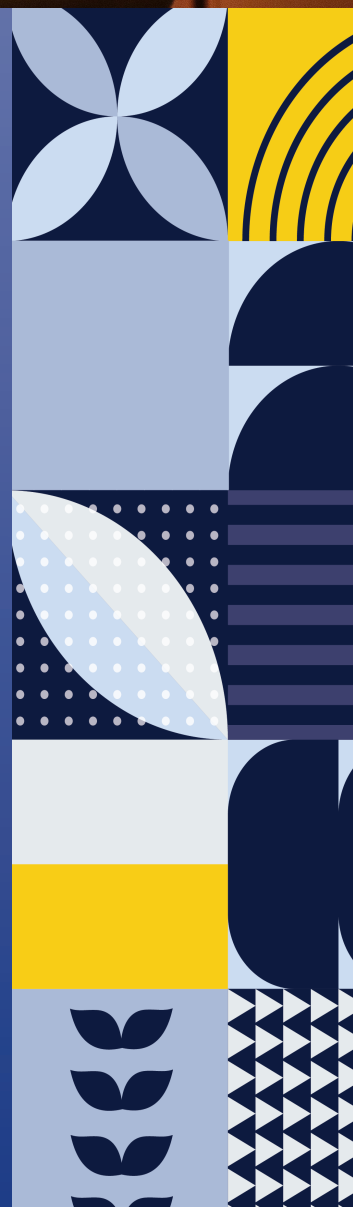


ANNUAL REPORT 23-24

Vision, Growth & Provision as we celebrate 20 years



OUR MISSION

Suncoast Voices for Children provides for the unmet physical, psychological, educational, and social needs of abused, abandoned, and neglected children in Pinellas and Pasco Counties.

It was founded by two Guardians ad Litem, Donna Gaffney and Sandra Killian, who were concerned child advocates. They saw that vulnerable children involved in the dependency system had many unmet needs and wanted to assist them. Suncoast Voices was born of that great need.

We are one of the few non-profit organizations that works on the front end to be the voice for every vulnerable child. Located in the Department of Children and Families, we work with Child Protection Investigators, case managers and other community agencies to keep children out of the dependency system, meet their needs while in the system, and give them what they need to succeed once they age out of the system.

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Letter from Board President and Executive Director

Holly Magnan & Amber Slusser

Dear Friends,

Reflecting on the past year fills us with gratitude as we reflect on the growth and pursuit of our mission.

At Suncoast Voices for Children, we are privileged to be able to help provide for the unmet needs of the abused, abandoned and neglected children in the sixth Judicial Circuit, Pinellas and Pasco Counties. We do this through our daily programs and services that have been created to support the child welfare agencies and deliver the essential items needed to PREVENT, PROTECT and PROVIDE for those who are at risk of entering, those who have entered and those who are transitioning out of foster care.

Last year, we were able to serve over 3,200 youth and young adults with over \$570,000 in support. We were able to help PREVENT over 2,100 youth from entering the foster care system by providing essential items such as beds, car seats, and safety equipment to the extended family members that lacked the resources to provide stable placement.

We were able to PROTECT not only the 1,000 children that received beds from the risks involved with co-sleeping, but we were able to help protect 180 homes with the safety items needed for Level I Licensing. We were able to PROVIDE activities such as soccer, camps, field trips and items that assisted with safe travel and education that let kids “be kids” for more than 1,600 youth and young adults that were in care and/or aging out of the system.

Furthermore, we are celebrating our 20th anniversary this year. What began as a vision that was started by two Guardians ad Litem twenty years ago has grown into a mission-driven organization that is fueled by the dedication, passion and commitment of staff and volunteers. Together, we work to create an environment where kids should not have to fear deprivation.

Delivering our mission would not have been possible without the remarkable generosity of our community. It is amazing to watch a community of individuals, businesses and community partners come together and BE A VOICE to impact lives.

As we embark on another year of service and growth, we remain deeply grateful for your support and partnership. Together, we will continue to make a profound impact on the communities that we serve because there will always be children in need of our help.

