



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 9, 2011

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FORTY CARROTS EXPANDS COMMUNITY OUTREACH PARENTING EDUCATION SERVICES

SARASOTA— A \$55,000 grant from the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, in partnership with the Florida Department of Health, will allow Forty Carrots Family Center to expand its parenting education work with young homeless mothers at SOLVE Maternity Homes and mothers recovering from addiction at the First Step Mothers & Infants Program. Forty Carrots *On Wheels* Parenting Program brings free parenting education to families from all walks of life, but particularly those at greater risk for abuse or other negative child outcomes. *On Wheels* employs teams of trained parent educators who travel throughout the community in specially-equipped vans to provide parents with information, skills and support to improve childhood outcomes and reduce the risk of abuse and neglect.

“We have seen a tremendous positive effect from these classes over the years and are absolutely thrilled with this expansion of services,” said Nancy Page, Clinical Director at First Step. “Forty Carrots parenting curriculum is designed to help our residential pregnant substance abusing women to learn the importance of infant care in all aspects of their development. Most importantly, nurturing efforts improve significantly which fosters the ability of our moms to bond with their infants.”

Research has demonstrated that certain factors- youth, poverty, single parenthood, family isolation, lack of education and drug and alcohol abuse- increase the risk of child abuse and other negative outcomes. Parents who are facing these significant challenges are less likely to interact with their babies and toddlers in positive ways that set them on a productive life course. “By investing in innovative prevention programs like *On Wheels*, we introduce protective factors that increase the potential for healthy child development, academic success and other positive outcomes,” said Winifred Heggins, Vice President of the Ounce of Prevention Fund.



Forty Carrots Family Center: Founded in 1993, Forty Carrots Family Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening families through educational programs for parents, children and professionals in the field. Forty Carrots offers a variety of classes for families with children ages 0-5 at their Kane Campus (1500 South Tuttle Avenue, Sarasota), and through community partners as part of the *On Wheels* community outreach program. Forty Carrots also offers a NAEYC-accredited, 5+ Stars (Look for the Stars) preschool program for children ages 2-5. Details on the Preschool and the Parenting Program, including a complete listing of classes, can be found at www.fortycarrots.org or by calling 365-7716.

The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida: Founded in 1989, The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida is a private, nonprofit corporation dedicated to shaping prevention policy and investing in innovative prevention programs that provide measurable benefits for Florida's children, families and communities. These programs build upon individual, family and community strengths to prevent serious problems that would require costly, long-term treatment. The Ounce of Prevention Fund holds the charter as the Florida chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America, administers the nationally accredited Healthy Families Florida home visiting program, and advances the prevention and early-intervention efforts of other organizations by providing research, evaluation, data management, strategic planning and social marketing services.

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