



Stanley Whitney

*HOPE, HEART & HOME*

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2025

NEWSLETTER



## WHO WE ARE !

**HOPE, HEART & HOME** IS A FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY COALITION RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS FROM OUR CATHOLIC AND INTER-FAITH COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT FOSTER CHILDREN IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

WE **SUSTAIN AND RETAIN FOSTER FAMILIES** BY PARTNERING IN LOCAL EVENTS AND BY SERVING AS **FOSTER PARENTS,**



**RESPITE PARENTS, MENTORS, GUARDIAN AD LITEM, PANELISTS, AND CAREPORTAL FIRST RESPONDERS.**

WE HOST MONTHLY VIRTUAL MEETINGS ON THE **SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH** WITH EDUCATIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS THAT INTRODUCE OUR CHILD ADVOCATES TO EVERY FACET OF **OUR CHILD WELFARE COMMUNITY.**

Visit us at [www.hopeheartthomeministry.com](http://www.hopeheartthomeministry.com)



HOPE  
HEART  
HOME





The number of kids in foster care is hard to see. So many kids needing safe homes. So many families needing support and healing. So many foster homes needed to fill the gaps. So what can you do?

1. Pray for a child in foster care.
2. Mentor a family who has a child in foster care
3. Consider becoming a Guardian ad Litem advocate
4. Become a foster parent
5. Educate yourself about trauma

Whatever the role you play, we all need to do our part to keep children safe. Preventing. Advocating. Supporting. Parenting. Want to learn more about how YOU can help? Contact Eric Schwindeman at [eschwindeman@yahoo.com](mailto:eschwindeman@yahoo.com)





# Prayer Boxes

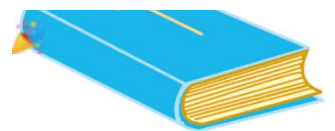


**Hope Heart & Home** is excited to partner with **Citrus Family Care Network** to engage local churches during this Lenten season to support children in foster care.

**Prayer Boxes** are placed in church lobbies requesting prayers and making information available on how to foster! Thank you, **Nadine Rolle**, **Mary Walton**, and **Kimberly Lopez** for introducing this way to put YOUR faith into action! Become a foster parent! ❤️



*Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.*  
Mark 11:24 (NIV)





# HOPE, HEART & HOME VISITS

## GLORY TO GOD

Heart & Home visited **Glory to God Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care Facility** on April 9. HHH learned about the nursing services for foster and biological children, including

occupational, physical, behavioral, and speech therapies. This faith-based PPEC Center serves Medicaid-eligible children aged 0-21 with complex medical needs. Thanks to Gersey, Bernadett, and staff for the informative tour and warm hospitality.



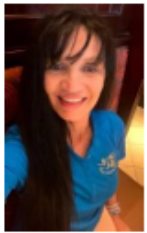


# RANDOM ACTS

**Random Acts of Kindness** was founded by St. John Neumann's Maria Jacques (HHH GAL) in 2022. By leveraging small donations from friends and family, she organized a team of volunteers to conduct monthly visits to foster families. During these visits, they delivered gift cards, meals, seasonal baskets, cookies and various small presents to families. The Random Acts program has been reorganized under the leadership of three seasoned HHH leaders:



**Mary Walton**, a former GAL manager and community activist, is responsible for overseeing recruitment and delivery in southern Dade.



**Bernadett Horvath**, a peer parent and founder of *BDW & More*, a non-profit organization that distributes bottles, diapers, and wipes, is administering the program in northern Dade.

