



The COLLECTIVE CHRONICLES

The Children's Collective, Inc.

Sept 2025

A Poverty Alleviation Non-Profit

WHO WE ARE

TCCI is dedicated to alleviating poverty and transforming lives in South Los Angeles by empowering children, youth, and their families to overcome systemic challenges and build pathways to sustainable success through high-quality, comprehensive, educational and family support services.



WHAT WE'RE DOING

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WHERE WE ARE



Locations

The Children's Collective, Inc. has 10 locations in the South Los Angeles area, offering various programs and services. To learn more, check out our website:

CHILDRENSCOLLECTIVE.ORG

Administrative Office

8616 La Tijera Blvd Ste 100
Los Angeles, CA 90045
(310) 870-1370

TCCI continuously enrolls for infant, toddler, and preschool programs. Call 424-286-4409.



CEO CORNER

September brings us into a powerful season of both **reflection and celebration**. It is a month when we as an agency are reminded of our dual responsibility: to protect life and to uplift culture. Two themes guide us this month—**Suicide Prevention Awareness** and **National Latinx Heritage Month**. Both speak directly to the heart of our mission at TCCI: strengthening families, empowering communities, and creating spaces of hope.

Suicide Prevention Awareness

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people ages 10-34. At TCCI, where we daily engage with children, youth, and families, it is essential that we recognize the warning signs and know how to respond with care.

Warning Signs of Suicidal Ideation



- Withdrawal from family, friends, or activities they once enjoyed
- Talking or joking about death or dying
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, shame, or being a burden
- Sudden mood swings—from despair to calmness (which may indicate a decision to act)
- Risky or self-destructive behavior (substance abuse, reckless driving, etc.)

What You Can Do

1. **Ask directly** - “Are you thinking about hurting yourself?” It does not plant the idea; it opens the door.
2. **Listen without judgment** - Be present, calm, and compassionate.
3. **Offer support** - Encourage professional help. Connect them with a counselor, doctor, or the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.
4. **Don’t leave them alone** - Stay with them or find someone who can until help arrives.
5. **Take care of yourself too** - Supporting others can be heavy. Lean on your colleagues and resources.

Every life matters, and as a community, we can be a safety net for those who feel like they are drowning.



National Latinx Heritage Month (Sept. 15 - Oct.

15)



This month we also celebrate the richness and resilience of our Latinx brothers and sisters. With deep roots in South Los Angeles, Latinx culture is part of the lifeblood of TCCI. From language, music, and food to family traditions and advocacy for justice, this heritage inspires us all.

5 Ways to Celebrate Latinx Heritage Month

1. **Learn & Share Stories** - Highlight the contributions of Latinx leaders in history and today.
2. **Celebrate Through Food** - Try a new Latinx-owned restaurant, or host a cultural potluck in your team.
3. **Engage with the Arts** - Support Latinx authors, artists, musicians, and filmmakers.
4. **Educate Yourself** - Explore books, documentaries, and articles about Latinx history and current issues.
5. **Support Local Communities** - Volunteer or partner with Latinx-led organizations in South LA.

Closing Thought

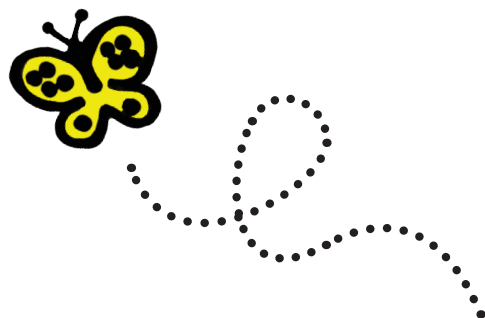
As we step into this season, let's hold these truths close: Every life is worth saving, and every culture is worth celebrating. At TCCI, our strength is in our diversity, our unity, and our commitment to one another.

Thank you for the work you do every day—whether it's preventing a crisis, planting seeds of hope, or creating spaces where culture thrives. Together, we embody the vision of a South Los Angeles that is strong, resilient, and full of life.

With gratitude and hope,

Dr. Charles Lee-Johnson

Chief Executive Officer
The Children's Collective, Inc.



CLIENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT: MATEO RAMIS RUIZ

How are you involved with TCCI?

Mateo has been involved with TCCI's FamilySource Center and College Corner, participating in two of FSC's summer learning programs and tutoring services.

How long have you been a TCCI client?



Mateo and his family have been receiving services for the past two years.



In what ways has TCCI changed your life?

The tutoring support he's received from FSC has positively impacted his life, both academically and personally. Through participation in the summer learning program, Mateo now better understands the material being taught during school. FSC has helped him grow into a more confident and capable student, setting a strong foundation for his future success.

What else makes them so spectacular?

What makes Mateo truly special is his eagerness to learn and his positive attitude toward every opportunity presented to him. He consistently shows up ready to engage, always willing to participate in activities and classroom discussions. Mateo stands out for his kindness and generosity, and quickness to help classmates who may be struggling. His curiosity drives him to ask thoughtful questions and he approaches challenges with determination rather than frustration. It's been a pleasure working alongside Mateo, as he continues to grow as a student and leader and inspire those around him with his kindness and positive energy.



CHILD CARE STAFF KEEP THEIR BOOTS ON THE GROUND



In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, Child Development incorporated quarterly staff wellness opportunities during our designated staff development time. Providing staff wellness opportunities offers a wide range of benefits for both employees and the agency. Some of those benefits include, improved mental health, increased productivity, stronger morale & culture, better work-life balance, etc.

