



STANDING



STRONG



TOGETHER



KIDS CENTRAL, INC.[®]
A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN

annual report | 2025



2025 at a glance

CONTRACTED AGENCIES

CASE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

- Lutheran Services Florida — Lake & Sumter Counties
- Youth and Family Alternatives — Citrus & Hernando Counties

INTENSIVE IN-HOME COUNSELING

- Camelot Community Care, Inc.

GROUP CARE PROVIDERS & EMERGENCY SHELTERS

- Arnette House
- Covenant Children's Home, Inc.
- Eckerd — E-Nini-Hassee
- Heart of Florida Youth Ranch
- Integrity Care, Inc. — Lake and Polk County
- LifeStream Behavioral Center — Our Turning Point Ranch
- LifeStream Behavioral Center — Youth Recovery Care Center
- LSF — Together at Home
- LSF — Hands of Mercy Everywhere, Inc.
- YFA — New Beginnings Shelter
- Press Forward, Inc.
- Rite of Passage, Inc. — Hope Forest Academy
- Crossroads Hope Academy, Inc.
- Florida United Methodist Children's Home
- Next Chapter Boys Home
- The S.T.A.R. House, LLC
- Erwin's House, LLC
- Twin Oaks
- WeCare Family Connections

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Gold & Associates — Marketing
- Mindshare Consulting Group, Inc.
- Empowering Young People, Inc. — Fatherhood Initiative

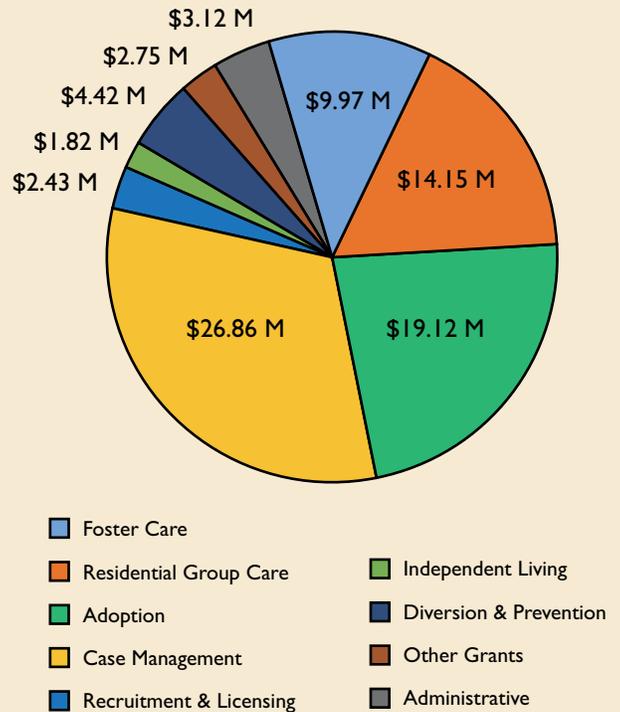
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

FY 2024-2025

REVENUES

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| • CBC Lead Agency | \$8,110,855 |
| • Healthy Start & MIECHV | \$2,739,856 |
| • Medicaid Services Coordination | \$531,692 |
| • Donations & Interest | \$234,961 |
| • Other Grants & Revenues | \$59,468 |

EXPENSES



96¢ of every dollar goes directly to the programs

Visit our website to view the audited financial statements at www.KidsCentralInc.org.

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Kids Central LEADERSHIP



JOHN COOPER
Chief Executive Officer

a message FROM THE CEO

Over the past year, we have been fortunate to continue advancing our work of helping children and families in need. At the heart of that endeavor there is a simple but profound belief: every child deserves a loving home, and every family deserves the support and resources necessary to stay together and strong.

We could not succeed without the collaboration and teamwork of our dedicated Kids Central staff and community partners. At Kids Central, we believe deeply in *Standing Strong Together*. Our achievements are only possible because we operate as one cohesive, committed unit. When we stand strong together, we create the foundation children and families need to thrive.

Family reunification remains the cornerstone of our work. The progress we have made this year is a direct reflection of the collective dedication of our employees and the partners who join us in guiding and supporting parents on their path to success. We also recognize the essential role that foster and adoptive families play in providing safety, stability, and love to children who need it most. Their willingness to open their hearts and homes strengthens our entire community.

As we move forward, our focus remains clear: keeping children and families together whenever safely possible, recruiting and supporting nurturing foster and adoptive homes, and ensuring that families have the tools they need to build strength, resilience, and lasting stability. Because at the end of the day, *Standing Strong Together* is more than a theme, it is who we are, and it is how we create brighter futures for the children and families we serve.