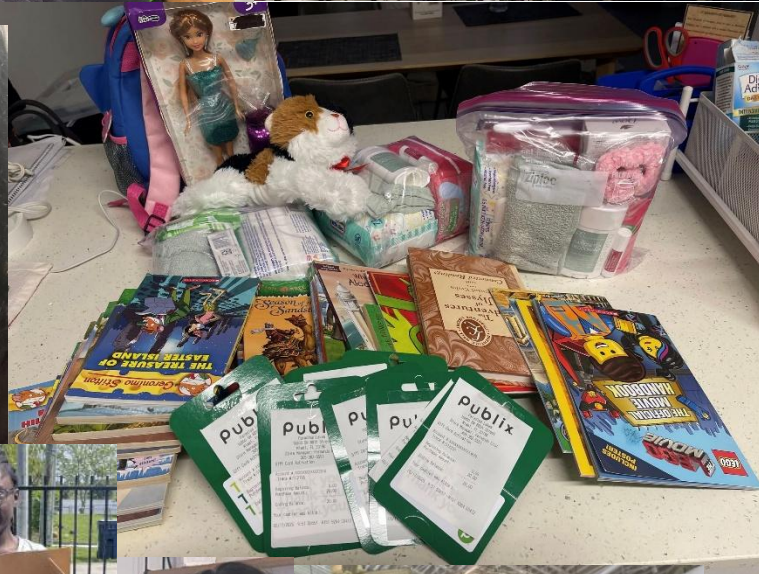


**Leanna Roberts**, a property manager and founder of *iOrphan* is supervising the entire program. Based in Maui, she manages HHH orientation, family matches, and appointment schedules remotely. Interested volunteers should contact Leanna at [leannajroberts@gmail.com](mailto:leannajroberts@gmail.com)





# OF KINDNESS



When Parents Thrive  
Children Shine!

786-907-2252

bernadett.bdwardmore@gmail.com



# MORE RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS



MARIA'S  
**random**  
act of kindness  
HOPE, HEART & HOME

Maria Jacques - Founder

Leanna Roberts - Administrator/Appointments 808-264-3552  
Mary Walton - Field Operations - South 305-298-6461  
Bernadett Horvath - Field Operations - North 786-907-2252









## **HOPE, HEART & HOME** **Hosts FFCR's** **MARISSA LEICHTER**

On April 14, Hope, Heart & Home Child Advocates received a detailed overview of the **Florida Foster Care Review** from their Senior Manager of Training and Engagement, **Marissa Leichter**.

Since 1989, Florida Foster Care Review (FFCR) has engaged community volunteers to improve safety, stability, and outcomes for children in foster care by connecting them to necessary services, relationships, and permanent families. Florida Foster Care Review's Citizen Review Panel (CRP) Program collaborates with trained volunteers to facilitate comprehensive review hearings for children in foster care and identify any unmet needs.



Through the CRP's recommended orders, FFCR seeks for children to receive services that contribute to their stability and well-being. Based at the Miami-Dade County Children's Courthouse, each of FFCR's 12 CRP panels meets virtually one day per month to conduct 5 to 8 review hearings.

FFCR's team of professionals trains and supports volunteers, assesses program effectiveness, and develops new approaches to increase their impact on children.

Hope, Heart & Home has partnered with Florida Foster Care Review since 2022 to provide volunteers for case review panels. Interested volunteers should contact HHH's **Rosie Perez Lacayo** at [hphperezlacayo@gmail.com](mailto:hphperezlacayo@gmail.com).





## HHH Honors Child Prevention Month



**H**ope **H**eart & **H**ome Ministry serves on the Board of the **M**iami-Dade **C**BC **A**lliance, providing a forum for collaboration among child welfare agencies and community partners. In recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month (April), attendees organized an event at 401 NE 2nd Avenue, featuring pinwheels symbolizing hope to raise public awareness.

During this occasion, Hope Heart & Home Ministry presented donations from the **K**iwanis **C**lub of **M**iami to His House For Children's **L**iz **A**non and **C**onnie **R**idgeley and to **K**imberly **L**opez from Citrus Family Care Network for events scheduled in May.





# KIWANIS CLUB OF MIAMI

## Partners with HHH



Hope, Heart & Home partner, **Kiwanis Club of Miami**, was honored at their meeting April 28 by Citrus Family Care Network with the **2025 Foster Family Appreciation Week Distinguished Service Award**. Congratulations to this Kiwanis Club for their exemplary support of children in foster care!



