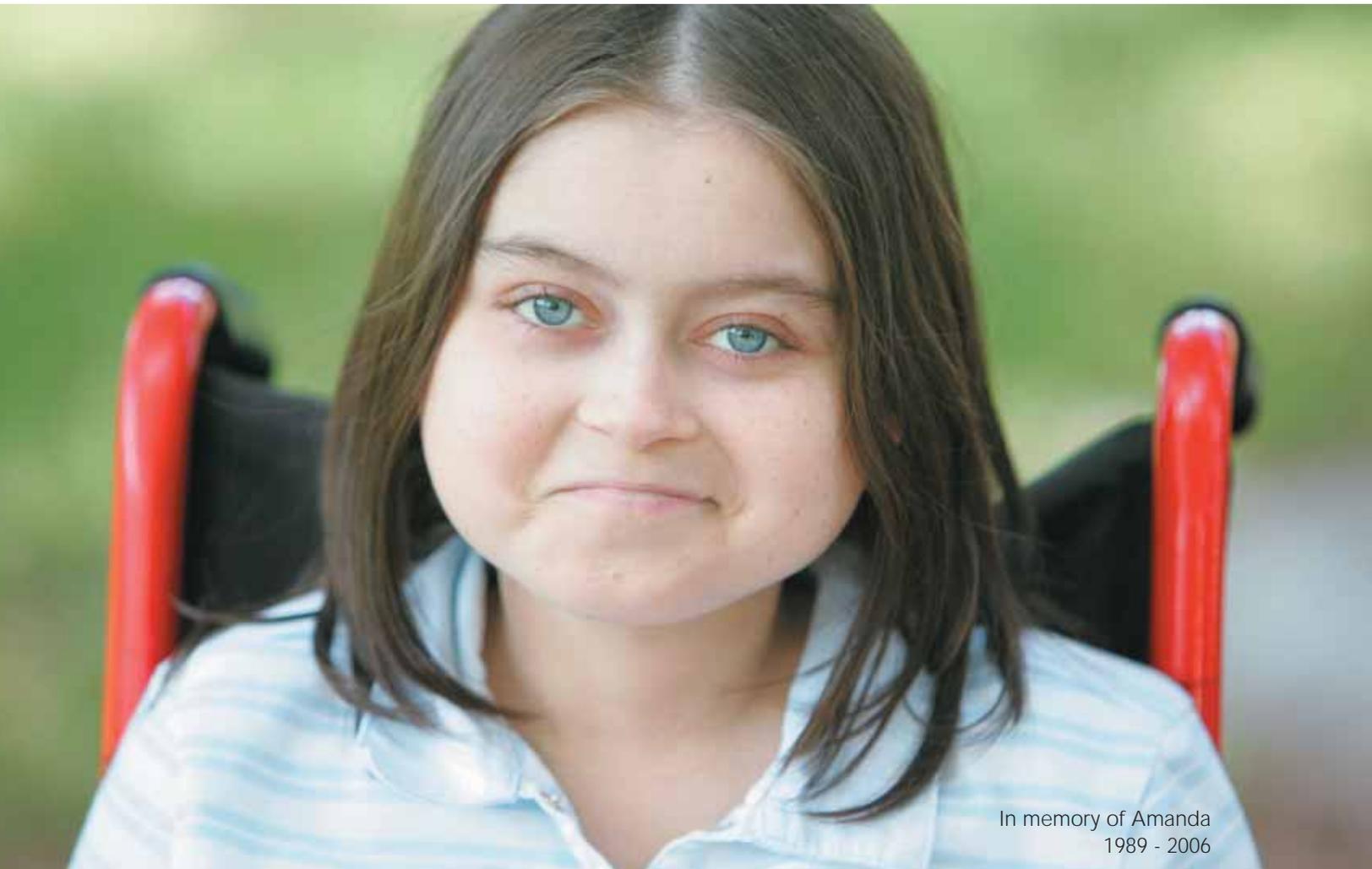


The children featured in our **2006 Report to the Community** are Duval County children waiting to be adopted by loving families.

