

**JULY
2026**



**Emerald Coast Children's
Advocacy Center**

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ECCAC Back to School Supply Drive

The Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center is collecting school supplies all summer long to help local children start the new school year ready to learn and succeed.

From backpacks and notebooks to pencils and crayons, every donation helps equip children in need with the tools they need to thrive in the classroom.

Join us in empowering the next generation: because every child deserves a confident start to the school year. We encourage you to print this flyer for your local business and set up a box to collect supplies.

See and share our needs list below!



BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE



OUR KIDS NEED:

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- ELMER'S GLUE STICKS
 - ERASER TOPS
 - PENCIL SHARPENER
 - INDEX CARDS
 - POST-IT NOTES
 - FISHER SCISSORS
 - PLASTIC 3-RING DIVIDERS
 - WIRED HEADPHONES
 - SMALL STAPLER AND STAPLES
 - 1 SUBJECT SPIRAL NOTEBOOK
 - PLASTIC PENCIL BOXES
 - ZIPPERED PENCIL POUCHES
 - PLASTIC OR PAPER 3-PRONG FOLDERS
 - #2 PRE-SHARPENED TICONDEROGA PENCILS
 - DRY ERASE MARKERS-RED AND BLACK
 - WIRED EARBUD-STYLE HEADPHONES
 - T1 30XA CALCULATORS (MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL ONLY)
 - CRAYOLA BRAND CRAYONS, MARKERS, COLOR PENCILS
 - COMPOSITION NOTEBOOKS, WIDE RULE
 - YELLOW HIGHLIGHTERS
 - RED AND BLACK INK PENS
 - COLLEGE-RULED NOTEBOOK PAPER
 - 1-INCH 3-RING BINDERS
 - CASH DONATIONS FOR THE PURCHASE OF MANDATORY SCHOOL SHIRTS, PE CLOTHES

EQUIP A
CHILD.
EMPOWER A
FUTURE. 



ECCAC

Emerald Coast
Children's Advocacy Center



DONATE

DONATE to ECCAC

Before You Post: What Every Parent Should Know About AI & Digital Safety

📱 Every photo tells a story.

🤖 AI can learn from it.

🎯 Predators are counting on it.

Let's protect our children together.



Protecting Children in the Age of AI

As technology continues to evolve, so do the ways we protect our children.

Every day, parents and loved ones share photos online to celebrate milestones, birthdays, vacations, and everyday moments. While these posts often come from a place of love, it's important to understand that today's artificial intelligence (AI) tools can analyze and manipulate images in ways that were unimaginable just a few years ago.

A single photo can reveal more than you realize, including a child's school, location, daily routine, or other identifying details. Even more concerning, bad actors can use AI to alter innocent photos into inappropriate or sexually explicit images without a child or family's knowledge or consent.

While these risks are unsettling, there are simple steps families can take to help protect their children:

- Review your social media privacy settings.
- Limit public sharing of children's photos.
- Avoid posting images that reveal schools, uniforms, locations, or daily routines.

- Ask friends and family to respect your child's digital privacy before sharing photos.

Child abuse prevention extends beyond the physical world—it includes protecting children online. By taking a moment to think before you post, you can help safeguard your child's privacy, dignity, and digital footprint.

Because every child deserves a safe childhood—both online and offline.



Thank You, Emeril Lagasse Foundation

We are honored to be selected as one of the Emeril Lagasse Foundation's Spring Grant recipients.

This generous funding directly supports ECCAC's Prevention and CARES teams, helping us educate children, families, and our community on ways to prevent child abuse and neglect while providing critical resources to families in need.

Through these programs, we work to identify and help alleviate food insecurity, connect families with essential services, and strengthen the support systems that keep children safe.

We are deeply grateful to the Emeril Lagasse Foundation for investing in prevention, early intervention, and healthier futures for children across Okaloosa and Walton counties.

Together, we are building stronger families and safer communities—because every child deserves the opportunity to grow up safe, supported, and loved.