Then at a **Kiwanis Club** follow-up meeting, 10 child activists came together (7 from Hope, Heart & Home) to review and plan summer events for Miami-Dade youth.

Front row: **Paul Czekanski** (HHH Mentor), **Chuck Little** (Treasurer). Back row: **Eric Schwindeman** (HHH Executive Director), **Maria Rey** (HHH), **Dr. Alecia Rodriguez** (Sadie's Daughter, Foster Parent, HHH Mentor), **Bernadett Horvath** (BDW & More, HHH Random

Acts of Kindness, Peer Parent), **Valerie Van Ostran** (GAL, HHH **CarePortal Florida**), **Eric Carpenter** (Vice President), and **Mary Walton** (HHH Random Acts of Kindness). Missing: **Diana Morrell** (GAL, Secretary).

The Kiwanis reviewed book giveaways, creation of coed flag-football & basketball teams, college tours for teens, subsidized swim lessons, movie outings, and Random Act & CarePortal deliveries to over 40 foster & bio families!

An airport tour, school supply drives, district convention, fishing tournament, field trips, ZooRun, bbq's, and toy drives are all planned with Kiwanis and HHH partners through-out '25.







**H**ope Heart & Home hosted **Alisa Surenskaya**,

Children's System of Care Manager at **Thriving Mind** South Florida, on Monday, May 12, during the organization's monthly virtual meeting.

Alisa shared details about Thriving Mind's safety net services for mental health and substance use, as well as the range of available services for children and youth.



**Alisa Surenskaya**  
Children's System of Care Manager



She highlighted that coordination among the Community Based Care Provider (**Citrus Family Care Network**), the Managing Entity, and Network Providers is important for efficient behavioral health service delivery to child welfare-involved families.



Thriving Mind | South Florida promotes access to effective, accountable and compassionate care for people with mental illnesses and substance use disorders. We fund and oversee a safety net of services for uninsured individuals in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties with support from the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families, and other public and private sources.



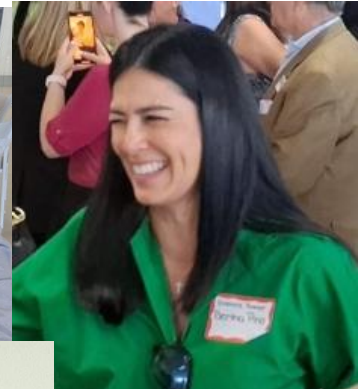
# EXPLORE FOSTER MIAMI STAKEHOLDERS BREAKFAST



Another exciting **Explore Foster Miami Stakeholder Breakfast** for 120 child advocates and 58 partners of Hope Heart & Home convened at the Lexus of Kendall Sky Room on May 21.

The HHH Blue Shirts welcomed **Bernadett Horvath, Tony Anon, Maria Rey, Alex Alvarez,** and **Mia Cosio** to their first breakfast.

Many thanks to **Panagiotis Kourtesis, Bertha Pino, Chris Lane, Jessica Lancaster,** and the Trustees of Explore Foster Miami for a beautiful morning of collaboration and reflection.











# HHH GOES ***BOWLING!***



Hope Heart & Home Ministry partnered with the **Kiwanis Club of Miami**, to host activities for foster families in May 2025. On May 3, they sponsored a fun-filled bowling party for His House For Children at Bowlero.

On May 17, the Kiwanis Club supported a day at Bird Bowl for Citrus Family Care Network, where more than 120 foster children and family members participated across 20 lanes. Participants engaged in bowling throughout the day. Gutter balls probably outnumbered strikes and spares, but the memory will last forever!

Thanks are extended to **Nadine Rolle** and her team, **Marta Oliva Torres**, Kiwanis President **Bruce Ross**, and HHH Board members **Dr. Alecia Rodriguez**,

**Rosa A. Perez-Lacayo**, **Maria Rey**, **Bernadett Horvath**, and **Paul Czekanski** for their contributions to organizing the event.



