

# from the *Heart*



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## *The Need:*

### High School Diploma for Every Student

With the second-best graduation rate in the state, Martin County is doing a lot of things right when it comes to helping our children succeed in school. The school district boasts the third highest Federal Graduation Rate in the state at 82.4% and the second highest National Governors Association Rate at 95.2%. (The difference is whether the rate includes “special diplomas” for special education students—but they’re both significantly higher than state average.) This is due to more than just the hard work of teachers in school. A lifetime of success starts when children are very young, happens when school is out and continues with reinforcements regarding attendance and behavior. The programs funded by the Children’s Services Council work comprehensively to support students by reducing summer-learning loss, ensure they are reading on grade level by the third grade and keep them engaged in positive activities so they’ll stay on track to graduate.



## *The Response:*

### After-School and Summer Programs



*Martin County:*

G.A.A.P., B.L.A.S.T.,  
J.A.S.E., P.L.A.C.E.,  
R.E.A.C.H.

Located in the neighborhoods that most need after-school care within walking distance of home, Martin County’s programs provide a safe and supervised place for children and teens. At area community centers in Golden Gate, Banner Lake in Hobe Sound, New Monrovia in south Stuart (run in partnership with the New Monrovia Community Development Corp.), Jensen Beach and Indiantown, participants keep learning when school is out.

The Children’s Services Council of Martin County is an independent district, approved by voters by referendum in 1988, to enhance the lives of the children of Martin County and to enable them to attain their full potential by supporting 34 impactful programs for youth in our community. Learn more about your agency at: [www.cscmc.org](http://www.cscmc.org) and [www.facebook.com/cscmc](http://www.facebook.com/cscmc).

# The Response:

## After-School and Summer Programs

### Big Brothers Big Sisters: Start Something



**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
of Palm Beach and Martin Counties, Inc.

With the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program, 90% of children matched with mentors for three months or more maintain their grades or show academic improvement. This is impressive because many of these "Littles" would otherwise be struggling not only academically but also with other difficult life decisions, like avoiding alcohol use or negative peer situations. Spending quality time with "Bigs" lets children know there's an adult mentor who cares and is rooting for their success everyday.



*YMCA:*  
**YReads**

The YReads program is geared toward students in grades kindergarten to third who are struggling academically but whose parents would not be able to afford after-school care or intensive tutoring. The intensive reading and vocabulary sessions are especially important, as studies show students who aren't reading on grade level by the third grade fall further behind each year. It's not all work—there's fun, too! Participating students also enjoy arts and recreational activities.

### GREAT FUTURES START [HERE](#).



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF MARTIN COUNTY

### Boys & Girls Clubs of Martin County: High-Yield Learning

Regularly attending members who attend the Club participate in high-yield learning activities, like homework help, leisure reading, and chess. This is especially vital for struggling students during the summer months when summer-learning loss can put children at a disadvantage. This—along with offering enriching programs and adult mentors—keeps kids focused on performing well in school and looking toward a future of success.



**Early Learning Coalition**  
Of Indian River, Martin and Okeechobee Counties, Inc.

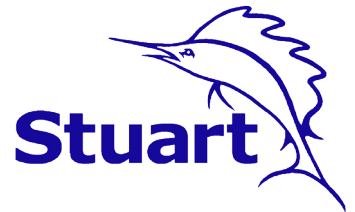
### Early Learning Coalition: Subsidized Child Care

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Studies show that academic struggles early in school can be a reason to drop out—so it's a priority to start teaching children early so they never feel behind. Thanks to the Early Learning Coalition, which contracts with 21 School Readiness Child Care facilities in Martin County, even children of families who could not afford child care will be able to have the same foundation as those in families who can. For families whose total income is 150% below the federal poverty level, the Council helps to fund child care for children ages birth to 5, helping to ensure all Martin County children are ready for school.

### City of Stuart:

**East Stuart Youth  
Initiative**



This collaboration keeps students on track to graduate. Tykes & Teens' Alternative to Out-Of-School Suspension (ALTOSS) program prevents troubled kids from falling further behind in school when they're being punished. The after-school and summer programs run by the city and the Boys & Girls Clubs include tutoring and homework help everyday. Certified teachers volunteer from nearby J.D. Parker Elementary to provide extra help to those students who need it the most. Plus, supportive adult role models and positive activities encourage kids to stay on the right path and do well in school.

