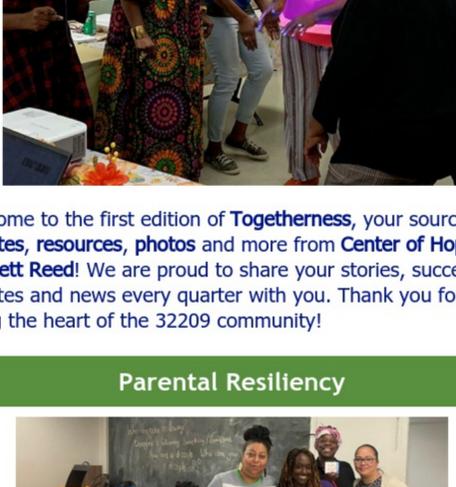


Welcome to the Togetherness newsletter!



Welcome to the first edition of **Togetherness**, your source for **updates, resources, photos** and more from **Center of Hope at Emmett Reed!** We are proud to share your stories, successes, updates and news every quarter with you. Thank you for being the heart of the 32209 community!

Parental Resiliency



Parent & Dad Cafés: A Safe Haven for 32209 Parents

Looking for support on your parenting journey? **Parent Cafés give 32209 parents a welcoming space** to connect, share, and stay motivated. These gatherings help families grow stronger — and we even have Dad Café and Parent Café at three convenient locations so everyone can join in! **For more information, call 904-265-6787.** There's always something happening Wednesday evenings at Center of Hope — we'll see you there!

Meeting locations are as follows. **Email CenterofHope@fssnf.org** for more information or for questions:

- **Emmett Reed**, 1093 W. Sixth Street (second and fourth Wednesday)
- **Vista Landing**, 5020 Cleveland Road (every Thursday)
- **Heavenly Angels**, 2318 W. 13th Street (first and third Thursday)



Mommy & Baby

Our Mommy & Babies group is growing stronger in 32209! After completing the Period of PURPLE Crying training, moms come together to support each other through the challenges of early parenthood. Recent events have included child development check-ins and resources from Adriana Bonilla and Maura Colon of the Early Learning Coalition, a celebration with FAIMH North Florida highlighting early childhood mental health, and a powerful session with **Dr. Selena Webster-Bass (Voices Institute)** on healing and life course impacts.

We also received a grant award from **Magnolia Project's Stress Relief Toolkit Award.** We were able to send 10 community parents to the Postpartum Support International's Certificate Training in Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs). This certification will help caregivers manage stress, understand infant behavior, and prioritize self-care.

Led by **Parent Ambassador Jolessa Davis** and **Christine Lester, M.Ed.**, our group continues to create safe, empowering spaces for families to connect, heal, and thrive. This is just the beginning for 32209 families!

Mommy & Babies group meets every third Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Center of Hope. No registration needed — just stop by!

Parent of the Quarter: Ms. Marilyn Lewis

This quarter, we're proud to spotlight **Ms. Marilyn Lewis**, a devoted member of our Parent Advisory Council and an active participant in Center of Hope programs. A resident of the New Town/Durkeeville area since 2018, Ms. Lewis first connected with COH after a tragic, racially motivated incident shook the community. While caring for two young boys left in her care, she found support through COH's diaper distributions, parenting programs, and resources—everything from a double stroller to guidance on Head Start and custody.



Today, Ms. Lewis not only participates in programs like Mommy & Babies, Parent Café, and Trauma-Informed Care, she also shares hope, encouragement, and hard-earned wisdom with other young mothers. "I tell young people how fortunate they are to have a place like this," she says. "The COH has become my mental and physical support—and my family." Her journey reminds us of the power of community, compassion, and connection. We're grateful for Ms. Lewis's leadership, generosity, and the inspiration she brings to our COH family.

Social Connectivity



Summer HopeFest

Our **Summer HopeFest** brought together families, community resources, vendors and more in a festive atmosphere at the Center of Hope! With games and raffles, grilled lunch, double dutch, a youth talent presentation and so much more, this annual event was bigger and better than ever.



