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United for Families Connector

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Local golfers tee off to help children in foster care

United for Families will host its Second Annual Teeing Off Fore Kids charity golf tournament May 30 at Panther Woods Country Club, in Fort Pierce.

Golfers will receive 18 holes of golf at a private club, use of a golf cart, lunch and a barbecue dinner, event polo shirt, golf towel and a sleeve of golf balls.

Awards, raffles, silent auction and a putting contest also will be offered.

The event, sponsored by Global Safety LLC, Sam's Club and Hometown News, is \$125 per golfer, or \$500 per foursome. Registration will begin at 11:30 a.m., and the tournament will begin with a shotgun start at 1 p.m. United for Families hopes to attract 100

golfers, and is particularly interested in promoting corporate teams. Proceeds will help fund programs that support foster parents, send children to camp, provide child safety seats and support grandparents and other relatives who care for children in the court dependency system. For information, call Leslie Haviland-Smith at 398-2920 or register online at unitedforfamilies.org.

<u>Schedule</u>
Registration: 11:30 a.m.
Shotgun Start: 1 p.m.
Dinner/Awards: Following tournament

Smartly Give Away Assets During Your Lifetime

By Scott Sade, The Sade Group at Smith Barney — Giving your assets is more complicated than just writing a check. You should be aware of certain rules. For example:

- The 2007 maximum gift tax exclusion amount is \$12,000 per person.
- The lifetime federal gift tax exclusion amount is currently \$1 million.
- The top federal gift tax rate is 45 percent.
- In 2010, the top gift tax rate will equal the top individual income tax rate (currently 35%).
- Any portion of the gift tax exclusion used will reduce dollar-for-dollar your estate tax exclusion available at death.

In light of all this, you may want to consider some creative lifetime gifts.

Charitable trusts, for example, can offer you several financial benefits, including the potential deferral of capital gains taxes, as well as possible gift and estate tax savings. They may also serve as effective vehicles for transferring wealth.

A Charitable Remainder Trust is a tax-exempt way to distribute income from the trust to beneficiaries for a period of time after which remaining assets are distributed to charities of your choice. You determine the time frame of the trust as well as the amount of annual payouts. There are some requirements that you should know.

First, the annual payout for the length of the trust or the

life expectancies of the beneficiaries cannot exceed 50 percent or be less than 5 percent of the value of the trust. And a private foundation or donor-advised fund may be named as the charitable remainder beneficiary.

Highly-appreciated assets owned by the trust can also be sold without an immediate capital gain, which may allow for an increase in current income as well as income tax deduction. However, the type of assets gifted and the type of charity receiving the gifts, as well as your adjusted gross income, are all taken into consideration in determining your charitable income tax deduction. What's more, there may be income tax due on your annual payouts from the trust.

Next edition — Charitable Lead Trusts

Kids need kits, Community

By Lea Ely, resource coordinator — The apartments of most young adults are a happy patchwork of castoff odds and ends — the ugly sofa mom never wanted in the house, the garish painting dad wasn't allowed to have in the house and the pots and pans that cooked up a thousand family meals. But family hand-me-downs are a luxury most teenagers in foster care don't have.

That's why United for Families is asking the community to donate apartment kits for students in its Road to Success program. These kits ideally would contain basic kitchen wares, linens and cleaning supplies, preferably new.



From left, Rae Ann Wallace, and Resource Coordinator Lea Ely show off one of the donated kits

Two groups have donated kits since the program began earlier this year: the Day Lillies, from White City Methodist Church and Beta Sigma Phi, a women's philanthropy group.

Each kit is worth about \$150. About 10-20 are needed each year.

CEO reflects on past experiences in child welfare

By Christine Demetriades, Chief Executive Officer — While dining with friends one noon, the table next to us kept erupting with uncontrollable laughter. I noticed about 12 women, all of retirement age, and I could not help but hear snippets of reminiscing about the years they worked together, the many people with whom they worked, as

Stop the Tears



well as years of humorous work stories. I smiled about this lunch all the way to my car, when it struck me that whenever I spend time with former work colleagues, we might humorously discuss some of the

people we met along the way, but we never talk about the actual cases of child abuse we have professionally worked together. We don't do this because the sheer horror of the case is never in the past, even years later.