STEPHEN SPIVEY
Board Chair

a message FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Since 2002, Kids Central has served as the lead agency for Community Based Care in Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion, and Sumter Counties. Our mission is easy to describe, “Protecting Children, Supporting Families, Engaging Communities,” but its execution requires the tireless effort and cooperation of hundreds of dedicated child welfare professionals and compassionate community members. Within the pages of this report, you will see the many ways their collaborations assisted children and families.

Kids Central embraces the Community Based Care model to help families in crisis become stronger and to protect their children from abuse and neglect. The model recognizes that children and families are best served by the people, organizations, and resources in their own communities. Our devoted employees, contracted partners, foster and adoptive parents, donors, and supporters are all committed to *Standing Strong Together* to help these families succeed.

An important aspect of a community’s strength is how well it responds to families when they need help. Kids Central is grateful for all the community members that help us ensure the response is caring, dignified, and effective. As our team focuses on the challenges ahead, we remain resolved in *Standing Strong Together* for and with the children and families we serve.

board of DIRECTORS

2024-2025



**STEPHEN
SPIVEY**
Board Chair



**KEVIN
MCDONALD**
Vice Chair



**JIM
NATIONS**
Secretary/Treasurer



**MATT
BARTOLI**
Lake County



**DIANA
BROWN**
Lake County



**GORDON
JOHNSON**
Sumter County



**RACHEL
KASER**
Marion County



**ANTHONY
PIARULLI**
Hernando County



**REBECCA
SCHATT**
Marion County



**BRAD
ROGERS**
Marion County



**CARLY
SAYLES**
Lake County



**LIZ
THOMPSON**
Marion County



**CHUCK
TROUTMAN**
Sumter County

LEADERSHIP *team*

- JOHN COOPER — Chief Executive Officer
- JOHN AITKEN — Chief Financial Officer
- SHALONDA MCHENRY-SIMS — Chief of Operations
- DAVID DESTEFANO — Chief of Strategy
- VERAUNDA JACKSON — Chief Legal Officer



protecting CHILDREN



FOSTERCARE

When parents struggle with issues such as substance abuse, illness, incarceration, or domestic violence, the courts may decide that temporarily removing the children from the home is necessary to protect them from abuse or neglect. When no relatives can step in, children may enter foster care, which offers a safe, temporary living environment until the family can be reunited. Foster parents, trained and licensed by Kids Central, provide compassionate support during this crucial time. The primary goal is always to reunite children with their families once it is safe, giving parents the chance to make important life changes. While families work toward reunification, foster care ensures that children have a stable, nurturing place to grow. Our community deeply appreciates the devoted individuals who open their homes and hearts to children in need.

NOTE: Statistics provided for FY 2024-25 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025)



2,086
children in care



81
new foster homes added

ADOPTION

When circumstances prevent children from safely returning to their parents, the focus typically shifts to adoption so the children can join permanent, loving families. Kids Central recruits, trains, and licenses individuals who wish to adopt children from the child welfare system. There is an urgent need for loving adoptive families in our community, particularly for sibling groups and teenagers.

Kids Central also provides post-adoption services to ensure families continue to receive support after welcoming a child into their home. Adoption subsidies are available to financially help families meet the special needs of their children. In addition, adopted children qualify for Medicaid and may receive a tuition waiver for their post-secondary education.



264
children adopted



665
children eligible for adoption



CASE MANAGEMENT

When families enter Dependency Court because of concerns about child abuse or neglect, the court establishes an approved case plan. Kids Central and its subcontracted Case Management Agencies are responsible for implementing and managing these plans. The core duties of case management include visiting the child at least once every 30 days to help ensure their safety, arranging the services outlined in the case plan, tracking and documenting the family's progress, and providing updates to the court. Case managers work to secure a safe, stable, and permanent home for each child within 12 months.



2,940
*children receiving
case management services*



INDEPENDENT LIVING

Kids Central and its partners offer Independent Living services to youth and young adults in foster care. Each year, some young adults leave the system without reunification or a permanent home. To support them, Kids Central leverages state, federal, and community resources that provide essential tools for a successful transition to adulthood, such as transportation, housing assistance, and emotional support. Independent Living services also help young adults pursue their educational and employment goals.



21
*high school diplomas
earned by program participants*



24
*program participants
who completed or enrolled in
post-Secondary education*



supporting FAMILIES



539
cases referred



363
families
who successfully completed their program



239
new referrals



395
children assisted

FAMILY PRESERVATION

Kids Central believes that investing in families early reduces the likelihood that children will experience abuse or neglect and require intervention later. To help children remain safely with their families, the organization provides research-based, results-driven prevention programs.

Preventing child abuse and neglect before it occurs offers the greatest opportunity for children to thrive. Family preservation services support families in identifying and reducing risk factors in the home, strengthening the family unit while ensuring children's safety.

