



Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children

It Takes a Village-Let's Champion for Children

Presented by: Suzanne Hooser Juniors' Special Program Chairman

Connect with your community agencies

1. Family support agencies
2. Law Enforcement
3. Foster Care
4. Social Services
5. Shelters
6. Teachers/Schools
7. Government officials

Partner with your community to bring awareness, support and advocate

1. Offer to clean, paint or spruce up children areas
2. Bring in book shelves and books and keep it stocked
3. Sponsor an event
4. Volunteer your services at a planned event
5. Host a book reading
6. Host a "Cocoa With a Cop" night for area members to get to know their police
7. Supply baked goods or snacks at an event
8. Invite Community agencies to speak at a club meeting
9. Hold a community forum with community agencies where community members can ask questions
10. Be a "go to club" for schools when items are needed

Seek out other Community Service organizations: 4H - Boys and Girls Club - YMCA

1. Sponsor a team
2. Provide snacks
3. Teach a class
4. Offer to read
5. Clean or organize an area
6. Provide a raffle basket
7. Volunteer to help at an event
8. Rent space at an event
9. Help with mailings
10. Purchase items from their wish lists

Engage with GFWC Affiliate Organizations by

1. Educating your communities about these organizations
2. Volunteering with our affiliates
3. Share information on Social Media
4. Signing up for updates to stay informed about our affiliates
5. Shopping for merchandise to support their programs
6. Host events for the education and knowledge of our affiliates
7. Invite Speakers or have a webinar for your club, district and/or state meetings
8. Attend events hosted by our affiliates, such as March for Babies walk

Junior Special Programs: Advocates for Children

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Presented by: Suzanne Hooser, JSP Chairman



It Takes A Village – Let's Champion For Children

It's fun to be part of G.F.W.C.

It's great to advocate for G.F.W.C.

Just ask how you can be part of the team

Won't you please join with me

It's fun to be part of G.F.W.C.

It's great to advocate for G.F.W.C.

You can be a champ for your community

You can help with whatever they need



FAMILY



Number one source of a child's development



SECOND SOURCE



TEACHER

LAW ENFORCEMENT

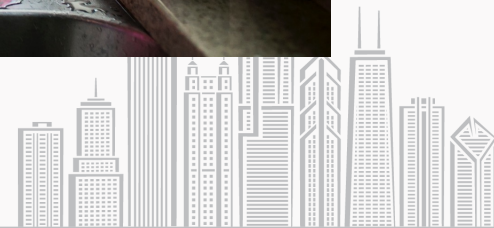


ADVOCACY

- SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY



- FOSTER CARE





LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER

Use This Powerful Tool – make the font larger

ADVOCATE THROUGH ELECTED OFFICIALS

ADVOCATE

shot
@life



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ADVOCATE



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ADVOCATE

Operation Smile



ADVOCATE



ADVOCATE



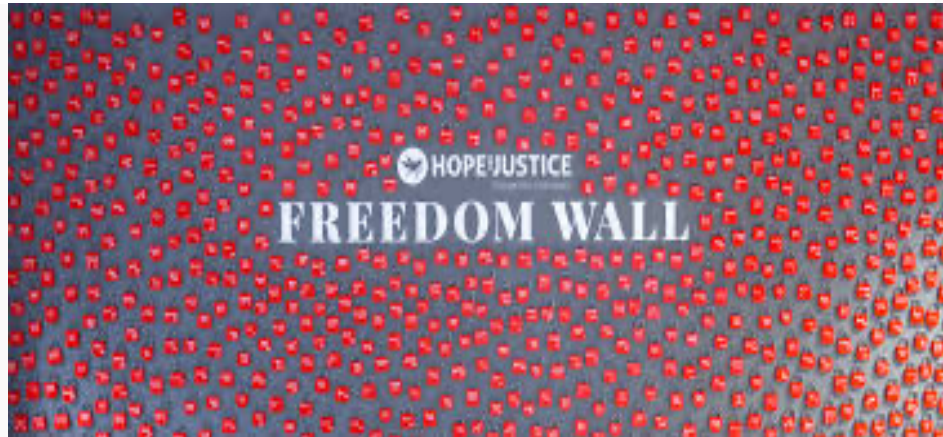
ADVOCATE



ADVOCATE



ADVOCATE



ADVOCATE

- **Volunteer at a Local Club**
- Working with youth today means a brighter future for everyone tomorrow. When you volunteer at a Boys & Girls Club, you can make a difference for young people in your local community.

