

GOOD NEWS

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

APRIL 2026

from our funded partners



Children's Board
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

www.ChildrensBoard.org

Seniors in Service

READERS IN MOTION

ART FEATURE: CREATIVITY ACROSS THE SEASONS



Throughout the year, our students have engaged in hands-on art activities that celebrate seasonal themes while encouraging creativity and self-expression. During Thanksgiving, students created fun and edible turkey crafts using cookies, candy corn, and pretzels. More recently, in celebration of Easter, they designed festive bunny baskets using paper plates, colorful fillers, and treats. Each activity allowed students to explore different materials while bringing holiday traditions to life in a meaningful and engaging way.



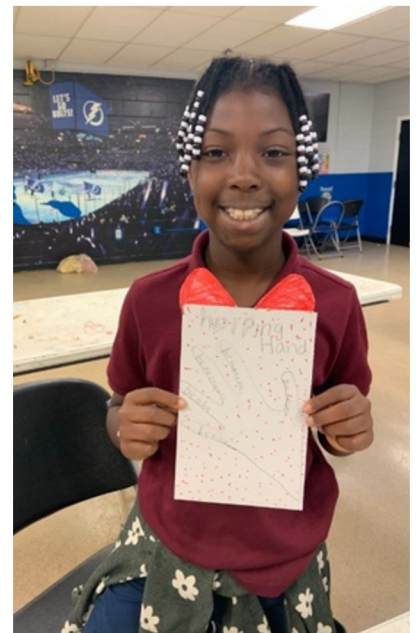
These creative experiences go beyond art—they help build confidence, strengthen fine motor skills, and create opportunities for connection. Students take pride in sharing their work with peers and bringing their creations home to their families, sparking conversations and moments of joy. By tying art to familiar holidays, we are able to create a warm and inclusive environment that celebrates both creativity and family connections.

Girl Scouts of West Central Florida

G I R L S C O U T T R O O P P R O G R A M

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS- INSPIRING WORLD THINKING DAY

In celebration of World Thinking Day—a day when Girl Scouts celebrate friendship, advocacy, and culture, connecting girls to each other, their community, and the larger world--girls participated in a meaningful artwork activity centered around making the world a better place. Each girl created a message for the future through either writing or drawing, encouraging them to reflect on how they can positively impact their communities. The girls showed incredible passion, creativity, and thoughtfulness throughout the activity. Their ideas reflected compassion, empathy, and a strong desire to make a difference. One particularly memorable piece came from a Girl Scout in Troop 96045 at Rowlett Park, focused on helping individuals experiencing homelessness. She illustrated a community kitchen and shared her ideas about creating spaces where people can donate food, ensuring that everyone has access to a warm meal. Her message: “Everyone always deserves food”.



Another Girl Scout from this troop highlighted the importance of kindness, drawing a helping hand that expressed her vision of a world where people consistently support one another. Her message encouraged others to spread kindness and always look for ways to help those in need.

This activity not only showcased the girls’ artistic talents but also their big hearts and commitment to creating a brighter, more compassionate future in their own communities and beyond. We are incredibly proud of the girls thoughtful ideas and dedication to making the world a better place.

DOCS Parenting Programs

HOT DOCS PROGRAM

HOW IS THE CHILDREN'S BOARD OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

A Story from a Mom who participated in the HOT DOCS Program

One of the most meaningful things I learned from the HOT DOCS Parenting Program was how to use a "busy bag" for my child.

My son is autistic and has a speech delay. Before participating in the program, when we attended gatherings or events, we usually brought a tablet for him. It kept him occupied, but he became so absorbed in the screen that he was disconnected from what was happening around him. He rarely

responded when relatives spoke to him and had difficulty joining in with others.

After learning new strategies in the program, I decided to try something different. On Veterans Day, I created a busy bag for him and filled it with simple activities, including a small board with letters and numbers. To my surprise, he absolutely loved it. Instead of focusing on a screen, he began showing the letters and numbers to us and interacting in ways we hadn't seen before. What started as a small activity became an opportunity for connection.

Since then, we've added more games and books to the busy bag. One of our favorite additions has been emotion cards. These allow him to share how he is feeling and even ask others how they are feeling by pointing to the cards.

I'm so grateful for the tools I learned through the HOT DOCS Parenting Program. They've helped my son feel more confident and included, and they've helped me see new ways he can connect with the world around him.



