

Application Form

Introduction

A Word version you may use to draft your application is available here. You must submit your final application through this portal.

The rubric that will be used to score your proposal is available for download.

A brief webinar giving an overview of this application can be viewed here.

Project Name*

Please give your proposal a short, descriptive title. This is how your request will appear throughout the PCF grant portal.

Suncoast Voices for Children - Request Committee funding for the needs of children in foster care.

Mission Statement*

Please write your organization's mission statement below. This should be no longer than one or two sentences.

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.

Is your organization headquartered in Clearwater?

Why PCF asks this: Given that the City of Clearwater is the funding source for this grant program, PCF may prioritize organizations headquartered in Clearwater or those that have a strong presence in the City.

No

Grant Start Date*

PCF expects to issue a contract to approved organizations in September 2023. If awarded with a contract issuance date of September 1, 2023, when would your organization begin to spend funds?

09/01/2023

Grant End Date*

PCF expects the grant period to be between 12 and 24 months for this process. Given this range, when would your organization expect to finish expending funds if awarded?

08/31/2025

Annual Operating Budget*

Please provide the amount of your annual operating budget, (expenditures only) for your entire organization.

\$997,000.00

Amount Requested*

The minimum grant request for this process is \$50,000.

The maximum grant request for this process is \$325,000.

If you request the full \$325,000, your organization should be able to demonstrate a *significant* impact to be made from these funds.

Please be sure that your grant request is proportional to your annual operating budget. If you have any questions about how much funding to request, please contact Jocelyn Howard at jhoward@pinellascf.org.

\$50,000.00

Programming

Programming Background*

Please describe the program that this grant would support and how it relates to your mission.

Example

Peer Counseling Services Inc. offers after-school support groups for middle schoolers and high schoolers. Below, Peer Counseling Services Inc. would describe what its programming is, how its programming works, and who is served.

Why PCF asks this: PCF wants to learn about what your organization does and how this work is related to carrying out your mission.

Suncoast Voices works with the Sheriff's Department Child Protection Investigators (CPI), Case Managers, and other community partners to keep children out of the dependency system or meet their needs while in the system. While it is sometimes necessary for safety reasons for the CPI Unit to remove children from parents, the disruption to the children's lives caused by the removal is immeasurable. The disruption can be reduced when the CPI identifies a safe extended family member or friend who can care for the child. Oftentimes, the family members and friends do not have a bed for each child, which is a requirement for the CPI to place the children. Voices provides beds in these cases to ensure that placements can occur. Voices also works with community partners to provide children who enter into foster care with access to items and opportunities not funded by the state, including clothes, car seats, music lessons, camp, extra curricular activities and more. Funds awarded would be used to provide items and services to meet the needs of children in, or at risk of entering, foster care.

Urgency*

Please describe how the proposed programming is addressing a time-sensitive community need. You may cite data sources.

Why PCF asks this: The City of Clearwater has indicated that this funding should be directed to programming addressing urgent needs.

When children are removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect in Clearwater, the first place they go is the Child Protection Division offices, where they wait while the investigators who determined they were at risk for abuse attempt to locate an appropriate placement for the children. If the investigators can't identify a safe, protective family member or friend, the children are placed into foster care. This assessment takes place before the children appear before the court for a "shelter hearing," an emergency review of removals that takes place every day, including weekends and holidays. Voices is the only organization operating out of these offices that fulfills requests for basic needs items that allow children to be safely placed with family members instead of foster care. Voices provides a number of items that are on hand at the offices that investigators can grab to make placements, such as pack n' plays, car seats and diapers and bottles. Being able to meet these needs before the shelter hearing means the difference between a child entering foster care or being able to stay with a family member. Keeping a child out of foster care limits their trauma during an already stressful and scary time.

History in Clearwater*

Please describe how long you've been providing services in the City of Clearwater, and the nature of such services.

Why PCF asks this: Given that the City of Clearwater is the funding source for this grant program, PCF may prioritize organizations headquartered in Clearwater or those that have a strong presence in the City.

