

# Heart Gallery Bulletin

## April 2026



Children & Family Services  
Heart Gallery of Pinellas & Pasco

### A note from The Heart Gallery:

April was a busy and exciting month for the Heart Gallery, filled with meaningful connections, creative expression, education, and community celebration. Throughout the month, we went live on Tampa Bay 28 to spread the word about Bear Bowl, presented to USF's Case Management class, hosted a Heart Art session at Florida CraftArt, and attended impactful trainings focused on empowered storytelling and trauma-informed care. We were thrilled to host our 3rd annual Bear Bowl, which was a huge success! We are deeply thankful to all of the donors, supporters, volunteers, and attendees who helped make it possible. The event allowed us to reconnect with old friends, meet new ones, and further our mission in a big way.

**A big shoutout to** Shelby Panek and Melanie Hoffman of Gulf Coast JFCS for their help securing raffle basket donations. Their sour support made a meaningful difference in the success of Bear Bowl!

**Did you know...** We regularly update Heart Gallery displays to keep them fresh, accurate, and reflective of the children currently waiting, ensuring each exhibit continues to spark meaningful conversations and connections. This month we updated displays at Countryside Mall, St Raphael Catholic Church, Allendale United Methodist Church, Temple Beth El, and Romp n Roll.

**Did you hear the big news...** Bear Bowl raised upwards of \$30,000 for the Heart Gallery! These funds will go directly back to the Heart Gallery to support our mission of finding local children their forever families.



United Way of Pasco County



### Stay in touch :



Heart Gallery of  
Pinellas & Pasco



@heartgallery\_pinellaspasco



heartgallerykids@gcjfcs.org

### Facts & Figures

**The difference your support makes...**

Heart Gallery Adoptions: **505**

Total number of pending adoptions: **83**

**Do you have room in your heart & home for a child in need of a forever family?**



# HEART GALLERY UPCOMING EVENTS



## Month of May

### Happy National Foster Care Awareness Month!

- This month is dedicated to raising awareness of foster care, honoring foster parents, and supporting professionals, volunteers, and programs that serve children in care.



**WED  
5/06**

### Tampa Bay Rays

- 1:10 pm
- Baseball Game and Post Adoption Event
- 1 Tropicana Drive, St Petersburg FL



**MON  
6/01**

### Tampa Bay Rays

- 6:40pm
- Baseball Game and Post Adoption Event
- 1 Tropicana Drive, St Petersburg FL



**SAT  
6/27**

### Tampa Bay Rays

- 6:10pm
- Baseball Game and Post Adoption Event
- 1 Tropicana Drive, St Petersburg FL



# HEART GALLERY SHINING STARS



Ashlynn hard at work during her Heart Art session

## Meet Ashlynn

LSF - 11024753

Ashlynn is a vibrant 13-year-old Caucasian girl whose bright personality and creativity shine through in everything she does. She loves roller skating, gymnastics, arts and crafts, and playing with her Barbie dolls. She also enjoys reading, comics, and hopes to become a teacher one day so she can share her love of learning. She thrives in environments where she feels heard, supported, and part of a loving team. With consistent support and encouragement, Ashlynn will continue to grow, develop her strengths, and move confidently toward her future.



Jillian and Hana pictured with Tampa Bay 28 hosts, Deiah Riley and Andrew Kinsey

## Sharing the Heart Gallery Mission on Tampa Bay 28

The Heart Gallery recently had the opportunity to go live on Tampa Bay 28, reaching viewers across the community to share our mission and elevate the voices of youth waiting for their forever families. Jillian Collins, Heart Gallery Coordinator, appeared on the segment alongside Hana Cowart, Director of Corporate and Community Engagement at Gulf Coast JFCS, where they discussed the impact of the Heart Gallery, the importance of creative advocacy, and how the community can get involved.

During the segment, the team highlighted Allyson, a 16-year-old youth currently waiting for her forever family, and proudly featured her Heart Art, demonstrating how art can be a powerful way for youth to express themselves and tell their stories. We are incredibly thankful for the opportunity to share our mission on live television and connect with new audiences throughout Tampa Bay.

Behind the scenes, Haley Cook, Gulf Coast JFCS Marketing and Communications Manager, provided essential support to help make the segment possible. This collaborative effort allowed us to spread awareness, uplift youth voice, and continue reminding our community that every child deserves belonging, connection, and unconditional love.

## WANT TO SUPPORT THE HEART GALLERY BUT DON'T KNOW HOW?

- **Host or connect us with a host** for a gathering that celebrates how the Heart Gallery of Pinellas and Pasco helps make adoption from foster care possible.
- **Give or rally support** to raise \$1,000 toward our Bear Hugs Adoption Month fundraising goal, helping us recruit loving families for children waiting in foster care.
- **Engage with us** online by liking, commenting on, and sharing the Heart Gallery of Pinellas and Pasco's social media posts.