



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release  
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### ***MAY IS NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH Broward County Foster Parents Honored at 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Appreciation Event***



Joe Rogers, foster parent-turned-adoptive parent shares his adoption story with foster parents. Rogers is a ChildNet Board Member and Chief Operating Officer at Broward Health



Broward foster parent Eugenia Welch with former foster youth & guest speaker Francisco Nelson and Candelaria Mota, ChildNet's Foster Home Recruitment Coordinator



Foster Parents Mark and Susana Brooks

PLANTATION – Across Broward County there are more than 500 foster homes where phenomenal individuals are serving as foster parents by helping foster children build brighter futures. Their incredible dedication and commitment to Broward County's abused children was recognized on May 5<sup>th</sup> at ChildNet's Ninth Annual Foster Parent Retention & Appreciation Conference at the Global Grille and Event Center in Fort Lauderdale.

Foster parents like Eugenia Welch, received special recognition for the years of service to Broward County's abused children. Today, Ms. Welch gives back through fostering because years ago she needed foster parents to care for her biological children while she focused on rebuilding her life. Eugenia says that being a foster parent is a way of giving back and urges others to consider fostering. "Foster Care isn't about taking kids away from their parents but helping both the children and parents rebuild their lives," said Eugenia. "I'm fully aware of the help foster parents provide because there was a difficult time in my past when a generous individual cared for my children, while I got myself together."

The event's guest speakers include Francisco Nelson, Eugenia's former foster son and owner of Francisco Nelson Creativity Production (FNCP) and Joe Rogers, foster parent-turned-adoptive parent and Chief Operating Officer at Broward Health. Both men also serve on ChildNet's Board of Directors. One of the evening's unforgettable moments was when Sue Redfern, a Broward resident who has been fostering for 19 years, was surprised with a heartwarming video message from her former foster children. During the Cinco de Mayo themed event complimentary hotel stays, restaurant gift certificates, festive gift baskets and department store gift cards were raffled off to more than thirty lucky foster parents.

ChildNet is the private, not for profit organization that administers the child welfare system in Broward County. Its mission is to protect Broward's abused, abandoned and neglected children. ChildNet manages the cases of approximately 2,000 children and their caregivers and delivers a comprehensive local system of care through subcontracts with more than 30 social service agencies. Since its founding in 2003, Broward County's abused children are safer, their placements are more stable and they move to permanent, loving homes more quickly. ChildNet is accredited by the Council on Accreditation. For more information about ChildNet and its services, visit [www.ChildNet.us](http://www.ChildNet.us) or call (954) 414-6000.

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