

On the Scene

Broward Care for Kids Foundation relaunches with renewed focus

Broward Cares For Kids Foundation (BCFK), the non-profit organization formed in 2004 to raise awareness and money to support children in the welfare system has re-launched with a new website and logo, new board members and a renewed focus. The kick-off event was held on June 26 at ChildNet headquarters in Plantation to celebrate the receipt of two national grants, My Stuff Bags and The Pajama Program.

My Stuff Bags Foundation provides a beautiful large duffel bag stuffed with things to cuddle, things to hold onto and to call their own to abused and neglected children entering crisis and foster care. The Pajama Program, a non-profit organization, provides new pajamas and new books to children who are waiting and hoping to be adopted.

Lisa Gaeta, president & CEO

of Finance Placements & Consulting and a board member of BCFK, submitted both grant applications after seeing one of the foundations on *The Oprah Show* years ago. After both grants were approved, ChildNet received almost 400 stuffed bags and pajamas. The bags stuffed with blankets, toys, toiletries and pajamas were distributed at the kick-off event. The bags are available to children that enter SafePlace, the first place children in Broward County go when they are removed from their homes due to abuse, abandonment or neglect.

Emilio Benitez, chief executive officer of ChildNet, explained that when children are removed from their homes, many times they come with little or no personal belongings. "Being able to give them [children] a bag filled with necessities and toys help to make this transition a

little more bearable," said Benitez.

"The looks and smiles on the faces of these neglected children is priceless when we are able to give them these simple necessities to help them get settled in their new surroundings" added Gaeta.

Broward Cares For Kids Foundation (BCFK), Inc. is a 501(C)(3) corporation, formed in 2004 with the sole objective of raising funds to support children in the welfare system. Funds raised by or donated to the Broward Cares for Kids Foundation are used exclusively to benefit the abused, abandoned and neglected children of Broward County, who have been placed in the local child welfare system.

For more information about BCFK, visit www.browardcaresforkids.org or call 954-414-5995. ■



Lisa Gaeta (right) shares a "My Stuff Bag" with a child at Safe Place.



Caseworker transfers a child's belongings into a "My Stuff Bag."