City of Waldo's Fall Festival
- Concerned Citizens of Newberry's Hope for the Community
- Deeper Purpose Community Charities' Annual Pinktober Kickback 3K Run/Walk
- Dream on Purpose's Career Launch Intensive
- Education Foundation's Teacher of the Year and Take Stock in Children Gala
- Free Canaan UMC Waldo's Family Fun Day
- Fundamental Therapy Solutions' Fall Festival
- Gainesville for All's Growing Greatness Spring Celebration

- Gainesville Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority's Youth Summit
- Gainesville Fire Rescue's Community Health events
- Girls Can Do It Too's Rewriting Her Story
- Greater Duval Neighborhood Association's First Annual Holiday Fundraiser & Scholarship Gala
- Just Between Friends Gainesville's Safe KIDS Day Fall 2023
- Manhood Youth Development Foundation's Civil Rights Spring Break Road Trip
- North Florida Council Boys Scouts of America's 2024 Gainesville American Values Dinner
- Partnership for Strong Families' Annual Family Resource Center Partner Networking Fair
- Pride Community Center of North Central Florida's The Pride Festival
- Swampbots' Florida Sunshine Invitational Championship
- The CHILD Center's Help Us Grow Event
- The Education Equalizer Foundation's College Pass
- Trinity Day Spa Pampering for Kids' Kidpreneur Popup Shop
- United Way of NCF's Women United Holiday Luncheon-ALICE Families
- Youth Council, Alachua County Branch of the NAACP, Unit 58b6's Youth Engagement Brunch and Panel Discussion



Top: Aqua Angels Artistic Swimming's The Little Mermaid Swimming Show; above, Cayson with County Commissioner and Children's Trust Board Vice Chair Ken Cornell; right, a boy blows bubbles at an event.



INCLUDING 8 BACK-TO-SCHOOL GIVEAWAYS AND EVENTS

- Alachua Raiders Football & Cheer's Back to School Giveaway
- Community Impact Corporation's PAVE 25th Annual STOP the Violence Back to School Rally
- Dare To Be Different Youth Empowerment Organization's Back To School Hygiene Drive
- Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County's Falling in Love with Reading, VPK Prom & Back to School event
- Friends of BCF's Back to School Supplies
- High Springs Chamber's Back to School Giveaway
- Shekinah Glory Family Worship Center's Back to School Giveaway & Health Fair
- Waldo Community New Vision Coalition's 2024 Back To School Fun Day Giveaway

TOTAL SPONSORED: 40
SPONSORSHIP INVESTMENT: \$53,957.⁵⁰

Community Engagement

The Children's Trust of Alachua County partners with community-focused nonprofits, businesses, grassroots groups, key stakeholders, local chambers of commerce, and city councils to enhance awareness of our organization and community-funded initiatives.

The Children's Trust sponsored the first-ever PBS Kids Zone at WUFT's longtime annual tradition, Fanfares & Fireworks, on July 3. Nearly all of the team supported the event, including one of our TeensWork interns!



Alachua County Relay for Life.



UF Health Shands Children's Hospital Bike Rodeo, Safety & Health Fair; right, Balance180 Halloween event.

We went from one end of the county to the other in Fiscal Year 2024, including events held in the municipalities of **Alachua, Archer, Gainesville, High Springs, Micanopy, Newberry, and Waldo.**



Okito Tech City Fun Fest event in Alachua.



Reader Palooza, Depot Park in Gainesville.



State Rep. Yvonne Hayes Hinson, center, visits with Cayson and LaToya Jennings-Lopez, director of the Community Partnership School, at the Wellness & Awareness Health Expo at Howard Bishop Middle School.

Community Partnerships

The Children's Trust engages in collaborative efforts with local businesses and organizations to develop joint events and community projects aligned with our core goals.

EXAMPLES OF PARTNERSHIPS INCLUDE:

We form strategic alliances with Alachua County **schools**, **PTAs** and other **educational groups** to offer resources that support student success and community enrichment.



The Education Foundation's 32nd Annual Robert W. Hughes Teacher Of The Year, Dwyette Smith.

Chambers and community groups are the cornerstone of our partnership, facilitating connections with grassroots neighborhood associations, community-focused clubs, influential advocacy groups, and innovative local businesses. We are members of the Chamber of Commerce in Alachua, Gainesville, Hawthorne, High Springs, and Newberry. We partnered closely with the Rural Women's Health Project and the 5th Avenue Neighborhood Association.



Latin Chamber of Commerce at Kairos in Gainesville.