With gratitude,



Holly Magnan
Board President



Amber Slusser
Executive Director



Preventing & Protecting

SUNCOAST STORIES

A Family Kept Safe

Blake, Cameron and Latasha came into care in 2023 after their mother was shot and killed in front of them. One of the children suffered a gunshot wound to her shoulder. The kids were placed with their maternal aunt who was working towards adopting all three children. Voices helped provide the family with beds, dressers, Level I safety items, diapers and food to help these kids feel safe and cared for to begin their path of healing.

Laura's Story

Laura, 17, came into care at the age of 15 because her mother knowingly allowed a 35-year-old man to sleep with her daughter. Laura then got pregnant, and all the children were removed from the home. Laura was kept out of school for over a year but since coming into care at a group home for teen moms, she went back to school, maintained her grades and graduated this past May. Voices was able to help Laura feel special at graduation by giving her a gift certificate to get her hair and nails done as well as purchasing a dress. Voices also provided Laura with a laptop to set her up for success when she started St. Petersburg College.

YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION

With your help, Voices has helped to keep more children safely out of foster care than ever before, along with helping children in foster care receive everything you would want for your own children and grandchildren.

Total: 3,212 \$573,249

Safe with Family 2,192 youth, \$325,072

Voices provides beds, pack 'n plays, safety equipment and more to help safe, loving grandparents, aunts and uncles to take custody of the children in their family to keep them out of foster care. Voices provided over 1,000 beds last year alone!

Level I Licensing Household Safety 180 homes, \$24,505

Voices provides homes with safety items to help keep kids safe with a relative caregiver and help prevent them from entering the foster care system.

Clothes and Food 1,115 youth, \$78,313

Voices provides emergency food and clothing access when food pantries and other services aren't accessible.

Safe Travel 69 youth, \$7,580

Voices provides young people with bikes, bike helmets, strollers, airline tickets, bus passes and more.

Education 228 youth, \$14,470

Voices provides children with uniforms, laptops, tablets, backpacks, school supplies, technical school supplies, and more.

Opportunity Passport 141 youth, \$100,294

Learn more about this financial education and savings match program on page 4!

Let Kids Be Kids 89 youth, \$20,527

Voices provides children with access to activities, camps, music lessons, basketball shoes, prom dresses, field trips, and more that are not funded by the State of Florida.

Health & Legal 9 youth, \$2,488

Voices helps children receive assistance that isn't covered by insurance like dental anesthesia, as well as help with legal fees for youth who have completed community service and who are working toward education and career goals.

This year, 91% of all funds were spent on services for children who were either in foster care or at risk of entering foster care by providing them with a wide variety of items – from diapers to tutoring; music lessons to Tae Kwon Do; birthday cakes to eyeglasses; beds and car seats to graduation fees. The needs are not always predictable, but to date, we are proud to say that we have met every request that fits within our mission.



STYLE VOICED

Many children don't have time to pack a bag before being displaced from their home or removed from a dangerous situation and leave with nothing but what they are wearing. The Style Voiced Clothing Program provides immediate access to four outfits, toiletries and other supplies to children entering foster care or at risk of entering care.

There are five Style Voiced Closets that are located within the Department of Children and Families and Family Support Services' Offices in Largo, Trinity and Dade City. These locations provide either shopping experiences or grab and go bags ready to assist children in crisis.



Providing When It's Needed Most

A SUNCOAST STORY

Sahira and Ceraya came into placement because one of them ingested cocaine and the other was physically abused. They were fortunate to be able to be placed with their aunt but unfortunately, she did not have the financial means to provide for them yet because she just started a new job. With the children's mother refusing to give the caregiver the children's clothes, Voices was able to provide clothing and shoes for both children to have the essentials that they needed to feel a sense of normalcy.



OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT

Young people aging out of foster care often face many challenges and lack the basic financial skills necessary for economic success.

Opportunity Passport™ is a program through the Annie E. Casey Foundation that focuses on improving the well-being of youth transitioning from foster care. Partnering with United Way Suncoast and Ready for Life, we provide a financial literacy program that gives young adults a critical chance to manage their finances, interact with the mainstream banking system and have access to a savings match to purchase assets.

