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Officials say that building is total loss

left before 911 answered." She said she has owned her unit there for 1 year.

Another resident, Andrea Grant, said she heard children screaming about a fire, then remembered her elderly neighbor and made sure he got out of the building.

"I told my son, you knock on these doors and I'll knock on the other doors," said Grant, 43, who lived on the second floor. "I found Mr. Grant [no relation to Andrea

Reunited families honored

Children back with parents from foster care

By Georgia East
SUNSENTINEL

They know what it's like to miss out on a birthday, a child's first steps and holidays with their sons and daughters.

Some were battling substance abuse or a mental illness while parenting. Their wakeup call, in some cases came when the state re-

moved their children and put them in foster care.

On Saturday, five Broward parents who have successfully reunited with their children will be recognized at a local luncheon to mark Family Reunification Week. Also being honored are the community partners whose services got them back on track.

In Broward, 885 children were removed from their homes from 2008 to 2009, while 659 children were reunited with their families.

Family Reunification Week, which runs through Saturday, is a new initiative by the state Department of

Children & Families. Broward is among 10 communities statewide celebrating with an activity.

ChildNet, a nonprofit that provides child welfare services in Broward County, two years ago began partnering with other local organizations to offer more specialized services. Among them: Children's Home Society, Minority Development and Empowerment Inc., Kids in Distress, Handerson Mental Health Center and Family Central.

"The timeliness has improved dramatically," ChildNet Vice President Larry

Rein said about their reunification services. "The key has been getting services into their homes much more quickly and intensely."

In addition, the Children's Services Council tries to strengthen families.

Not all reunions are successful. Last year, about 11 percent of the children re-entered the system.

Rein said that while they look forward to successful reunions, the goal is a way to ensure that a child is safe.

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Father's CPR helped save son

Boy entangled in hammock

By Juan Ortega
SUNSENTINEL

» DAVIE » A newly released police report provides details in an incident where a 13-year-old boy became entangled in a hammock and was saved by his father and emergency responders.

The boy, whose name was