Celebrating National Foster Care Month

## Let's Bowl!

CITRUS FCN FOSTER FAMILIES ARE INVITED TO AN AFTERNOON OF BOWLING & FUN

**SATURDAY, MAY 17**  
12:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.

**BIRD BOWL**  
9275 SW 40 ST.  
Miami, FL 33165

RSVP To Your Foster Parent Liaison.  
Space is **Extremely Limited**.  
RSVPs are **required** & will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis.

**Citrus**  
Family Care Network

**Kiwanis**  
Youth Foundation

**EXPLORE FOSTER**  
MOMENTS

**CALVARY**  
CHAPEL  
MIAMI







# H.S. KEY CLUB

## COLLABORATION

As we wrap up our advisory role with the Kiwanis Division 26 and 27 High School Key Clubs, **Hope, Heart & Home** wants to thank the Clubs for their support of children in foster care in 2024-2025. Their participation in

our HHH school supply drives, youth fishing tournament, Holy Smoke Barbeque, Thanksgiving Basket drive, Christmas toy drive, and the holiday Dinner for the WOW Center. Your service organizations were great to partner with!











# HHH JOINS **PATH** COMMUNITY EVENT!

## **P**ARENTS **A**DVOCATES FOR **T**RANSFORMATIONAL **H**EALING

There was a large turnout for the **PATH** Symposium in Homestead on May 24. **Hope, Heart & Home** and **Bernadett Horvath's BDW & More Foundation** worked with PATH, joining **Allison Schild** and **Roxy Llarenas'** team to provide backpacks, books, toys, diapers, baby clothes, and bottles to families in need. The event featured an overview of parents' rights and was a successful collaborative outreach. Happy birthday to Bernadett Horvath.









# Catholic Parishes Welcome *Hope, Heart & Home*



Hope Heart & Home extends gratitude to Fr. Gabriel and St. Louis Catholic Church for hosting our recruiting team, led by Mary Hamel and Lorenzo Cosio, on Sunday, June 29. Mary and Lorenzo did a great job of emphasizing our mission of educating, engaging, and equipping inter-faith communities to support foster children through advocacy, recruitment, and wraparound care. Thanks also to Paul Czekanski, David Hamel, and Alex & Liz Alvarez for contributing to a successful event.

Hope Heart & Home and Citrus Family Care Network presented Distinguished Service Awards to Holy Rosary-St. Richards Catholic Church for its ongoing support of foster children. On June 4, HHH's Rosa A. Perez-Lacayo and Eric Schwindeman met with Father Yosbany Alfonso, Propelled in Christ Ministry Head Kathleen Smith, and Parish Office Manager Coraly Maldonado to discuss future collaborations.







# AGAPE HONORED IN JUNE

**AGAPE** is founded on unconditional love - to heal and uplift lives through "a holistic, integrated, evidence-based model of care." **Hope Heart & Home Ministry** was honored to hear this passionate message from AGAPE's mother-daughter team, **Sandy's & Grace Hernandez** on our monthly virtual call June 9.

Sandy, Chief Operating Officer, and Grace, Activities Coordinator at AGAPE introduced new foster care services they are launching as well as an outline of residential & outpatient services, including a "Mommy & Me" reunification program.



HHH is grateful for our partnership with AGAPE and Sandy & Grace's leadership supporting children in foster care.

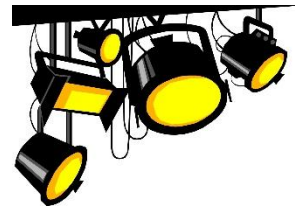




## HOPE, HEART & HOME 2025 QUARTERLY SPOTLIGHT:

### DR. ALECIA RODRIGUEZ

HHH's Dr. Alecia Rodriguez has contributed to the community in various roles, including guardian, mentor, parent, foster mom, therapist, author, and speaker. HHH is proud of her accomplishments this quarter.