Emeril Lagasse Foundation



Handmade with Heart

This gift for the children truly melted our hearts.

We are incredibly grateful to the Public Safety Telecommunicators of the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office for their generous donation of beautiful hand-crafted crochet toys. Each one was lovingly made with care and compassion, creating a special source of comfort for children during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

A handmade toy may seem like a small gesture, but to a child navigating trauma, it can provide reassurance, security, and a reminder that they are surrounded by people who care. We are deeply thankful for the time, talent, and kindness these telecommunicators poured into every stitch.

Thank you for helping us bring comfort, hope, and healing to the children and families we serve. Your generosity is making a meaningful difference—one handmade friend at a time.





Community Partnership Spotlight: The Donut Hole

We are incredibly grateful to The Donut Hole for partnering with the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center by placing ECCAC donation boxes at their checkout counters. Their generosity gives customers an easy way to support children and families in our community, one small donation at a time.

Every dollar collected helps provide advocacy, therapy, prevention education, and hope for children on their path to healing. Partnerships like this remind us that meaningful change happens when local



businesses and community members come together for a common purpose.

The next time you visit The Donut Hole for one of their famous donuts or a delicious meal, consider dropping your spare change into the ECCAC donation box. Those small gifts make a lasting impact.

Thank you, The Donut Hole, for helping us create a safer, brighter future for the children we serve.



Living Our Values at ECCAC

At the **Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center**, our mission is more than the work we do—it's reflected in the values that guide how we serve children, families, and one another every day. These aren't just words on a wall; they're the principles that shape our culture and remind us why we're here.

We **lead with love**, allowing compassion, trust, and our shared commitment to children to guide every decision. **We choose courage**, knowing that when we be brave, others will follow, we inspire those around us to do what's right, even when it's difficult.

We care with all our hearts, treating every child, family, teammate, and community partner with empathy, kindness, and respect. **We embrace a spirit of excellence**, understanding that growth comes through continuous learning, humility, and striving to be better each day.

We know our facts, valuing truth, accuracy, and informed decision-making so that our advocacy and care are built on trust and integrity. **We focus on the future**, dreaming boldly, making

thoughtful plans, and taking intentional steps toward a better tomorrow for the children and families we serve.

We also believe in building strong relationships. **We eat dinner family style**, making time to gather, connect, laugh, and strengthen the bonds that make us more than coworkers—we're a family united by purpose.

And just as importantly, we remember to **celebrate the little things** and **splash in puddles**. We recognize the small victories, embrace childlike joy, and choose gratitude even on rainy days. In a field where the work can be heavy, these moments of laughter, hope, and connection remind us why we do what we do.

Together, these values define who we are. They help us create a workplace where people feel supported, a culture where excellence and compassion go hand in hand, and a community where every child has the opportunity to feel safe, seen, heard, and loved.

Because at ECCAC, our values don't just shape our culture—they strengthen our mission to bring hope, healing, and justice to every child we serve. 💙



[DONATE to ECCAC](#)



ECCAC Volunteer Spotlight: Pat

For 16 years, before a child ever met an advocate or therapist, they met Pat.

From our front desk, she became a source of comfort, kindness, and reassurance for countless children and families walking through our doors—many on one of the hardest days of their lives.

Today marks Pat's final day at the front desk, and while we're saying goodbye to a remarkable volunteer, we're celebrating the incredible legacy she leaves behind.

When asked what she has loved most about volunteering, Pat shared:

"The main thing that I have loved about being here is seeing children that come in and then, as they graduate, you know that the therapy here has been so good for them and that their life is going to be changed. It's the transformation."

Those words capture the heart of why Pat has dedicated the past 16 years to the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center. She has witnessed healing firsthand and has been part of that



journey simply by making every child and family feel welcomed, safe, and cared for from the moment they arrived.

Her advice to anyone considering volunteering is just as heartfelt:

"If they love children, number one, you've got to love children to be here."

Pat, thank you for 16 years of unwavering compassion, grace, and service. Thank you for the smiles, the listening ear, the comforting presence, and for helping make our Center a place where healing begins the moment a family walks through the door.

