



Broward Children's Center Communication Guide

All of us at Broward Children's Center are representatives of our organization and responsible for its public perception. This booklet is designed to help us use clear, consistent language when communicating with each other and those outside our organization.

**Broward Children’s Center
Communication Guide**

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Providing quality services to infants, children and young adults with special needs.

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v1. Describing Broward Children’s Center to Others

Working at Broward Children’s Center means that at some time or another you’ll be asked about the Center and what we do. Below are a few examples of how best to respond.

I. Releases, Letters, Blurbs and Footers

This short paragraph can be helpful when sending any correspondence to individuals or organizations that need to know more about Broward Children’s Center. It’s good to consider it a standing element or permanent attachment to all your communication pieces.

“Since 1971, [Broward Children’s Center](#) has provided quality programs to infants, children, and young adults who are developmentally disabled and medically fragile. The Center provides a wide range of direct care, support, and quality of life advocacy services for these children and their families.”

Remember, all stationary and letters with the Broward Children’s Center logo should have the following footer:

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II. Email

Make sure your email signature is consistent with the Center standard and includes the below sentence.

“Since 1971, [Broward Children's Center](http://www.bckids.org) has provided quality programs to infants, children, and young adults who are developmentally disabled and medically fragile.”

All electronic references to Broward Children's Center must be hyperlinked (a link you can click on to go to the web) to our website at <http://www.bckids.org>

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III. Extended description

If you require more detail the below description can provide a more complete overview.

Broward Children's Center Agency Description

At Broward Children's Center, we specialize in helping infants, children, and young adults with special health care needs. Founded in 1971, our nonprofit center in Pompano Beach, Fla., offers a range of health, wellness, education, recreation, therapeutic, daily living and advocacy services. During more than three decades of service thousands of children and their families have benefited from the Center's programs.

Broward Children's Center provides a home to some of the most technically dependent children in the country and addresses the educational, social and medical needs of both typically developing and special needs children. The Center is a pioneer in the development of community-based residential programs for medically fragile youngsters and in the delivery of school programming for children with developmental delays.

The Center's overriding goal is to provide the most natural, independent and unrestrictive lifestyle for all those we serve.

Our services include:

- Two preschools for typically developing and special needs children
- Education for children who are medically complex
- Medical transportation
- Licensed home health care
- In-home and facility-based respite care
- Before- and after-school programs
- Physical, occupational, and speech/language therapy
- Counseling
- Kids Klinik mobile and Center-based primary medical care
- Pediatric Extended care
- Group homes

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IV. Broward Children's Center Achievement Description

Often many audiences will want more detailed information about what Broward Children's Center has achieved. In this situation the below description can inform readers of the Center's accomplishments.

Since 1971, [Broward Children's Center](#) has provided quality programs to infants, children, and young adults who are developmentally disabled and medically fragile. The Center provides a wide range of direct care, support, and quality of life advocacy services for these children and their families.

As a nonprofit organization the Center has been a field leader during its more than three decades of service to infants, children and young adults with special needs. The Center introduced the first after school program for medically fragile/developmentally delayed youngsters in Broward County; the first after school program for children with disabilities in Florida; first licensed freestanding pediatric nursing home in Florida; and the first nonprofit agency to be awarded funding for developmental disabilities by the Broward County Commission.

The Center's largest residential program is the only freestanding, licensed pediatric skilled nursing facility in the State of Florida. Maintaining a sub-acute level of care, this unit provides 24-hour nursing and respiratory care, as well as developmentally appropriate therapeutic and educational programming. The population is the largest concentration of pediatric long-term ventilator-assisted individuals in the Southeast United States, and home to some of the most technology dependent children in the world. The Center also has three residential group home facilities, which are homes to a similar but more medically stable population of children and young adults. A major emphasis in all Center programs is the provision of least restrictive and natural environments possible. The Center networks with community agencies on state and district levels in a collaborative effort to achieve this goal.

Other programs and services provided by the Center include: two developmental preschools for children with developmental delays; center based educational classes for school-age children who are medically complex; wheelchair accessible transportation; licensed home health agency; in-home respite; before and after school program; physical, occupational and speech/language therapy for residents and community based children; psychological counseling; self-help groups; and therapeutic recreation for children with special needs. Our most recent projects include the creation of a Respite Home, which provides relief for families that care for the special needs children at home; opening of the Kids' Clinic medi-van program, which provides immunizations and health screenings at community preschools and day care centers serving children of ethnically diverse, lower-income families; and Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care, a comprehensive day program for community children with complex medical conditions. Over 600 residential and community-based children and their families are served through the Center's programs.

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History Timeline

If you find a need for historical data or a timeline of the Center’s history the following information should be helpful

The History of Broward Children’s Center

Since it was founded in 1971, Broward Children’s Center has grown to become one of the nation’s leading providers of services for children with special health care needs.

1971: Marjorie Evans establishes Broward Captivated Child Care to provide services to children with profound disabilities for six hours a day. At the urging of the state, the facility soon expands its programs to 12 and then 24 hours a day. The first residential program serves about 25 children and is on Northeast 21st Avenue, Fort Lauderdale.

