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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **CHILDREN'S FORUM RECEIVES CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN AWARD FROM THE CHILDREN'S TRUST**

**TALLAHASSEE, FL (November 10, 2011)** The Children's Forum, a nonprofit organization that provides leadership and advocacy to achieve high-quality and accessible early care and education and afterschool services for all children, has received a *Champions for Children* award from The Children's Trust in the Excellence in School Readiness Programming category. The award honors individuals and programs that have made extraordinary efforts on behalf of children and families and was presented to the Children's Forum at the seventh annual *Champions for Children* Awards Ceremony on November 4th in Miami, Florida.

As a key partner in The Children's Trust Quality Counts initiative that aims to improve the quality of early care and education programs in Miami-Dade County, the Children's Forum employs specially trained career advisors of the Quality Counts Career Center. These career advisors meet with teachers and directors of child care programs to help them assess their strengths, review their educational backgrounds, set education and career goals, provide scholarships and encourage them to achieve their dreams of pursuing a career as a professional early childhood educator.

“We are humbled to receive the ‘*Champions for Children*’ award,” said Phyllis Kalifeh, president and CEO of the Children’s Forum. “We thank The Children’s Trust for their visionary leadership and accept this award on behalf of all of our partners in Quality Counts. Our collaborative efforts are making a difference and the children are the real winners.”

Quality Counts is a voluntary quality rating improvement system that reviews centers and family child care programs according to clearly defined, high quality standards using a 5 Star method of evaluation, and offers supports and incentives to help programs reach their goals. Areas evaluated through self-study and formal rating include the program learning environment, staff educational qualifications, adult-child ratios and group sizes, family engagement, program administration and curriculum.

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### **About the Children’s Forum**

The Children’s Forum is a statewide, not-for-profit organization with an uncompromising vision to make Florida a state where children grow and thrive in quality environments and where families have access to information, resources, and options to assist them in their parenting roles. Through a broad array of programs, research and advocacy, the Forum is committed to achieving our vision by targeting and supporting those who care for and educate our children daily; the early care and education workforce.

### **About The Children’s Trust**

The Children’s Trust is a dedicated source of funding created by voter referendum in 2002 to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County by making strategic investments in their future – because all children are our children. The Trust focuses its investments in the areas of health, development and safety and to increasing parental and community responsibility in children.