make font larger



**BOYS & GIRLS
CLUB**







- Lets champion together across programs and services to work toward a common goal
- Where Families will benefit through many support networks.
- Since Young children require a continuum of quality health and education services, advocate!

Help to make Neighborhood conditions a safe place to play for all.

Make font larger

Be a Champion for children by being part of the village.

Great resources is our own
GFWC.org website

Read what other clubs are doing to
Champion and advocate.



QUESTIONS AND/OR IDEAS





GFWC
est. 1890
**GENERAL FEDERATION
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS**

Behind every champion is a
team that prepared him to
become that champion.

Anderson Silva

Thank you

Mimi French Christa Nuckols

Sarah Starkey Sherri Hammons Sandra Dunbar





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You can help with whatever they need



2024 GFWC Convention Workshop-June 30, 2024

Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children Committee

First slide

It Takes a Village- Let's Champion for Children.

Thank you for joining us today as we plan to give you a little insight into how you can become a champion and part of the village people advocating for children.

2nd slide

Play Song/team spells out GFWC letters: Mimi French, Christa Nuckols, Sherri Hammons, Sarah Starkey, Sandra Dunbar

Advocacy means to speak up, to plead the case of another or to champion a cause. It's an important way in which we can help ensure and improve the health and well-being of all children.

3rd slide

Suz-Family:

When we consider advocacy for children, let us not forget that families are essentially the building blocks of society. Family units are the number one source of a child's development. Family plays an important role as it provides emotional support, nurtures that feeling of belonging, love, and encourages educational growth, and fosters cognitive development. A child's brain development is influenced by the family. Family members have an important role in an individual's success or failure in life since they are the main support system and source of encouragement. Advocating for children also means advocating for a healthy family dynamic. Advocate for family programs in your community.

Service providers, including child welfare agencies, youth justice systems, schools, law enforcement, and other community-based organizations encounter high risk and trafficked youth frequently in the course of their work. Let's take a closer look at how you can advocate with these agencies.

4th Slide

Sarah-Teacher

Teachers and schools are second to the role of family. They spend many hours with our children and therefore are an essential resource for children in need. Beyond just teaching academics, schools can foster students' development in their relationships, identity, emotional skills, and overall well-being. Poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse, or neglect—produces toxic stress that affects learning and behavior, but how schools and teachers respond matters. Positive, stable relationships are the key to success. Advocating with teachers and schools to support their needs to accomplish such goals could be as easy as establishing your club as a good resource for needed school supplies, implementing a backpack drive, offering health snacks for break times, or sponsoring a buddy bench. Check mentoring opportunities at your local schools.

5th slide

Mimi-Law Enforcement:

If a child is suspected of being abused or neglected, it is often necessary to remove the child from that home immediately, without court intervention. Approximately 20 states give social workers authority to remove children without a court order, but 46 states give such authority to police officers. This removal can be very scary for children. This is just one duty of our police officers. Check with your local department to see if you can help with possibly setting up a donation drive for stuffed animals or transition bags that contain pajamas, a toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, and a small blanket. I know my local police department carries such bags in their squad car, so they are ready if this issue arises.

In Colorado Springs they have a combined task force for the ease of transitioning children taken out of the home. They have combined the process of this by housing all involved under one roof. So as not to have a child be questioned multiple times by different agencies, such as the social worker, doctors, and police, they work together and can watch the interview being done by the professional and get the answers they need without repeated steps so as not overwhelm a child. Consider advocating to put this in place in your community.