1980: As more and more children are referred for round-the-clock care, the Center establishes its first home for residents who are medically stable.

1983: The child care/preschool and residential programs move to Pompano Beach. Soon, the Center begins accepting children with special health care needs for emergency “respite” stays.

1987: The first resident on a ventilator is accepted. This leads the staff to develop new programs that meet the needs of children with respiratory conditions.

1989: A respiratory therapy department is created, enhancing medical services for residents. Educational services for many children are also added, thanks to Broward County’s Hospital Homebound Program. Children’s Services of Broward County helps establish a respite program for caregivers.

1990: The number of children needing help continues to grow significantly — and so does the age of children served. The Center opens a second group home on Southwest 8th Avenue for older residents. Meanwhile, the Residential Habilitation program moves to a state-of-the-art facility, and a new class for ventilator-dependent children opens with funds provided by Broward County.

1991: The School Board of Broward County expresses a need for additional classes for children with special needs in southern Broward County. Broward Children’s Center responds by opening its second preschool at St. Ambrose Church on Southwest 31st Avenue, Fort Lauderdale.

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1992: Developmental Services and Children's Medical Services say they can no longer support payment for services to residents in the residential habilitation program due to the increasing medical complexity of this population, such as children with tracheotomies or ventilators. With these changes, Broward Children's Center becomes licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration (ACHA) as the first pediatric skilled nursing facility in the Southeast.

1995: Broward Children's Center opens Coastal Kids Home Care to provide in-home nursing care for infants, children and adolescents with medically complex conditions up to 24 hours a day.

1996: Broward Children's Center opens a state-of-the-art, eight-bed residential facility to meet the needs of young adults 21 and older who are medically fragile, need ventilator assistance or need 24-hour nursing and respiratory care.

1997: Broward Children's Center expands its therapy programs and opens its Outpatient Clinic on 20th Avenue, Pompano Beach. The new clinic provides occupational, physical and speech therapy to infants, toddlers and school-age children in the community.

1999: Having outgrown its old facility, Broward Children's Center's preschool program moves to a newly renovated home on 20th Avenue, Pompano Beach. A Place to Grow Preschool expands its service to other young children in the community.

2000: Broward Children's Center centralizes its administrative offices at 1801 E. Atlantic Ave., Pompano Beach.

2001: Coastal Kids Pediatric Respite Home opens, offering relief for families that care for special-needs children at home. The home coordinates the Kids Klinik medi-van program (immunizations and health screenings at community preschools and day care centers) and the Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care (day program for community children with complex medical conditions).

2002: Kids Klinik grows to include a Kids Klinik office on 20th Avenue, Pompano Beach. The clinic provides many medical services, including physicals and immunizations, as well as sick visits to children with special needs and/or lower-income families.

2004: Due to increasing demand, the Skilled Nursing Facility separates from Broward Children's Center.

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VI. Vision Statement

Vision Statement

Although Broward Children's Center's vision statement is not something that you will often need to make available to those outside the organization it can, however be helpful to those of us within the organization. This statement is intended to help give us a common purpose and make sure all our efforts are focused in the same direction.

We see ourselves becoming:

- An organization that continues to provide a continuum of quality and cost efficient programs and services to children and young adults with complex medical, developmental, and or therapeutic needs.
- Providers of specialized care in variety of environments including, home, residential sites, developmental preschools, community based schools, and out patient therapeutic sites.
- Leaders in the field for providing services to children and young adults with special health care needs as well as a resource for individuals, families and the community at large.
- An organization respected by the community for a high level of commitment to children and young adults with special health care needs.
- An organization that is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of individuals and the community.
- An organization that looks to the future and plans for how it can safely fit in the future.

Value Statement

Broward Children's Center is committed to:

- Providing high quality medical, developmental, and therapeutic services
- Promoting and maintaining individual and family's maximum potential
- Recognizing the strengths and needs of individuals and families
- Executing comprehensive programs that include successful transition to home and community
- Facilitating parent-professional collaboration and education.

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2. Agency Programs

I.

Broward Children's Center Group Home One

Broward Children's Center's Group Home One is a home for children and adolescents with medical and developmental disabilities who are transitioning from a skilled nursing facility, their own home, a foster home, or other setting. The facility includes private bedrooms, a den, recreational room, kitchen, and dining area. The unique backyard garden includes a patio, barbeque area, and wheelchair swing.

The group home is staffed twenty-four hours a day with 2-3 certified nursing assistants under the supervision of licensed and registered nurses. Other medical services include twenty-four hour access to a primary physician and pediatric sub-specialists. All residents attend a school-based program in the community or in another Broward Children's Center educational program.

Residents receive appropriate occupational, physical, and speech therapy at school and in their home environment. All adaptive equipment, mobility needs, and assistive technology services are provided by the Center's therapy department.

Meaningful and appropriate activities and services are provided in the least restrictive and most natural environment possible. Daily and weekly sensory stimulation, music, arts and crafts, cooking, videos, movies, literature, park visits, shopping, and special event activities are administered by activities personnel.