### MENTAL WELLNESS

FOR *The Culture*



**Dr. Alecia Rodriguez, PhD, LMFT, LPC, CST**

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

UNIQUE THERAPY

MONDAY | MAY 19TH | NOON



**Dr. Alecia Rodriguez**

Psychotherapist | Unique Therapy  
Mental Health Coordinator | Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Special talk on Bullying Prevention  
& Mental Health Wellness by  
Dr. Alecia Rodriguez.



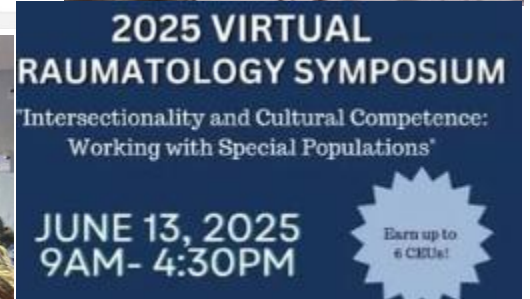
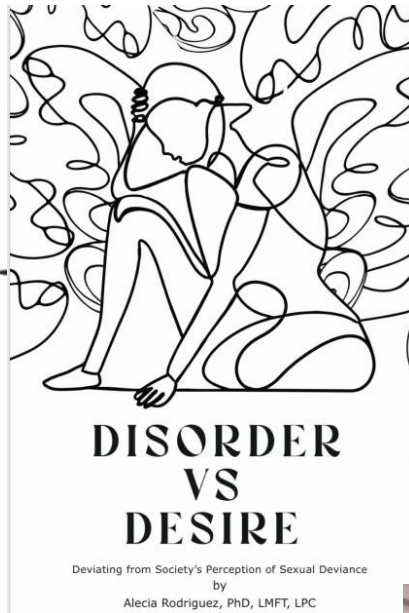


Dear Alecia Rodriguez,

We are absolutely thrilled to share some exciting news with you—congratulations! You have been selected as the recipient of the **AASECT Book Award for Sexuality Professionals** for your book, **Disorder vs Desire: Deviating from Society's Perception of Sexual Deviance**.

To celebrate you and all this year's award recipients, we are excited to invite you to the 2-Hour AASECT Annual Awards Virtual Ceremony [on May 23, 2025, from 4 PM to 6 PM ET](#). While attendance is optional, we would love for you to join us!

During the ceremony, a member of the Awards Committee will introduce you and share the reasons behind your selection. Your dedicated slide, highlighting your work and how others can engage with it, will be displayed during the ceremony and on the AASECT website. We also look forward to recognizing you and the other



Dr. Alecia Rodriguez, LMFT, LPC,  
CST, NCC

*"Resilient Roots:  
Culturally Responsive Trauma Care  
for BIPOC Communities"*



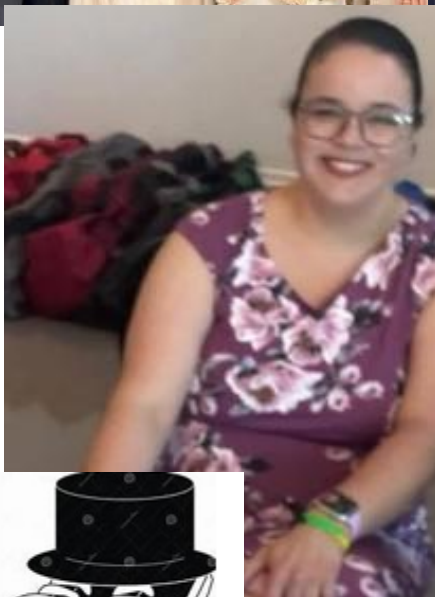


# Collaboration For Sneakers!

The **Kiwanis Club of Miami** has been simply amazing in their support of children in foster care! **Marta Oliva Torres**, Director of Licensed Care and Transitioning Youth Services for Family Care Network, accepted a generous donation from the Kiwanis for the **2025 Black Tie & Sneakers Ball**, a "prom-like" event held each year for foster youth.



**HHH** and the Kiwanis Club of Miami are proud to sponsor this exceptional event for teens aging out of foster care. Congratulations to, **Nadine Rolle, Leslie Veiga, Marta Torres, Esther Jacobo**, and the entire **Citrus Family Care Network** Team for their efforts making June 14 a magical night for 138 youth!