Executive Director Marsha Kiner with Alachua City Manager Mike DaRoza and Mayor Gib Coerper at the Alachua Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting.



Above, at the 5th Avenue Arts Festival. Left, presenting a certificate of appreciation to former High Springs Mayor Gloria James at the High Springs Chamber of Commerce Meeting.

Local governments and nonprofit agencies work together to address community needs and advance projects that elevate children and families' standard of living. We are also members of the Florida Alliance of Children's Councils and Trusts (FACCT) to promote policies and legislation that help improve the lives of children, our youth, and their families.



Advocacy meeting with Senator Keith Perry during Legislative session. Artwork from Traveling Art Camp.



Civic and social organizations are strengthened through collaborations and partnerships. Organizations include Gainesville Rotary Club, GFWC High Springs New Century Woman's Club, Kiwanis Club, and Sunrise Rotary Club.



CHILD Center Help Us Grow event; above, High Springs New Century Woman's Club.



UF Health Shands Pediatric Trauma Services Department. Below, a Healthy Afternoons with Gainesville Fire Rescue event.

Healthcare providers help with health-related workshops and referrals for families who need screenings and wellness care. We partnered with UF Health Shands Pediatric Hospital, Alachua Florida Department of Health, and Gainesville Fire Rescue Paramedicine Program.



At CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services' opening of the new Interface Youth Shelter.

Cultural Institutions, including museums, art galleries, and cultural centers, promote diversity and cultural awareness through specially curated events. We value and recognize the importance of our partnerships with A. Quinn Jones Museum & Cultural Center, Harn Museum of Art, and the Florida Museum of Natural History, to name a few.

Universities and colleges are among the academic institutions that fortify our research capabilities, collaborative partnerships, and community-based learning programs. Academic institutions such as the University of Florida's Center for Arts in Medicine and Santa Fe College play a vital role and we value their partnerships.



Table visitors at the 25th Annual PAVE Stop the Violence Rally. Below, Pastors Duncan and Anderson at the event.

Faith-based organizations join forces with us on community-focused projects. We have established partnerships with various churches and ministerial associations to address pressing community needs.



FINANCIALS

ALL FUNDS PRELIMINARY YEAR-END REPORT		
REVENUES	FY2024 BUDGET	FY2024 ACTUAL**
Ad Valorem Property Taxes	\$9,412,041.00	\$9,486,616.58
Interest	\$425,000.00	\$829,283.77
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$521,800.33	\$168,507.83
Use of Fund Balance	\$5,491,155.83	--
Capital	\$3,000,000.00	\$3,000,000.00
Total Revenues	\$18,849,997.16	\$13,484,408.18
EXPENDITURES	FY2024 BUDGET	FY2024 ACTUAL**
Personnel Services	\$1,581,212.83	\$1,415,142.20
Operating Expenses	\$1,556,267.00	\$1,107,794.55
Grants & Awards	\$10,795,102.33	\$7,314,752.89
Capital Expense	\$2,963,000.00	\$2,981,563.58
Depreciation Expense	\$37,000.00	\$35,975.12
Sub-Total Expenditures	\$16,932,582.16	\$12,855,228.34
OTHER SOURCES (USES)	FY2024 BUDGET	FY2024 ACTUAL**
Transfers Out	\$1,040,000.00	--
Appropriated Reserve	\$877,415.00	--
Total Transfers	\$1,917,415.00	--
Total Expenditures	\$18,849,997.16	\$12,855,228.34
Net Income (Expense)	-	\$629,179.84