Our law enforcement also wants to see our youth succeed and this is why they have so many programs set in motion. Often local police departments sponsor sports in the community, hold a "Shop With a Cop" program during the holiday season, they often partner with Big Brothers, Big Sisters programs and mentoring programs. Come together by sponsoring a "get to know your officer" event, like "cocoa with a cop". Sponsor a basketball playoff or offer a booth at your next event for your local law enforcement.

Often a police department has a designated room dedicated for parents with custody issues to exchange the children for visits. Perhaps you could provide deep cleaning or offer to paint and make it a more relaxed, homey atmosphere.

6th slide

Christa-Child protective services, and foster care programs:

The goal of child protective services is to support parents and caregivers in making necessary changes so children are safe and protected in their homes. Unfortunately, over 700,000 children are abused each year in the United States. 437,283 American children were removed from their parents last year. Federal reports state 9+ million children have been separated from their parents in the last 20 years.

Foster care comes into play for children removed from a home or when courts decide the necessity of a child's welfare.

Whether it be a foster care situation or shelter there are plenty of ways to advocate. Again, sometimes children are removed from their home abruptly and with no daily supplies. Children are always in need of clothing, books, backpacks, school supplies or good nutritional snacks. Contact your many agencies to find their needs. Reach out to other resources such as Prevent Child abuse America, child advocacy centers, or your local foster care. Volunteer at your local shelters.

Here are a list of 10 ways to help

1. Hire a Youth in Care

Are you a small business owner or manager? Do you hire for summer/after school/weekend work? Reach out to your local fostering agency and submit a job description. If there is a young person who meets the job requirements, and is aware that usually a background check is done, they can send that person to you! Youth in care need job skills and will generally enter independent life earlier than their peers, so work experience is very important.

2. Send a Meal

When you are maxed out, the last thing you want to do is figure out (and prepare) dinner. Fostering families are often stretched to the limit with welcoming in new children, taking kids to appointments, weekly family visitation, weekly therapy, meetings with case managers, doctor's appointments, attending school meetings, and basic life like working full time, being partners, being parents, and self-care. Send a gift certificate to your local foster care agency for a family in your area. A \$25 gift certificate to a local pizza place goes a long way and can really brighten a day!

3. Offer Services

What can your club offer? Could you hold a car wash for foster families or agency workers? Are you a photographer and could offer a complimentary Senior Picture photo shoot? Could you do nails, hair, or makeup for a young person's prom? Are you a math whiz and could tutor a kiddo who needs a little extra support? Do you speak another language and might be a resource for a child whose family speaks that language? Could you run a group for young people on writing resumes or job interview skills? Whatever you do, how could you offer your skills?

4. Gift of Green (Thumbs, that is)

Are you a gardener? Do you send every visitor to your home away with an armload of zucchini? Do your flowers bloom so brightly that even the bees are overwhelmed? Send some of that bounty to a foster family! Drop off veggies, fruits, and berries to your local fostering agency and they will be sure it makes it to the tables and taste buds of fostering families or biological families who could put your produce to good use. Donate a bouquet of flowers to an agency to brighten the day of a kiddo who needs a little pick-me-up!

5. Run a Donation Drive or Fundraiser

Children in care often arrive with very little. This includes clothing, shoes, coats, seasonal items (think bathing suits to snow boots), school supplies, and hygiene products. There are also intangible needs that our foster parents and agency try to supplement, like extracurricular clubs, lessons, and camps. There are sensory support items, sporting equipment, and recreational items. Get your club, friends, colleagues, or community members to run a book/toy/coat/toothbrush drive or host a fundraising event like a bake sale/car wash/dance-a-thon to support kids in care. Need help planning? Just ask your local agency for what is currently needed.