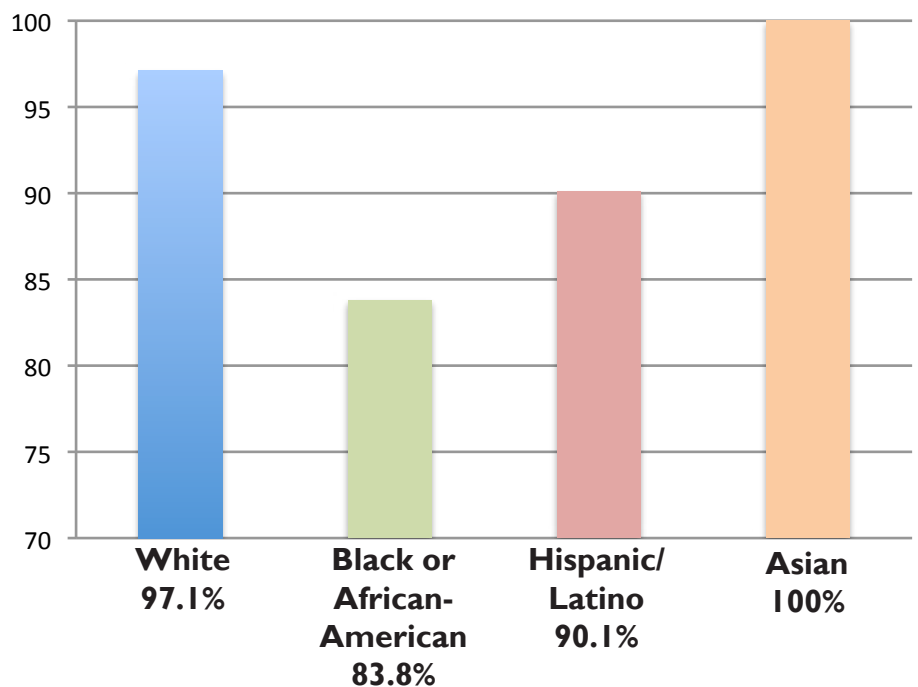
## *The Impact:*

# High Graduation Rates

There are many different graduation rates, and states are now mandated to track graduation with national standards. The main difference is the NGA (National Governors Association) state standards count the "special diplomas" earned by special education students. Regardless of which rate is used, Martin County still ranks among the very top in the state. Still, by breaking down the rates by ethnicity, it's clear work needs to be done by our community to ensure no student falls through the cracks.

**Martin County  
Graduation Rate  
in  
2010-2011:  
95.2%**

**Florida  
Graduation Rate  
in  
2010-2011:  
80.1%**



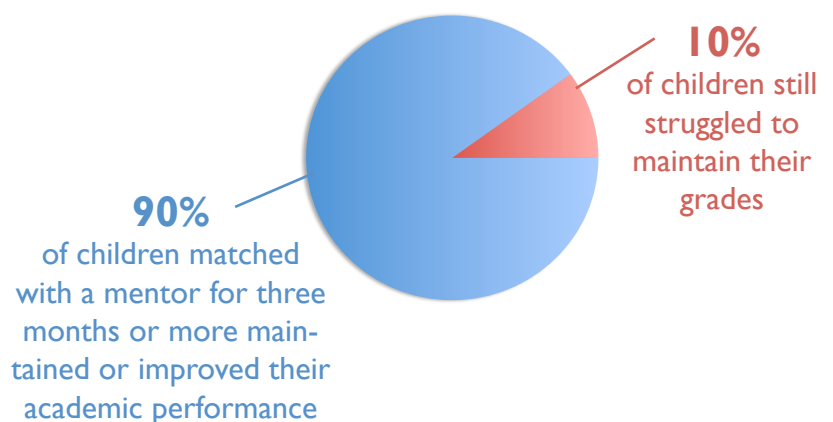
**Fewer Suspensions with the  
East Stuart Youth Initiative:**

**63%** of participants in the ALTOSS out-of-school suspension program had no more suspensions for the rest of the 2011 school year.

**Better Attendance taught  
early with the YMCA's  
YReads! program:**

**100%** of participants improved school attendance.

**Academic Improvement with  
Big Brothers Big Sisters:**



*Success Story*

When Jermaine Baker was growing up in Indiantown, he could have followed along a path toward drugs and crime—the lifestyle many of his peers were embracing. But when he was 8 years old, he became a member of the Indiantown branch at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Martin County.

Off the streets, the Club became Jermaine's safe haven. But when he got to high school, he realized he was going to really need to knuckle down to stay on track to graduate. Fortunately, the youth development staff at the Indiantown branch was there to boost his academic performance, and young Jermaine ultimately graduated from South Fork High School in 2005. Each day after school, Jermaine participated in Project Learn activities that reinforced and enhanced the skills he was developing in the classroom. Project Learn is based on Dr. Reginald Clark's research showing that students do much better academically when they spend their non-school hours engaged in fun, educational activities. Indeed, it was the tutoring that Jermaine received at the Club that enabled him to develop a daily habit of completing his homework on time and eventually enjoying his graduation day.

Today, Jermaine is the Teen Coordinator at the Indiantown branch, helping ensure today's generation of children in Indiantown are getting the homework help they need to be academically successful. He's also just launched a new bucket drumming group (known as the Buckineers) at the Indiantown Club, because he feels that young people should be well-rounded and active in the arts, athletics and technology.

Education remains an important part of Jermaine's life as well. He is continuing to take college classes at Indian River State College and is working toward a degree.

*Events & Meetings*

**May 2:** Student Art Exhibit Opening  
**Public welcome to meet the  
artists and tour our facility from  
4:30-6:30 p.m.!**

**May 11:** Free training on child  
abuse prevention by Guardians for  
New Futures, Inc., 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
in the CSCMC Community Room.  
RSVP by May 4 to [smacera@cscmc.org](mailto:smacera@cscmc.org).

**This Summer:** Free SPLASH  
swimming lesson vouchers will be  
available. (Stay tuned to learn more!)

Want to schedule a free Lunch and Learn for  
your club or homeowner's association? Contact  
Suzanne Wentley at [swentley@cscmc.org](mailto:swentley@cscmc.org)!

*Council  
News*

With a successful State of the Child Symposium held on April 27 in our new building, the staff of the Children's Services Council of Martin County has begun the research and data-collection for the new strategic plan. Every five years, we encourage the community to participate in our efforts to determine the results sought for Martin County's children, what programs will be most effective to reaching those goals, and how, as a community, we would be best able to measure our successes. This planning and analysis allows the Council to identify our funding priorities for the next five years, so that we can continue to provide local solutions for local needs. If you would like to learn more about this process, please contact Sarah Gosney, Director of Policy and Operations, at [sgosney@cscmc.org](mailto:sgosney@cscmc.org).

*Contact Us*

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