Our partners at United Way Suncoast offer their Financial Coaching program to these young adults and assist in providing the \$3,000 savings match to all Opportunity Passport graduates through our three-year funding commitment.

All Time Opportunity Passport Totals

258 matches, \$190,549 match dollars with a total \$381,098 in assets purchased

2023-2024 Fiscal Year Highlights | 141 Participants | Match Dollars



\$31,076
Vehicles



\$12,541
Housing



\$5,513
Education



\$19,205
Credit Building



\$1,169
Small Business

New to the Program

- Started offering Renting an Apartment workshop
- Offered the first in-person class to engage more young men
- Offered Two-Day Career Event that provided young adults with the opportunity to develop and enhance their job readiness skills, go shopping for interview apparel and meet with workforce vendors

Survey Results:

85% of active participants, 116 young adults, responded to the Annual Voices Opportunity Passport Results Survey.

They reported the following achievements since entering the program:

- 61% opened a bank account
- 88% saved at least \$500 in a bank account
- 73% increased their credit score

A man with a beard, wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans, stands outdoors with his hands on his hips. The background is a blurred natural setting. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue filter.

Creating Life Changing Impact

A SUNCOAST STORY

Tikal was 18 years old, unemployed and had been living in multiple shelters, couch hopping and sleeping outside when he started Opportunity Passport. Due to his instability, he was unable to complete the online financial literacy training. Eventually he started working the overnight shift as a janitor at an events center. He also found a temporary place to live at his uncle's house so he could save some money. After several months he restarted financial literacy training. It wasn't easy to wake up 2 hours early to attend the classes before his night shift, but he finished.

He then participated in the Renting an Apartment class and learned about housing discrimination, rental scams, tenant and landlord responsibilities and the eviction process. He also earned an additional match of \$1,000 to use towards the security deposit on a new apartment. Tikal used the match the following weekend to get into his first apartment.

As stated by Tikal, "I'm really grateful for this program. This has helped me take a big step in life that I've been dreaming of since I was 15. Without it I could still be sleeping in shelters surrounded by strangers or outside sleeping on the concrete, but thanks to Opportunity Passport I've been slowly improving on my life every day."



2023 Voices of the Year

Brenda George and Julie Webster

Brenda George and Julie Webster founded 100 Women Who Care Pinellas County, which is part of a national alliance of giving circles that makes giving back easy and impactful. Every quarter, women throughout Pinellas County get together to dedicate \$100 and one hour of their time to learn about a local nonprofit. At the end of the evening, members decide, as a group, which local nonprofit will receive a donation of more than \$10,000. Now in its eleventh year, 100 Women Who Care Pinellas has donated over \$418,000 to more than 35 different charities.

Pastor Johnny Scott

Johnny Scott has served Generations Christian Church as the Senior Pastor since 2017. Johnny was ordained into ministry in 1999 at his home church, The Church at Mt. Gilead in Mooresville IN. Johnny's 'serve first' mentality is reflected in his urgent support for the needs of children in foster care in our community through foster care recruitment, adoption support, and hosting SVC's Style Voiced Pasco warehouse on Generation's campus. Members of GCC volunteer to support the program and assist with special events for children in foster care.

Board Members List:

Rita Becchetti
Morgan Camacho – Vice President
Carol Conway
Joe Esposito
Anne Michelle Frey
Donna Gaffney – Co-Founder
Tara Gaffney
Patrick Lainhart – Vice President
Karen Lewis - Secretary
Holly Magnan – President

Kari Mainelli - Treasurer
John Marvin
Shanae Thibeaou

Leadership Team:

Amy Baldwin
Shawn Burns II
Jeanne Joyner
Amber Slusser
Wendy Woolley

THANK YOU DONORS

Our donors and sponsors fuel our work and enable us to positively impact the lives of children in foster care. We appreciate their support, their generosity and their trust in us. Thank you to all our donors, including the following major contributors:

100 Women Who Care Pasco
AAA The Auto Club Group Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. John Adams
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American Legion Auxiliary Cross Bayou Post 252
Mr. Tony Amico and Ms. Rachel Antkowiak
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Mr. and Mrs. Charles and Cynthia Webb
Dr. Richard Wilkes and Tina Ruggiero
Mr. Russell Williams
Mr. and Mrs. Josh and Wendy Woolley
World Precision Instruments
Mr. Dylan Yasparro
Ms. Cara Zingre

Providing When It's Needed Most

A SUNCOAST STORY

Kaleb was removed due to the mother's mental health concerns and placed in a group home after being on the run for a month. His mother's rights were terminated, and his father had been in and out of prison his entire life. Attending school virtually, he did not have a laptop to complete schoolwork. He had been completing his schoolwork on his phone and on computers at his day placements. Voices helped provide Kaleb with a laptop so he could complete his schoolwork consistently and on time in order to avoid falling behind or risk failing.



20 YEARS STRONG

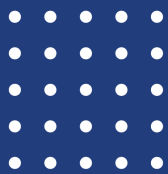
In the spring of 2004, the privatized agency providing services for the Florida Department of Children and Families collapsed creating an urgent need in services for those vulnerable children. Children were being bounced from one foster home to another and caseworkers were changing, sometimes monthly. They were laboring under huge caseloads and often unable to meet requirements for visiting children and assuring their safety. There were not enough resources to protect the rights and safety of the children. Many children were without essential clothing and there was no provision for providing for many of their other needs. Two Guardians ad Litem, Donna Gaffney and Sandra Killian, and several community leaders wanted to create a safety plan for children who were dependents of the State. Donna and Sandra created Suncoast Voices for Children Foundation, Inc. (SVC).

Operating out of donated space, with the assistance of an operating grant from Eckerd Family Foundation and a generous donation left from Phyllis Joyce, SVC began providing for the unmet needs of the children through referrals from case managers, Guardians ad Litem and Child Protection Investigators.

From helping keep 98 children in the home of a family member in 2006 to today, as we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we serve more than 3,500 youth each year through our programs and services. Throughout these two decades of growth, new programs, and deepened community connections, one constant has been Donna Gaffney's unwavering passion and commitment. Known for her dedication to giving back, Donna has been involved with many local organizations, including Florida Holocaust Museum, Redlands Christian Migrant Association, the Children's Home of Tampa, Guardian ad Litem, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and more. In 2002, she received the Excellence in Child Advocacy Award for her work representing and advocating for abused and neglected children in Florida's 6th Judicial Court. Donna remains an integral part of Suncoast Voices for Children and continues to advocate for children, ensuring their needs are met so they feel safe and cared for. Beyond her board role, Donna also serves on the Needs Request Committee, meeting weekly to review and approve submitted requests.

As Suncoast Voices continues to serve the needs of some of our most vulnerable children, Donna shares, "There will always be children in need of our help. That is where perspective comes in – by remembering the profound impact we can have on the life of a child! It is why we keep coming back year after year trying to engage and educate more people on how they can help."

We are privileged to work alongside Donna and continue to expand her vision and deliver such a critical mission within our community.





GROWING THE TEAM
WITH THE FIRST EMPLOYEE

2008



HELD OUR INAUGURAL
FUNDRAISING GALA

2016



STYLE VOICED
CLOTHING
CLOSET OPENS

2022

2024

HAPPY 20TH
ANNIVERSARY



OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT
LAUNCHES

2020

WELCOMED OUR FIRST
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

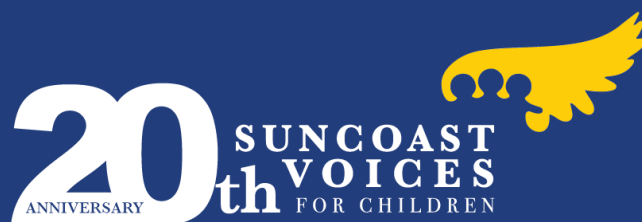
2017



SUNCOAST VOICES
LAUNCHES

2004





PREVENT • PROTECT • PROVIDE

It's Who We Are. It's What We Do

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