It is with sincere gratitude that we thank all of the photographers and contributors who have made it possible to capture the true essence of each and every child featured here and allow us to raise awareness of their need for families—now and forever.



In memory of Amanda
1989 - 2006

photo by Elizabeth Nicole

COVER PHOTO CREDITS:

Rachel Blanton | Pamela Casey | Kinder Cannon | Kirk Chamberlain | Debra Dempsey | Paul Figura | Margaret Fishback | Bill Frakes | Reneé Gage
Dan Harris | Kuola Karalis | Ryan Ketterman | Pam Kildea | Kelly LaDuke | Joy Lee | Agnes Lopez | Cassandra Mallien | Tiffany Manning | Ross Martin
Peggy McAteer | Aaron Mervin | Elizabeth Nicole | Edwin Z. Ormeo, Jr. | Kristen Penoyer | The Professional Photographers Society of North Florida
Tiffany Roach | Tara Uracius | Tayloe White | Naomi Williams

FACING CHANGE

Vision, creativeness and leadership in finding permanent homes for children, through aggressive recruitment of prospective parents and promotion of children, is nothing short of a cultural revolution—changing a culture of complacency to a culture of commitment to our children and their families.



Family Support Services
OF NORTH FLORIDA INC.

Last year was one of tremendous progress for Family Support Services. Our organization underwent significant operational shifts including relocating to larger offices, increasing our staff, launching two new websites and the reorganizing of contracted agency partners.



Jim Adams, CEO

photo by Edwin Ormeo , Jr.

Through these changes, we were steadfast in our commitment to provide for the safety and stability of Duval County's children and families. As a result, we exceeded our adoption goal, finding loving families and safe, permanent homes for 352 of our children.

We received a Gold Star in the JCCI 2005 *Quality of Life Report* for improving the rate of adoption for children in foster care. Additionally, we initiated standardized foster parent training and reduced the time a child must wait between foster care and adoption.

In Duval County alone, we have approximately 3,000 children in both in-and out-of-home care. In conjunction with five community-based care agencies, we achieved an average of 99.7 percent compliance on monthly home visits—100 percent for two consecutive months.

Our recruitment efforts for adoptive and foster parents were elevated by the introduction of our Heart Gallery and Jacksonville's Children. Through these channels we've increased adoption inquiries by an average of 600 percent.

However, we could not achieve these results without the assistance and support of our Board of Directors, the Department of Children and Families, our community-based care agencies, caseworkers, staff, partners, community leaders, advocates and families.

This year brings a new set of opportunities. We will focus on reducing out-of-home case loads and the total number of children coming into the system; working to establish an assessment center where children who come into care will immediately have a place to go for required services upon removal from their homes; continue to recruit prospective families for our children awaiting adoption, especially teens and focus on providing "life skills" to our older children through an enhanced Independent Living Services program.

Our vision—that children grow up connected to their own families, supported by foster families and protected by the community—is becoming a reality because people are recognizing that child protection is a community responsibility.

Thank you for your continued support.



photo by Edwin Orneo, Jr.

From front to back, left to right:

Celeste Turain
Wachovia Bank

Nancy Edwards
Community Representative

Michael Shorstein
Attorney at Law, Family Practice

Dr. Dennis Lafer, Board President
Pediatric Surgeon

Strandralyn Terry-Jones
Dean of Keiser College at Jacksonville

Jim Adams
Family Support Services, CEO

Christine Carr
Department of Juvenile Justice

John Drilling
Lexicon Relocation

Carmel Laserna
CBS 47

Dedie Campbell
HomeBanc Mortgage Corp.

Kerrie Slattery
Website Professional

Joanne Lipp
Community Representative

Michael Widman
Vistakon

Joanne Robertson
Family Support Services, COO

Dr. Harriet Howe
University of North Florida

Karel Moerings
Nicolaas Alexander Jewelers

Not Pictured:
Wayne Clark, Philip Mobley
and **Linda Rubens**

FINDING FAMILIES

This year, Family Support Services exceeded its adoption goal of 234— placing 352 Jacksonville children with permanent and loving families.

