

CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES FAMILY TIMES

VOLUME XLV ISSUE I



SPRING 2023

MATCHES MADE IN HEAVEN?

When people ask what I “work at,” I sometimes take the easy route and say “I work for an adoption agency.” The follow up questions include “How Many children are waiting to be adopted” - or - “How long does a couple wait for a child?” As you know, we only place infants for adoption, so we are working with Birth Families. For that reason, we also work with couples wanting to adopt. We explain to a hopeful family that it can be up to two years to receive a child into their home, but this varies. The full explanation of what I do at work takes into account what an expectant mom wants for her child.



CFS Caseworkers choose to spend time with expectant moms. We want to know them well, before reviewing adoptive family profiles with her. Likewise, CFS caseworkers get to know prospective adoptive families through the Home Study process. We consider both parties, and offer a few profile books to birth families to choose from. Jerry likes to set aside plenty of time for a mom to consider her options. There are cases when the birth family ask the Caseworker to choose the family. Even so, it is always best for her to meet the adoptive family in person.

Birth Moms let Caseworkers know details they want for a family. Some ask for couples without children, a couple with infertility. Others want their child to have siblings. One mom was drawn to the openness of communication the adoptive family was willing to provide. A past Birth Mother found the family she wanted for her child on our website. She stated she wanted a Christian family for her child and liked how musical they were. Caseworkers did not rush to make a match with this family. After spending time with the expectant mom, and presenting her profiles, she ended up choosing the original couple!

Once the expectant mom (and sometimes the dad) choose a family, CFS caseworkers set up a phone call or schedule a meeting in person. It is during such times that we feel blessed to witness how the birth and adoptive families interact. What begins as a nervous get to know you “hello” many times ends with smiles and even laughter.

Continued on page 2



1) Ethan & Lauren met Margaret, the birth mother of their child, at the hospital 2) Stacia & Jonathan met Shawn at the CFS office before the baby arrived.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Fran Poppell stepped down as a member of the CFS board following the December 2022 meeting. She served in this role for 15 years. Her thoughtful insight and wisdom were valuable to the Director and Board. We also appreciated her willingness to travel from her home in Tallahassee to Gainesville to be present at board meetings.

With no prior notice, she assisted during one adoptive placement as a witness.

Thank you, Fran, for your heart of service to moms, babies and families.

May God bless you with health and happiness as you continue to serve Him.

"It has been an honor to serve and to be associated with the CFS Board of Directors, who are godly people with an unselfish mission."

Fran as a strawberry blonde, to encourage others to support research for a cure for breast cancer.



SPRING 2023

20 YEARS!

Twenty years ago, the Board of Christian Family Services faced several challenges. Adoptions had become more competitive, and infant adoptions were down 20% nationally. CFS had three licensed foster homes but no children in them. Funding, as always, was a problem. The Executive Director had tendered his resignation as he had accepted another position.

Considering these factors, the board questioned the direction CFS should take. Board member Dave Dillard stated that “we have an obligation to widows and orphans and we need to see this ministry continue.” And so it did.

Within 2 months of the departure of Ray Crowder, Jerry Callens was hired as the Executive Director of CFS. Office Assistant Chris Dillard shared “Jerry was a contract worker for CFS, and provided counsel and guidance to a Birth Mom” after Ray left CFS. Chris continued, “Jerry did such a great job with this mom, that he was hired!”

204 Adoptive Placements later, Jerry continues to be an advocate for the fatherless in his role at CFS. Congratulations, Jerry - and thank you! - for 20 years of service!



Some of the ways Jerry serves CFS “clients” include the legal paperwork for birth mothers and adoptive parents. During the signing of consents, Jerry takes a break with moms (and dads) to discuss the reason she chose adoption for her child.



Jerry usually walks with the adoptive couple as they leave the hospital.

RECENT PLACEMENTS



Maverick Rene was placed on July 18, 2022. Jerry poses with the new parents, Rachael & Samuel.



Enslee Gracelynn was placed on January 15, 2023. Chase and Lauren are pleased to add a daughter to their family. Grayson is happy to finally become a big brother!

MATCHES MADE IN HEAVEN?

Continued



3) Tess and Dan got to know Savannah over a meal together at a local restaurant.

CFS Expectant moms find they have a lot in common with the family they choose for their child. Similar interests, hobbies, and at times, physical features. Such selfless moms show us they want to do what is best for the child. Her focus is on the positive aspect of adoption.

As Christians, do we believe such “matches” are random? Or, do we trust the match of birth and adoptive families are guided by Wisdom not of this earth? Who else can mold an unfortunate circumstance into one meant for good?