Suncoast Voices for Children has been serving children and families in Clearwater since its inception in 2004. The process of reviewing and fulfilling requests is our flagship program. By funding services and items for children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse, abandonment, or neglect, we are able to meet their immediate needs in a timely manner. Starting in 2022, Voices began tracking requests by zip codes. Over the last 10 months, Voices served a total of 165 children in Clearwater - granting requests totaling \$39,720. The majority of these requests were for the following items:

- Beds and bedding
- Car seats
- Clothing
- Laptops
- Extra-curricular activities
- Food
- Birthday gifts

Language Capacity*

To what extent will your organization provide the proposed programming in languages other than English? Be specific as to written/digital materials and staff capabilities.

Why PCF asks this: Approximately 20% of Clearwater residents speak a language other than English in their homes (ACS Community Survey, 2021 1-yr Estimates). [msocom 1](#) PCF is interested in your ability to reach these residents.

Voices' partners at the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, the Department of Children, Families and Family Support Services, Lutheran Services of Florida, and Directions for Living all provide direct service workers who speak Spanish and use translation services if needed to work with families who speak languages other than English and Spanish. Thanks to this infrastructure, Voices is able to provide services to families who speak any language in the Clearwater area and throughout Pinellas and Pasco Counties.

Outcomes*

Define one to two outcomes already being measured by your organization in relation to the programming this grant would support. This should be the outcome of the overall programming itself. **Outcomes are not the number of people you will serve, but how they or their situation will change.**

"Outcomes - are specific, measurable statements that let you know when you have reached your goals. Outcome statements describe specific changes in your knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors you expect to occur as a result of your actions. Good outcome statements are specific, measurable, and realistic."

(W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide)

Example

80% of youth involved in peer counseling will show increased emotional intelligence after six months of participation.

Why PCF asks this: PCF considers measurable outcomes to be a cornerstone of effective social service programming. Tracking outcomes allows both an organization and its supporters to know how effective its programming is and helps an organization improve its programming over time.

Our goal is to provide for the previously unmet needs of children in foster care. Voices is proud to report that we have funded 100% of the requests that fall within the scope of our mission since our inception in 2004. Our ability to provide a quick turnaround means less time a child suffers with a toothache because the state refuses to pay for anesthesia. It means Voices has diapers and bottles in-house so that children do not go hungry or dirty while their cases are being reviewed. If awarded, this funding will allow us to continue a 100% success rate - even as the requests increase due to current economic stressors. The number of requests we receive each week has grown significantly, due in part to the housing crisis that continues to weigh on families in the community. Three years ago we averaged 12 requests per week. The last 6 months we have averaged 35 requests per week - triple the norm. Our target outcome is to serve 100% of the children that qualify for our help.

Measurements*

Explain what measurement tools you will use to evaluate the stated outcome(s) above. That is, how will your organization know it is achieving or not achieving the outcome(s) stated above? Stronger requests will use a validated tool or method of data collection.

Example

Peer Counseling Services administers the Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test before counseling begins, and in six-month intervals thereafter.

Why PCF asks this: PCF would like to know how the outcome(s) you've specified are measured, and if you used a validated tool that has been proven in usage outside your organization. If you've developed your own tool, please describe how it was made.

Voices works alongside the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Child Protection Division and the Family Support Services diversion service providers to identify children who have safe, loving family members who are able to take custody of children who would otherwise enter into foster care. Our community partners perform assessments developed by the Department of Children and Families to determine if homes are appropriate and if any interventions or services can correct identified deficits. Voices provides the requested services and items to every family that has been assessed to be appropriate to take custody that meets the organization's program criteria in order to place children with family.

Grant Specifics

Grant Impact*

How would this grant help your organization and its clients achieve the outcomes stated above? That is, what would you be able to do with this funding that you otherwise could not?

This has been copied from your LOI. Please expand in this question to describe how this grant expands services.

Why PCF asks this: The intention of this grant is to fund organizations providing support for individuals and families in Clearwater with emergency housing and social services needs. How that support happens, and how this grant could help, differs from organization to organization. PCF would like to know specifically how this grant would help your organization and the clients you serve.

