



Hand Talk

MISSION STATEMENT

The **FAMILY CENTER on DEAFNESS** empowers Pinellas County families with deaf or hard of hearing members by providing programs and services to promote communication and independence.

FREE AMPLIFIED PHONES



CALL FCD AT
727-399-9983
FOR DETAILS

CONTACT US:

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Largo, FL 33773
727-501-2323 voice
727-235-6285 vp
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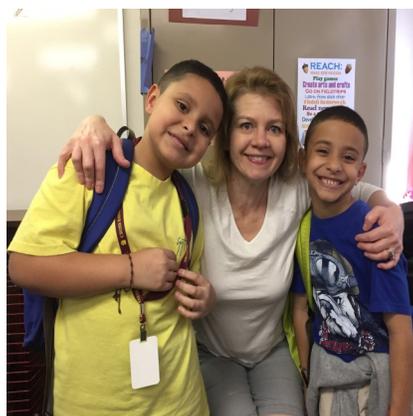
Check our website
for latest news and
announcements!

Before And After The Storm

In September, crisis hit our community as Hurricane Irma churned on a collision course toward Tampa Bay. As Pinellas families boarded windows, waited in gas lines, and stocked up on water and batteries, we watched in dread as Irma devastated our neighbors in the Caribbean. As the storm's strength increased and the trajectory was updated, we boxed up precious family photo albums in water-proof bins, inwardly said goodbye to our roofs, and thousands of us hit the highways to go north.



There was a collective panic in the air, as Facebook posts shared photos of empty grocery store shelves and stand-still traffic on I-75. But in the midst of a looming storm, our neighbors came out of the woodwork, some for the very first time, to help. At The Family Center on Deafness, we are a community resource, like a good neighbor, for the Deaf and hard of hearing community. FCD distributed seven cases of food and water to five different families in need. The food came from GA Foods in St. Petersburg, a specialized maker of highly nutritious meals serving the needs of healthcare patients, seniors, children, military, and emergency responders to disasters. We also helped a family who lost their roof by donating furniture. *See Storm, pg. 2*



We at FCD want to express our sincere thanks to Cindy Hoglund for years of dedicated service to the D/HH students in Pinellas County at FCD.

Cindy recently left FCD and moved to Waco, Texas, where she will be working at The Christian Academy for the Deaf.

Cindy's creativity, smile, and positive attitude will be deeply missed, but we are certain she will continue to educate and nurture Deaf and hard of hearing students as she embarks on this new stage in her life, serving a new community.

*To Cindy, With
Love...*

FCD Academic Bowl Team Off To A Great Start

Gallaudet University's national Academic Bowl for Deaf and hard of hearing high school students was established in 1996, with the goals of fostering the pursuit of academic excellence, promoting a spirit of academic competition and sportsmanship, and providing social opportunities for the development of collegiality and lifelong friendships.

Gallaudet hosts four regional Academic Bowl competitions for up to 80 teams of D/hh high school students. The top 20 teams advance to the National competition held at Gallaudet University every year. This is a great opportunity for D/HH high school students to meet other students from both Deaf schools and mainstream schools.

For many years, FCD collaborated with Pinellas Park High School to sponsor a team; however, for the 2017-2018 school year, FCD coordinated a team independently, and is sponsoring their trip to the regional competition. Student participants in ABT represent the whole county, with students from Pinellas Park High School as well as mainstream students. The four students participating in this year's competition, Tammy Huynh (12), Vipin Suren (10), Bella Engelman (10) and Tyna Kim (9), are coached by Tracy Kasch and Cindy Hebbeler.



Storm, from pg. 1

Luckily, the morning after the storm, most Pinellas County residents awoke to find our roofs in place and our homes not flooded. "We dodged a bullet," people said as they picked up rakes, took down plywood and cleaned out refrigerators. Many of us went without power for a week, but we were alive and for the most part, our houses were intact.

While we may be exhausted from disaster prepping in September, and while our grocery stores are still thinly stocked, we're adjusting back to old routines and responsibilities. At FCD, student programs are back on schedule and we have a lot planned for October.

We recognize families experience storms apart from hurricanes in their private lives, and we want you to know we're here to help. Helping our Deaf and hard of hearing families in times of crisis is part of the FCD mission. If our clients should find themselves in need of food, counseling, or other services, remember we are a resource for you. It's our privilege to be your neighbor and a support system.



Our annual Halloween party, in collaboration with the Deaf Literacy Center, will be held at the FCD offices this year on Saturday, October 28.

For the younger children, there will be a costume party and signing stories during the day. In the evening, there will be a spooky haunted house for older students and adults. Teen Scene is excited to take the lead on decorating the haunted house, so come join us and prepare to be spooked! Everyone and all ages are welcome.

Look for more information, coming soon!

