



Children's Board  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

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FAMILY  
RESOURCE CENTERS



## Brandon Center Success Story

# Supporting Life's Transitions



### 5 Protective Factors: Concrete Support in Times of Need

*Children's Board Family Resource Centers are funded by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County and administered by the Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County. Managing partners include: Champions for Children, Children's Home Network, Family Community Advisory Councils, REACHUP, Inc. and St. Joseph's Children's Wellness and Safety Center.*

**All programs and services are at no charge to families and individuals.**



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In 2011, Natalia arrived from another country to Florida and was eager to learn English. She found out that the Children's Board Family Resource Centers in Brandon provided ESOL classes. She took the classe and began attending other adult education classes that were offered at the time.

Natalia would bring her stepdaughter, who was 9 years old, to participate in ESOL playgroup. During that time, her stepdaughter was going through a difficult transition. The Center became a fun place that offered a disatraction from her situation.

In 2015, Natalia learned that she was pregnant! She returned to the Center to attend prenatal classes offered by Champions for Children. When Samuel was born, she brought him to Baby Café. Experiencing breastfeeding challenges, she felt very frusrated and sad. She says, "Baby Café helped me get through that time, they provided the support and information that I needed!"

Natalia and Samuel also enjoyed Infant Massage, Baby & Me, Growing Together, and Music & More. She says, "He has benefited here – he is more social, sings with other kids, knows when he needs to clean up – he is happy here!" The registration process and ASQ are very important and beneficial. Samuel did not start walking until he was 18 months old. Thankfully, she was able to speak with Beatriz Aponte, a child development specialist. Beatriz explained milestones and answered questions. She then referred him to Early Steps. In the meantime, Natalia continued to attend the classes, model the behavior, use activity sheets, and get involved in other programs. When Early Steps finally arrived she exclaimed, "He was already walking and did great during the evaluation so he didn't qualify!"

Consistency was key for Samuel's development. To best support him, Natalia shares, "If I can't bring him, my husband, Adrian, brings him to the classes and registrations. At first Adrian wasn't involved with Samuel's activities. But now, he enjoys coming here. I can see how happy he is! He has learned a lot. He is taking care of Samuel while I attend a job training program. The Center has been the greatest support that I have had! When I arrived to this country, I was here alone. At the Center, I socialized, met people, and made friends. I fell in love with this Center!"

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