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FORTY CARROTS HITS A HOME RUN WITH THE RAYS BASEBALL FOUNDATION

Renewal of \$5,000 grant keeps Parenting Education Vans Rolling

May 20, 2013 – The Rays Baseball Foundation has awarded Forty Carrots Family Center a grant of \$5,000 to underwrite transportation costs for its community outreach *On Wheels* Parenting Program that brightens the future of thousands of area children annually. Forty Carrots Family Center's *On Wheels* Parenting Program travels into the community five days a week fostering essential parent-child bonds, preventing child abuse and increasing school readiness for children from all walks of life.

"The Rays Baseball Foundation is proud to partner with Forty Carrots Family Center and support their work strengthening families. We look forward to the positive impact the *On Wheels* Parenting Program will have in the community," said Suzanne Luecke, Executive Director Rays Baseball Foundation.

Forty Carrots *On Wheels* program reaches families via two vans that travel to locations throughout Sarasota and Manatee counties daily making parenting education accessible by bringing free classes to clients where they live, work and study. For example, teen parents participate at their high school during their regularly scheduled health class. Young, pregnant homeless mothers are able to participate at their place of temporary shelter. All families can participate in classes at Sarasota County Libraries.

Grant funding received from The Rays Baseball Foundation will ensure that the Forty Carrots vans are able to carry parenting educators and developmentally appropriate play and learning materials to the families who need this crucial program. Forty Carrots' two vans cover 350 miles combined weekly throughout Sarasota and Manatee Counties and serve approximately 2,700 individuals in the course of a year, many of them week after week.

Other funders of Forty Carrots Parenting Program *On Wheels* include Sarasota County Government, The Roberta Leventhal Sudakoff Foundation, The Wilson-Wood Foundation, and The Jerome & Mildred Paddock Foundation.

Forty Carrots offers a variety of classes for families with children ages 0-5 at their Kane Campus (1500 South Tuttle Avenue, Sarasota) and at all eight Sarasota County Libraries. A complete listing of classes can be found at www.fortycarrots.org or by calling 365-7716. Forty Carrots Family Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening families through educational programs for parents, children and professionals in the field.

The Rays Baseball Foundation is committed to supporting youth and education programs throughout the Tampa Bay region. The Rays Community Fund Grant Program provides assistance to local non-profits in the Tampa Bay region. Grants up to \$5,000 are awarded through this program. These funds help add to and support current programs offered by community-based non-profit organizations. More information is available at www.raysbaseball.com.

PHOTO ATTACHED: From left to right: Rays third baseman Evan Longoria; Forty Carrots Development Director, Jennifer Abbott; Rays pitcher Joel Peralta; Rays Baseball Foundation Executive Director Suzanne Luecke. Background, Rays broadcaster Neil Solondz.

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