Heartgallery recruitment project raises community awareness

Each year thousands of children on Florida's First Coast are removed from their families due to uncontrollable circumstances, abuse or neglect. While many of these children are eventually reunited with their families, hundreds are not, so they become available for adoption.

As part of an aggressive recruitment effort, Family Support Services established the Heart Gallery of Jacksonville—a mobile portrait exhibit that travels throughout the city featuring Duval, Clay, Baker and Nassau County children in search of forever families.

In October 2005, Jacksonville's Heart Gallery was officially unveiled at the Modis building where 8,000 employees passed by the exhibit daily. It was during this time that Chris Guarnieri, mother of two daughters and a volunteer with the Guardian Ad Litem program, attended the debut party—with no intentions of adopting a child. When she looked at one young boy's photograph and saw a younger version of her husband staring back, her intentions changed.

In June, Chris and her husband John adopted 13-year-old Ricky—the first child to be adopted as a direct result of Jacksonville's Heart Gallery project. Overall, the gallery has increased adoption inquiries 400-600 percent on average.

Ricky, 13, was adopted in June. His new family saw his portrait in the Heart Gallery, which opened to the public October 18, 2005.



photo by the Professional Photographers Society of North Florida

Nearly 50 local professional photographers continue to volunteer their time and talent to capture the spirit of more than the 100 children and sibling groups that adorn the gallery.

During National Adoption Month last November, three of Jacksonville's photographers and their portraits were selected, among hundreds, to be displayed in a 50-portrait national exhibit in Union Station in Washington, D.C. The gallery has traveled to many locations since its inception, including the State Capital, The Avenues and Orange Park malls, the R. Roberts Gallery, South Mandarin Library and The Jacksonville Landing.

At any given time, there are about 300 children hoping to find permanency and security in a loving and caring family. Family Support Services Heart Gallery of Jacksonville will continue this ever-changing display of our community's children awaiting adoption by families that will open their hearts and their homes for them.



Megan photo by Edwin Ormeo, Jr.



Huntley photo by Agnes Lopez



Corey and Leo photo by Tiffany Roach

All in good judgment

Family Support Services is fortunate to have the support of four juvenile judges including Judge David Gooding. Because of his passion for finding permanent homes for children in need of a good family, in November 2005 Gooding received an Adoption Excellence Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for his work in the courtroom to help the advancement of adoptive services in Duval County. The award recognized his creation of *Family Fridays*, a program where he sets aside time on Fridays to finalize adoptions.

"When I see someone step forward and take the role of parent for a child that needs a parent, that is the pinnacle," he said. "Awards are very temporal, but families are forever."



Judge David Gooding

photo by Edwin Ormeo, Jr.

Lights, Camera, Action!

Focusing on *Jacksonville's Children*

Two very special and talented woman, Carmel Laserna, executive producer of special projects, and Dawn Lopez, co-anchor, both of CBS 47 News, work to help First Coast foster children get adopted with a weekly franchise segment called *Jacksonville's Children*.

Family Support Services and CBS 47 implemented the idea in April 2005 as a means for the children to tell their stories, in their own words, of why they want to be adopted and what type of family they hope to call their own.

Each week, Lopez talks with a child or sibling group, participating in activities and sharing stories of foster care and the feelings of each child. Interested prospective parents are encouraged to call Family Support Services to enroll in classes to become a licensed adoptive parent, or to visit 47's website to watch videos of other available children.

On average, the show creates 15 inquiries per child. Since its inception, three children have been adopted as a direct result of the program.

"Dawn's and 47's commitment to helping our children find families is immeasurable. To see how she relates to the kids and enables them to speak about the reality of their situation is truly a talent," says Jim Adams. "Words cannot express our appreciation for their dedication of time and effort."

Jacksonville's Children airs Fridays on FOX30 News at 4 p.m. and Mondays on CBS47 at noon. To view previous interviews, visit www.cbs47.com and click on the *Jacksonville's Children* link.

Dawn Lopez prepares 7-year-old **Xena** for her debut on CBS 47's *Jacksonville's Children*.



photo by Kirk Chamberlain

FOSTERING HOPE

With 3,000 children currently in foster care in Duval County, and nearly 40 new children coming into the system each week, there continues to be a need for more foster homes.

