



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Jenna Brown
Phone: 850-487-6344
jjbrown@thechildrensforum.com

**CHILDREN’S FORUM EMPLOYEES LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO HELP
FLORIDA CHILD CARE PROGRAMS IMPACTED BY DISASTER**

TALLAHASSEE, FL (January 25, 2017) We live in Florida and Mother Nature impacts us in ways we can’t control. Storms often lead to flooding. Tornadoes, high winds, and fallen trees can cause structural damage. Lightning strikes can lead to fire and electrical issues.

Have you ever wondered what would happen if a child care center couldn’t open for business due to a disaster? Parents wouldn’t be able to work, child care teachers and owners wouldn’t get paid, and children would be confused by the loss of their routines.

According to the Office of Disaster Assistance at the Small Business Administration (SBA), as many as 40 percent of small businesses hit directly by a serious natural disaster perish. The economic impact on Florida’s 10,022 licensed child care programs serving 792,768 children could be devastating.

That’s why the Children’s Forum has established [Children’s Forum CARES](#) (Crisis Assistance, Relief and Emergency Support), a program that provides timely response and relief to child care programs in Florida impacted by disaster. Forum CARES assists centers that are in danger of closing, temporarily or permanently, by meeting some of their most pressing needs on a short-term basis.

Forum CARES may be able to provide necessities to child care programs such as:

- Toys and classroom materials
- Supplies such as diapers, formula, and food

-more-

Board of Directors

Phyllis K. Kalifeh, Ed.D.
Children’s Forum
President and CEO

Robert H. Buesing, J.D.
Trenam & Kemker
Attorneys at Law
Board Chair

Wil Blechman, M.D.
Retired Physician
Vice Chair

Allison Davis, CPA
WTAS, LLC
Treasurer

Christopher J. Card, Ph.D.
Lutheran Services Florida
Board Member

Claudia Davant
Adams St. Advocates
Board Member

Charles Hood III
4KIDS of South Florida
Board Member

Larry Pintacuda
Retired Executive
Board Member

Pastor Kenneth Scrubbs
First Baptist Church of Leesburg
Board Member

Linda Stoller
Consultant
Board Member



- Volunteer hours
- Insurance deductibles
- Small cash grants
- Other support specific to the situation

“If a child care program is closed, families are unable to go about the business of restoring their homes and communities,” said Phyllis Kalifeh, President and CEO of the Children’s Forum. “That’s why Forum CARES was created to ensure that child care programs can remain open in times of disaster.”

For more information on Forum CARES, visit

<http://www.flchild.com/index.php/programs-services/forum-cares/>. You may also [donate to Forum CARES](#).

The Children’s Forum is a statewide, nonprofit organization with an uncompromising mission to build and support systems which promote positive experiences and outcomes for young children. Through a broad array of programs, services, research and advocacy, the Forum is committed to helping children achieve life-long success.

Board of Directors

Phyllis K. Kalifeh, Ed.D.
Children’s Forum
President and CEO

Robert H. Buesing, J.D.
Trenam & Kemker
Attorneys at Law
Board Chair

Wil Blechman, M.D.
Retired Physician
Vice Chair

Allison Davis, CPA
WTAS, LLC
Treasurer

Christopher J. Card, Ph.D.
Lutheran Services Florida
Board Member

Claudia Davant
Adams St. Advocates
Board Member

Charles Hood III
4KIDS of South Florida
Board Member

Larry Pintacuda
Retired Executive
Board Member

Pastor Kenneth Scrubbs
First Baptist Church of Leesburg
Board Member

Linda Stoller
Consultant
Board Member