According to the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, almost 3 million children “live in homes with no parent present (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The majority live with a relative; over half live with a grandparent.” Research shows that kids who are placed with safe family members instead of in foster care are much more likely to succeed as adults. However, loving aunts, uncles, and grandparents often can’t afford to take in children, or they don’t have the supplies required by law to take custody. If awarded, this grant will fund requests from Clearwater caregivers and provide for the increasing needs of children in foster care in the Clearwater community. Monies awarded will help to ensure family members have beds, car seats, safety equipment and other childcare essentials that are needed for our kids to stay with protective, Sheriff-approved relatives instead of entering foster care, which leads to better outcomes for our kids.

To date, Suncoast Voices has granted every single request that fits within our mission. However, these needs have increased significantly over the years. Last year, Voices saw a 27% increase in the total number of children served by the request committee. We know that keeping children in a familiar environment minimizes trauma. By funding necessary items (such as beds, car seats and school supplies) and opportunities (such as summer camp or music lessons) we can keep children with safe, familiar caregivers. This grant will ensure our ability to meet the growing needs in the Clearwater foster family community.

Reduction in Funding*

Due to limited funding, your request amount may not be fully awarded if it is moved forward in the grant process. How would reduced/partial funding impact your proposed program?

Why PCF asks this: The review committee that ultimately recommends proposals for funding may consider partial funding. PCF would like to know upfront what impact this would have on your proposal.

Partial funding would still provide growth opportunities for the request committee and help to ensure all requests are funded.

Sustainability*

Given that this funding is time-limited, how does your organization plan to sustain the programming expansion? If there is no sustainability plan, how would your organization effectively wind down the expansion when this funding ends?

Why PCF asks this: Due to the size and potential impact of this grant, PCF would like to know how clients would be supported after the grant period ends.

Recently, Voices has taken large steps toward expanding our donor base. In 2022, we hired our first Development Director who has already helped to create more awareness around our work in the community. She is cultivating relationships with private donors, family foundations and corporate sponsors. The Board of Directors also invested in the future by hiring a Director for our clothing closet program called 'Style Voiced'. This program will ultimately reduce costs by accepting gifts in kind (such as clothing and school supplies) that previously we purchased for children in need. Both of these roles strive to strengthen relationships within the community - ultimately leading to more donors, more volunteers, increased community awareness, opportunities for advancement, and stronger collaboration with community partners. However, cultivating relationships takes time and this grant would allow for time to identify prospects and build relationships that can carry the program even after the funding cycle ends.

Governance/Financials

Board List*

Please upload a current list of your organization's Board of Directors.

PDF and Word formats are accepted.

Voices Board of Directors.docx

Organization Budget*

Please upload your most recent, board-approved organizational budget. You may add any notes regarding your budget below.

PDF and Excel files are acceptable.

Voices Organization Budget.xlsx

Project Budget*

Please use [this template](#) to describe expenses for this program. You should use this template to provide a budget narrative as well, explaining the purpose of each expense and how it relates to the program.

The more specific your line items, the better. Any staff member(s) that would not be 100% funded by this grant should be shown with the time and effort that would be allocated to this grant.

Clearwater-Budget-Voices.xlsx

Capital Purchases*

Capital expenses in your proposal should be shown to remove barriers to expanding services. Please describe below:

1. What percentage of your request is capital?
2. Describe why capital purchases are needed, and how they *directly* support the programming described in this proposal.

If your request does not include capital purchases, write "N/A" below.

Why PCF asks this: Unlike other local opportunities using ARPA funding, this grant opportunity is not meant to primarily fund capital needs. While capital purchases are permitted, the acquisition must be connected to your programming and should be helping unlock operational resources.

N/A

We did not intend to attach an additional upload, but answering the question was required for submission. We have attached our 2022 Annual Report, which is the best summation of our organization's activities available, but it is 8 pages in length. Please disregard the report if it is not helpful or due to the length limitations outlined in the question prompt. Thank you for your consideration!

Additional Upload

Additional Upload*

If you have additional documents to support your application, you may upload them here. Please limit your upload to five pages. PDF files are accepted.