Children in Care

3,240 July 2005
3,081 July 2006

Children in Out-of-Home Care

2,383 July 2005
2,070 July 2006

By Age Group

0-4 1,143
5-9 741
10-14 601
15-18 401
18+ 84

By Racial Profile

African American 1,661
Caucasian 1,134
Asian 17
Hispanic 96
Multi-racial 62

By Gender

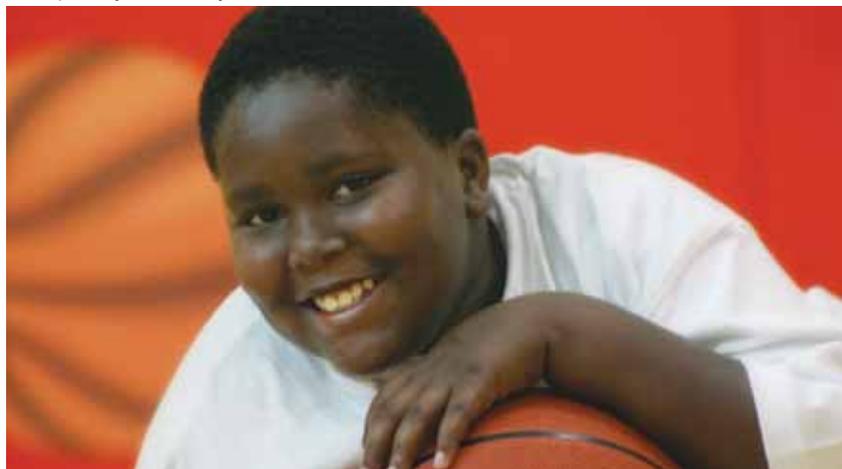
Female 1,442
Male 1,528

Active foster homes in Duval County 350

Number of children in cases closed
(adopted, reunited with family member,
long-term permanent placement) 1,800



Calvin photo by Pamela Casey



Demetrius photo by Aaron Mervin

Nearly 400 Jacksonville residents like Dee Wilson, who has been a foster parent to over 800 children, and Melisa Page-Baile, adoptive mom to eight former foster care children, are making lives better for many of the thousands of children requiring out-of-home care. Currently, there are 350 active foster homes in Duval County.

Foster care is a protective service offered when children must be removed from their homes for a planned, temporary period of time. Foster families provide for the physical and emotional safety of children and, in the interim, allow them the ability to have a stable home environment. Since the primary goal of foster care is to reunite families, while a child is residing in a foster home, a variety of services are provided to parents and the child—with the objective of resolving the problems that led to the foster care placement.



Timarus photo by Ryan Ketterman



Nya, Mike and Dierdre photo by Edwin Orneo, Jr.

COMMUNITY CARES

Thank you! To our partners and supporters committed to creating a better and brighter future.

A **Community Advisory Panel** comprised of business, faith and political representatives, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Jacksonville Fire and Rescue, the Duval County School Board and Health Department was established to review the current foster care system and recommend areas for improvement.

In partnership with American Enterprise Bank, the **"I Wish I Could..."** fund was established to help pay for the things foster children need and want like orthodontics, school sporting programs and prom dresses.

The **3rd Annual Aromas Cigar, Wine & Martini Bar Charity Golf Tournament** held at World Golf Village in June, resulted in a contribution of \$23,000 to support Family Support Services' Heart Gallery of Jacksonville. The event included a sponsor dinner, live and silent auctions and an awards ceremony. The donation will be used to help fund future gallery portraits and increase community exposure of the gallery.



Alexis photo by Aaron Mervin



Kordre and Kordreq photo by Kirk Chamberlain

Foster kids, aged 5-17, attended the second annual **Back-to-School Party** at Jacksonville Indoor Sports. Sponsored in part by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, JEA, HSBC, Unisource and Henry Schein, more than 70 volunteers donated their time to help collect new backpacks and school supplies for more than 400 foster children.

More than 40 foster children received trophies at the **6th Annual True Winners** luncheon on April 22, 2006. The event recognizes children in care who demonstrate academic success in spite of unfortunate personal circumstances. Awards are given for A-B Honor Roll Achievement, Most Improved Academic Progress, Good Citizenship and Perfect Attendance.