6. Sponsor a Wishlist

Start a club sponsorship. These are folks who we reach out to when we have a specific need or wish. This can range from working together to outfit an entire sibling set of three who arrive in February with nothing. Buying pajamas to purchasing a book for a little boy who loves to read. Foster Friends pitch in when they can.

7. Volunteer

Whether it is volunteering to wrap gifts around the holidays, to help run an art therapy group, to sort donations, or to pack books for a monthly Book drop. Have your club consider being the source for books. Members may have children's books to donate, hold book drives or

collect books through visits to rummage sales, thrift stores or flea markets. By volunteering you really allow the foster staff time to do the things they do!

8. Offer Experiences

Could your club donate tickets to the zoo, aquarium, or other local attractions? Give the gift of creating childhood memories.

9. Host an Info Session

Invite a Foster Care Homefinder to join your group for a coffee hour/meeting/get together to educate folks about foster care. You never know who may have been considering opening their doors to foster care and was just waiting for the right opportunity!

10. Post Information

Whether it is on the bulletin board of your local community center or on the wall of your social media accounts, post information about foster care agencies, foster care facts, and foster care stories. The more people know about foster care, the more likely they are to find ways to help.

Don't forget about those children that age out of foster care. Often, they are left to fend for themselves and are kicked out of the foster home. Seek out and advocate. Start mentoring programs where these children can come and get resources for work and places to live and perhaps go on to college or trade school. Find programs in your community that support this.

7th slide

Mimi-Legislative Action Center and your government officials

A powerful tool to advocate is our own Legislative Action Center (LAC). Take all the guess work out of sending letters to your congressmen by signing up with LAC. Once you have signed up you will be notified when certain bills are going before our legislators and all you have to do is sign your name, your letter is generated and sent off to your local congressmen. Contacting your local congressmen can also be done on your own. GFWC has provided tips on how to meet with legislators on the GFWC.org website. There is a wealth of information in the Legislative Action Center under "What We DO". You can look up bills on the federal level and on the state level at <https://www.votervoice.net/GFWC/home>. You may also wish to just do a google search on a specific topic for your state. However you wish to give voice for those that can't please make the effort by letting your elected officials aware of how important child safety and security is.

8th slide

Sherri-Shot@Life

Advocates for funding of vaccines to ensure all children around the world have access to lifesaving vaccines.

Shot@life educates, connects and empowers individuals to champion global vaccines as one of the most effective ways to save the lives of children in developing countries. The campaign rallies the public to advocate and fundraise for global childhood vaccines. By encouraging people to learn about, advocate for, and donate to vaccines, we can decrease the 1.5 million annual vaccine-preventable childhood deaths and give every child a shot at a healthy life.

Some of the accomplishments of this program, AGFWC Affiliate Organization, has achieved over the last five years are \$2 billion in US Funding to provide 42 million vaccines for children, 20 million lives saved from measles and 16 million people walking.

Ways your club can advocate for children through Shot@Life are:

- Texting VACCINES to 738674. By doing this you can easily send a letter to your member of congress in support of global childhood vaccination programs.
- Attending a live webinar training right from your computer.
- Attending our Annual Champion Summit in Washington D.C. to be trained as advocates for global childhood immunization programs.
- Hosting an event with a raffle benefiting Shot@Life.
- Post on social media platforms, tagging elected officials.

Shot@Life team provides all the support you need to do these actions. They offer sample message templates, sample social media posts, and call scripts! It's super easy!)

9th slide

Mimi-March of Dimes

March of Dimes supports families before, during and after pregnancy. March of Dimes advocates at the federal, state and local level to improve the health of all moms. Sign up for action alerts on their website. Volunteer at March for Babies events, send a note of hope to a family facing a challenging time through their website, post ready to use social media images and content to get the message out. Hold a community baby shower and donate the gifts.

