

# **The Libertore Fund for Children, Inc. Areas of Funding 2020**

## **Early Childhood Education and Therapy Intervention (\$175,732)**

Early childhood is the period from prenatal development to six years of age. It is a crucial phase of growth and development because experiences during early childhood can influence outcomes across the entire course of an individual's life. For all children, early childhood provides an important window of opportunity to prepare the foundation for life-long learning and participation, while preventing potential delays in development and disabilities. Early intervention programs provide a balanced approach to emotional, social, cognitive, and language development, preparing all children for success in school and later in the workplace and community.

### **Achievement Academy**

Achievement Academy is a charter school in Polk County for children up to 5 years of age with special needs. They provide early intervention through support, therapy and education, advocacy and resources for parents, teachers and children.

The Birth to Three program offers early intervention services to children up to three years of age who may be at-risk for developmental delays due to; prematurity, substance exposure, social/emotional issues, environmental issues.

### **Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Suncoast**

BBBS fills the need for youth to have an adult mentor in their life. They assign a woman or man to an at-risk youth that does not have a male or female role-model. The school identifies the students that they feel are reachable and would benefit by a big brother or big sister. Mentors work with these children in the community and/or at the school; the longer the mentor stays the higher the chance of success.

### **Central Florida Speech and Hearing Center**

Central Florida Speech & Hearing Center offers a variety of special Speech Pathology programs to fit various needs of adults and children. Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) is a communication option for infants, toddlers, and young children with hearing loss and their families. LSL is a developmental approach which follows typical child milestones by introducing skills at the early stages.

### **Children First**

Children First is an early childhood education provider in Sarasota County for children six weeks to five year of age. It offers accountable programs that strengthen children and families. Many of the families live in stressful social and economic environments. The services provided improve the quality of the lives of the families by using a comprehensive approach to development, education, health and well-being to ensure kindergarten readiness.

### **Easter Seals SW Florida**

Easter Seals helps children and adults that have developmental issues. Our funding is designated for The Lily School/Children's Therapy Center. The Lily School offers children who are both typically developing and differently abled an equal opportunity to learn in a creative atmosphere by providing high quality education and care that children need in their early developmental years, ages birth to five. Therapy is provided for Speech-Language, Occupational, and Autism.

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## **Forty Carrots**

Forty Carrots offers:

- Parenting Education to empower families with the tools they need to ensure positive outcomes.
- Mental Health Services for the entire family. The individual and family offerings are devoted to promoting healthy family relationships.
- Early Childhood Education for children ages 2-5, to experience success in school and in life. They develop the whole child through a developmentally appropriate, play-based approach using the Creative Curriculum.

## **Foundation for Dreams**

Dream Oaks Camp celebrates the abilities and develops the strengths of children with special needs and chronic illnesses ages 7-17 by collaborating with families to provide individualized result-based goals, family support, and recreation in a camp environment. Our overall vision is that all individuals with special needs have every opportunity to learn and grow, leading to more productive behaviors, meaningful relationships, and a more comprehensive profound skill set. The Dream Oaks Camp program is unique in that they are the only one of its kind in the Southwest Region of Florida providing year round residential and day sessions for children with ALL special needs and chronic/terminal medical conditions including (but not limited to) autism, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, developmental delays, Down syndrome, ADHD and cancer patients. They offer a variety of camping sessions specialized to meet the needs of each group we serve by modifying strategies to include the participation of all campers, despite their physical, emotional, or developmental challenges.

## **Learning Resource Center of Polk County**

LRC helps students maximize their learning potential by providing personalized educational programs, consultative services for parents, and programs to accommodate community needs. Their reading readiness programs prepares rising and repeating kindergarten students for academic success. All children, with or without disabilities are provided help. Programs are provided through scholarships for families with low socio-economic status.

## **The Florida Center for Early Childhood**

The Florida Center for Early Childhood has been a leading provider of therapeutic services, early education, and healthy development for children in southwest Florida. Its programs focus on infants and children through fifth grade who are at-risk academically, socially, or economically. They provide developmental therapies, mental health counseling, and early education at Starfish Academy preschool. The organization also offers Healthy Families, a home-visiting program that guides parents who need assistance. The state's only Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders clinic is located at the Sarasota campus, offering evaluations for individuals of all ages who may have had prenatal exposure to alcohol.

