

GUARDIAN AD LITEM PROGRAM AND SPEAK UP FOR KIDS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

DECLARING MAY 2020 FOSTER CARE APPRECIATION MONTH

WHEREAS, the Guardian Ad Litem Program is a force of volunteers who advocate on behalf of children who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned by their caregivers; and

WHEREAS, Speak Up for Kids of Palm Beach County serves as exclusive nonprofit support funding wellness, normalcy, and therapeutic initiatives for children in care; and

WHEREAS, in 1984 Palm Beach County adopted the program and began with 15 volunteers and currently has a corps of greater than 600 volunteers serving the over 1,600 children in care; and

WHEREAS, in 2008 Speak Up for Kids of Palm Beach County was founded to fund gaps in needed services for child victims served by the Guardian ad Litem Program; and

WHEREAS, to illustrate the magnitude of the financial benefit of the collaboration between the Guardian Ad Litem Program and Speak Up for Kids brings to Florida, The services donated by Guardians across the state save Florida over \$18M in salaries and mileage reimbursement costs. That is greater than \$1M for Palm Beach County alone. The Guardian Ad Litem Program and Speak Up for Kids are making an impact in children's lives and the return on investment the program brings to the county is unparalleled; and

WHEREAS, Palm Beach County is a dynamic, multicultural county with strong social consciousness and a mission of "...ensuring the decisions we make today will have lasting value..." is not lost on the leadership of the Guardian Ad Litem Program or Speak Up for Kids, and, in fact, is extremely important as the collective intent of our programs is to protect the most vulnerable in our county by advocating for their best interest; and

WHEREAS, the Guardian Ad Litem Program and Speak Up for Kids are hereby recognized for their joint efforts and successes in standing united to ensure local children thrive,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA, assembled in regular session this _____ day of _____, 2020, that in Palm Beach County the Month of May is hereby proclaimed

Foster Care Appreciation Month

Speak Up for Kids, Guardian ad Litem Month

<https://speakupforkidspbc.org/#what-we-do>

SPEAK UP FOR THE KIDS INFO

Speak Up for Kids of Palm Beach County, Inc. is the exclusive 501(c)(3) fundraising arm for the Guardian ad Litem Program of Palm Beach County, Florida.

We champion best-interest child advocacy through the recruitment, training and retention of court-appointed volunteer child advocates. Through effective advocacy the cycles of abuse, violence, and crime are being broken one child at a time, and children's futures are being rewritten.

These "guardian angels" are committed solely to each child's emotional, educational, and physical well-being throughout dependency court proceedings as the only 100% objective voice, serving as 'the eyes and ears of the dependency court'.

GUARDIAN AD LITEM

<https://www.galpbcc.org/>

The Florida Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Program in Palm Beach County is a partnership of community advocates and professional staff providing a powerful voice on behalf of Florida's abused and neglected children. Guardian ad Litem Volunteers (GALs) are trained, court-appointed advocates for children who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected.

A Guardian ad Litem (GAL) is a trained, court-appointed volunteer who advocates objectively and solely for the best interests of children who are abused, abandoned or neglected and who are involved in dependency court proceedings.

A GAL serves as the eyes, ears and arms of the justice system. They identify the best possible result for each child whose care is the responsibility of the state.