

Children's Health Collaborative Invests in New Initiatives to Support Children in Central Florida

Grants Totaling \$200,000 Will Address Mental Health, Nutrition, Education, and Economic Stability

ORLANDO, Fla. (Oct. 30, 2025) – Efforts to enhance the health and well-being of children in Central Florida have received a boost with the announcement of \$200,000 in grants awarded to four impactful community-based initiatives by the Children's Health Collaborative.

Funded by the [Ginsburg Institute at Nemours Children's Health](#), [Heart of Florida United Way \(HFUW\)](#), and the Marianna D. Pratt Focus & Collaboration Initiative, the initiatives are designed to promote a comprehensive approach to child well-being that extends beyond traditional medical care.

"Our collective investment reflects a deep commitment to ensure that children's health and well-being are influenced not only by medical care but by the full spectrum of resources and support available to them as they live, learn, and grow," said Nancy Molello, Executive Director of the Ginsburg Institute at [Nemours Children's Health](#). "By investing in community-based solutions, we are taking critical steps toward building a healthier, more vibrant future for Central Florida's children."

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The recipients and their initiatives are as follows:

- **Peace and Justice Institute, ArtReach Orlando, Millennium Middle School (Mental Health)**
This collaborative initiative will implement an arts-integrated program aimed at creating a healing-centered educational environment for students at Millennium Middle School.
- **Cristo Rey High School, HEBNI Nutrition, and Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida (Healthy Food & Nutrition)**
Focusing on Orlando's Oak Ridge community, this initiative will provide nutritional education, access to healthy food, sustainable gardening, and physical fitness resources to address gaps in food access and health literacy for students at Cristo Rey Orlando High School.
- **Early Learning Coalition of Orange County and Orange County Public Schools (Quality Education)**
This project seeks to improve the transition from preschool to kindergarten, enhancing school readiness for children. The initiative will emphasize access to quality education, family support, and early developmental resources.
- **Community Legal Services and The Sharing Center (Economic Stability)**
These organizations will collaborate to address the legal barriers faced by low-income individuals, including those experiencing homelessness in Seminole County. They will provide legal assistance, access to benefits, and job training programs to promote economic stability.

"We are proud to be part of the Children's Health Collaborative because we believe that an investment in children is an investment in Central Florida's future," Jeff Hayward, President and CEO of HFUW. "By addressing key factors like mental health, nutrition, education, and economic stability, we are not only helping children thrive but also strengthening the family unit that supports them. When families are stable and healthy, children are better positioned to succeed today and for generations to come."

Each of the four selected initiatives will receive \$50,000 to support the implementation of their impactful projects. Applicants were required to submit proposals demonstrating collaboration between at least two local organizations while addressing one or more of the designated opportunity areas.

“The Marianna D. Pratt Focus & Collaboration Initiative is pleased to partner with Heart of Florida United Way in funding four impactful grants. We look forward to seeing the meaningful outcomes these investments will generate, helping to foster a stronger more supportive community where our children can thrive.”

The Children's Health Collaborative is a consortium of more than 100 organizations across Central Florida, working together to enhance the health and well-being of children while strengthening community partnerships throughout the region.

In the coming weeks, grant recipients will have the opportunity to compete in the Spark Tank event where they will showcase how their initiatives will advance children's health. A winner at the Spark Tank will be awarded additional funding to support their community-based program.

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About Nemours Children's Health

Nemours Children's Health is one of the nation's largest multistate pediatric health systems, which includes two free-standing children's hospitals and a network of more than 70 primary and specialty care practices. Nemours Children's seeks to transform the health of children by adopting a holistic health model that utilizes innovative, safe, and high-quality care, while also addressing children's needs well beyond medicine. In producing the highly acclaimed, award-winning pediatric medicine podcast *Well Beyond Medicine*, Nemours underscores that commitment by featuring the people, programs and partnerships addressing whole child health. Nemours Children's also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, [Nemours KidsHealth.org](https://kidshealth.org).

The Nemours Foundation, established through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to the children, families and communities it serves. For more information, visit [Nemours.org](https://nemours.org).

About Heart of Florida United Way

Heart of Florida United Way (HFUW) stands up for the education, financial stability, health and basic needs of every person in Central Florida. Since 1939, HFUW has delivered programs, invested dollars, and convened community members around important issues impacting Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties. As Central Florida's most comprehensive health and human services nonprofit, HFUW created a \$50 million impact in Central Florida last year. In 2021-22, HFUW served more than 703,000 people through its direct service and funded programs. HFUW is home to notable community resources like the 211 Information & Referral Crisis Line; 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline; Mission United program for Veterans; TECHquity, an initiative bridging the digital divide; Destination Graduation at Seminole State College; the Ryan White Part B & General Revenue program, which administers nearly \$2.3 million to provide HIV/AIDS services and referrals; the Planning Council Support program that facilitates community planning and priority setting for HIV services. United Way partners with individuals, local businesses, government, and other nonprofit agencies to open opportunities and close gaps in Central Florida. Visit www.HFUW.org for more information, or call (407) 835-0900. Follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn at Heart of Florida United Way and on Twitter and Instagram @hfuw.

About Marianna D. Pratt Focus & Collaboration Initiative

The Marianna D. Pratt Focus & Collaboration Initiative is dedicated to uniting like-minded non-profit organizations through strategic partnerships and collaborative efforts. By fostering a spirit of cooperation, we aim to amplify our collective impact and create sustainable, meaningful outcomes that benefit our communities and advance our shared values. Established in 2023, the fund honors the life of Marianna D. Pratt, whose family has a longstanding commitment to community-building.

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<https://nemours.mediaroom.com/ChildrensHealthCollaborativeGrants>