Group Home One's mandate seeks to maximize participation in appropriate daily activities within the resident's home environment and within their community. Staff are committed to providing a positive environment that respects all individual residents and their families. Ensuring the privacy and dignity of residents remains the home's guiding principle. For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bcckids.org

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II.

Broward Children's Center Group Home Two

Group Home Two is a home for adolescents and young adults with medical and developmental disabilities who are transitioning from a skilled nursing facility, their own home, a foster home, or other setting. The facility includes private bedrooms, a den, recreational room, kitchen, entertainment patio, and dining area.

The group home is staffed twenty-four hours a day with certified nursing assistants under the supervision of licensed and registered nurses. Other medical services include twenty-four hour access to a primary physician and pediatric sub-specialists. All residents attend school-based, Broward Children's Center, or community programs.

Residents receive appropriate occupational, physical, and speech therapy at school and in their home environment. All adaptive equipment, mobility needs, and assistive technology services are catered for by the Center's therapy department.

Meaningful and appropriate activities and services are provided in the least restrictive and most natural environment possible. Daily and weekly sensory stimulation, music, arts and crafts, cooking, videos, movies, literature, park visits, shopping, and special event activities are administered by activities personnel.

Group Home Two's mandate seeks to maximize participation in appropriate daily activities within the resident's home environment and their community. Staff are committed to providing a positive environment that respects all individual residents and their families. Ensuring the privacy and dignity of residents remains the home's guiding principle. For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bckids.org

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III.

**Broward Children's Center
Group Home Three**

Group Home Three is an eight-bed home for adolescents and young adults with complex medical conditions who are technology dependent or who have developmental disabilities. Designed to meet the needs of those transitioning from a skilled nursing facility, family home, foster home, or other setting, the Home provides uninterrupted care to individuals whose developmental and medical needs require alternative living environments.

The Home includes a customized kitchen area, a living area, bathroom, shower room, six bedrooms and an outdoor entertainment patio. The facility is designed to promote maximum independence and personal environmental control for all residents. The Home is staffed with a registered nurse and certified nursing assistants twenty-four hours a day under the supervision of licensed and registered nurses. Other medical services include twenty-four hour access to a primary physician and comprehensive array of pediatric sub-specialists. Residents attend either school-based, Broward Children's Center, or community-based day programs. Residents can receive occupational, physical, and or speech therapy evaluations and school- or home-based therapy if needed. All adaptive equipment, mobility needs, and assistive technology services, are provided by the Center's therapy department and daily and weekly activities are administered by the group home activities personnel. Activities include sensory stimulation, music, arts and crafts, cooking, videos, movies, literature, walks, shopping, and special events.

The long term goal of Group Home Three is to maximize participation in appropriate daily activities within the resident's home environment and their community. The staff is committed to providing a positive environment, respectful of all of the individuals who reside in the home as well as their families. Meaningful and appropriate activities and services are provided in the least restrictive and most natural environment and resident confidentiality and dignity remains the staff's top priority.

For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bckkids.org

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**Broward Children's Center
Children's Comprehensive Home Health
(HomeCare)**

HomeCare provides home health care that allows infants, children and young adults to remain at home while receiving medical services. We also educate other members of the household, so the family maintains as much independence as possible. Speech, physical and occupational therapies are available based on the person's need.

HomeCare services include:

- Ventilator Care
- Skilled Nursing
- Speech, Physical and Occupational Therapy
- Medical Social Services
- Gastrostomy Tube Feeding
- Tracheostomy Care
- I.V. Therapy
- Diabetic Management and education

HomeCare is a licensed Medicaid provider accepting children who receive Medicaid and children approved by the Children's Medical Assessment Team (CMAT). HomeCare also provides services to clients through a contract with the Broward County School Board.

For more information, please call 954.941.1228, ext. 102, or visit us online at www.bckids.org

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v.

Children's Comprehensive Care Center CompCare

The Children's Comprehensive Care Center is the only free standing nursing facility for children who require sophisticated medical treatment in the southeast. It is designed to provide a child and family-friendly environment for individuals from birth to twenty one.

Services provided include:

- Skilled Nursing
- I.V. Therapy
- Respiratory, Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapies
- Medical and Social Services
- Educational Programming
- Psychological Counseling
- Dietary Services
- Recreational Activities
- Case Management

These services are combined to maximize each individual's development potential and meet their personal emotional and physical needs. Programs address each resident's specific feeding, ambulation, mobility, dressing, toileting, communication and adaptive equipment needs. The overriding goal of CompCare is to provide the most natural, independent and unrestrictive lifestyle for all those we serve.

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VI.

Broward Children's Center Preschools

Broward Children's Center's Preschools provide educational, developmental and therapy services to children at strategic locations in the northeast and southwest of Broward County. The preschools serve youth aged from birth to five years of age and both have been consistently awarded the Gold Seal of Excellence by Child Care Licensing.