REACH

Raising Expectations & Achievement of Children with Hearing Loss

The REACH program kicked off the school year with 15 students on Sept. 6th. REACH is an afterschool program for d/hh kindergarten through fifth-grade students at Cross Bayou Elementary School. It begins at 1:35 pm and ends at 5:00pm. Over the summer, the REACH portable was refurbished to accommodate the growing

program, and there is currently room for five more students in the program.

REACH is a terrific opportunity for Deaf and hard of hearing students to socialize, receive help with homework and take fun and educational monthly field trips. In September, students are participating in a bowling field trip to Seminole Lanes.

Each Tuesday and Thursday, students spend 45 minutes receiving help with homework; however, please encourage your children to work on their homework assignments every day, as there is not enough time during the program to complete a week's worth of assignments.

If you have a child attending REACH, please consider donating healthy snacks, which can be dropped off during pick-up time. For questions about REACH, contact Jennifer@fcdpinellas.org or text 727-269-5674. If you are interested in volunteering with REACH, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Dawn Varner at Dawn@fcdpinellas.org.

REACH SCHEDULE

Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays
K-2nd Grade	K-5th Grade	3rd-5th Grade



On September 23-24, eight Pinellas County high school students had

the amazing opportunity to participate in a free STEM workshop at the Florida School for the Deaf, in St. Augustine. With the financial support of RIT and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), the Teen Scene students spent a night at a St. Augustine hotel, went snorkeling, and learned from six Deaf professionals working in STEM fields.

In October, RIT will be sending Fred Beam and a group of performers to host workshops for middle and high school students. The program, called Sunshine 2.0, is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 21st at 10 a.m. All middle and high school students are welcome. Contact franklin@fcdpinellas.org or addie@fcdpinellas.org for more details.

Middle School students are learning to encourage fellow students by writing monthly appreciation letters to each other. Because these years can be some of the most challenging for teens and tweens, they are also learning relaxation tools to manage stress and anxiety.



American Sign Language Classes will begin the first week of October and are open to FCD clients and non-clients. We are offering two class times:

Monday Classes will be hosted at the FCD office from

6pm-7pm and taught by Sally Shortz and Beth Engelman.

Tuesday Classes will be hosted at Cross Bayou from 9am-10am and taught by Lisa Curzio-Blake.

Classes are \$15 for Clients and \$50 for non-clients, and include the book.

To sign up for ASL class, email beth@fcdpinellas.org or text 727-492-1254

REACH

October: 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 31



High School: By Appointment
Contact Franklin@fcdpinellas.org

Middle School: Mon & Wed 4pm – 6pm



October 6, 13, 20
No Teen Scene— October 27

Special Family Event:



Saturday, Oct 7th
10am-6pm

399 2nd St, Indian
Rocks Beach

Discount Tickets Available! \$10
Adults \$7 Children

Details: Contact
Beth@fcdpinellas.org



Meet Caitlyn Dollar

Parent Network



In-Kind Donations

Daphne Woodham
PDQ Pinellas Park

Financial Donations

Sarah Lucas

Volunteers

Kimberly Albury
Dana Cechnicki
Jonathan Chapman
Brian Giddons
Ricky Gnatowsky
Adam Hennessey
Tyna Kim
Lisa Kingston
Jill Radford
Dennis Sofr

Caitlyn Dollar is FCD's newest staff member. Serving as part-time Youth and Family Support Assistant, she is replacing Cindy Hoglind, who left last month.

Caitlyn holds A.A. degree and an A.S. degree in ASL interpreting from St. Petersburg College. She is also a senior at USF, where she is working toward a B.S. degree in ASL interpreting. Prior to joining FCD, Caitlyn volunteered with the REACH program for two years. We're certain she'll make a great addition to our FCD team.

On Thursday, September 28, FCD hosts the first Parent Network for 2017/18.

This is a great opportunity for parents of Deaf and hard of hearing children to dine together, learn and support each other.

This month's meeting will have PDQ chicken tenders and focuses on educational tips to help students be successful. Join us in the months to come to learn about advocacy, IEP's, social development, emotional issues and other informational topics.

Where:

Cross Bayou Elementary—Deaf Ed Commons

Time: 5:15-7:15 p.m.

Bring: A side dish or dessert to share.

Family Center on Deafness Staff

Julie Church Executive Director

Kathy Kemp Office Manager

Jennifer Boggess Lead Youth/Family Support Specialist

Franklin Smith Youth/Family Support Specialist

Addie Osmar Youth/Family Support Specialist

Beth Engelman Parent Support Specialist

Sally Shortz Program Support Specialist

Dawn Varner Youth/Family Support Specialist

Caitlyn Dollar—Youth/Family Support Asst.

Gwen Sand FTRI Supervisor

Tammy Shuman FTRI Distribution/Outreach