

SUNRISE TALK

Foster Children Celebrate Chanukah With Snow, Music at JAFCO Children's Village

by Sharon Aron Baron • December 24, 2025



Children playing in the snow. {JAFCO}

Dozens of foster children living at JAFCO Children's Village celebrated Chanukah on December 18 with a winter-themed festival that transformed South Florida into a snowy holiday scene.

The annual celebration, sponsored by Plantation residents Julie and Howard Talenfeld, brought together foster children currently living at JAFCO Children's Village, as well as children who have been adopted or placed in foster care through JAFCO programs. The Talenfelds have supported the Chanukah event for more than a decade, continuing a family tradition aimed at creating joyful memories for children in care.

The event featured a massive mound of snow — 15 tons in total — along with a menorah lighting, music from a DJ, sufganiyot, latkes, and other traditional Chanukah foods. About 250 children, families, staff members, clients, and JAFCO and Foundation board members attended.

"We are so happy to have the opportunity to put smiles on the children's faces at JAFCO," Julie and Howard Talenfeld said in a statement. "It's a wonderful tradition celebrating with a snow fight."

Children bundled up to play in the snow, an experience rare in South Florida, while families and supporters gathered to mark the holiday together. Organizers said the event reflects the broader support JAFCO receives from donors and volunteers, helping ensure children in foster care grow up in a safe, nurturing environment with around-the-clock care.



Justin Kohlhagen, JAFCO Executive Director, Stewart Greenberg, Chair, JAFCO Village Board of Trustees. Maurice Plough, Immediate Past Chair, JAFCO Village Board of Trustees, Amy Sylvestsky, Chair, JAFCO Children's Ability Center. (JAFCO)

JAFCO's mission is to provide care, safety, and support to children and families – within the Jewish community and beyond – who are impacted by abuse, neglect, trauma, or developmental disabilities, giving every child a place to belong.