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Literacy Empowers All Families (LEAF) Bookworm Visits Children First to Help Stuff Backpacks with School Supplies for Children Starting Kindergarten in the Fall

Who: [Literacy Empowers All Families \(LEAF\)](#)

What: Leaf the Bookworm Supports Literacy at Children First

The LEAF program mascot, “Leaf the Bookworm” visited Children First on May 23 to help support literacy development for young children by stuffing backpacks with school supplies and handing them out to children enrolled at Children First.

Children First with the help of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and other LEAF partners including the Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County will distribute 1,200 backpacks filled with needed supplies, information and books to children who will start Kindergarten in the fall.

Where: Children First, Orange Avenue, Sarasota

About LEAF: The Community Foundation of Sarasota County along with Sarasota early learning and education communities recognized the importance of early intervention and came together to establish the [Literacy Empowers All Families \(LEAF\)](#) program. The comprehensive literacy initiative is funded by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and is supported by a number of community partners including the Sarasota County School Board, Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County, Sarasota County Library System and Children First. This multi-year commitment to reading and learning for children, parents and educators “connects the dots” from birth through middle school and unites early child care providers, the libraries, and the Sarasota County school district in a unified approach to serving at-risk families.

About Children First: Children First is a private, charitable, non-profit organization that serves over 600 of Sarasota County’s most vulnerable children, birth to five years of age, and their families. Services are provided at multiple locations throughout Sarasota County. Visit www.childrenfirst.net for more information.

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Images Attached:

- Leaf the Bookworm pictured with Children First’s Early Childhood Advisory committee. Back row, left to right: Wendy Harris, Diana Williams, Emily Carr-Osborn, Leaf, Monica Marino, Andrea DiBello, Brigid Malecki, Sonia Azar. Front row, left to right: Michelle Bundy, Jodi Osgood, Judy Brown
- Leaf the Bookworm helps teacher Jodi Osgood classroom at Children First hand out backpacks to students. Children pictured from top left corner: Courtney Smith (pink flowered shirt), Christina Steele (pink shirt), Takurian Smith (black #3 shirt), Nyla Hugan (purple shirt).