The Junior League of Jacksonville and First Coast News, in partnership with SteinMart and Suddath Relocation, hosted its 7th annual **Operation Backpack** in September. Hundreds of new backpacks were donated and then filled with emergency supplies children need when entering care. The event also raised over \$7,000 in gift cards and donations so the children could purchase something special for themselves.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida delivered over 1,460 **Easter baskets** filled with candy and food to our children in care.

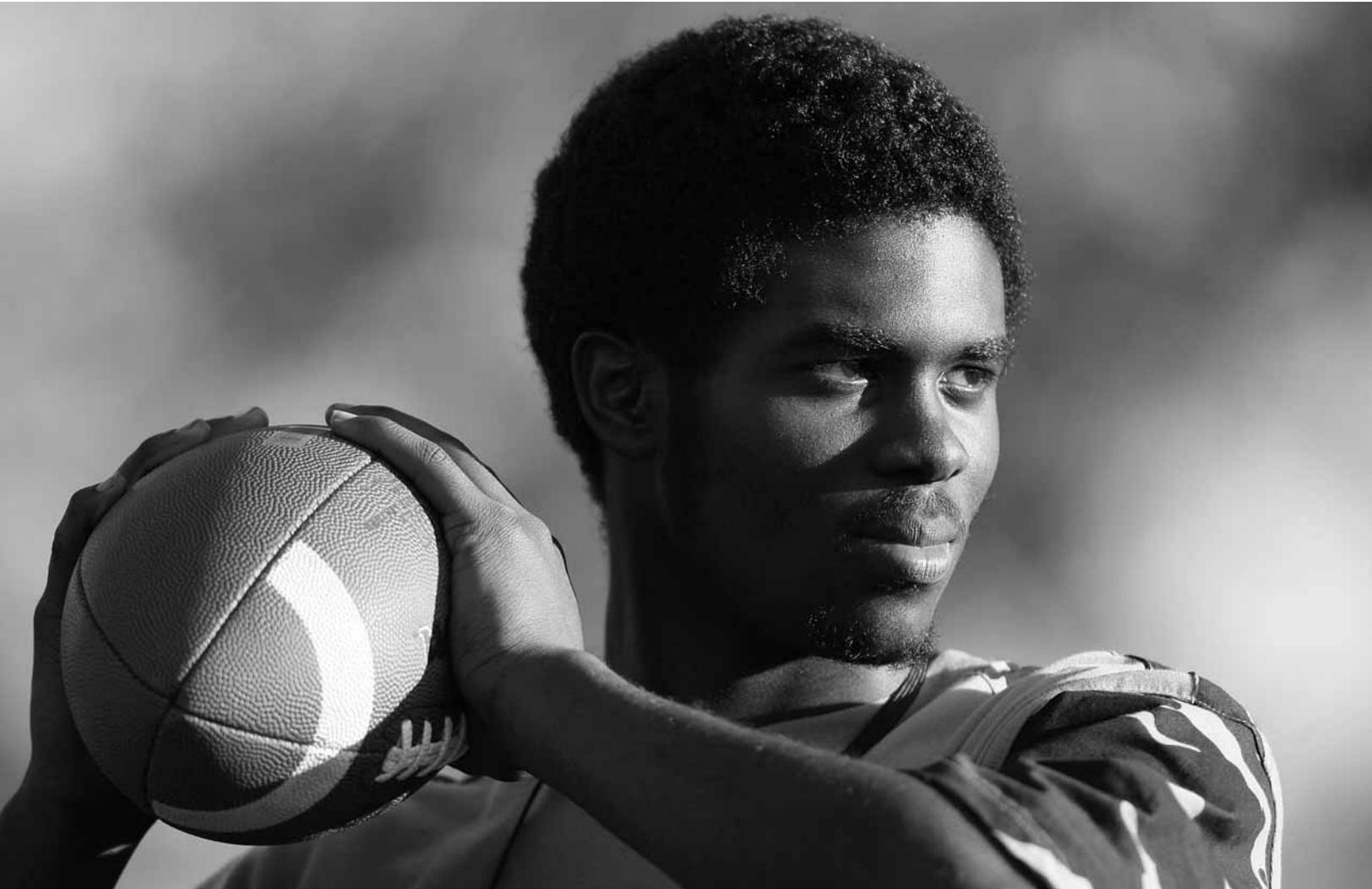
The Florida Air National Guard, Young Lawyers Association, Rayonier Inc. and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida brought joy to the holidays by delivering gifts to foster care children and to families in the Prevention Program.