It is always buried deep inside us, ready to rear its ugly head when you are waiting at a stoplight, or mindlessly performing some Saturday morning task at home. You can feel your eyes moistening as a small face appears, and you wonder how the child is doing now. You ask yourself if the relative placement was a good one, or are they happy in their new adoptive home? You most certainly always remember the children who die, still appalled by the loss of a life, and you wonder what their little lives would have been like had they lived. What I believe I am trying to say is that society is much more victimized by child abuse than perhaps realized by us all. Central to everything is the child who now knows the world is not a safe place and that "love" hurts in ways unimaginable. They may never trust fully again.

We have a family completely devastated and even, perhaps, destroyed. We have the many individuals who work with the child and the family such as therapists, case managers, law enforcement, judges, Guardian Ad Litem, teachers, doctors, lawyers, mentors, to name a few, all of whom become deeply affected and changed by these cases.

Whether the small face is actually looking back at them, or by the sheer intensity of the documents that introduce the child to them, their lives have changed. The later impact to society is even more devastating when you read the many, many statistics about children who have been victims of abuse who do not fare well as adults. I must stress at this point, that many victims of child abuse do well as adults, but conversely, many do not.

So for National Child Abuse Prevention Month 2008, United for Families reaffirms its commitment to **Stop the Tears and End Child Abuse**. We pledge to protect every child the very best we can, and help each child successfully travel the long road to recovery. We pledge to work with our community partners to make certain the child welfare system leaves no stone unturned in its search for better ways to protect and strengthen children and their families. We pledge to continue to move towards a child welfare system that does not merely protect children from being abused again, but protects children from being abused in the first place. We need everyone's help to accomplish this.

The children must not continue to bear the cry of child abuse alone, and society has borne its sorrowful echo long enough. This is a task too great for any one person, agency or community. We must act collectively, wisely, and with great speed.

Graduate gets award from UFF

United for Families honored its first college graduate in its Road to Success program March 25 during a board of directors meeting. Ashley Ritchie, 20, came to the Road to Success program, which teaches independent living skills, when she was still a child living in foster care.

United for Families' Board President Pat McCoy presented a \$1,000 check to Ritchie, who said she will use the money to help prepare for the next leg of her education. Ritchie will begin a BA studies program this



United for Families Board President Pat McCoy presents a \$1,000 cash award to Ashley Ritchie during a board meeting March 25.

fall at Florida Atlantic University. "I'm going to cry," Ritchie told Road to Success Specialist Lisa Florio. "No one has ever given me something for doing good."

Ritchie said she wants to study early childhood education and become a teacher.

Program seeks coaches for life

Many teenagers turn 18 with at least a basic understanding of how to balance a checkbook, run a load of laundry or Map Quest their way to a job interview. But a teenager who ages out of foster care is lucky if he knows his address.

Children who grow up in the foster care system are more likely to become homeless, teen-age parents or imprisoned than children who have not lived in foster care. Few graduate high school, fewer attend college and those who get employment do so at low wages.

"Many foster kids age out of care without a family support system or an address to come home to," Program Director Denise Rivan said.

United for Families, however, is trying to change these facts for teenagers through its Road to Success program. The program teaches foster youth the ABCs of adulthood. These skills include budgeting, interviewing for jobs and maintaining a household – all skills taught one-on-one through the program's new life coach model. In this model, adult mentors are paired to foster youth.

There currently are eight life coaches available for more than 30 foster youth turning 18 within the year. More are needed.

Ribbon Tying



Colette Carey, a former United for Families client, takes a moment with her former case manager, Jill Poole, during the March 27 Stop the Tears ribbon-tying event, which held March 27 in honor of Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month.



United for Families CEO Christine Demetriades pins a blue ribbon to a tree in memory of the children helped throughout the years.



Keynote Speaker Pat McCoy holds up a picture of her three adopted children. McCoy, a foster parent, also is president of the United for Families Board of Directors.

Register now to become a life coach

Community members interested in dedicating a few hours a month to a teen-ager in foster care are encouraged to attend one of regular monthly volunteer orientations and life-coach trainings at United for Families headquarters, 10570 S. Federal Hwy., Port St. Lucie.