Partnerships with the School Board of Broward County and Children's Diagnostic and Treatment Center ensure the preschools provide Pre K and Early Intervention Services to children meeting Individuals with Disabilities Act criteria. The Preschools are also licensed child care facilities that offer early-learning programs to employee and community children.

Preschool programs provide children with the opportunity to participate in multiple experiences that will promote and encourage learning and development in all areas, including cognition, language/communication, gross motor, fine motor, and social skills. Staff includes certified teachers, licensed occupational, physical, and speech language therapists, social workers, teaching assistants, and child development associates.

Transportation is provided to and from its programs in wheelchair accessible buses driven by commercially licensed drivers. A before and afterschool program is available on a fee for service basis as well as sliding fee scale basis through the Children's Services Council's, *Maximizing Out of School Time* program. Both preschools have a pediatric licensed practical nurse on site to meet any medical needs.

Preschools use the *Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs* and the *Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs*, based on typical sequences of development for use in the home, preschools, and typical child care settings. Following an assessment of individual functioning, interdisciplinary Preschool staff develop an annual individualized educational plan, or a Family Support Plan that identifies individual goals that will be addressed.

Typically developing children are screened before admittance using the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire*. As with all of Broward Children Center's programs, the preschools are family centered and support and encourage an open door policy for all families.

For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bckkids.org

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VII.

**Broward Children's Center's
Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care Program (PPEC)**

Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care (PPEC) provides an alternative to in-home nursing for children with complex medical needs from birth to age 21. Medical needs supported include ventilator assistance, tracheostomies, oxygen therapy, pulse oximetry, respiratory therapy, enteral and parenteral nutrition, and intravenous treatments in a center based environment.

Up to twelve hours of care is provided per weekday, including after school hours. Services provided include:

- Skilled Nursing
- Respiratory Care
- Developmental and Educational Programs
- Nutritional Services
- Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy
- Social Services
- Recreational Activities
- Transportation

Children's medical needs are met by a caring staff with pediatric experience in a stable and healthy environment. Therapies and educational programs are designed individually to meet the developmental needs of those who attend. The program also stresses opportunities for socialization with other children with special health care needs.

Services are prescribed by the child's primary care physician and are authorized by a Children's Multidisciplinary Assessment Team (CMAT) or private insurance company.

A Board Certified Pediatrician oversees facility care and registered and licensed practical nurses provide direct care to children. Nursing assistants and other ancillary staff provide support services.

The PPEC program is centrally located in northeast Broward County and is easily accessible to public transportation. Transportation can also be provided by the Center. For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bckids.org

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VIII.

Broward Children’s Center Respite Care

For more than a decade Broward Children’s Center’s Respite Care has been giving parents and caregivers a break from the stress of providing 24-hour care to their dependants. Respite Care allows caregivers to “recharge” and gives them an opportunity to address issues beyond the immediate care of their children with special needs.

Respite Care allows caregivers to increase their participation in family and community activities, combating the isolation that can occur when their lives center on caring for a child with special needs. Respite Care also supports caregivers dealing with their own medical or emotional challenges.

Respite Care provides approximately eight hours of in-home support a month to individual families served. To be eligible for services, families must live in Broward County and have a child aged birth to 21 years-old with a documented diagnosis. Applicable diagnosis includes medical, behavioral, and developmental delay.

An initial telephone interview determines eligibility criteria and an intake packet is then mailed to caregivers. Once the packet is returned a Respite Care professional visits the youth’s home to further assess their needs and develop a plan of care, including personal outcomes. Caregiver are then informed of program policies and provided with referrals for any unmet services.

Clients and Respite staff are matched based on client need and staff background and skills. All Respite Care services are provided on a one staff to special needs child ratio.

Each quarter 25 percent of client files are reviewed and parents interviewed regarding their satisfaction with the program. Demographic information on clients utilizing the programs is also analyzed on a quarterly basis and outcomes sent to families.

For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bckkids.org

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IX.

Broward Children's Center Social Services

The Social Work Department at Broward Children's Center provides a wide variety of services to all Center programs. The department's highly qualified social workers deliver ongoing support services to children and families within Center-based programs, and through referrals and community and governmental agency partnerships.

Partners include the Department of Children and Families, Developmental Disabilities/Medicaid Waiver, the Department of Education, Children's Medical Services, and Children's Diagnostic and Treatment Center. Social workers provide on-site assistance, as well as home visits to families. Services available include:

- Short-term Psychotherapy and Support Groups
- Education
- Case Management
- Information and Referral.

Families can be linked to thee and other community agencies and assisted by an accessible emergency fund when in need. The department remains proactive in seeking out and accessing community donations for children served and strives to educate staff and the community on the role and need for social workers. Department programs also educate staff and the community regarding child abuse awareness and prevention.

Staff are also founders and members of the Inter-Agency Support Services Committee, a collaboration of Broward County agencies serving children with special needs. Staff representatives and those from the Ann Stork Center, ARC Broward, Children's Diagnostic and Treatment Center, Nova Baudhuin Oral School, and United Cerebral Palsy collaborate to optimizing agency resources in the development of quarterly educational community events. Programs are developed according to the interests expressed by parents in an annual assessment. For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bckkids.org

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Broward Children's Center Therapy

Broward Children's Center's Therapy Department provides occupational, physical, and speech language therapy services to Center programs and home and out-patient clients in two locations.