Voices 2022 Annual Report.pdf

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Voices Board of Directors.docx
- Voices Organization Budget.xlsx
- Clearwater-Budget-Voices.xlsx
- Voices 2022 Annual Report.pdf

Suncoast Voices for Children Foundation, Inc.
Board of Directors

Name/Board Position	Employer/Title
Travis Hadwin, <i>President</i>	Steward Partners Global Advisory, LLC, <i>Senior Vice President</i>
Kari Mainelli, <i>Treasurer</i>	Sabal Trust, <i>CFO</i>
Cynthia Faulhaber, <i>Immediate Past President</i>	N/A
Donna Gaffney, <i>Co-Founder</i>	N/A
Carol Conaway	N/A
Rita Becchetti	N/A
Tara Gaffney	N/A
Holly Magnan	Delta Construction Partners, <i>CFO</i>
The Honorable Frank Quesada	6th Judicial Circuit
Morgan Comacho	Power Design, Inc.
Anne Michelle Frey	Shorecrest Preparatory School, <i>Teacher</i>
Camesha Jones	<i>Student</i>
Karen Lewis	Franklin Templeton, <i>VP-IT</i>
Patrick Lainhart	New York Diamond Center
John Marvin	Education Executive
Vanessa Kasprzyk	Vanguard, <i>Sales Executive</i>
Shanae Graham	PuzzleHR, <i>HR Program Manager</i>
Rich Jenkins	Pasco County Government

**Suncoast Voices for Children
2023-24 Budget**

	2022-23 Budget
Contributed Support	
Individuals	86,250
Board Donations	16,500
Corporate Donations	60,000
Family Foundations	100,000
Civic Org. Donations	74,000
Gifts in Kind – Goods/Services	32,200
Donated use of Facility	9,000
Endowment int income	25,000
Foundation Grants	65,000
United Way- Pasco	25,000
United Way Suncoast	56,500
Interest Income	50
	549,500
Fundraising Support	
Letter Campaign	27,500
Gala	460,000
Fundraising events, other	25,000
Gala Expense	(60,000)
Other fundraising event expense	(5,000)
	447,500
Total Income	997,000

Program Expenses	
Children's Needs	381,336
Clearwater Children's Needs	47,664
Opportunity Passport	81,500
Restitution Project	30,000
Clothes Closet	52,000
Leadership Pasco Remodel	10,000
Young Adult Nonprofit Leadership Program	6,500
CPI of the Year	500
Program Awareness	5,900
Donated Program Material	15,000
	<u>630,400</u>
Salaries and Related Expenses	
Salaries and Wages	276,000
Payroll Taxes	21,000
Payroll Fees	1,050
	<u>298,050</u>
Other Personnel Expenses	
Professional Fees	100
Technical Support	200
	<u>300</u>
Non-Personnel Expenses	
Marketing Expense	2,000
Telephone & Telecommunications	360
Professional Services	18,900
Office Supplies	4,000
Computer/Software	8,500
Merchant Card Fees	900
Postage, Shipping, Delivery	1,300
	<u>35,960</u>
Occupancy Expense	
Opportunity Passport Office	3,000
Donated Facility	9,240
	<u>12,240</u>
Travel & Meeting Expenses	
Travel	10,000
Conference/Meeting	300
	<u>10,300</u>
Misc. Expense	
Depreciation expense	
Insurance	5,300
Other Expenses	550
Staff Development	3,500
	<u>9,350</u>
Business Expense	
Organization Expense	400
	<u>400</u>
Total Expenses	<u><u>997,000</u></u>
Net Income	<u><u>\$ -</u></u>