KINSHIP

More than 14,000 children in Circuit 5 are primarily cared for by relatives rather than their parents. To support these caregivers, Kids Central created a comprehensive Kinship Care Program. This program provides targeted services as part of a multi-level prevention approach, helping children remain in safe, stable, and nurturing homes with family members.



HEALTHY START & MIECHV

Healthy Start is a comprehensive program that promotes optimal prenatal health and positive developmental outcomes for pregnant women and their babies. It offers free screenings to identify risks such as low birth weight, poor prenatal health, and potential child abuse or neglect. Healthy Start services are available to anyone who is pregnant, has recently experienced a pregnancy loss, or has a child under three years old. Kids Central provides Healthy Start services in Alachua, Hernando, and Lake Counties.

Additionally, Kids Central is contracted to deliver the Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) in Alachua and Marion Counties. MIECHV supports parents and caregivers of children from birth to age three by providing education on child developmental milestones, personalized parenting guidance, support groups, assistance with developmental or health concerns, and access to books and educational toys. These services empower parents to become their child's first and most influential teacher.

EDUCATION

Children thrive when their parents are actively involved in their education. Unfortunately, foster children have historically encountered significant challenges and often lack the advocacy needed to support their academic success. Kids Central collaborates with foster parents and school systems to champion the educational needs of foster youth, ensuring they receive the opportunities and support necessary to succeed in school and in life.

BABY SLEEP BASICS

More children in Florida lose their lives to asphyxiation than to drowning, often due to unsafe sleep conditions such as co-sleeping. Kids Central aims to reduce these preventable tragedies through its Baby Sleep Basics Program, which offers safe-sleep education and information about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) to parents and caregivers.



3,475
healthy start clients
provided with 48,131 services



233
MIECHV clients
completed 3,178 visits



413
children assisted
by education liaison



engaging COMMUNITIES



\$321,476
donations received
from fundraising

- *monetary* – \$156,321
- *in-kind* – \$165,155

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Children and families thrive when supported by a system of care that leverages the organizations, advocates, and resources within their own communities. Florida’s Community-Based Care system is built on this principle, emphasizing community engagement in strengthening families and nurturing children.

Kids Central focuses on cultivating strong relationships throughout the local community, including clients, neighbors, public officials, government agencies, other nonprofits, and potential donors. The Community Affairs Department serves as a bridge between Kids Central and the community, sharing information about the organization’s programs and initiatives. Through efforts such as annual child abuse prevention and awareness events, as well as fundraising activities, Kids Central engages the community, raises awareness, and generates resources to support the needs of the families we serve.



525 families
1,072 children
helped at kids central resource center

RESOURCE CENTER

Kids Central operates a Resource Center at its corporate office in Wildwood to help families in need. Many of the children and families served by Kids Central and its partners face challenges in accessing basic necessities such as food and clothing. With the support of the community and private donors, the Resource Center provides a variety of new and gently used items, including clothing, furniture, houseware, hygiene products, baby care essentials, and food. These resources are available to children and families in crisis who are clients of Kids Central.



VOLUNTEER/MENTOR PROGRAM

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting the health and well-being of our communities. As community needs continue to grow, the generosity and dedication of volunteers are more important than ever. Kids Central is deeply grateful to our volunteers, who help advance our mission, assist staff, and help reduce organizational costs.

Kids Central's Mentoring Program allows volunteers to make a meaningful difference in the life of a young adult, ages 16-23, in the foster care system. Mentors provide guidance and support as these youth navigate their journey to adulthood. Research shows that children with engaged mentors are more likely to pursue higher education or vocational training and are less likely to use illegal substances. Mentorship is a powerful way for community members to support foster youth, even if they are not in a position to become foster parents.

KIDS CENTRAL CONNECT

Kids Central has partnered with Findhelp.org to maintain KidsCentralConnect.org, our online social care network. This platform demonstrates Kids Central's dedication to improving access to resources within our communities. By collaborating with similar organizations, KidsCentralConnect.org serves as a digital hub that connects individuals to support services aligned with our mission to protect children, support families, and engage communities.

Today, KidsCentralConnect.org features over 10,000 participating organizations, offering a wide array of services and providing vital support to those in need.



10,288
individuals assisted





KIDS CENTRAL, INC.[®]
A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN
Building Better Lives

901 INDUSTRIAL DRIVE, SUITE 200
WILDWOOD, FLORIDA 34785
352.873.6332 • KIDSCENTRALINC.ORG

Produced with the financial assistance of



GOLD
MARKETING™



The Kids Central network is
accredited by the Council
on Accreditation (COA).

Kids Central, Inc. is a private, nonprofit corporation, exempt from federal income tax under chapter 501(c)(3). Kids Central is registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs (#CH21011). A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling, toll-free, 1-800-435-7352, within Florida. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the State.

Kids Central, Inc. is a community-based care lead agency contracted with the Department of Children and Families.