Donna L. Brooker

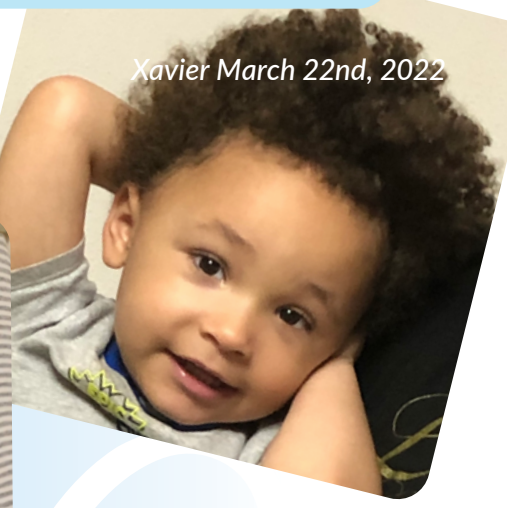


2022 PLACEMENTS

Sebastian February 18, 2022



Xavier March 22nd, 2022



James Daniel March 10th, 2022



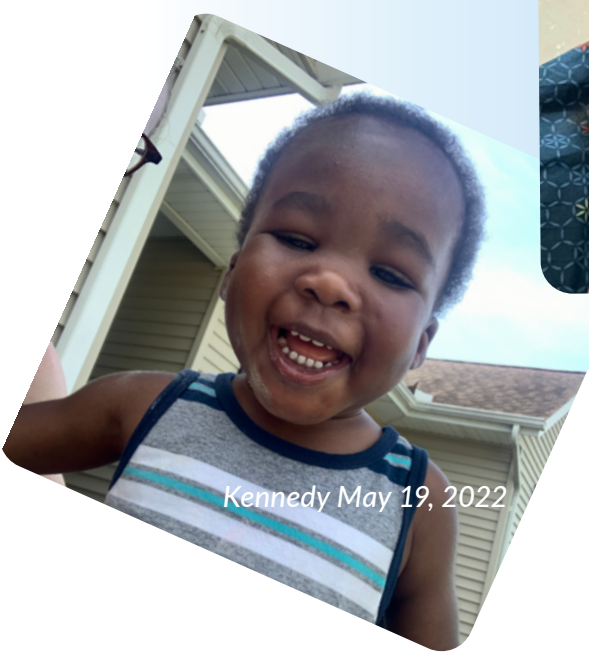
IN 2022...

- 6 CFS Families received a placement,
- 3 CFS Families received other agency placements (*Not Shown Here*)
- 27 Average Age of Birth Mothers who placed
- 67% Of CFS Birth Mothers had other children
- 67% Of CFS Birth Mothers had significant financial need

Maverick July 19, 2022



Kennedy May 19, 2022



Eliana July 22nd, 2022



A YEAR IN REVIEW 2022

2022 FINALIZATIONS



Jacob Carlos 2/08/22
Don & Carla

It's another boy for Don & Carla, who added Jacob Carlos to their family - Donald and Alexander couldn't be happier!



Sebastian 5/24/22
Danny & Virginia

Danny & Virginia welcome Sebastian Lee as their son, sharing their love and last name.



Reid Lawrence 6/15/22
Alex & Kacy

Alex & Kacy became first time parents when Reid Lawrence joined them to make them a family of three.



James Daniel 6/15/22
Daniel & Tess

Daniel & Tess received a son, James Daniel, into their family, making Winnie a big sister!



Xavier Elijah 9/27/22
Terrence & Kimberly

Terrence & Kimberly decided to start again when Xavier Elijah was welcomed to their family! Big sisters Essence and Trinity are pleased to have a little brother!



Kennedy Nathaniel 9/27/22
Travis & Morgan

Travis & Morgan welcomed son Kennedy Nathaniel, making Elyse a big sister.



Eliana Rosalyn Hope 10/25/22
Travis & Sarah

David & Evie add daughter Eliana Rosalyn Hope to their family and give her their last name at finalization.

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

You hear them everyday

Thank you for your patience in receiving the first CFS Newsletter of 2023. The few months of this year were extremely busy, which slowed the creation of this publication. Here are a few of the reasons (excuses) for the delay:

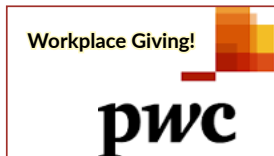
- ✿ Re-licensing occurred in January, when it is usually in February. A new licensing agent required staff involvement to make changes to the screening process.
- ✿ Kim was working with several expectant moms, most due in February. One mom experienced other medical concerns and the baby needed to be delivered early.
- ✿ A full Financial Audit, conducted by CPA's, began the second week of January. CFS usually has a Financial Review but it was time for a more thorough look at our financial processes. The review concluded February 16.
- ✿ Jerry was working with an expectant mom who delivered in early February; he also worked with a Birth Mom and Dad while mom was in ICU and their baby was in NICU. Updates in next newsletter.
- ✿ The same week as the mom Jerry was working with (above), an expectant mom Kim was working with, in another city, delivered her child. An update will be provided in the next newsletter also.

