



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CHILDREN'S FORUM EMPLOYEES LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO HELP FLORIDA CHILD CARE PROGRAMS IMPACTED BY DISASTER

TALLAHASSEE, FL (January 25, 2017) We live in Florida and Mother Nature impacts us in ways we can't control. Storms often lead to flooding. Tornadoes, high winds, and fallen trees can cause structural damage. Lightning strikes can lead to fire and electrical issues.

Have you ever wondered what would happen if a child care center couldn't open for business due to a disaster? Parents wouldn't be able to work, child care teachers and owners wouldn't get paid, and children would be confused by the loss of their routines.

According to the Office of Disaster Assistance at the Small Business Administration (SBA), as many as 40 percent of small businesses hit directly by a serious natural disaster perish. The economic impact on Florida's 10,022 licensed child care programs serving 792,768 children could be devastating.

That's why the Children's Forum has established [**Children's Forum CARES**](#) (Crisis Assistance, Relief and Emergency Support), a program that provides timely response and relief to child care programs in Florida impacted by disaster. Forum CARES assists centers that are in danger of closing, temporarily or permanently, by meeting some of their most pressing needs on a short-term basis.

Forum CARES may be able to provide necessities to child care programs such as:

- Toys and classroom materials
- Supplies such as diapers, formula, and food

-more-

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- Volunteer hours
- Insurance deductibles
- Small cash grants
- Other support specific to the situation

"If a child care program is closed, families are unable to go about the business of restoring their homes and communities," said Phyllis Kalifeh, President and CEO of the Children's Forum. "That's why Forum CARES was created to ensure that child care programs can remain open in times of disaster."

For more information on Forum CARES, visit

<http://www.flchild.com/index.php/programs-services/forum-cares/>. You may also [donate to Forum CARES](#).

The Children's Forum is a statewide, nonprofit organization with an uncompromising mission to build and support systems which promote positive experiences and outcomes for young children. Through a broad array of programs, services, research and advocacy, the Forum is committed to helping children achieve life-long success.

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