Jacksonville Jaguars linebacker, Ephraim Salaam, and other team members took foster children shopping at Target for the annual holiday **Shop with a Jock** event.

The Jacksonville Fire & Rescue Department helped to ensure that all children in care had gifts to open for Christmas. Every fire station in Duval County was a drop-off location for new unwrapped toys and gift cards.

The U.S. Marine Reserves hosted a holiday party for children in foster care at Dave & Buster's. Santa Claus was there with presents donated by the community, while the children enjoyed food and played games, both donated by the establishment. In addition a special party was held for youths in the Independent Living program.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Dominique photo by Bill Frakes



Prevention

We're taking STEPS to promote strong families. This year 1,027 families were serviced by the prevention staff. As a result of the prevention programs, over ninety percent of those at-risk families did not come into the system.

Prevention is a core service provided by Family Support Services (FSS) . By way of a key program entitled Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents (STEPS), direct services and community resources are made available to help prevent child abuse and neglect and promote healthy family environment. In addition, FSS distributed over 500 "healthy family" information packages through schools, churches and events.

When the loss of a job, substance abuse, major illness, divorce, incarceration or similar situation causes disruptions in families, the odds of poverty, abuse or neglect increase the chances that a child will be negatively affected. Through the STEPS program, FSS assists families in need of transportation, food, clothing and emergency financial support. During November and December 2005, over 100 holiday dinners were distributed to families in the program.

FSS will continue to strengthen and empower families in the community through education, assessments, referrals, professional family support workers, case management, and in-home educational sessions on parenting, financial management skills and behavior management strategies.

Independent Living

Independent Living services are designed to help foster care youth become proficient in daily living activities such as money management, employment skills, food preparation and other vital skills required for adulthood. The independent living skills are taught by professional staff at multiple agencies under the direction of Family Support Services' Independent Living department.

In addition, program assistance is available to those that meet the eligibility requirements set forth by Florida Statutes.

- Road-to-Independence Program: Financial assistance for full-time students attending an accredited high school or college and making satisfactory progress.
- Educational Training Vouchers: Financial assistance for books, school supplies, tutoring, etc. for qualifying full- or part-time students.
- Transitional Support Services: Short-term assistance for critical needs such as housing, employment, education, mental health, counseling, disability and other essential services.
- Aftercare Support Services: Various assistance for youth ages 18 to 22.
- Subsidized Independent Living Program: For youth under the age of 18 who demonstrate a high level of personal responsibility and proficiency in independent living skills which enable them to be placed in an unlicensed living arrangement.



Lauren photo by Tiffany Roach



Rochelle photo by Paul Figura

Finances

Total Budget **\$33,965,000**

Casework Service & Related Support	\$16,760,000	49.3%
Prevention and Preservation	715,000	2.1%
Adoption Promotion and Support	345,000	1.0%
Community Development	90,000	0.3%
Coordination of Health Care	75,000	0.3%
Family Support	450,000	1.3%
Substance Abuse & Mental Health	520,000	1.5%
Subtotal	18,955,000	55.8%

Room and Board

Adoptive Care	\$ 5,205,000	15.3%
Foster Care	8,035,000	23.7%
Shelter Care	865,000	2.5%
Independent Living	905,000	2.7%
Subtotal	\$15,010,000	44.2%

