



Faith Based Champions for Children

A prayer for places of worship, like yours, to step forward to serve as “Faith Based Champions” for children in foster care

Our prayer is a simple one – that every child, like Anthony pictured above, will have a safe, nurturing and committed family.

Faith Based Champions for Children Initiative

Faith Based Champions for Children is an initiative of Eckerd in partnership with One Church, One Child of FL, Heart Galleries of Pinellas & Pasco, Directions for Living, Lutheran Services Florida, Youth & Family Alternatives, Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas and Safe Families for Children. The initiative is designed to identify and partner with you in an effort to find foster and adoptive homes for all foster children in the Tampa Bay Area. Partner places of worship will be known as **Faith Based Champions** and will receive a tool-kit of resources to help in recruiting foster and adoptive families, as well as information on helping provide much-needed resources for foster children.

What is a Faith Based Champion?

Faith Based Champions are places of worship. that commit to helping children like Anthony find a foster or adoptive home, as well as providing much-needed resources to children like Anthony in foster care. When you sign up, your place of worship will receive a Heart Gallery portrait of a local foster child available for adoption, so you can share their story with your congregation and pray for that child. Then, each month you'll receive a new child portrait to feature and pray for. Your spiritual leader or designee will also receive a tool kit of resources to educate your congregation about the need for foster and adoptive families, and resources our children need. Each **Faith Based Champion** tool kit will include:

- ✓ **Heart Gallery Portrait**– Heart Gallery portrait of a local foster child available for adoption, and child photo bio cards that includes the child’s digital photo and bio to feature in bulletins, flyers, websites, newsletters, etc.
- ✓ **Foster Parent Recruitment Materials**– Plexiglas card holder filled with foster parent recruitment materials, so your members will know what it takes to become a foster parent
- ✓ **Raising Hope Brochures** – Lists items needed to stock our Eckerd Raising Hope “Room of Hope” to meet the needs of infants, children and teens entering foster care – and beyond.
- ✓ **One Church One Child Materials** – Materials include a kiosk, photo album of children available for adoption, brochures, family referral form, and music CD
- ✓ **Access to Speakers** – Various speakers from Eckerd are available to speak to your congregation about your featured child or about foster parenting or adoption in general
- ✓ **Safe Families for Children** - A foster care diversion ministry starting in our area. In keeping with Psalm 68:6, "God set the lonely in families," Safe Families connects Christian families with families in crisis. The Christian family opens their home to host the children of the family in crisis for a temporary period of time. During this time, the host family is able to care for children and encourage the family in need as they try to get back on their feet. By eliminating isolation for the family in crisis and removing the fear of their children being removed from the home by the system, we hope to increase their chances of overcoming crisis and building a better life for their children.

To become a **Faith Based Champion** in Pinellas or Pasco County and receive a free tool kit or to learn more, please contact **Vanessa Fair (727)456-0600/Ext 2246** or vfair@eckerd-eca.org.

Eckerd is a national nonprofit youth and family service organization that has given much-needed second chances to 100,000+ children and families since 1968. Eckerd Community Alternative, a program of Eckerd, is the community-based care lead agency for child welfare services in Pasco and Pinellas counties and serves over 3,400 children each day in the local foster care system.