**Unaudited amounts, as of 11/30/2024.

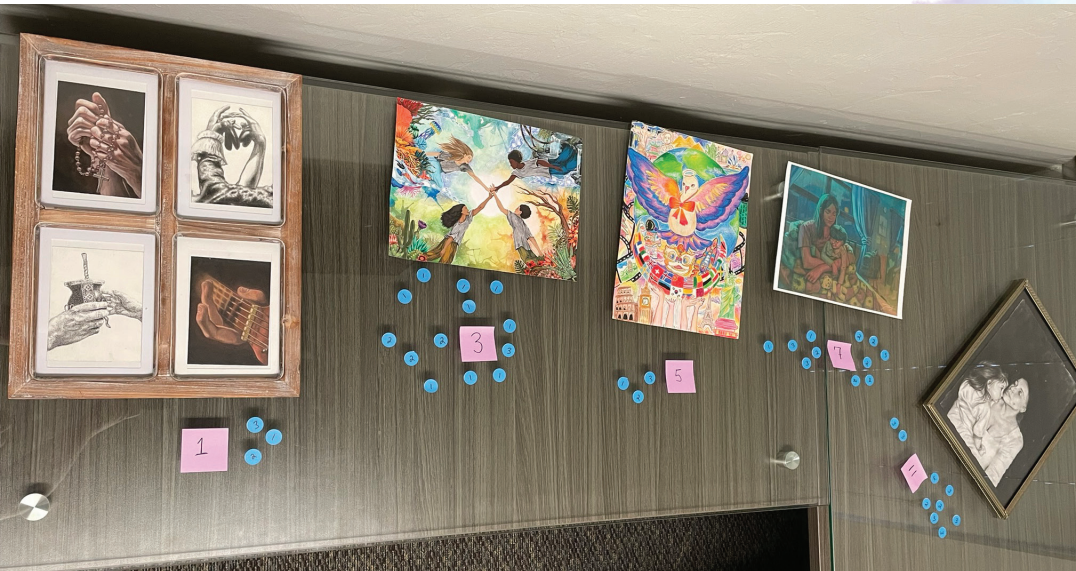


Marsha Kiner goes live on Tu Fiesta Radio for the Amazing Give.

Media outlets play a key role in spreading the word of Children's Trust programs, initiatives and services across the county. This year, the Children's Trust made live appearances on Tu Fiesta Radio and WUFT.

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Contest winner Jaden Alfonzo, Grade 12, First Christian Academy



The top five art pieces, as narrowed by three UF College of the Arts professors, receive 1-2-3 votes from Children's Trust staff to select the final placements.

ABOUT THE CONTEST:

The "Speak Your Piece" art contest was designed to highlight the talent of young artists in Alachua County. High schoolers were challenged to create pieces that showcased their unique perspectives on what peace means within our community. Over six weeks, artists completed 2-D works and submitted them to their high school art teachers, who then offered their top two pieces to the Children's Trust. Three University of Florida College of the Arts professors then evaluated the works based on originality, composition, level of difficulty, interpretation of the theme, and overall impression. After the professors' judging, the top five pieces went up for a final ranking from the Children's Trust staff, who coincidentally selected the same top three as the UF judges.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

From the moment Jaden first picked up a pencil, she has been immersed in creating art. Driven by her passion, the high school senior plans to pursue a degree in art with a minor in music. In a bold choice, Jaden submitted an art piece in a medium she only recently began exploring: watercolor. (Her usual medium is graphite.) As the winner of "Speak Your Piece" art contest, Jaden plans to put her \$500 prize money toward her senior trip.



How Jaden describes the piece that graces this year's Annual Report cover:

"We are complex individuals who are distinct from one another, but have one important thing in common: We are human beings. We want to be loved and accepted, we long for friendship, we want hope, we want to contribute positively to society, we want successful lives. Because of that, it's in our nature to *connect* with each other.

Yet, that connection is constantly broken. There is violence in schools, wars, suicide, and other devastating events that bring nothing but sadness and struggle. Influences of dishonesty, hate, and anger have taken control of us, breaking the

togetherness we are meant to have.

This piece is meant to deny that and embrace the beauty of joining together. Each character coming from a different corner represents the diversity and vibrancy of mankind. Every human is individually unique; there is no "same" person. The purpose of including different elements of nature pertaining to each character is to bring light to how we are a creation, just like nature, and that the way we are connected to nature is an example of how we are connected to each other. The background colors belonging to each character

bleed and fade into a white center, which demonstrates how even with our differences — whether it is our appearance, our home life, our opinions — we can still accept each other. At the white center, the hands come together in a soft, delicate touch. This demonstrates how with the simplest and gentlest acts of acceptance and compassion, we can have an impact on the world. With the want to connect and the ability to accept, we are led into love. It has been built into us to love, and when we love, it is not violence that results. It is peace."



CHILDREN'S TRUST TEAM

Standing (L-R):
 Thomas Hill
 Max De Zutter
 Elizabeth Cayson
 Demetrica Tyson
 Scott Sumner
 Mia Jones
 Bonnie Wagner
 Miranda Rodriguez, intern
 Kirsten Rabin

Seated (L-R):
 Jordan Sutherland, intern
 Amalie Bethune
 Belita James
 Marsha Kiner
 Tara Major
 Kristy Goldwire
 Amy Wagner

Not pictured:
 Jeannine Seider
 Nicole Odom
 Ashley Morgan-Daniel



CHILDREN'S TRUST
 OF ALACHUA COUNTY

Follow us on social media!



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