The clinic provides screenings, evaluations, and treatments to infants, preschoolers, school-age children and adolescents with delays in the developmental areas of speech and language, motor skills and daily living activities. Evaluations and treatment sessions are scheduled during the morning to cater for infants and preschoolers and during the afternoons for school age children and adolescents.

Services are provided by licensed and certified / accredited therapists and therapy assistants under the direction of a Director of Therapy. The program promotes a strong interdisciplinary approach to ensure all disciplines work together to achieve all developmental goals.

Therapists collaborate on adaptive equipment, augmentative communication systems, splinting, seating, and mobility needs. Therapy staff have extensive experience with patients who are technology dependent premature infants as well as full-term infants with complications. Staff also provides therapy to those with respiratory difficulties, traumatic brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, specific language impairments, apraxia, muscular dystrophy, and other primary physical impairments.

Services are provided under a variety of funding sources including Medicaid / Healthy Kids program, Part C, private insurance and private pay. Medicaid transportation is available. All programs are located along public transportation routes and are therefore easily accessible to the community at large. For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bckkids.org

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XI.

Broward Children's Center

Kid's Klinik

Kid's Klinik programs are designed to provide comprehensive, family centered, medical services to children of low-income families. The programs are designed to overcome the health care cost, location, and hours of operation barriers low-income families often face. Kid's Klinik also provides a medical home for this population. Services provided include routine wellness visits, immunizations, and sick visits. Field-leading quality of care is provided by a Board Certified Pediatrician, Advanced Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, and a medical assistant.

Kid's Klinik is centrally located in Pompano Beach and easily accessible by public transportation. The Klinik's Mobile Clinic travels out into low-income neighborhoods and to community schools to provide immunizations, physicals and health screenings. An onsite-pediatric clinic provides similar services as well as other primary care services during conventional and evening and weekend hours. The clinic provides a comfortable child and family friendly waiting area and examining room. The health care services of the Kid's Klinik programs are covered by most insurance companies, Medicaid/Healthy Kids, or a sliding fee scale basis. Services are also provided to the uninsured.

For more information, please call 954.943.7638, or visit us online at www.bckkids.org

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**3.
Broward Children's Center
Style and Spelling Supplement**

The Associated Press Stylebook is the first source for style issues and spelling. If your questions isn't answered there, consult a good dictionary, such as Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. Use the dictionary's first preferred spelling. Don't rely solely on your spell check or grammar check functions – they are not as smart as you are. When in doubt check in out in this guide, a dictionary, or as a last resort, consult with your friendly Foundation/Communication Department.

All of us deal with the style issues all the time in the effort to be consistent and accurate. The specific spelling and style suggestions below address language we encounter frequently in our internal and external communications. Here are some general rules to guide you.

The following should be considered Broward Children's Center Style:

acknowledgment – Not acknowledgement.

advisor – Not adviser

African-American (*adj. and n.*)

Broward Children's Center – Use the full name in the first reference, preferably without the article *the*. Second reference is *the Center*. Internal documents and documents not for publication can use the abbreviation *BCC* where convenient, however only after first indicating abbreviation - *Broward Children's Center (BCC)*. Broward Children's Center departments should always be referred to as a division of Broward Children's Center in the first reference – Broward Children's Center's Group Home Three.

child care

children with special needs – no reference to disabled. The word children or youth should come before any qualifier about their status – i.e. Children who are vent dependent, NOT vent-assisted children.

day care

email – not e-mail

Fort Lauderdale – Do not abbreviate, for cities. *Fort Lauderdale*.

Fund raising, fund-raiser,

Fund-raising (*adj.*) – Fund raising is difficult. A fund-raiser was hired. They planned a fund-raising event. (Note: Never used as one word)

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grant making, grant-maker, grant-making (*adj.*) – Grant making is challenging but enjoyable. The Health Foundation of South Florida is a grant-making organization. The Health Foundation of South Florida's staff members are grant-makers.

Group Home – capitalized and appropriate number spelled out – Group Home Two.

high school

home owners

Internet

judgment – no *e*

longtime (*adj.*)

middle school

multicultural, multimedia, multipurpose, multisite – The rules of prefixes apply, but in general, no hyphen.

nonprofit

payout

Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care Program (PPEC) – Full name in first reference, PPEC in following references.

preschool, preschooler

Special needs – children with special needs or children with special health care needs.

teen, teen-ager (*n.*) teen-age (*adj.*) – Do not use teen-aged.

turnaround (*n.*)

typically-developing children

website. One word

wide - No hyphen. Citywide, communitywide, statewide, worldwide

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**4.
References to Individuals with Special Needs**

Language can be used to shape ideas, perceptions and attitudes. Words in popular use mirror prevailing attitudes in society. Those attitudes are often the most difficult barriers that youth and adults with disabilities face. Positive attitudes can be shaped through careful presentation of information about people with disabilities. Below are some guidelines:

- Describe the person, not the disability
- Refer to an individual’s disability only when it is relevant
- Avoid images designed to evoke pity or guilt

Examples of negative and positive use of words and expressions:

Instead of ...	Use ...
The disabled, The handicapped, The crippled, cripple or invalid	Infants/children/young adults, or individuals with special needs.
Normal (when used as the opposite of disabled)	Typically-developing youth (When the word “normal” is used as the opposite of “disabled” it implies that someone with a disability is abnormal)
Crippled by, afflicted with, suffering from, victim of, deformed	Person who has, or person with ... (name of disability)
Defective, maimed	Impaired, injured
Paralytic or arthritic	Person who is paralyzed or has arthritis
Lame	Person with a physical disability
Birth defect	Disabled since birth or born with ... (name of disability)
Confined, bound, restricted to or dependent on a wheelchair	Wheelchair dependent
Handicapped accessible	Accessible by people with disabilities. Universal access
Instead of ...	Use ...
Deaf and dumb, deaf mute	Person with no hearing or hearing impaired
The retarded, mentally retarded, mentally subnormal or Mongoloid	Person with a developmental disability, person with a learning disability.
Vegetable	Cognitively impaired
Spastic (noun)	Person with cerebral palsy
Epileptic, Fits	Person who has epilepsy or seizures
Mental patient, the mentally ill, mental, insane	Person with mental illness (specify illness if known, e.g., schizophrenia or depression)
Crazy, emotionally disturbed	Person with behavioral health care needs

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The blind or the visually impaired (as a collective noun)	Persons who are visually impaired or blind, persons with visual impairment, or blind persons
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Some more guidelines to bear in mind when talking about people with disabilities:

- Do not focus on the disability unless it is crucial to a story. Avoid tear-jerking human interest stories about incurable diseases, congenital impairments or severe injury.
- Do not portray successful people with disabilities as superhuman.
- Do not sensationalize disability.
- Emphasize abilities, not limitations.
- Avoid “tragic but brave” stereotypes. In fact, avoid stereotypes altogether.
- Show people with disabilities as active participants in society.
- Portraying persons with disabilities interacting with non-disabled people in social situations and work environments help break down barriers and open lines of communication

5. Creating a New Communication

Before you even begin a new communication piece consider who you want to talk to and what message that audience will best respond to. Here are two steps to take into consideration before you begin creating your communications.

Define Your Audience

Who do you want to reach? What do you know about them?

The first step towards strong communications requires us to identify those segments of the population you are trying to reach. Getting clear about your audience requires answering such questions as:

- Who is the best audience for our mission/goals?
- Who will best help us achieve our goals?
- What demographic groups are we trying to reach?
- What do we know about the best ways to reach them?

Sometimes, these questions can be answered in a short brainstorming session, but more information can be gathered by conducting small focus groups or interviews with target audience members.

Shaping Your Message

Crafting a message in a way that gets you heard

Once you feel you know your audience the next step is to tailor your message to reach that specific group or individual. Whether you're jotting off an internal memo, writing a press release, or being interviewed by a journalist it is important to ask the following questions to ensure your message is clear and effective:

- What does my audience know about me?
- What kind of message will they respond to?
- Through what mediums are they best reached (Internet, memo, radio, print)?
- What kind of information do they need from me?
- What language will resonate with my audience?

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As you craft your message, keep in mind that each communication medium will likely require a different approach. For example, writing for the Web is very different from writing for radio or television. Although matching your style with your medium is important remember that communications are less about the technology or medium chosen as a vehicle and more about advancing the cause of our organization. An effective communications strategy reflects the Center's mission, goals and objectives, and is well integrated into daily operations. It requires a clear articulation of audience, clarity of message, and choice of media platform. It also consists of an ongoing feedback relationship between planning and evaluation.

For more information on planning communications check out the Benton Foundation's Communications Capacity Building resources at http://www.benton.org/publibrary/practice/about_ccb.html or ask the Center's foundation staff for a hard copy. This publication includes topics on communications **planning**, message shaping, media choices, evaluation and funding.

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Tools of the Trade**

There are several common communication tools and mediums that you may well use at Broward Children’s Center. Knowing which ones are the best fit for you and your audience is the key to delivering effective and efficient communications. Here are just some of those tools and some tips on how to use them.

I. Broadcast Faxes

Cost: Low

Ease of use: Medium to High

Primary target: Media, legislators, nonprofit colleagues, non-wired board members

The broadcast facsimile (fax) is a hard copy alternative to email. It is also a substitute to direct mail and/or phone communication, especially when the message requires prompt delivery and timely receipt. The broadcast fax broadcasts a customized message to a multitude of fax machines at once. The fax delivers a hard copy of your message to the recipient’s fax machine, which can alleviate some of the concern of unread email. At Broward Children’s Center most broadcast faxes are used for legislative alerts, news releases and when it’s beneficial to send any message requiring timely delivery.