The next orientation is 10 a.m. to noon April 24. To register for the next training and orientation, please call United for Families Volunteer Coordinator Linda Smith at (772) 398-2920 Ext. 207. Upcoming event and volunteer opportunities also can be found at www.unitedforfamilies.org.

250 race to stop the tears in 5K



The race is on! More than 240 runners and walkers participated in the event.



Jon Williams crosses the finish line first at 17 minutes, 54 seconds.



Event Coordinator Leslie Haviland-Smith gives final instruction to the volunteer team from New Horizons. The substance-abuse treatment and United for Families partner organization also had a team of 22 runners and walkers.

United for Families Wish List

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Diapers | Event Sponsors |
| Baby Wipes | School Supplies |
| New Cribs | Back Packs |
| Twin Beds | Parade Float |
| New Car Seats | Refrigerator |

- Truck or Van to pick up donations
 - Medicaid Dental Providers
 - Rubbermaid Shelving Units
 - Plastic Storage Bins
 - Full Size Toiletries—soap, shampoo, deodorant, shaving gel, facial soap
 - School uniforms—Collared Polo Shirts, khaki and navy blue pants, shorts, skirts
 - Teen Boys and Girls Clothing
- For more information, contact Lea Ely, (772) 398-2920, Ext. 297

Port St. Lucie — More than 240 runners and walkers took their mark March 15 at Tradition and set out on a 5K run to break the cycle of child abuse.

The number was 62 percent greater than last year's 148 runners and walkers, who participated when United for Families first unrolled its Stop the Tears 5K Run, 1 Mile Walk and Family Festival. The run was the agency's kickoff event for its Stop the Tears campaign to break the cycle of child abuse. The next event is Diva's Night Out, a benefit hosted by Cost Cutters, at 5:30 p.m. April 24 at Indian Riverside Park.

United for Families raised more than \$10,000 during the 5K event, which featured the music of Sweet Justice and attracted about 600 people including 72 volunteers and 40 vendors. Tropicana, Little Caesar's Pizza, Home Crete Homes, Rosenthal, Levy and Simon, Publix and Hurricane Wings sponsored the event.



Stop the Tears 5K race results

Men's Overall

Jon Williams
Coconut Grove
17:54

Women's Overall

Tara McFarlane
Fort Pierce
24:21

Case Manager of the Quarter Jennifer Bresnahan



Jennifer Bresnahan displays her Case Manager of the Quarter award and a basket of goodies, which includes a \$250 bonus. Below, Bresnahan gets a hug from supervisor Alisa Carter.



Jennifer Bresnahan was awarded United for Families' highest honor March 20 when she was named Case Manager of the Quarter.

Bresnahan was nominated by her supervisor, Alisa Carter, who said the St. Lucie County case manager consistently goes above and beyond even the most insistent demands of the job.

"Where many of us have learned to disappear as quickly and quietly as possible when the inevitable 4:45 p.m. emergency starts to make itself known, I have yet to catch sight of the back of her head disappearing down the stairs when I needed her," Carter said. Bresnahan is now eligible to become Case Manager of the Year.

Volunteer Spotlight

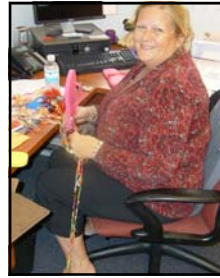
Marge Skillman

By Linda Smith, volunteer coordinator — Most people read one newspaper a day or maybe two, not Marjorie Skillman. She reads five area newspapers, several local publications and various community spotlight newspapers. Marge was recently retired and looking for a volunteer opportunity when she found United for Families. She now clips articles for United for Families, a task that take about 15 hours a week.



“This is an essential task,” Development Director Christina Kaiser said. “It helps us gauge our outreach efforts and our ability to spread our mission work.”

Besides newspaper clippings, Marge and her husband Al, assist with mailings throughout the year. Marge has four children, six grandchildren.



Volunteers made sandals to sell at the March Sandy Shoes Festival in Fort Pierce. Top, from left, Linda Smith, Leslie Haviland-Smith and Angela Rowe participate in a squeeze off; right, Sally Savage makes sandals; center, Haviland-Smith and Rowe show off their shoes; bottom left, more shoe-making; bottom right, Kevin Bea proudly displays his newly made sandals. The shoes sold for \$10 a pair.