10th Slide

Sandra-Operation Smile

Operation Smile is a nonprofit that transforms lives through free cleft surgeries and comprehensive care. Clubs could consider making a donation or sponsoring surgery for these children. The Smile Project, hosted by GFWC-MFWC Decatur Progressive Woman's Club

promoted Operation Smile by collecting toothbrushes and toothpaste for local underprivileged children.

11th Slide

Sarah-UNICEF

UNICEF USA helps ensure the world's most vulnerable children get the nutrition, water, protection, education, and health care they need to survive and thrive. UNICEF is on the ground before, during and after emergencies strike, working to respond quickly and reach individuals who are most in need.

UNICEF USA has a priority to push for U.S. Government funding to tackle the learning crisis, to ensure every child is immunized, mental health issues and climate change. UNICEF USA also has a website with an easy to send email form to congress in prioritizing the mental well-being of our children. Their website also has a marketplace to purchase everything from jewelry, fashion to home décor. Consider buying your next gift or Christmas cards on UNICEF USA.

12th Slide

Suz-Heifer International

Their mission is to end hunger and poverty by educating and empowering farmers around the world. What is even better is Heifer has a campaign to see women and girls succeed. They say investing in women is key to ending hunger and poverty.

Start by visiting www.heifer.org/gfwc Here you can find key information about the Fund a Female Farmer initiative, as well as downloadable resources for use at a club meeting. Heifer International also has a "Send a Girl to School" initiative. Girls often suffer the most from gender discrimination. They are often denied the opportunity to go to school because resources are limited. My goal as Wisconsin's Junior Director was to raise funds to send a girl to school and we were able to accomplish this 2 years in A ROW.

13th Slide

Sherri-St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

A child's health is very important for their development and growth. A place that has helped children around the world is St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

In 1955, when Danny Thomas was looking at starting a children's hospital survival rate for childhood cancers was only 20% and for those with acute lymphoblastic leukemia the most common form of childhood cancer only 4% of children survived. Today thanks to St. Jude the

survival rate of childhood cancer is at 80% and the survival rate for acute lymphoblastic leukemia is at 94%.

At St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the burden of treatment costs is removed so parents are free to focus solely on their child. Families never receive a bill for treatment, travel, housing or food.

St. Jude's goal is by 2030 that at least 60% of children with six of the most common kinds of cancer worldwide will be cured.

How can we be advocates for children and their families while at St. Jude? We can donate as individuals as well as clubs. You could pass around a container at each club meeting and collect spare change. If you take the change and donate \$10 a month for a year you could provide a red wagon which is the mode of transportation for the youngest patients. I know some clubs have hosted walk-a-thons or participated in one.

Did you know there is a St Jude Ranch that provides a safe, nurturing home with therapeutic residential treatment services to thousands of abused and neglected children in Nevada? St Jude Ranch has made and continues to make a difference by creating new lives with hope for these children. The GFWC Mesquite Club of Las Vegas (NV) club held a pajama drive in connection with their Annual Holiday Luncheon. Each member and guest was asked to bring sets of pajamas for children at St. Jude's Ranch in Henderson, Nevada. Through the generosity of those members and guests, 149 pairs of children's pajamas were donated.

14th Slide

Christa-Canine Companions

Canine Companions has been providing assistance dogs to people with disabilities since 1975.

One in four Americans live with a disability. As the leader of the service dog industry, Canine Companions enhances independence for children, adults, and veterans with disabilities through expertly trained service dogs. Their service dogs assist people with a wide range of disabilities, including multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injury, stroke, hearing loss, developmental delay, veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and more.

Bring awareness by hosting Canine Companions at an event. Invite them to speak at your club meetings. Sponsor a puppy parade and include Canine Companions. Dogfest is Canine Companions fundraising event where your clubs can register to volunteer and show your support. Check the Canine Companions website for cities and dates.

Clubs near the regional centers could provide meals, etc., when team training is being offered.

Contact your closest regional center to see if your club can fill any items on their wish lists.

Join the Canine Companions Facebook page: (www.Facebook.com/CanineCompanions) and help them build their network of “likes.”