Our quarterly staff wellness opportunities consisted of each site working with dance instructors to learn the “Boots on the Ground” line dance. As we closed out the year, we brought all 8 sites to a central location to showcase what they all learned. Staff wellness isn’t just about health benefits and fitness challenges, it’s about feeling supported, staying balanced, and having the energy to do your best work and enjoy life beyond it. Having all sites together was a great bonding opportunity – beyond the staff in their immediate workplace. The team truly enjoyed seeing everyone in the department and putting their new skills to the test!

We hope to continue providing these opportunities to the staff for years to come. Staff wellness is especially important in the child care field, where professionals face emotionally demanding, physically active, and mentally draining work every day. Supporting wellness in this field not only benefits staff, but directly enhances the quality of care children receive.



BACK TO SCHOOL WITH BACKPACKS

We're excited to share that our FamilySource Center (FSC) annual Backpack Giveaway was a huge success! This year, 60 families benefitted from our valuable community partners, including New York Life, TEACH Public Schools, South LA College Prep, City Attorney's Office, Los Angeles Public Library, and our very own TCCI Child Development Centers!

Families also enjoyed free haircuts, clothing, various food items, learning toys, and—of course—backpacks filled with school supplies! This event supported over 120 students to gear up and prepare to start the school year strong!



A big THANK YOU to our community partners, volunteers, and supporters who made this possible. Together, we're helping our youth step into the new year prepared and confident.



CALFRESH WRAPS UP PARENT CLASSES

Throughout August, Calfresh Healthy Living (CFHL) will be wrapping up the last parent classes of the year. Our final parent nutrition class was Wednesday, August 27th at TCCI's Casa Child Care Center.

Additionally, child nutrition classes are being held at our Hope and Vermont sites.



The CFHL team has also continued to conduct produce distributions with the following highlights:

- For the month of August, Hope, McAlister, Casa Dominguez and Florence Child Care sites hosted produce distributions.
- As of this summer, CFHL has compiled 1,761 produce bags and distributed 16,909 pounds of produce.



BLACK BREASTFEEDING WEEK AT BIH

Every year from August 25-31, we come together to celebrate Black Breastfeeding Week (BBW)—a movement that uplifts, empowers, and supports Black families on their breastfeeding journey.

Why is this week so important? Because it tackles real challenges: lack of lactation support, cultural stigma, hospital bias, and isolation for moms who want to breastfeed. BBW is about closing the breastfeeding gap, celebrating our stories, and creating spaces where Black mothers feel seen and supported.

Did you know? Many Black moms report feeling alone in their breastfeeding experience. That's why BBW exists—to build community, share resources, and provide the encouragement every mother deserves.

At TCCI's Black Infant Health (BIH) program, we're proud to offer a safe space during Sista Circle support groups, refer clients to trusted lactation consultants, and even provide breast pumps for moms with latching challenges.

And the celebration doesn't stop there—we hit the streets for BBW 2025! This year we attended:

- **Wednesday, August 27:** Milk Crawl with Irth App & the Suckle Center at the California African-American Museum
- **Friday, August 29:** Breastfed & Blessed at The Children's Collective - Rita Walters Learning Complex
- **Saturday, August 30:** Sacred Flow: A Black Breast and Chestfeeding Brunch hosted by SLAB/AAIMM Community Action at A.C. Bilbrew Library

Let's celebrate, educate, and normalize Black breastfeeding—because representation matters, and support changes everything!

Follow us on Instagram @tcci_blackinfanthealth and visit our website www.blackinfanthealth.org



FEATURED EMPLOYEE: YENIFER MONTES

Site: Florence Child Care Center

What do you do in your role?



As a Teacher's Assistant, I help the lead teacher with classroom activities, prepare learning materials, and support the children's growth and development through play.



What do you like about working at TCCI?

I like working with a hardworking and caring team.

Tell us something about you.

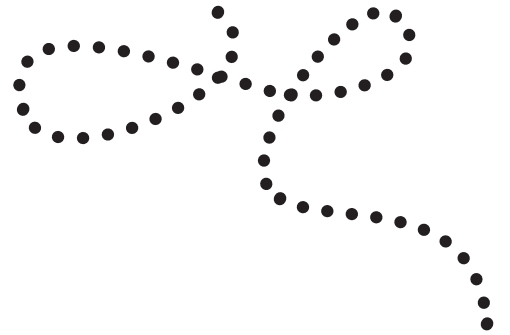
A fun fact about me is that I like tarantulas.

What is your favorite part of the job?

My favorite part of the job is spending time with the children.



FEATURED PHOTOS: 2025 ANNUAL BACKPACK GIVEAWAY





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tcci.kit.com/newsletter-signup



CAN YOU GUESS HOW MANY BUTTERFLIES ARE IN THIS NEWSLETTER?

Find the answer in next month's newsletter!

The August newsletter had 33 butterflies! Did you get it right?

NOW **HIRING**

The Children's Collective, Inc.



EARLY INTERVENTION SPECIALIST

Child Development

LEAD CASE MANAGER

FamilySource Center

MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR

General Hire

PRE SCHOOL TEACHER ASSISTANT

Child Development Program

PRE SCHOOL TEACHER

Child Development Program

To Apply:

To browse any of our open positions, please go to childrenscollective.org/careers or scan the QR code to the right.

Thank you for your interest in employment at The Children's Collective!



The Children's Collective, Inc. was founded in 1972 by Dr. Jackie Kimbrough, who served as the Executive Director for 52 years.

