

# CHS in the News



## Duval County: Local students benefit from mentorship program

*Published January 27, 2020*

DUVAL COUNTY, Fla. — Local students are receiving valuable lessons outside of the classroom.

In Duval County, Children's Home Society of Florida (CHS) mentors are empowering children to reach their full potential.

S.P.A.R.K. is a 13-week mentorship program for boys and girls between the ages 11 and 17 who may not live with their biological parents.

S.P.A.R.K. stands for Speaking to the Potential, Ability and Resilience inside every kid.

The small team of four mentors is dedicated to helping teens develop appropriate boundaries, make good choices and prepare themselves for a stronger and brighter future.

More than 200 students have found support and guidance through S.P.A.R.K.

The program said the main focus is to reduce risky behavior. Mentor and educator Peggy Henderson said that includes preventing teen pregnancy.

“Studies have been shown that kids that are in foster care have a 48% higher risk of becoming pregnant, risk-taking behaviors,” Henderson said.

During group sessions, topics of discussion include building healthy relationships, bullying, overcoming trauma, safe-sex education and growing self-confidence.

Henderson said it's rewarding to see the children blossom.

“I think every kid can benefit from it,” Henderson said. “It's an opportunity for kids to just be the best that they can be and to really shine.”

If you'd like to learn more about the program, visit [www.chsfl.org](http://www.chsfl.org).

**chsfl.org**