All broadcast faxes are to be approved by the Foundation office to ensure consistent messaging and to maintain a record of all transmissions. Foundation staff can also help you with the technical aspects of broadcasting your message.

It’s important to note that under Federal law a broadcast fax may only be sent to those who have provided the Center with their fax number and their “OK.”

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II. Email

Cost: Low

Ease of use: Low to Medium

Primary target: Taskforces, Committees, Department, Colleague organizations, Board Members,

Email is the primary method of communication for most nonprofits both internally and externally and as such is the most common representative tool of the Center. Make sure that all your outgoing email have the standard confidentiality disclaimer and Center description attached below your signature for each original outgoing email. All Center email signatures should also be in the standard 10pt black Arial font narrow and without background color. If you have any questions regarding email style please contact the Foundation.

Email Capture: Email's huge popularity means it's often the best way the Center has of reaching our service population, donors, nonprofits, and the public. It is critical that we capture the email addresses of these individuals and groups. You should record an email address for every contact you make. An email address is as important as a name or a phone number and will remain a precious tool in our communication efforts. All email addresses that you record in your addresses that you feel should be on our electronic mailing list should be forwarded with title and name information to the Foundation.

Email Listserv: An Email listserv collects the email addresses of a group of participants into a single address so that each time a member emails that address it reaches all the members of the email listserv. A listserv can have a moderator (requiring a single member of the list to monitor all emails and send them on to others), or not. Both these options have advantages and disadvantages. Speak to a Foundation representative if you want to get started on building your own listserv.

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III. Handouts & Flyers

Cost: Low to Medium

Ease of use: Low

Primary targets: Internal and External audiences

Handouts and fliers are one of the easiest ways to relay information quickly and simply, however we still need to be aware of the need to keep these tools consistent and professional. A good start is to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of the handout?
2. How will I accomplish this purpose?
3. Will the handout have visuals? (drawings, photos)
4. What is my distribution method?

The headline or opening line of your handout should grab the reader's attention. Effective handouts usually contain a call to action, request for help, or other clear next step for, or request of the reader.

Writing the Copy

Writing short takes more time than writing long but fewer words are more effective than too many. Choose your words carefully and don't be afraid of leaving lots of "white space" on the page.

Design

Most handouts are 8 ½" x 11" because they are easy to produce, file and track. When it comes to design, your first decision is horizontal or vertical, a decision based on the amount of copy you have.

Times New Roman is considered by most to be the easiest font to read and is standard font used in Center communications. Other design tips include:

- Use bullet point for emphasis.
- Use double spacing when you can
- Vary type to add interest to your handout, but do it cautiously, because too many changes will slow reading speed.
- Use different colored paper to grab attention – Foundation staff will provide you will the color choices that match our logo colors
- Whether its photos, clip art, rubber stamps, or scanned images, every handout needs a visual.
- If you don't have images to create visual interest use large font heading, print in bold and use regular keyboard keys, such as dots, dashes, and asterisks, to add visual interest.

Remember all external handouts need to be approved by the Foundation before being distributed. The Foundation will also be able to help with features such as ready-to-go handout templates.

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Distribution

Handouts can be distributed in many ways including personal distribution, stuffing them with outgoing mail, mailing them separately, or stacking them in front of an exhibition. Foundation staff can help you make the right choice for your distribution needs as well as provide you with templates for the following:

- Event flyers
- Advertising flyers
- Informative flyers (factual or historical information)
- Invitation flyers (to a meeting or event)

Specialty flyers (open house)

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IV. **Letters to the Editor**

Cost: Low

Ease of use: Low

Primary target group: Public

One of the easiest and most under-utilized forms of media relations is the simple letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Survey statistics indicate that the “Letters to the Editor” column is one of the best-read selections of a newspaper. This promises your letter a vast reading public – if it is published.

Letters to the editor are best used as a statement of opinion or a way to point out misinformation. Letters to the editor can bring attention to inaccurate information contained in a publication, generate support for Center advocacy or thank the public for its support of an event or an issue.

Your letter must be succinct because only a few column inches of space can be allotted to it. You must state your position and develop your case in three or four short paragraphs, couching your assignments in simple language and offering strong evidence. A word limit and information about submitting a letter to the editor can be found on the editorial page of each newspaper.

The more dispassionate and reasonable your reply, the more credible it will appear. Sign your letter with your name, title and web address. Include a phone number where you can be reached for questions or verification. Contact the Foundation marketing staff if you need background information on issues, and editing assistance. Please make sure all letters to the editor in which use your Center title are approved by your Dept. Director.

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V. Meetings

Cost: Low to Medium

Ease of use: Low to Medium

Primary target group: Current members

Today time is at a premium. Everyone wants to make each moment of the day count. When planning your meetings, you'll keep your members happy if you are organized, productive, and as brief as possible.

Before you call a meeting here's some valuable tips:

- Ask yourself if you really need a meeting? Will an email or phone call do?
- Identify a meeting team leader responsible for keeping the meeting focused and within set time limits
- Create a typed agenda which establishes a purpose for the session and sets the groundwork for discussion
- Keep a record of meeting notes
- Identify clear next steps and delegate who is responsible for achieving those steps

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VI. Newsletters

Cost: Medium to High

Ease of use: Medium to High

Primary target: Internal and external audiences, including clients, staff, collaborators, supporters and the public.