## **The Haven**

The Selby Preschool provides children, ages 1 through kindergarten, with early childhood education. Their educational classrooms are inclusive, meaning that typically developing children and children with special needs are taught together in the same setting. Students have access to high-quality therapy such as physical, occupational and speech therapies during their school day.

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### **The Salvation Army Hazel Haley HALO Child Enrichment Center**

H.A.L.O. Child Enrichment Center (Helping and Learning Opportunities) is a DCF licensed childcare facility established specifically for homeless children whose families are currently residing in their Emergency Family Shelter, Family Living program, or other local shelters. HALO is staffed with childcare professionals create an atmosphere which benefits the children emotionally, socially, and academically. Parental partnership is also an important part of HALO's purpose. The staff work with mothers and fathers on improving their parenting skills. The goal is to provide a safe place for children to learn and grow while their parents work toward a secure future.

### **Inspiration Academy**

A school whose goal is the transformational development of a student's mind, body and spirit. A transformational school uses mentorship as a means to earn the right to speak to the heart of a student in order to individualize instruction and develop an intrinsic motivation. This intrinsic motivation or "inspiration", works from the inside out and produces winning habits of selfless, disciplined, authentic care for others. Teachers, coaches and parents all rally around what can be put on the transcript to tell a story that others want to hear. Grades and transcripts are just part of the peaceable fruit produced by a transformed life.

### **Child Abuse (\$10,789)**

A child is abused or neglected every five minutes in the State of Florida. Child abuse takes on many forms, which often occur at the same time. These are:

- Physical abuse occurs when a child is purposely physically injured or put at risk of harm by another person.
- Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child, such as fondling, oral-genital contact, intercourse, exploitation or exposure to child pornography.
- Emotional abuse means injuring a child's self-esteem or emotional well-being. It includes verbal and emotional assault — such as continually belittling or berating a child — as well as isolating, ignoring or rejecting a child.
- Medical abuse occurs when someone gives false information about illness in a child that requires medical attention, putting the child at risk of injury and unnecessary medical care. Failure to provide adequate food, shelter, affection, supervision, education, or dental or medical care.

### **All Star Children's Foundation**

All Star Children's "Campus of Hope & Healing" will include a center for trauma-focused clinical services and provide children between the ages 0-18 who have been victimized by abuse, with loving and stable homes. Their campus will serve foster children in Sarasota County's child welfare system. The campus will integrate trauma-sensitive principles (safety, trust, choice, empowerment, and collaboration) throughout its physical environment, treatment programs and staff interactions. They will offer onsite trauma therapy services, targeted case management support, coordination of services, and enrichment programs to prepare children to successfully complete their transition into a more optimal, permanent situation.

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### **Child Protection Center**

CPC helps children and families in crises, focusing on prevention, intervention and treatment of child abuse. The center serves as a clearinghouse for treatment, visitation, education, and therapy. The Sexual Abuse Treatment Program provides treatment for children who are victims of sexual abuse and for families through individual, group, and counseling. The Children and Families Program provides supervised visitation in a safe place for the children to continue their relationship with a non-custodial parent. The Prevention and Education Program offers personal safety and abuse prevention education to the children in the Sarasota County schools and provides community awareness about child abuse.

### **More Too Life**

More Too Life Foundation is an award winning, survivor-led, anti-human trafficking, sexual violence prevention agency that provides direct victim services, training, education, awareness events and prevention with court-appointed services to buyers in three Florida counties and with a new online learning management system for use by other organizations for other buyers nationwide, as well as critical intervention services to several communities and victims. With the mission to offer programs and resources that educate and empower survivors of trafficking, offenders, and youth at risk of exploitation, the name “More Too Life” implies that there is more to life than being a victim.