Annual Community Donations **\$ 305,000**

FSS Executive Staff

Jim Adams, Chief Executive Officer

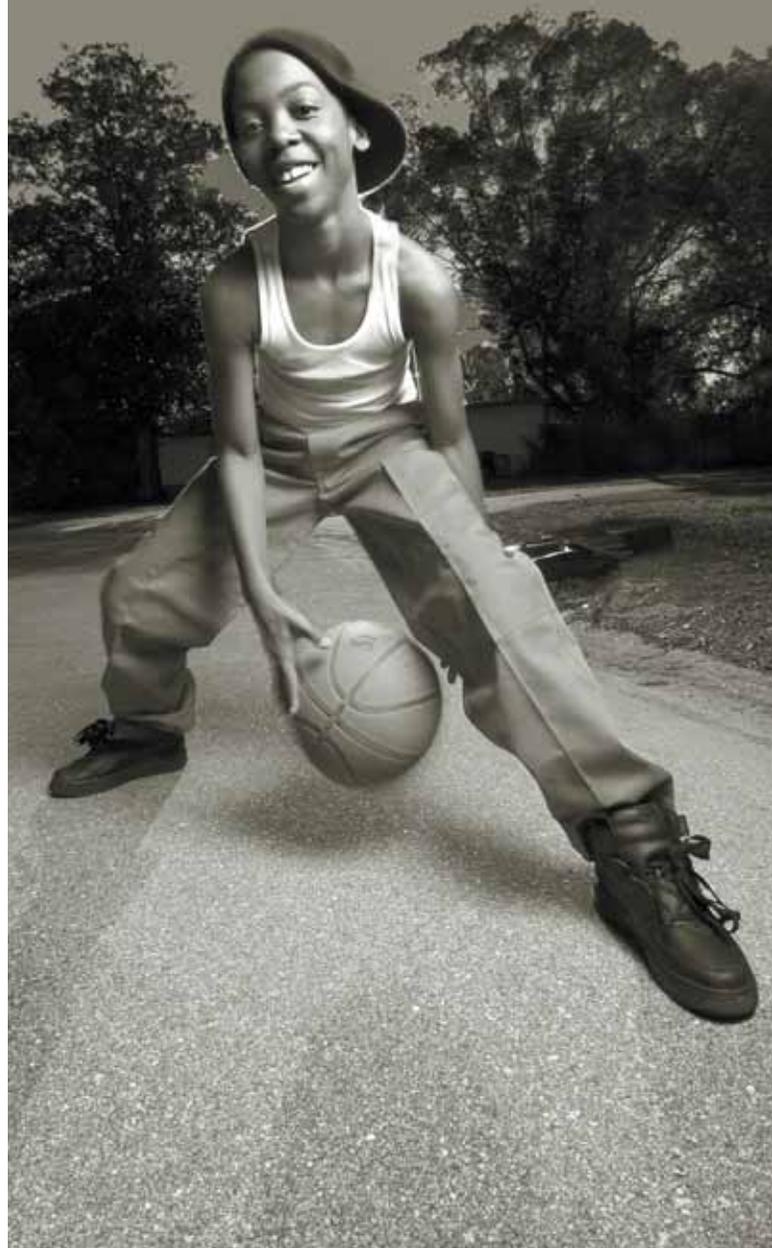
Joanne Robertson, Chief Operating Officer

Lee Wilson, Chief Financial Officer

Chuck Young, Community Development Director

Colleen Carter, Project Manager

Family Support Services maintained its top status in community-based care with a continued “Green” rating for fiscal responsibility in the past year. The rating, from the Department of Children and Families, is awarded to state agencies in recognition of appropriate handling of federal and state funds and regulatory compliance of funding utilization.





Community-based care Providers

Child protective services for children and their families are delivered within neighborhoods through five local community-based care service centers contracted by Family Support Services of North Florida.

Children's Home Society • 348.2811
3027 San Diego Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32207

Daniel • 296.1055
4203 Southpoint Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32216

Jewish Family & Community Services • 448.1933
6261 Dupont Station Ct., Jacksonville, FL 32217

MHRC • 642.9100
900 University Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32211

PSI Family Services • 723.6049
4819 Soutel Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32208



Family Support Services
OF NORTH FLORIDA INC.

Family Support Services of North Florida, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Your support is needed. Please consider fostering or adopting a child. Monetary donations are welcomed and appreciated. Make an online donation today at www.fssjax.org.



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