You will always be a cherished part of the ECCAC family. 💙🦋



Building Confidence, One Moment at a Time

A child's confidence isn't built overnight—it's shaped through everyday interactions with the adults who care for them. The simple words we say and the opportunities we provide can have a lasting impact on how children see themselves and the world around them.

Here are six meaningful ways to help build a child's confidence:

- Listen with your full attention. When children feel heard, they learn that their thoughts and feelings matter.
- Praise effort over perfection. Celebrate hard work, persistence, and growth rather than focusing only on results.
- Offer age-appropriate choices. Giving children opportunities to make decisions helps them develop independence and trust in their own abilities.

- Encourage them to try new things. Every challenge they face—even if they don't succeed right away—builds courage and resilience.
- Celebrate progress. Recognizing small milestones reminds children that growth happens one step at a time.
- Remind them they are loved unconditionally. Knowing they are valued simply for who they are provides the secure foundation every child needs to thrive.

At ECCAC, we know that children flourish when they feel safe, supported, and believed in.

Whether you're a parent, grandparent, teacher, coach, or trusted adult, your encouragement can help shape a child's confidence for years to come. Sometimes the smallest moments—a kind word, a listening ear, or a celebration of their effort—can make the biggest difference.

Make a Direct Impact - Volunteer with the ECCAC!

Support the ECCAC Mission – Volunteer Today

If you have any questions about events and volunteering contact our Community Engagement Manager, Christopher: (251) 809-4067 or email at (Christopher@eccac.org)

Join us in making a difference for children in our community. By volunteering with ECCAC, you help support the hope, care, and safety for children who need it most. Every hand makes an impact.

Volunteer with ECCAC



ECCAC Healing

Fact:

Every toy in our therapy rooms has a purpose.

What may look like simple play is often powerful communication.

Through dolls, art supplies, sand trays, and games, children are able to express thoughts and emotions they may not yet have the words to describe. Play gives children a safe way to process big feelings, share their experiences, and begin to heal at their own pace.

In these moments, healing doesn't feel like therapy—it feels like being understood.



Summer Water Safety Starts with You

Living on the Emerald Coast means spending time at our beautiful beaches, pools, and waterways—but it also means staying aware of the unique water safety risks that come with them.

At the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center, we believe every child deserves a safe and enjoyable summer. Before heading to the beach, always check the beach warning flags and choose beaches with lifeguards whenever possible. Even experienced swimmers can be caught in dangerous rip currents, making it essential to understand beach conditions before entering the water.



Whether you're at the beach, pool, or on a boat, these simple safety habits can help save lives:

- Designate a "Water Watcher"—an adult whose only responsibility is supervising children near the water.

- Keep young children within arm's reach at all times.
- Put away phones and eliminate distractions while supervising.
- Never allow children to swim alone.
- Enroll children in swim lessons as early as they're developmentally ready.
- Ensure children wear properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets when appropriate.
- Protect home pools with four-sided fencing, self-latching gates, and alarms.
- Learn CPR—it can make the difference in an emergency.
- Teach children how to respond if caught in a rip current: stay calm, float, and swim parallel to the shore until free of the current.

Most importantly, remember that drowning is often silent. It can happen in seconds, without splashing or cries for help.

By staying informed and practicing these simple safety measures, we can all help ensure every child enjoys a fun, safe summer on the Emerald Coast.

Thank you for being part of the ECCAC community.

Your support helps us provide safety, hope, and healing for children every day.

Together, we're making a lasting difference—one child at a time.

-The ECCAC Team

OUR MISSION

We seek to heal and prevent the trauma of childhood abuse and neglect by providing advocacy, child-friendly therapies, and a safe environment for kids to feel seen, heard, and understood. We restore lost innocence, provide hope, and make a difference in all the lives we touch.





 **Rise to the challenge.** 
Help us restore childhood joy and hope for the future. 

DONATE NOW



Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center | 401 McEwen Drive | Niceville, FL 32578 US

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