## Hope, Heart & Hope Team-Up With Sadie's Daughter, Inc. and My Buddy Bench Project!

Hope Heart & Home continues to build a coalition of community and faith-based partners to support children in foster care. This quarter HHH was proud to join the "Kindness Ambassadors" of My Buddy Bench Project and Dr. Alecia Rodriguez (Unique Therapy) as they were honored at a ceremony at Village of Palmetto Bay Hall.



Mayor Karyn Cunningham presented a Proclamation of Mental Health Awareness to founders Victoria & Mary Portela as Pine Villa Elementary's Principal Adam Pascual, School Counselor Ms. Natasha Deveaux and community leaders looked on.



The Buddy Bench Project has placed 6 benches in local schools and parks to support Mental Health and promote Bullying Protection.

Dr. Rodriguez is a Mental Health Coordinator at Pina Villa, and a Trustee of HHH and the Kiwanis Club of Miami. "I was grateful to share that powerful moment during Mental Health Awareness Month. Together, we're creating spaces of connection, compassion, and healing." Learn more at [www.mybuddybenchproject.org](http://www.mybuddybenchproject.org)  
Be a Buddy. Be Kind!







## HHH CELEBRATES REUNIFICATION

June is reunification month in the child welfare system. Today 150 parents & children came together to celebrate "the power of parents" at a beautiful ceremony & luncheon held at Jungle Island. **Hope Heart & Home** congratulates Citrus Family Care Network's Parent Engagement Unit, **Allison Schild**, and peer specialist **Roxy Llerena** for organizing this special event.

**Bernadett Horvath** (HHH, BDW & More) participated in the event, engaging with many of the families involved in her Random Acts of Kindness Campaign in North Dade. Many thanks are extended to all individuals whose contributions positively impact these families and enable such loving gatherings.











EXPLORE FOSTER  
MIAMI



National Christian  
FOUNDATION South Florida

## Collaborative Programs Move Forward!

Hope Heart & Home Ministry wishes to recognize its 501(c)3 partner, **Sadie's Daughter's Initiative (SDI)**, for the launch of three summer collaborative programs with twelve child welfare organizations.

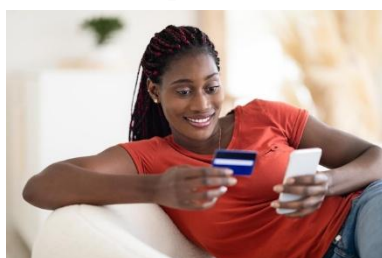


SDI Director, **Dr. Alecia Rodriguez**, secured a Zee Grant from the Kiwanis Club of Miami, to provide coed basketball and flag football programs in Homestead for fifty children aged seven to eleven, including those from foster care and low socioeconomic backgrounds.

In collaboration with HHH, SDI also received funding from the National Christian Foundation and Explore Foster Miami to distribute gift cards to teens aged seventeen to nineteen who are transitioning out of foster care. This "Give Back" assistance program is currently supporting applicants from His House, Genesis Hopeful Haven, First Star Academy, Citrus FCN, and Casa Valetina.

Additionally, a donation from **George Lopez** to SDI and **Lucas Alvarez LA6 Foundation** will be managed by HHH's **Bernadett Horvath**, **Mary Walton**, and **Leanna Roberts** to assist biological and foster families through the "Random Acts of Kindness" Campaign.

**Sadie's Daughter's Initiative** remains committed to uplifting, empowering, and advocating for foster youth. Congratulations to Dr. Rodriguez and all HHH partners for their successful implementation of these three initiatives.







### Assistance Request Form

Thank you for reaching out to Sadie's Daughter Initiative (SDI) for support. Our mission is to empower and uplift youth in foster care by providing essential resources, including gift cards to help teens purchase personal items, clothing, school supplies, and other necessities. Please complete the form below to request assistance.

#### Applicant Information

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY): \_\_\_\_\_

