



Children's Board
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

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FAMILY
RESOURCE CENTERS



Brandon Success Story

Finding Relief



Five Protective Factors: Concrete Support in Times of Need

Children's Board Family Resource Centers are funded by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County and administered by the Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County. Managing partners include: Champions for Children, Children's Home Network, Family Community Advisory Councils, REACHUP, Inc. and St. Joseph's Children's Wellness and Safety Center.

All programs and services are at no charge to families and individuals.



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At the beginning of the school year, Mrs. Santiago received a text from her son's middle school about the Children's Board Family Resource Centers and the Mobile Medical Clinic (MMC) provided by St. Joseph's Children's Wellness & Safety Center. She was relieved to find a place that could assist her family since they did not have health insurance. She called the CBFRC in East County and greatly appreciated that the staff thoroughly explained the process for making an appointment and "eliminated the running around" for her.

Mrs. Santiago decided to make an appointment at the Brandon Center for her son. At the MMC, Candace Harris with the Family Healthcare Foundation set up an appointment to apply for Florida KidCare. When Mrs. Santiago offered to start the application, Candace responded, "No, it's my job to serve you!" Feeling relieved, she said, "That was important for me because it is so stressful thinking that you are going to make a mistake or if the internet stops working!"

Recounting the failed attempts and frustration to obtain KidCare, she just thought she didn't qualify and gave up. There was always one question that was very difficult to answer. When they got to that question, Candace called her supervisor. Together, they worked on it. Once approved, she called Candace to let her know. "Again, that was very important because she answered my call after hours! I didn't expect that!" She said.

Simply put, she exclaimed, "The Children's Board Family Resource Centers resolved the problems in my life. My children did not have health insurance for two years. My stress level was so high – it was terrible. I would constantly tell the kids, 'Wash your hands. Use hand sanitizer. Don't get sick. Don't touch anything.' We couldn't afford for them to get sick. I was so worried especially for my daughter, Valeria. We couldn't afford to find help for her. She had a learning disability and, then three years ago, she was diagnosed with severe anxiety. Now I can look for specialists that my daughter needs. The Centers have provided me with all the assistance that our family desperately needed!"

In October, she returned to the MMC with her daughter. She was impressed by the respect shown by the MMC staff. Annette, MMC staff social worker, helped her find the counseling for which they had been searching. Mrs. Santiago explained, "Due to her daughter's severe anxiety, she can't take five steps away from me. I had to explain everything before coming here and she was able to stay by herself. She learned today that she has options. She understood and responded without feeling nervous or anxious. I told her that she is ready to see a doctor – she did it by herself. She completed the questionnaire by herself – without asking me or looking up at me. Annette made her feel important – she told my daughter, 'the decision is in your hands.' She felt totally comfortable. This was such a different experience. My daughter told me, 'I did so good mom! Can we go to the get something at the store?' This was a milestone for her!"

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