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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Manatee County children and families strengthened through \$9,000 grant

**(SARASOTA, FL - AUGUST 8, 2019)** Forty Carrots Family Center has been awarded a \$9,000 grant from John J. Gorr Foundation (Alexandra St. Paul, Trustee) of Manatee Community Foundation to fund its Partners in Play® (PIP) parenting education groups at Manatee County Public Libraries.

The PIP program is designed to empower parents to strengthen the bond between parents and children (babies, toddlers and young children) by offering a safe, developmentally appropriate and creative play experience, within a high-quality learning environment guided by professional Parenting Educators who provide resources, referrals, and support within the context of parent-child playtime.

"Providing support to children and their caregivers during those early years of life is essential to building strong families and communities," said Forty Carrots CEO Michelle Kapreilian. "With the Manatee Community Foundation's support, our Partners in Play® groups expand early learning for children and fortify relationships between children and caregivers that ultimately reduce the risk of abuse and neglect and promote healthy child development necessary for future success in school and life."

With 88 percent of Manatee County children in PIP not enrolled in preschool, PIP enhances child learning out of school and at home, building the foundations for lifelong learning and empowering parents to be their child's first teacher. PIP programs are at 6 library locations in Manatee County and 9 library locations in Sarasota County, serving more than 3,600 clients annually at no cost to families. PIP groups are open to parents, family members, caregivers and children ages 0-5, from all backgrounds and socio-economic levels.

**ABOUT FORTY CARROTS** - Since 1993, Forty Carrots Family Center has served the Sarasota & Manatee communities by providing children with good beginnings that last a lifetime through its expertise in Parenting Education, Mental Health Services, and Early Childhood Education. Rated 4-Stars by Charity Navigator, Forty Carrots fundraises to provide these services to families from all walks of life, with 93% of families receiving free services. Visit [fortycarrots.org](http://fortycarrots.org) for more information.

**ABOUT MANATEE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION** - Manatee Community Foundation partners with our citizens to strengthen and enhance our community through philanthropy, education, and service—now and forever. Since 1998, the Foundation has awarded more than \$27 million in grants and scholarships. For more information, visit [ManateeCF.org](http://ManateeCF.org) or call (941) 747-7765.



Forty Carrots Parenting Education Director, Laura Josephson, talking with a family a Braden River Library during Partners in Play®