Budget Detail

ORGANIZATION NAME: Suncoast Voices for Children - 2023-2025

EXPENSES	Total Project Cost	ARPA Grant Request
1 Salaries		
Show your calculations. Include any project staff that will be paid a percentage of time from ARPA funds. Explain what will they do, how many hours will they work on the project.		
	\$100,000	\$ -
Salaries Sub-Total	\$ 100,000.00	\$ -
2 Fringe Benefits		
Show your calculations. Includes such items as FICA, medical, dental, life insurance, etc.		
	\$ -	\$ -
Fringe Benefits Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -
3 Contractual		
Show calculations for reimbursement. Include: funds to hire someone for the project who is not a member of the agency's staff; Name of person/company, if known; What will they do?		
	\$ -	\$ -
Contractual Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -
4 Equipment		
This is the category requesting to purchase a major piece of equipment such as a computer or copy machine and during the grant period, must be used primarily for the project. Explain: What is the specific item and how did you determine its cost? Why is this needed for the project? Please show any calculations.		
Equipment Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -
5 Travel		
Provide any travel costs and calculations. Include, for example, if you plan to reimburse project staff for local travel and/or to send for out of town training/conference. Show calculations.		
	\$ -	\$ -
Travel Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -
6 Supplies		
What specific items, how many, unit and extended cost? Include expendable items, including office supplies necessary for day to day project activities.		
Voices will dedicate 100% of ARPA funding to purchasing supplies and services for Clearwater children. Every request is unique, but common examples of items provided include beds, car seats, laptops, fees for extracurricular activities and camps, medical expenses not covered by insurance and more.		
Supplies Sub-Total	\$ 95,328.00	\$ 50,000.00
7 Other		
Includes miscellaneous items that do not fit into any other category such as, but not limited to, costs for printing, duplication of project-related materials. Provide details. Emergency Relief fits here.		

Other Expenses Subtotal	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 195,328.00	\$ 50,000.00
Difference between requested ARPA grant and project cost	\$	145,328.00



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Since 2004, Suncoast Voices for Children has met the needs of thousands of abused, abandoned and neglected children. Every week, Voices reviews dozens of requests submitted by Child Protection Investigators from the Pasco and Pinellas Sheriff's Offices (CPIs), case managers from Family Support Services and a host of other child advocates in Pinellas and Pasco County.

This past 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 birth certificates to tutoring; dance lessons to Tae Kwan Do; birthday cakes to eyeglasses; beds and car seats to graduation fees. The needs are not always predictable, but to date, SVC has met every request that fits within its mission.

Voices' Request Committee meets every single week throughout the year and immediately approves every request that fits within our mission, like this one:

REAL STORY

Newborn twins Bailey and Kailey were removed from their mother's care when she attempted suicide. By partnering with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, Voices was able to help the girls' grandmother take custody in the middle of the night by providing her with two cribs, baby gates, child safety locks, diapers, wipes, bottles formula and more.

YOUR GIFTS JUST KEEP GIVING

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.

Program Expenses 2022 | Total: 3,536 Youth Served | \$432,166.56



Safe With Family | 2508 youth | \$285,233

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 provide over 1,000 beds last year alone!



Clothes & Food | 508 youth | \$46,438

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



Let Kids Be Kids! | 102 youth | \$18,001

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.



Education | 61 youth | \$13,272

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



Safe Travel | 141 youth | \$10,941

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



Health & Legal | 134 youth | \$6,884

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



Opportunity Passport | 82 youth | \$51,396.56

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

REAL STORY

Joe, 8, and Angelo, 6, were placed with their aunt due to domestic violence in their parents' home. Voices provided the family with bunk beds and bedding so that the aunt could take custody, as well as child safety locks, a fire extinguisher and other safety equipment that helped the aunt become a "Level 1 Foster Parent" for Joe and Angelo to receive additional support for the children's care from the State of Florida. By partnering with the Pinellas and Pasco Sheriff's Offices and FSS to get connected with families in need, Voices has helped hundreds of families receive immediate access to safety equipment and enhanced funding to help keep families together.

THANK YOU DONORS YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Our donors 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 of our donors, including the following major contributors:

100 Women Who Care Pinellas County
Mr. and Mrs. John Adams
American Legion Auxiliary Cross Bayou Post
252
Mr. and Mrs. Darrin Anderson
The Anderson Group
Ms. Janice Band
Ms. Colleen Barger
Ms. Helen Barrot
Mr. and Mrs. Chris Barrott
Mrs. Rita Becchetti
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Masterson Family Foundation
Mr. William Matthews
Estate of Odette Mermet
Ms. Barbara Montgomery
New York Diamond Center
Ms. Angela O'Brien
Owen Electric
Mr. and Mrs. James Parent
Ms. Laura Parraga
Pasadena Liquors
Pasco County Sheriff's Office
Paul Reilly and Rose Baker Reilly Charitable
Trust
Ms. Dana Permuy
Ms. Juli Permuy
Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
Pinellas Education Foundation
Pinellas Federal Credit Union
Estate of Elsie Potts
Power Design Inc.
Professional Condo Concepts
The Honorable and Mrs. Frank Quesada
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United Way of Pasco County
United Way Suncoast
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The Werk
Dr. Richard Wilkes and Tina Ruggiero
Ms. Sabine Williams
Mr. Ron Wolfson and Ms. Judith
Woodworth
Woodie's Wash Shack
Ms. Christine Wyatt
Ms. Cara Zingre

HOW DO YOU SPELL \$UCCESS\$? OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT™!

Launched by Suncoast Voices in partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, United Way Suncoast, Ready for Life Pinellas and Cetera, Inc., this five-week financial literacy class is for youth aging out of foster care who are learning to live as independent adults. Graduates receive access to a financial coach provided by United Way Suncoast and a savings match up to \$3,000 each to reach their educational and career goals. These funds can be used toward cars, housing, small business expenses, credit building, health care expenses - anything that helps them navigate obstacles to becoming independent, successful adults.



Our partners at United Way Suncoast will continue to offer their Financial Coaching program to these young people, and also locked in a three-year funding commitment that will continue to provide the \$3,000 savings match to all Opportunity Passport graduates.



“
Opportunity Passport™ helped me save while replacing safety equipment and purchasing new equipment like saws, lawn mowers and leaf blowers for my business.
- Isaiah

ALL TIME OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT TOTALS

Total: \$202,400.06



\$109,916.38

Vehicles



\$22,343.04

Credit Building



\$7,886

Small Business



\$3,243.24

Education



\$37,691.40

Housing



\$12,440

Investments



\$6,080

Participant-Specific



\$2,800

Healthcare

STYLE VOICED CLOTHING PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

Suncoast Voices for Children is proud to take over the operation of the emergency clothing program to continue serving the immediate needs of our children who often enter foster care with only the clothes on their backs. The four Style Voiced “stores” are located within the Pinellas and Pasco County Sheriff’s Offices and Family Support Services’ offices in Largo, New Port Richey, Trinity and Dade City. The stores provide immediate access to four outfits, toiletries and other supplies to children entering foster care or at risk of entering care. Voices surveyed young adults who used clothing closets when they were in foster care to identify ways to make them even more welcoming. The young adults asked if we could design the closets like stores at the mall so they don’t feel like they’re getting charity. Young adults even selected the name of the program and designed the store logo! You can join the Style Voiced team by volunteering at the stores, creating a clothing and supply drive or helping us spread the word about the needs of our community’s children. Be sure to check out our social media and visit suncoastvoices.org/style for updates!

We owe special thanks to Elsie Potts, a child advocate and longtime supporter of Voices whose bequest made the program possible.



REAL STORY

How important is good hygiene, decent clothing and personal style to the children we serve? Thirteen-year-old Anthony has lived in 30 different foster homes during his 10-years in the system. For a period of time, he was bounced to a different home every night. He refused to go to school at one point because his only two pairs of pants and favorite shirt were worn and messy, and the only thing he had to wear on his feet were hand-me-down ladies’ shoes.

Voices paid \$400 for clothes, shoes, underwear and a bag to keep his property safe, all so he could return to school comfortably without being ashamed of how he looked to his schoolmates.



BE THEIR LIGHT

The 2022 Gala held at The Birchwood Grand Ballroom was a delightful and successful event themed around a special message to all our supporters – Be Their Light. In 2022, an average of three children in Pinellas and Pasco County were removed from their caregivers every day. When that happens, the only life these children have known - whether for four years or 14 - is gone. Whatever light was putting the twinkle in their young eyes has gone dark.

Suncoast Voices for Children in partnering with our friends at Power Design for something really special for our upcoming gala, which will be held on September 30th, 2023 at Power Design, located at 11600 9th St N, St. Petersburg, FL 33716. We're asking everyone we meet to step up for these children and be their light. They desperately need a reason to hope for happier times, for opportunities to just be kids - to have fun, be on a team, learn to play an instrument, ride a horse - or maybe find a forever family where they are cherished and feel safe. Voices allows you to be their light - individually and collectively - then step back and watch them shine.



