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Back-to-School Backpack Giveaway Helps South Florida Children in Foster Care

****Needed School Supplies Arm Kids with Tools to Succeed****

Family Resource Center of South Florida Kicks off Annual Backpack Program

Miami, FL – July 1, 2012 – With close to 3,000 children in the foster care system in South Florida, many area children, already with challenges at home, now face the start of a new school year with anxiety about acquiring needed school supplies. An important and inspiring program run by **Family Resource Center of South Florida** (“FRC”), one of the state’s leading child welfare organizations, works to resolve this problem by **providing new school supplies and backpacks to foster kids.**

FRC’s back-to-school backpack giveaway program outfits close to 400 children with needed items including backpacks, notebook paper, #2 pencils, jumbo pencils, colored pencils, markers, highlighters, index cards, 2-pocket folders, mechanical pencils, glue sticks, and calculators. The program is in its 8th year running and serves as a wonderful complement to FRC’s work which is dedicated to the prevention and treatment of child abuse and includes child placement in a certified foster home, mental health counseling, ongoing home visits and assessments, tutoring, school uniforms, adoptions and other interventions and support as needed.

This year’s lead corporate sponsor of the Backpack Program is BJ’s Charitable Foundation, which generously donated \$5,000 for the purchase of school supplies (\$12.50 per child). In addition, many other organizations and individuals have purchased extra items to donate when doing back-to-school shopping for their own kids.

The community has rallied behind this important cause and is coming out to help assemble the backpacks. Specifically, volunteers will be coming out on Saturday July 13, 2013 to fill all of backpacks with grade level appropriate supplies before the month-long distribution process by FRC caseworkers begins.

FRC’s Executive Director, Oren Wunderman, reflected on the back-to-school program, “We take enormous pride and joy in serving foster children and believe the back-to-school season is a wonderful time for a fresh start.” “It is clear that the back-to-school backpack giveaway furnishes children with the supplies they need, and contributes to their confidence to help make the academic year ahead a successful one.”

Foster care kids in South Florida will start receiving their new backpacks and supplies on July 19, with caseworkers making deliveries up until the first day of school (August 19). If you wish to learn more, would like to interview Dr. Wunderman, or arrange to see a family receiving the donated items, please contact Christina Daigneault at 917-207-4686 or media@orchardstrategies.com.

About Family Resource Center

Family Resource Center of South Florida, Inc., a non-profit organization, was founded in 1978 by a group of concerned community leaders. FRC's Mission is the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect through the strengthening of families. The agency provides integrated care for children who have entered the foster care system and their parents, licensing and oversight of foster homes, adoptions, parent education classes, mental health services and substance abuse counseling.

FRC won Florida Trend Magazine's BEST PLACES TO WORK in both 2010 and 2011 and is one of only two non-profit organizations recognized for the award.

About the Executive Director, Dr. Oren Wunderman

Oren Wunderman, Ph.D., has worked in non-profit child welfare agencies or mental health centers for most of the last thirty years. He is licensed as a Psychologist, Marriage and Family Therapist, and Mental Health Counselor. He earned his Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees from the University of Miami. He has taken coursework in non-profit management from the Harvard University School of Business and the Florida International University School of Business. For the past 15 years, he has been a yearly guest lecturer in the subjects of Child Abuse and Forensic Psychology at the University of Miami, Departments of Counseling and Clinical Psychology, Miami Children's Hospital and several local Community Mental Health Centers.

Dr. Wunderman has been with FRC for the past 15 years, 10 of which he has served as the Executive Director. During his tenure, Dr. Wunderman has enabled FRC to triple in size while expanding the complexity and scope of services. He extols to the staff the values of Transformational Leadership, whose cornerstone beliefs are: (1) Treat the clients respectfully, always caring for them as though they were loved members of your family, and (2) Always preserve a fundamental humility and awe about the vital services provided to troubled clients.

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