### **Community-based Youth Development Programs (\$15,500)**

An abundance of research provides solid evidence that youth development organizations are important agents in helping students achieve academic success. These programs also provide a safe and caring environment for the youth to engage with their peers and adults, whom are often their mentors and role models, while their parent or guardian is at work.

### **Boys and Girls Clubs of Sarasota**

BGCSC provides a club experience that assures success is within reach of every young person who walks through their doors, with all members on track to graduate from high school with a plan for the future, demonstrating good character and citizenship, and living a healthy lifestyle. They offer after-school and summer programs for more than 5,500 children and youth ages 6-18.

### **Boys and Girls Clubs of Polk**

For more than 75 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of Polk have been working with young people from disadvantaged economic, social, and family circumstances. Boys & Girls Club has actively sought to enrich the lives of girls and boys. It is dedicated to ensuring that disadvantaged youngsters have greater access to quality programs and services that will enhance their lives and shape their futures as productive citizens.

### **Girls’s Inc. of Sarasota of Sarasota and Polk**

Girls Inc. focuses on the development of the whole girl. She learns to value herself, take risks, and discover and develop her inherent strengths. The combination of long-lasting mentoring relationships, a pro-girl environment, and evidence-based programming offered during the summer and after school, equips girls to navigate gender, economic, and social barriers, and grow up healthy, educated, and independent. When girls participate in meaningful, supervised

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activities in a secure and supportive environment, it prevents them from being exposed to other unsafe alternatives that are proven to increase during out of school hours.

### **Parker Street Ministries**

Parker Street Ministries moved into a Lakeland neighborhood consumed with poverty and crime. Its people were, for the most part, broken, forgotten and marginalized. For the last ten years, this ministry has worked to reconcile the individuals in this neighborhood to one another, to the world around them and to God. Because Parker Street Ministries is characterized by a staff and friends who intentionally live in this neighborhood, it has been transformed from the inside out and is now a family-oriented area. The programs offered are: afterschool academic enrichment, academic summer camp, a housing initiative, neighborhood mentorship and mercy, annual Christmas store and regular block and neighborhood parties.

### **Services for the Homeless Mothers, Their Unborn Baby and Children (\$10,000)**

The national definition of homelessness includes sleeping the previous night in a place lacking water or electricity. Quality programs provide safe, caring, faith-filled shelters/homes that teach life-skills, provide counseling, training, and educational opportunities to help end the cycle of poverty, abuse and that support life. Young people who experience homelessness engage in a wide variety of health risk behaviors and significantly higher rates than their housed peers due to exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), detrimental to their development. Children living in poverty, including those experiencing homelessness, are 5 times more likely to undergo adverse childhood experiences, increasing their risk of developmental challenges and poor health and functioning.

### **Lighthouse Ministries**

Lighthouse Ministries in Lakeland uses a holistic approach to meeting the needs of an individual's mind, body, and soul. They provide food, clothing, shelter, education, referral services, on-site job training, career advancement training, counseling, case management, discipleship, and structured classes in budgeting, parenting, and spiritual growth all within one central location. The Center for Women & Children assists victims of domestic violence, homelessness, and destructive lifestyles. The program provides direction, encouragement, accountability, and discipline to help bring about positive changes within the residents' lives.

### **Our Mother's House**

Our Mother's House of Diocese of Venice Catholic Charities is a 2-year, non-denominational, transitional housing program, located in Venice, for single mothers and their preschool children who would otherwise be homeless. Supportive services address financial literacy, anger management, employability skills, developmental and parenting needs of children, educational or vocational opportunities and mainstream services.

### **SOLVE Maternity Homes**

SOLVE Maternity Homes are located in Bradenton and Sarasota. The program offers support for pregnant women of all ages by providing housing, education, counseling, health care resources, childbirth and parenting classes, adoption assistance, and spiritual support for the duration of pregnancy and for a predetermined time after birth.

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### **Family Promise of South Sarasota**

FPOFS is an affiliate of Family Promise National based in New Jersey. At a national level, Family Promise exists to ensure that homelessness for children is rare, brief, and nonrecurring. Locally, Family Promise of South Sarasota County exists to serve families experiencing a housing crisis. Their programs provide comprehensive case management services, referrals, and resources for these families in crisis so they can achieve a permanent address and financial independence.