As a ministry to women with unexpected pregnancies, CFS Caseworkers **have been very busy this year!!** CFS Staff, balancing both the licensing and audit, was fully engaged in assisting the expectant and adoptive families for consent and placement paperwork. More news – the details – in the next CFS Family Times!

OTHER WAYS TO DONATE TO CFS...



Merck Gives Back
Volunteer • Contribute • Connect



OCTOBER-DECEMBER
2022

IN MEMORY OF

Mildred Beadle

Linda Case

Lovelle Churchwell

Joyce Price

Barbara Nell Cox

Linda Case

Kathy Etherton

Chuck & Janet Pierce

Terry Hamilton

Linda Case

Norris & Donna Hutchingson

Valerie Sirens

Carl & Annie Ruth Jacobsen

Linda Jacobsen

Joe Jacobsen

Linda Jacobsen

Dorothy Metzger-McGarry

*Jim & Linda Tremblay
Stuart & Patricia Trott*

Marybell E Pietrusiewicz

Linda Case

Don Price

*Max Blanks
Dorothy Coat*

Nancy Putnal

Ron Putnal

Dawson Stanaland

Carl & Melissa Vinson

Carol Townsend

Joyce Price

Heather Lea Turney

Linda Jacobsen

Clayton Welles, Jr

Polly Anne Long

Cal Winters

Linda Case

OCTOBER-DECEMBER
2022

HONOR TO:

Donna Brooker

Inez Brooker

100th Birthday of Bill Bennett

*Tom & Jo Brown
Bob & Fran Poppell*

Jerry Callens

Pat Hogan

Mary, Neil, Sarah & Laura Eppler

Jerry & Debbie Callens



FAIRWELL BUT NEVER GOODBYE

CFS welcomed a new caseworker in August of 2017, and was sad to see her leave in October 2022. As **Jasmine Pierce** begins a new chapter in her life, we know she will be a blessing to those whose path she will cross.

Jasmine served on the front lines of the ministry as she listened and guided women with unplanned pregnancies. Traveling throughout Florida, Jasmine met in person with expectant moms, many of whom made adoption plans for their baby.

When she found herself in the delivery room with a mom who had no one else to support her, Jasmine remained by her side. The arrival of a child into this world is not all pleasant, yet her commitment to the women she worked with surpassed any discomfort she may have experienced during the delivery of the baby.



She followed up with moms after placing their child for adoption, determining their emotional health.

Visits to pregnancy centers and hospitals were completed by Jasmine as she networked for CFS. She was part of the training CFS provides to Pregnancy Center volunteers, imparting information so that they could speak with women about adoption.

As her time as a caseworker progressed, Jasmine served CFS adoptive families for their Home Study and Post Placement Visits. One thing Jasmine loves is taking pictures with CFS babies! On each return from the hospital or a family visit, she was happy to share new photos of the babies she worked with. She uniquely linked mothers and families as she assisted with communication between the two following placement.

When her decision was made to move on, Jasmine reached out to the moms and families she worked with during

her five years with CFS. We continue to have past moms, families and pregnancy centers ask, "How is Jasmine doing?" We know she is employed and pleased to be closer to family, and that we are happy she chose to stay awhile at CFS.

Jerry, Donna, Kim and Katy did not wish Jasmine goodbye when she left, only a "see you later." Join us in prayer for Jasmine's continued success, health, and happiness as we continue to adjust to her absence.



Picture Of Jasmine's Last Day



Photos on the left: A few of the many babies Jasmine worked with during her 5 year tenure at CFS. Keep in mind, this may also mean she worked directly with their birth parents and the adoptive parents. What a blessing you have been, Jasmine!

Staff

Jerry D. Callens, Exec. Director & Caseworker
Donna L. Brooker, Ministry Assistant
Kim Tang, Caseworker
Becky Barclift, Bookkeeper
Katy Horton, Social Media & Graphic Design
John & Charlotte JeBailey, Cradle Care

Board of Directors

Jimmie Brunson
Jackie Collins
Sherri Daume
Ramon Osejo
Rick Worley

Christian Family Services • A Christian Alternative 2720 S.W. 2nd Ave • Gainesville, FL 32607 • 352.378.6202

Info@cfsfl.org

Toll-free: 800.226.2367

Fax: 352.378.6205

CHRISTIANFAMILYSERVICES.COM