



KIDS CENTRAL

**A COMMUNITY APPROACH
TO THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN**

**BUILDING
BETTER
LIVES**



352-873-6332

www.KidsCentralInc.org

ABOUT KIDS CENTRAL

Our Mission:

To develop and manage a child-centered community-based system of care for abused, neglected and abandoned children and their families, in order to strengthen families and prevent them from entering the child welfare system.

Our Vision:

To be the most effective and recognizable lead agency for community-based care, providing child-centered practices that strengthen families and help create, support and maintain a safe environment for children.

Our Core Values:

- Assure Child Safety
- Strengthen Families
- Manage Available Resources
- Diversify Funding



CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT

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Kids Central, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation, exempt from state and federal taxes under Chapter 501 (c)(3).



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In 1996, the Florida Legislature passed innovative legislation to begin a privatized, community-based care model for child welfare. Child Protective Investigations are still performed primarily by investigators from the Department of Children and Families (DCF), but Florida's Community-Based Care (CBC) system allows the state to contract with a single lead agency in each district to intervene when abuse, neglect or abandonment is found and to hold that agency responsible and accountable for creating safe, permanent homes for these vulnerable children.

In 2003, Kids Central was selected by the Florida Department of Children and Families to serve as the lead CBC agency for child welfare in Circuit 5, which includes Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion and Sumter Counties. Kids Central has built a coalition with these five communities to identify, develop and manage service delivery and to ensure that families are fully connected to and supported by their communities.

Kids Central contracts with service providers in each of the five counties in Circuit 5 for case management services, and we partner with other resources in each community to round out the full spectrum of services needed by children and families.

Services provided by Kids Central include, but are not limited to:

- Case Management
- In-Home Prevention/Intervention Services
- In-Home and Out-of-Home Protective Services
- Emergency Shelter
- Kinship (Relative) Care
- Foster Care and Adoption
- Independent Living Skills
- Intensive Residential Treatment
- Post-Placement Supervision
- Family Preservation/Reunification
- Treatment for Emotionally Disturbed Children
- Primary Prevention Services

Kids Central has a community-based, volunteer Board of Directors that provides guidance and oversight for the agency. Board members hail from all five counties in DCF Circuit 5, representing a variety of professions and interests.



Kids Central is always working to improve the design and delivery of services to the community we serve.

- In July 2007, Kids Central became only the second CBC agency in Florida to receive network accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA), an international, independent, not-for-profit accrediting body for community-based behavioral health care and social service organizations in the United States and Canada. The accreditation process involves an in depth examination of an organization's compliance with best practice standards and includes a review of organizational standards, focusing on human resources, financial and risk management, continual quality improvement and service standards.
- Kids Central has identified two additional segments of our community that warrant special attention from our system of care and from the community itself: Kinship Caregivers and Foster Teens.
 - Kinship Care is the term applied when family members are raising the children of relatives. There are over 14,000 children in DCF Circuit 5 living with grandparents or other relatives who are not their parents, and very few of these families are receiving the much-needed support and services that a licensed foster parent receives. Kids Central conducted our first Kinship Care Conference in June 2007, and the response from the community was tremendous. We intend for this to be an

annual event. Kids Central is providing assistance and outreach to Kinship Care families in other ways too. A Kinship Care Regional Advisory Board was created in 2005 for gathering information about the needs of relative caregivers and finding ways to meet those needs. Additionally, our agency facilitates existing Relative Caregiver Support Groups while working to establish new ones throughout DCF Circuit 5.

- At any given time, Kids Central serves approximately 250 youths ages 13-18 in the Florida DCF Independent Living program. The reality is that many of these teens will not be reunited with their families and, when they turn 18 and exit the child welfare system, they will enter society with few resources and numerous challenges. Because they lack continued support, these young adults are more likely to have difficulty securing employment, to experience homelessness and/or incarceration, and to receive public assistance.

Kids Central is one of five agencies selected to receive a parcel of land in Hernando County, as part of a "campus" for the delivery of several community services. Our plan for the land is to build Transitional Living Apartments for foster teens from DCF Circuit 5, which will provide them a supportive place to live while they receive continued services and training that will better enable them to successfully transition to self-sufficient, productive adult members of our community.

If you would like to learn more about any of our projects or services, please call Kids Central at 352-873-6332.





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