15th slide

Sarah-Hope for Justice

Hope for Justice is changing lives to end slavery! According to the International Labor Organization 49.6 million people were living in modern slavery in 2021, and 12% of all forced into labor are children. Get involved by checking their website for upcoming events to participate in. Raise awareness during human trafficking month in January and anti-slavery day in October. Learn to spot the signs of trafficking and use your voice on social media. Educate teens on cyber security, safe surfing and healthy dating.

16th slide

Suz-Boys & Girls Clubs of America has the focus to enable all young people to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. Partner with them in their fundraising events by volunteering or donating gift baskets. Offer to teach a class to the students. Have your club sponsor an event. Donate healthy snacks for the after-school program.

17th slide

Mimi-The YMCA's mission is to help young people grow into healthy, thriving adults by offering supportive education and leadership programs along with team sports and camps. Clubs can participate in the Y's annual Healthy Kids Day in April. Volunteer at the YMCA or at their events. Form a partnership as they are essential to the y's ability to strengthen community. Provide healthy snacks.

18th Slide

Sandra-4-H

America's largest youth organization that empowers nearly 6 million young people with skills to lead for a lifetime. Consider funding a child to go to camp, sponsor an event, be a mentor, or volunteer. 4-H focuses on 4 program areas.

1. STEM

4-H science programs provide 4-H youth the opportunity to learn about Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) through fun, hands-on activities and projects.

2. Agriculture

4-H agriculture programs offer youth exciting opportunities to delve into the fascinating realm of farming and agriculture through engaging and hands-on activities and projects. Whether it's cultivating crops, caring for animals, or exploring the science behind sustainable farming, 4-H provides a fun and educational platform for young learners to gain invaluable insights into the agricultural industry.

3. Healthy Living

4-H healthy living programs help 4-H youth learn how to lead lives that balance physical, mental, and emotional health.

4. Civic Engagement

4-H civic engagement programs empower young people to be well-informed citizens who are actively engaged in their communities and the world.

19th Slide

Suz-Seek out child and adolescent organizations in your community or state and partner with them to ensure our children's well-being. Possibly hold a discussion panel with your local agencies and community service programs to talk about what you do and talk about how you can help, and to remember that GFWC members are here to help. Share ideas, partner with each other, and form alliances.

20th Slide

Club members from GFWC Southwest Region Women's Club of Colorado donated athletic shoes, socks, headbands, hair spray, hair chalk, and pens. They collaborated with Girls on the Run, a nonprofit program for girls in grades three to eight.

During Foster care month in May members of the GFWC Vienna Woman's Club (GA) brought twelve washcloths and learned to craft them into cloth teddy bears. The finished teddy bears were delivered to the Department of Family and Children's Services office for distribution to foster children.

Members from the GFWC Dover Area Woman's Club (DE) packed 120-200 food bags once a month for End 68 a weekend food program for food insecure students. They staffed a Saturday donation drop-off station and helped unload food deliveries.

GFWC Woman's Club of Milton (PA) created forty bags from recycled jeans using a cord donated from a local factory as drawstrings. The bags contained: a book, crayons, pencils, a tablet, an activity pad, a coloring book, a drawing pad, toothpaste, a toothbrush, a comb, shampoo, soap, lotion, and packets of cheese crackers, cookies, and a scarf made by a club member.

GFWC Woman's Club of Rock Hill (SC) collaborated with The Sanctuary of Life Outreach Center (SOLO) to establish a reading program in the underserved areas of Rock Hill. Members placed the books in local businesses, and students could choose a book at their reading level. The club donated the bookshelves and books for three locations and is in the process of providing the bookshelf and books for a fourth location.

Find your community needs, sponsor events, and bring awareness, to ensure children have the necessary tools, supplies, and mentors to allow them to be all they want to be.

21st Slide

Questions and ideas

22nd Slide

Thank you

23rd slide as members are leaving play the song again