### **Foster Care & Adoption (\$88,296)**

Foster care includes all children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. In order to prevent more abuse when children are removed from their homes, we support quality programs that:

- recruit, screen and train foster parents
- provide a safe place to stay, counseling, therapy and support

### **A Safe Haven for Newborns**

A Safe Haven for Newborns is dedicated to saving the lives of newborns from infant abuse and abandonment, as well as assisting pregnant girls and women in crisis. A Safe Haven for Newborns, through community outreach campaigns, education and their community service app, is dedicated to reaching pregnant girls and women before they reach the crisis stage. They assist them as they make their decision in the best interest of their baby and themselves, whether with counseling, parenting, health related issues, adoption or confidentially placing the Safe Haven Baby with their forever home. All services are free. They are in many cities and states. Some of the drop-off places for babies are fire stations and hospitals.

### **Bridge a Life**

Their mission is to provide Christ-centered hope for children with relational trauma through awareness and family support.

They offer:

- Parents' Night Out - A safe place for families to bring their children to local, participating churches where they provide a loving, Christ-centered environment while parents enjoy a much needed evening out. The volunteer team coordinates, hosts, and ministers to foster and adoptive families by providing parents a night out.
- Stew Crew – A team coordinates, prepares, and delivers meals right to the door of foster and adoptive families who have just received a child or find themselves in a crisis situation.
- Training and Education - Foster, Adoptive, Relative Caregiver, and Safe Families, as well as professionals and anyone working with vulnerable children are invited to participate in the training.

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### **Catholic Charities DOSP Adoption Program**

Adoption Services are a part of the St. Petersburg Diocese but offered throughout the State of Florida in 62 counties. Three counselors travel to the pregnant women and provide education, referrals, and services, like taking them to doctors' visits and meeting their needs, at no cost.

### **Children's Guardian Fund**

The Children's Guardian Fund provides funding to meet emergency needs and enable normalcy and enrichment in the lives of children in foster and state care in Florida's 12th Judicial Circuit. We also promote public awareness and community support for the children's needs. They provide limited funding to support the recruitment, training and retention of Guardian ad Litem Program volunteers so the children have a voice.

### **Children's Home Society of Florida**

CHS serves over 100,000 children each year that are victims of abuse, abandonment, and neglect. They recruit, license and support foster families that provide stability and safety to children in the midst of uncertainty. Sometimes, children who have endured severe trauma are best served in a group home setting, staffed around-the-clock by compassionate, highly trained professionals. Their residential homes provide safety, counseling, nurturing and encouragement as kids and teens work through the intense pain. When family challenges interfere with children's safety, they work closely with parents to help them overcome the obstacles that brought them into the child welfare system. In some situations, children can never safely return home. When this occurs, they work to find the right family to adopt and provide a forever home.

### **Everyday Blessings, Inc.**

Everyday Blessings is a foster home for children made up of small units with a common area for study, eating, and social activity, that have been removed from their homes due to neglect, abuse and/or violence. Their goal is to keep siblings together so they can stay united. The children range from infants to 17.

### **FBCH/One More Child**

One More Child provides shelter and finds foster care homes for children removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. Their goal is to get the families reunited and that takes an average of 6 months for parents to get their children back, sometimes longer. They also have homes for unwed and pregnant mothers and their children. The Compassion Center feeds the community and offers services for families such as counseling, available services in the community and food.

### **Heart Gallery**

The Heart Gallery contributes to over 5,000 adoptions per year. They display the children's pictures in hospitals, bank lobbies, Starbucks, libraries, anywhere public that they secure permission. They focus on harder to adopt children, older, siblings, emotional or physical handicaps. Since they have been displaying pictures they have seen a 25% increase in these types of adoptions.

They launched the Family Finder Technologies, a platform that implements a modern digital marketing approach to recruit foster families, manage child profiles, perform inquiry management, and child matching.

