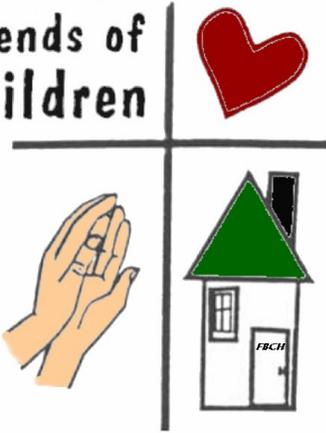


Friends of
Children



Friends of Children of North Central Florida

FOCNCF

P.O. Box 358502

Gainesville FL 32635-8502

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December 2021



Every child deserves a family



A Word from the President:

Greetings Folks:

Well folks, December has arrived and we have had mixed emotions regarding our Annual Denim & Diamonds Event that we were hoping to happen the end of October. This is our main fund raiser each year. We have prayed and discussed what would be the best for our donors and those who work at this event to ensure the safest environment for all. The Board made the difficult decision last month to postpone **Denim & Diamonds** until the Spring time. We are moving forward to plan this amazing fundraiser for **Tuesday, March 1, 2022**. It will be held at Santa Fe River Ranch (Valley View venue). And while we plan for that, the work still continues. We have foster families to encourage, children to help, single moms to assist and facilities to upgrade and renovate. The Cellon-Thomas Campus (the four homes south of LaCrosse) homes are filled with parents and the children keep coming. And remember, that most of these children don't come for just a few weeks – unfortunately these are longer term events while the state works on behalf of parents to try and reconstruct a favorable living environment. Ultimately the hope is for the children to be reunited with parents. Additionally, we continue to find ways to assist other foster families in the area that operate under the One More Child (OMC) umbrella.

We have also completed the first **Brave Mom home** in Gainesville. Our first mom and her three children lived at the

home for several months. Mom worked hard, took classes, took care of her children and started a savings account. She studied for her CNA license and is very excited about working in the health field, which was a dream she had and now it has become a reality. We are all excited for her success and the future she and her children will have. Now, our second mom has moved in and a third! We all are thrilled to be working with these brave moms who are trying to care for their children and keep their families together. We are currently renovating our second home located adjacent to the first Brave Moms home. After that, we hope to establish other homes in other areas.

We can certainly use prayer partners, additional board members for FOC and the continued financial help. See about getting your businesses, your churches, your friends involved in supporting, caring for and helping children and families in need. One way you can help right now is to sponsor a table at our upcoming event in March 2022. Your business, your church, or a group of your best friends can purchase a table of eight and join us for a fun and exciting evening. We are also always looking for volunteers to work alongside us as we continue to reach out and support our local foster families, Brave Moms, and children and families in need. We trust these updates find you well and pray God's Blessings on you. May you have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

Denny George
President



...from the *Florida Baptist Children's Home/ One More Child*

Our Brave Moms Home...



Our Single Mom's Residential Program in Gainesville (also known as Brave Moms to FOC) has had an exciting year. We graduated one mom with three little boys in June

and put a new mom in 3 days later with three little girls. We have since also added another mom who has one little girl and a baby on the way. Both our current moms came without jobs but found jobs within the first week they were in our home. The children are settling in well and have started school and preschool while moms are working. Westside Baptist Church in Gainesville raised money to put in a much-needed playground for the children. Needless to say, the kids are really excited about all the new play equipment. Just as exciting, the remodel has started on our second mom's home. Friends of Children is providing the funding and oversight for this project. This will allow One More Child Single Mom's program to house up to two more moms and their children.

Our graduating mom has moved back to be near her family. She has successfully completed her CNA certification that she started while she was in our home and has obtained the job she wanted using that certification. She says she is very thankful for One More Child and the Skills Classes. She has been able to use many things she learned in the Single Mom's Program to keep her on track as she continues to move forward towards her next goals.

We have had many volunteers to help with our Thursday night Skills Classes. Single Moms offer moms a mandatory class on Thursday nights to meet one of the goals they are striving to achieve while they are with us. Some classes are one night, and some go over several weeks. Each Thursday night the moms have a meal provided by one of our wonderful volunteers from our local churches. Then during class at least two other awesome volunteers provide childcare for our moms so that they can concentrate on their class for the evening. Mentors are also assigned and can attend classes with their mentee if they like. Mentors also meet with moms at other times besides classes. If you would like to volunteer with any part of our Single Moms Program in Gainesville, please contact Mary Griffis, Supervisor, at 352-672-6112 or mary.griffis@onemorechild.org

Dear Friends,

Several new faces have joined the Gainesville OMC Team this summer. Bonne Evans, Program Director retired earlier this summer and we are thankful for her years of dedication and service to One More Child. We have been blessed to have Anne Chastain join the team as our new Director, along with Amanda Bush and Brittany Sammons as Licensing Specialist.



Currently, all of our foster family homes are full. We have 38 licensed homes with a total of 58 children in care.

We continue to be blessed with the many donations from local churches, families and friends. It is because of these donations that we are able to serve those in care. **THANK YOU!!!**

Christmas is around the corner and there are a few ways you can help ensure our children receive gifts during the holiday season. Just contact our local office.