You can be part of our next celebration — our parenting groups, community calendars and social media always have the latest news!

Our 32209 Community Impact (2024-2025)



Families Served	715
Children Served	1,352
Engaged Participants in Community Events	2,742
Caregivers/Community Residents Received Parenting or Workforce Development Training and/or Certification	176

Health & Wellness Hub



Labor of Love Garden

Our Labor of Love Garden is thriving! This season, we're proudly growing vibrant yellow peppers, fragrant basil, and fresh parsley—alongside a bounty of other produce. We've already harvested juicy watermelons, earthy beets, crisp string beans, sweet potatoes, and so much more. **Every plant grown here represents nourishment, community, and hope for 32209 families.** Right now our garden is in its harvesting season — we look forward to planting new things with you soon!



Moai Yoga for Change

This quarter, the Center of Hope has embraced wellness through our **Moai Yoga for Change** initiative. Our community has felt a positive impact, bringing peace and unity to the 32209 families. We look forward to continuing these wellness efforts!

Featured Recipe: Parmesan Baked Yellow Squash

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium yellow squash
- Grated parmesan cheese (to taste)

DIRECTIONS: Fresh yellow squash meets savory Parmesan cheese in this quick, flavorful side dish. Simply slice the squash, sprinkle generously with Parmesan, and bake until golden and crispy. Perfect for a light, wholesome side that's ready in minutes!

Prep Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 15–20 minutes
Servings: 4



Coming Soon: Pink Party, Harvest of Hope



Pink Party and Buddy Bus

Get your boots and your besties — the **third annual Pink Party is back** with a Boots on the Ground theme on **Wednesday, Oct. 1!** From 6-8 p.m. at Center of Hope, enjoy free food and music, education and community energy, plus raffles, giveaways and so much more. **Octavius Davis**, co-host of Front Page on **Hot 106.5FM**, will emcee the event. Don't miss it!

On **Wednesday, Oct. 15**, the **Buddy Bus** returns to bring mammograms to the heart of 32209. Make your appointment now for this life-saving screening! Register at <https://bit.ly/COHbuddybus2025> to save your spot by Oct. 14 -- Baptist Health will call you to confirm your appointment! No walk-up appointments are available at this time.

Harvest of Hope

It's time to celebrate Fall and our 32209 community at the Center of Hope! Meet your neighbors, enjoy delicious treats, win prizes and take home a family fun bag. We'll see you **Saturday, November 15** at Center of Hope!

Hope for Christmas - Jolly Jamboree at Center of Hope

It's never too early to plan for Christmas! The **Jolly Jamboree** returns to Center of Hope at Emmett Reed on **Saturday, December 7.** Meet **Santa and Mrs. Claus**, live music, enjoy holiday treats, family fun games, raffles and giveaways, and so much more. Don't miss the most magical event of the year at Center of Hope! Email CenterofHope@fssnf.org or call 904-265-6787 to find out how you can be part of this special event.

Business Spotlight: Mika's Mixes

Tomika Ivey is the owner and mastermind behind **Mika's Mixes**. Her battle with breast cancer moved her to find alternative ways to healing. Never losing her faith, Tomika was resilient and began to consume fresh fruits and vegetables to that diet. Her desire to live pushed her to juice and study the benefits of juicing. Embracing nutrient-packed juices played a crucial role in Tomika's recovery and inspired her to create various blends of natural juices for herself. Through prayer, trial and error, Tomika established **Mika's Mixes** in 2024 as a way to share her blessing with others. Tomika now leads the journey to better health and vibrant living through **Mika's Mixes**.

You can find out more on Facebook.com at **Mika's Mixes** or call 904-345-9503.

Become a Hope Builder!

Center of Hope is currently seeking **volunteers for their Hope Builder programs and upcoming events**, including Christmas on Candy Cane Lane.

There are many options for you to be part of the Center of Hope team! Use your phone to scan the QR code, or use the link at CenterofHopeFL.org to fill out the volunteer interest form.

Thank you to our sponsors

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