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## **The Twig Cares**

A boutique for children in foster care where they can shop for new clothes. Often, they enter foster care with only the clothes on their back. Many foster parents do not have the financial resources to provide new clothing, shoes, etc. for the children in their care. The Twig is a place where the children feel welcomed and valued. They serve 350 children a month.

## **Pregnancy Help Centers (\$32,400)**

Women facing an unplanned pregnancy have the right to know their options so they can make an informed decision about the pregnancy, The clinics provide a safe place to explore options. All services are offered for free, there is no judgement, all information is confidential, and any decision is supported. The clinics provide free pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, and STI testing. Additionally, they offer a women's wellness program, post-abortion care, referrals to community services, and ongoing support during and after the pregnancy, as needed.

## **Heroic Media**

They help pro-lifers save lives from abortion by giving them the opportunity to sponsor internet marketing programs that connect women at risk of getting an abortion to pro-life Pregnancy Help Centers.

## **Options for Women Pregnancy Help Center**

Options for Women Pregnancy Help Clinic is a medical clinic serving women facing unplanned pregnancies. They specialize in helping women get the information they need by offering professional, nonjudgmental services at no cost to them, so they can make decisions with confidence.

## **Sarasota Medical Pregnancy Center**

SMPC serves women who are pregnant or suspect they may be pregnant, offering numerous medical services, support, and educational services at no charge. They work with more than 25 local agencies to support women and strengthen families in Sarasota.

## **Fatherless Boys and Girls (19,800)**

Fatherlessness has a long-lasting negative impact on health and socioeconomic characteristics such as the following (but not limited to):

- 63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes– 5 times the average.
- 90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes
- 85% of all children who show behavior disorders come from fatherless homes
- 75% of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers come from fatherless homes
- 85% of all youths in prison come from fatherless homes – 20 times the average.

## **Idols Aside**

Idols Aside establishes strong relationships, provides continual discipleship and guidance while modeling Christ through sports camps, hunting retreats and education; encouraging and empowering the body of Christ to reach the fatherless. Their work goes beyond the camps, they check on grades, help single moms, provide necessary contacts in the community, and reach out to churches to find families to help mentor these single moms and their children.

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## **Child Hunger (\$14,000)**

Children that are food insecure (lack of sustainable physical or economic access to enough safe, nutritious, and socially acceptable food for a healthy and productive life) are staggering. We know that children can't learn when they are hungry and we support these agencies that make sure the children have food to eat when they are not in school.

### **All Faiths Food Bank**

All Faiths Food Bank in Sarasota County secures donations from the food and grocery industries, government agencies, food drives, local growers, individuals and other organizations. Food is provided to people in need at food pantries, soup kitchens, schools, veterans' programs, youth organizations, senior centers, and emergency shelters.

Their Kidspack Program provides meals for children on the weekends, holidays and summer when school is out and they cannot get a meal at school.

### **Emergency Care Help Organization (ECHO)**

Their mission is to bridge the gap between crisis and stability. They provide for immediate needs followed by comprehensive wrap services such as case management, job skills training, GED, Financial Literacy Class, and Healthy Living offerings.

### **kidsPACK of Polk**

Many children go hungry when school is out. kidsPACK provides food for insecure elementary age children with a backpack and a meal pack of nutritious, non-perishable food to take home each weekend for 42 weeks during the school year to ensure they have access to food when school is not in session.

## **Youth Sports Scholarships (\$21,860)**

The Larry Libertore Youth Sports Scholarship gives underprivileged boys and girls the opportunity to participate in sports camps, clinics, and leagues.

### **Top 4 Reasons Youth Need Sports**

1. Improved Physical Health- build a foundation of good exercise habits for the future.
2. Athletes Accelerate in Academics- being involved in sports can not only help cognitive performance but also lead to improved academic functioning.
3. Mental Health Benefits- adolescents in sports, tend to understand themselves better and are best able to set limits and boundaries, when considering children's overall social and emotional experience.
4. Nothing worthwhile in life comes easily- Learning to work hard in sports and tolerate the natural ups and downs of athletics, can support the development grit.