The Center's newsletter is an excellent marketing tool to keep those we wish to communicate with informed and, just as importantly, connected. The Foundation takes the lead in producing the newsletter, however all Center team members play an important role in filling the newsletter with compelling and informative news.

Good newsletters are packed with real news - make sure to inform Foundation staff of any newsworthy stories. Good newsletters also have eye-catching pictures - Make sure you let Foundation staff know if you're having an event that will produce great photos, or snap those great moments with a Center camera yourself.

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VII. Photographs

It's a cliché, but a picture really does tell a thousand words, and more importantly creates an emotional connection with our audience. Foundation staff are always looking for photographs to publish in our newsletter, on our web site and in promotional and fundraising materials. Please keep your eyes out for events and situations that will provide great photos. Don't forget the Perfect Picture Competition gives you the chance to win a great prize every year!

Remember that we do not have permission to photograph some of our clients. If you are unsure of who you can photograph call the Foundation. Foundation staff can also provide you with a photo release form for parents or guardians to sign. Published photos will be filed in our archives. Please write the names of people in the shot on the back of hard copy photos, identifying them from left to right. Email digital photos to Foundation staff, or ask a Foundation staff member for help in transferring digital photos.

Some tips for great photos:

- Always take more shots than you think you need
- The best photos are of people less than six feet away
- Shoot with the light behind you
- No "backs of heads" – shoot frontal shots or profiles
- Always get the names of those photographed
- Movement is good
- Try and show diversity

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6. VIII. **News Releases**

Cost: Low

Ease of use: Low

Primary target: Media, legislators, General Public

News Releases are often the reflex method of choice that most of us think of to “get the word out,” however; deciding on whether or not to use a press release and which audiences to target requires a lot of planning. Foundation staff can help with those decisions and are responsible for putting together all news releases, but they need your help to make sure the Center's releases make the biggest splash they can. Here's how you can help:

- Let Foundation staff know when you have an idea or event that you think would make for a good release.
- Make sure you update Foundation staff on new contacts and specific individuals or organizations that would be interested in receiving a release.
- Give Foundation staff as much lead time as possible for a release. Some media outlets require a submission at least a month in advance!
- Remember that photos always improve the chances of a news organization running a news release.

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IX. Newspaper and Newsletter Articles

Cost: Low

Ease of use: Low

Primary target group: Public, advocacy targets and the public.

A sensational newspaper or newsletter article can be a spectacular communication tool if it follows a few simple guidelines. Foundation staff will be happy to help you put together an article that will give you the best chance of publication. Here are some things to think about when considering a news article or newsletter submission:

- Who cares? Why would people want to know about this story and which media outlets is the best fit for this story?
- Can and have you answered the “who, what, where, when, why and how” of the story. It’s best to do this in the first two paragraphs.
- Use an active voice.
- Are your facts accurate? **MAKE SURE YOU TRIPLE CHECK** dates, name spelling, figures and other data.
- Personal testimonies and eye-witness accounts round out your story and put a human interest touch to it.
- Remember good photos can double or triple your chances of publication.

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X. Website Content

The Center's redesigned website will begin to take a much larger role in our communications, knowledge management and information sharing needs. Website content is the responsibility of the Center Webmaster and Foundation staff, but as always we need your help to keep the site accurate and up-to-date. Please forward any content ideas, technical issues, changes or corrections to the Foundation department.

Communications Code of Conduct

As part of a greater focus on the importance of communications the Center has established the following guidelines for all public relations campaigns, consumer education and marketing efforts. These guidelines are designed to ensure our strict ethical and privacy program guidelines are mirrored in our communications policies.

General Principles

- All communications must be honest, truthful and not misleading, conform to accepted principles of fair competition and good business practice, and be prepared with a sense of social responsibility.
- All communications from the Center to all audiences should take into account the level of education, knowledge and maturity of the audience for which it is intended.
- Recognizing that young children and others with developmental disabilities often have difficulty in understanding the difference between reality and imagination, care must be taken to communicate truthfully and in an accurate manner and in language understood by these individuals.
- Communications and marketing activities should showcase positive social behavior, such as friendship, kindness, honesty, justice, generosity and respect for others.
- Minorities and other groups should be included as positive role models. Social stereotyping must be avoided.
- Parents and caregivers remain the primary influence in child development. All communications must contribute positively to the parent/caregiver-child relationship.
- Marketing and communication activities should not influence programming in any way.

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- All Center partners should not have policies or procedures that run contrary to the Center's own.
- All Center procedures, such as privacy policies must be easily accessible to the public at all times.

It is the responsibility of the Foundation to communicate these guidelines to all agencies, freelancers and other suppliers who may be developing or promulgating education, communications, public relations, marketing or advertising materials.

Please contact the Foundation if you have any unanswered communications questions, or require communications assistance.