To learn about becoming a foster parent or to RSVP to attend our next Information Meeting, please contact Anne.Chastain@onemorechild.org



As always, there are opportunities to serve other than fostering. We need churches/individuals willing to provide wrap-around support for our foster families. **THANK YOU for everything you do to support One More Child!** Visit us at www.onemorechild.org to learn more.

O: 352.672.6112 C: 904.314.3992 F: 352.505.6196
3700 NW 91st Street Suite B-300
Gainesville, Florida 32606
www.FBCHomes.org | www.OneMoreChild.org





Mark Your Calendars!!!

Tuesday, March 1st, 2022

Last year was such an unusual year for all of us and this year has been similar. With that being said, we are planning our annual Denim & Diamonds event to be held in the spring of 2022. Because of Covid and the concern for large group gatherings we have decided it best to wait a bit longer. We have begun planning for our event and pray that you will participate through your prayers, and support by sponsoring a table for eight or through your financial support via the envelope enclosed with this newsletter. Denim & Diamonds will be on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, 6:00pm at the **Santa Fe River Ranch/Valley View**. This event is our biggest fundraiser of the year and is designed to continue our support for the Brave Moms Homes (Single Moms) and the foster families through One More Child (Florida Baptist Children's Home). **Because of you**, our friends, local churches and businesses we have been able to open one home already for moms in the Gainesville area and were able to purchase a second home that is under renovation at this time. Our hopes are to expand to our surrounding counties and provide safe, nurturing environments to single mom and their children. That is why we have Denim & Diamonds.



Mark your calendars for Tuesday, March 1, 2022. Consider a sponsorship of \$1000, \$3000 or even \$5000. Encourage your church to sponsor a table. Invite those with a heart and passion for caring and protecting God's children to come and share in this awesome opportunity. We are soliciting individuals and businesses for other sponsorship levels, program ads, and auction items. We appreciate your support.

Thank you for supporting the children and families in North Central Florida

If you wish to learn more about the Brave Moms home, please contact the Friends of Children at: friendsofchildrenfl@gmail.com.



But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. ~2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Ways to continue to support FOC...

The Friends of Children... are blessed to have the support of our local churches, pastors and those who serve in the community. If it weren't for the amazing volunteers and various ministries that provide supplies, meals, monetary gifts and personal time we would not be able to support One More Child ministries. YOUR gifts are most appreciated and needed. Your gift to FOC stays in our local area. If you wish to contribute and be a part of this amazing organization, you may send your financial donation gift to:

Friends of Children

**PO Box 358502
Gainesville, Florida
32635-8502**

Or online at:

<https://www.focncf.org/how-to-help/>



Included with your newsletter is a self-addressed envelop that can be used for your financial gift to Friends of Children.



★
**JOY
NOEL
ANGEL
JESUS
PEACE HOPE
WISEMEN
CHRISTMAS
BELIEVE FAITH
PRINCE OF PEACE
THANK YOU**

Who is FOC ?

As you may know, this organization was created from a dream of more than fifteen years ago. Our purpose is to establish a Florida Baptist Children's Home campus in North Central Florida. This dream was fulfilled in June 2016. Friends of Children of North Central Florida is a nonprofit 501c3 organization that raises funds to support our local campus in Gainesville and OMC Gainesville ministries. Friends of Children Board of Directors:

- Denny George, President, Trenton
- Bobby Davis, VP, Worthington Springs
- Donna Jordan, Secretary, Melrose
- Bill Cellon, Treasurer, Gainesville
- Kim Baxley, Archer
- Gary Hunter, Chiefland
- Ron Locke, Gainesville
- Faye Zuidema, Alachua



Also, Friends of Children are **seeking board members for the 2022 year**. If you are passionate about children and ensuring they are safe and nurtured and are willing to advocate for them, please contact FOC at friendsofchildrenfl@gmail.com. You will be blessed beyond your imagination!!!

Our Mission Statement:

To be a Christ centered support of foster, adoptive and in need families.

Check out our new and improved (and still under "re" construction) website.

www.focncf.org

The Board members of The Friends of Children want to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year! May God continue to watch over you and yours in the coming year.



For "Inquiring Minds"...

We want to share with you **some things about our Denim & Diamonds Event** in March and what you can expect and how you can participate.

- There will be a **silent auction** with a variety of treasures. Homemade cakes, jams/jellies, gift card trees, quilts, artwork, sports memorabilia, and the list continues.
- There will be a **live auction** featuring an **eight-day cruise** ("Autumn in the Northeast", 10/5 – 10/13/2022) through Crystal Cruises. This is a value of \$10,000+. (Cruise port fees, security, handling charges, airfare, excursions will be the responsibility of the purchaser). There will also be an additional two to three big ticket items for auction.
- There will be **entertainment** from Nashville that you won't want to miss!!!
- Excellent **food and desserts**....
- One More Child President, Dr. Jerry Haag will provide an update regarding Foster Care and the Single Moms Program.
- **YOU** can be a part of this amazing event and invite seven of your closest friends to sponsor a table for eight for \$1,000. That is only \$125 per person for a worthy cause!!
- You can also send a monetary gift by using the enclosed self-addressed envelope.
- **BUT... the best way you can support** this endeavor is through **your continued prayers**. As Friends of Children, we continue to partner with One More Child in providing good Christian foster homes and support the Brave Moms Homes for single moms and their children of North Central Florida.

Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate. ~Psalm 127:3-5