Sandal-making workshop 2008



Volunteer Corner—Orientation & Opportunities

By Linda Smith — Volunteers from United for Families joined The Grace Place in January for the Port Salerno Seafood Festival.

The Junior League of Martin County volunteered March 8 by hosting the Barnes and Nobles Book Fair. Proceeds from the event help provide books to children in foster care during their birthday month.

Two high school organizations — Martin County High School's DECA students and Treasure Coast High School's Future Business

Leaders of America are actively volunteering at festivals.

“This is a great cooperative opportunity for United for Families to join forces with other organizations” said Leslie Haviland-Smith, event coordinator.

United for Families was excited to have 70 volunteers at the recent 5K event in Tradition. From setting up tents and tables, to directing traffic and providing assistance to vendors, our volunteers were there to help.

Orientation Sessions

April 14
6-8 p.m.

April 24
10 a.m. to noon

Volunteer Opportunities

April 18: *Hibiscus Festival*

May 2: *Friday Fest*

May 26: *Stuart Memorial Day Parade*

May 30: *Teeing Off Fore Kids*

June 13: *Foster Parent Dinner*

June 14: *Foster Family Swim Party*

Family Group Decision Making — a look at where your money goes

By Lisa Thornton, program specialist —

Family Group Decision Making is a child-centered, family-focused planning conference that empowers families to make better decisions about caring for their children.

In Family Group Decision Making, the family — not the professional — creates a plan that will keep the children safe and the family in tact.

The conference is facilitated by Family Group Decision Making professionals. At the heart of the conference, however, is the opportunity families have to begin a private discussion. It is at that time that service providers step out of the conference and the family plan is created.

The program is lauded internationally for keeping families together and children safe and out of the child-welfare system.

United for Families' program has received 27 referrals since its inception in 2007.

Dependency Case Managers are to be commended for taking the time and effort needed to help their clients through the process.

Case managers are an integral part of the conference. We applaud them for helping their families create solutions that further enhance child safety.



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Our Mission ~

*To break the cycle of
child abuse through a
diverse network of
community partners and
innovative services.*

United for Families thanks its January-March 2008 contributors

Kristen Baltes	Janet Forsythe	Kaitlyn Neeley	Angela Rowe	Brittany Borchert	Sam Cosimano	<i>Weatherbee Elem.</i>
Susan Morris	<i>IRCC</i>	Kristi Lewallen	The Tappan Family	Karsten Fillmer	Janice Marer	<i>Morningside Elem.</i>
Jane Christiansen	<i>Rosalind's Downtown</i>	Cerena Wallace	<i>Global Safety Inc.</i>	Kornelia Fillmer	Andrew Trainor	<i>Morningside Church</i>
Shelley Brandt	<i>Fitness</i>	The Harvey Family	Kay Williams	Kathy Albritton	Tracy Sosa	Kathy Rossini
Bruce Brandt	<i>Royal Palms of SLC</i>	The Demetriades Family	The Philip Smith Family	<i>Rack Room Shoes</i>	Marshall Stinson	Karen Selway
Allen Post	Herman Gottfried	Sandra Schwartz	Virginia Howell	Nelsen Marty	Johnathan Gralak	Laura Brolmann
Jennifer Post	<i>Homecrete Homes</i>	The Rivan Family	Jennifer Kilibab	<i>The Dog Dish</i>	Brigitte Lamn	Pierre Grandbury
Jamie Karbett	The Kaiser Family	The Steve Smith Family	Veronica Gutierrez	<i>It's In the Bag</i>	Safina England	Chris McKnight
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Aidan Ralicki	Elise Mahovich	<i>Hoskins and Turco</i>	Jennifer Corona	<i>Delicious Doggy De-</i>	Melitta Perez	Vicki Bobbitt
Yuri Neto	<i>Tropicana</i>	<i>Smokys Barbeque</i>	Bob Murphy	<i>lights</i>	Bob Murphy	Jessica Dawson
CJ Robertson	Peter Erwig	<i>Just Luv Soy.com</i>	Anette Gosselin	<i>Stuart Cardiology</i>	Anette Gosselin	Robert Myers
Delmi Barrera	Sonnel Andino	Gabriela Hochberg	Mitchel Fields	<i>Crispers</i>	Shelby Fields	April Posch
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