Big Brothers Big Sisters Tampa Bay

1:1 MENTORING - ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HIGHLIGHT SPRING BREAK ACTIVITIES OR COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Our annual Spring Picnic in March brought together more than 60 matches for an afternoon filled with fun, connection, and shared experiences. This year's event introduced an exciting new element—a “passport” activity that guided each Little and their Big through a series of interactive zones across the park. At each zone, participants earned stickers, transforming the day into a collaborative adventure that encouraged movement, engagement, and



teamwork. The picnic featured a variety of thoughtfully designed spaces, including a Creative Zone for hands-on arts activities, a Yard Games Zone with classic outdoor games, a Challenge Zone with physical activities, and a Quiet Zone for relaxation and meaningful conversation.



In addition to the themed zones, the event offered several memorable highlights that enhanced the overall experience. Mini horses were a standout attraction, delighting children and creating joyful, up-close interactions. The DJ kept the atmosphere lively and energetic throughout the day, while a picnic-style lunch of subs, chips, and cookies ensured that everyone could refuel and recharge at their own pace. To close out the event, Littles who completed their passports received goody bags filled with mental health resources and were entered into raffle drawings, adding an extra layer of excitement and reward.

The Spring Picnic not only provided a day of enjoyment but also reinforced the importance of shared experiences in strengthening relationships between Bigs and Littles. By creating opportunities for connection, exploration, and fun, the event supported our mission to build strong, lasting bonds and foster a sense of belonging within our community.

The Family Healthcare Foundation

CONNECTING KIDS TO CARE

“A FAMILY SUCCESS STORY WITH CBHC SUPPORT”

“When we first connected, this community member was carrying a lot on her shoulders. A new mother in a new country, she was doing her best to navigate an unfamiliar healthcare system while caring for her child. On top of that, she wasn’t sure if her son's insurance had even been approved yet, and the details of how to use her benefits felt confusing and out of reach. It was clear she felt overwhelmed but also determined to figure things out.

We took things one step at a time. Together, we confirmed coverage for her son and walked through how his insurance works in a way that felt simple and practical. As we talked, she began to ask more questions, growing more comfortable and engaged. We explored the options and found a plan that truly fit her baby’s needs. I also helped her initiate a change to his Primary Care Provider.

Throughout our conversation, I focused on meeting her where she was listening carefully, explaining things clearly, and being mindful of her unique experience. Little by little, the uncertainty started to lift.

By the end of our time together, there was a noticeable shift. The hesitation she started with had been replaced by confidence. She no longer felt lost in the system she felt capable of navigating it. What began as a stressful and uncertain moment turned into one of empowerment. She left not only with answers, but with the reassurance and confidence to make informed decisions for her child.”



Glazer Children's Museum

LEARN AND PLAY TAMPA BAY

At **Learn & Play Tampa Bay**, we're intentional about building meaningful, trusting relationships with families. From the moment a family enrolls, we focus on making them feel welcomed, seen, and supported. This starts with clear communication, warm greetings, and a safe, inclusive environment where both caregivers and children feel comfortable.



During our sessions, educators prioritize connection by engaging with families on a personal level, learning names, acknowledging each child's development, and creating space for caregivers to share experiences. We model positive interactions, offer encouragement, and provide tools that families can take home to continue building strong relationships with their children.



Outside of sessions, our team works collaboratively to ensure programs run smoothly, materials are thoughtfully prepared, and environments are inviting and engaging. These behind-the-scenes efforts help create consistency and reliability, which are key to building trust.

Ultimately, our goal is to create a community where families feel supported, valued, and connected not just during programming, but beyond it.

ReDefiners World Languages

GLOBAL EXPLORER

Children Artwork

Art has a way of making learning come alive, and our Global Explorer students truly embraced that this month. As they explored their countries of origin, they brought their discoveries to life through creative, hands-on projects. Arabic students traveled through Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria, learning about culture through food and art, creating couscous dishes, practicing

origami, and designing traditional ceramic plates inspired by North African traditions, where shared meals often bring people together.



Mandarin students continued their journey across China, exploring cities like Hong Kong, Chengdu, Xi'an, and Harbin. Their artwork reflected a wide range of topics, from using pandas to learn about facial features to discovering flavors through Chinese snacks. They also explored seasonal changes and even recreated history by building their own

versions of the Terracotta Warriors, turning complex cultural concepts into something tangible and fun.

Meanwhile, **Spanish students** focused on South America, diving into the cultures of Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. Through their projects, they created clay landscapes representing jungles and mountains, and designed vibrant masks inspired by Carnaval de Barranquilla, a celebration known for its music, color, and community spirit. What stood out across all groups was how art helped students connect more deeply with each culture, making learning not just educational, but meaningful and memorable.