LIGHTNING STRIKES VOICES TWICE!

Community activists in the Tampa Bay area are honored to be named as a Community Hero by the Lightning Foundation, both for the recognition and for the \$50,000 they receive for donation to their favorite charities. Voices Founder Donna Gaffney was so honored in February 2022. In 2004, Gaffney founded Suncoast Voices for Children and, under her guidance, Voices has raised over \$4.5 million to fulfill the needs of these at-risk youth, specifically to help children avoid foster care and support them if they are already in the system.

In December, the Lightning Foundation awarded Voices with a \$50,000 grant to expand the Opportunity Passport program to reach more students from surrounding counties, and give them access to trained, credentialed financial coaches. The Lightning helped Voices celebrate by spotlighting program director Jeanne Joyner and inviting OP graduates and community partners to celebrate at a game.



REAL STORY

Owen, age 9, was placed in foster care after he witnessed his mother and her boyfriend overdose. When his mother passed away, William was devastated and he refused to engage with therapy or other services. William is a fun and loving young man who also loves sports, so Voices paid for him to attend a sports camp of his choice. The camp was a positive outlet that helped him reconnect with other youths and adults, something he desperately needed.

KEEPING PASCO FAMILIES SAFE AND TOGETHER

Pasco County has as a disproportionately high number of children in foster care compared to other counties its size. To correct this imbalance, Voices kicked off the Pasco Safe-With-Family Project in 2019 with the support of United Way of Pasco, the Broadrick Family Foundation and other community partners. We focus on providing safe beds, car seats and other safety equipment to protect these kids from dangerous weapons, drugs, swimming pools and co-sleeping



suffocation. This allows authorities to place many children with loving family members and friends and keep them out of foster care.



United Way of Pasco County

To date, the program has served over 2,000 children, and over 600 in the last year alone have been able to move in with safe family members, outpacing initial projections.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Please welcome our newest members to the Voices board!



John Marvin

Education Senior Executive



Shanae Graham

PuzzleHR



Patrick Lainhart

New York Diamond Center,



Morgan Permuy

Power Design, Inc.



Karen Lewis

Franklin Templeton

REAL STORY

Antwan, age 15, Charles, age 12, and Sasha, age 8, lived with their mother, who was supposed to have a domestic violence injunction ordering her boyfriend out of the home. The mother let the boyfriend back into the home, and one evening, he got drunk and began beating the mother with a baseball bat in front of the children. Antwan intervened to protect his mother, while Charles took Sasha to safety with a neighbor and called the police. The children were placed with their grandmother, but she needed safe sleeping arrangements for the children. Voices provided bunk beds for the boys and a twin bed for Sasha so that they could have their own safe places to sleep.

THANK YOU FOR BEING A VOICE!

For years, a guiding message has floated through every gathering of the Suncoast Voices Board, every Gala event, every Request Committee meeting, every event or breakfast with the Child Protection Investigators. That message, carried everywhere she goes by past president Carol Conaway, is simple – “If not the children of their own parents, then whose children are they? They are our children.”

We carry it out, but you, our donors, make it possible. If not you, then who? There are no state funds to replace those you contribute. We are so grateful, certainly for your donations, but just as deeply for the giving heart and compassion you clearly have for abused, neglected, abandoned – and scared - children.

Thank you isn't nearly enough, so on behalf of every child we serve, please know that your support literally means everything to them.

Don't forget – 91 cents out of every dollar we receive goes directly to help these wonderful children.

REAL STORY

Charlie, 17, cared for his younger siblings day-to-day, fixing them breakfast and helping them with homework because their parents were addicted to prescription drugs. Charlie was devastated when they were separated, with Charlie placed in a group home without any of them. Charlie struggles in school due to moving often, but his goal is to graduate and to get a job that would allow him to one day take custody of his siblings. Voices provided him with a bike, lock and helmet to help Charlie get to school and work.



SUNCOAST
VOICES
FOR CHILDREN

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