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Welcome

Children's Home Society of Florida (CHS) recently marked 105 years of nurturing children and strengthening families, and we realize that the children we serve today are not unlike those we served when we opened our doors in 1902. Many share the hurt and disappointment of a shattered family and broken promises. All long to feel love, acceptance and stability.

For these children and so many more, we offer hope and guidance...we provide families with opportunities for success and happiness.

While continuing our deep commitment to protect and guide young ones, we have a responsibility to do

even more – to break the tragic cycle of child abuse and neglect for increasing numbers of children.

With your help, this dream can come true. Together, we can end the recurring nightmares too many children have suffered. Together, we can ensure every child is safe, healthy and prepared for life.

Learn how to become a charter member of the CHS Annual Fund to help break the generational cycle of child abuse and neglect for increasing numbers of children.



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History

Children's Home Society of Florida was founded in Jacksonville in November 1902, amidst a nationwide effort to find safe homes and loving families for children orphaned by industrial and farm accidents, epidemics such as tuberculosis, or during childbirth. At the time, no public welfare or social service agencies existed to provide financial support or housing for orphaned youngsters.

In 1920, CHS began expanding to meet the needs of Florida's growing population, opening its first division office opened in Pensacola. Later that year, two more divisions were created. Eleven more divisions were established over the next 80 years, culminating in 2000 with a division in Panama City that serves six surrounding counties.

Initially providing adoption and foster care services to homeless children, CHS successfully built upon its strong reputation to become a multi-service organization aiding children and families. Programs expanded to provide education and support services to teen and first-time mothers, single and struggling parents, intergenerational and extended families, runaway and throwaway teens, at-risk children and youth, and developmentally, emotionally and medically challenged children.

Over the years, CHS played a key role in Florida's legislative arena, supporting compulsory education, industrial schools, a juvenile court system, the Child Labor Law, laws to protect children from abuse and, eventually, the Florida Department of Welfare. On the national level, Children's Home Society of Florida was a founding member of Child Welfare League of America, still the country's premier advocacy organization for children's issues.

As the largest organization in the state accredited by Council on Accreditation for Children and Family Services (COA), CHS has maintained continuous accreditation since 1982. CHS' commitment to excellence recently resulted in re-accreditation through 2010.



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