

Hopeful Happenings

2023 Summer Newsletter
Serving Sarasota and DeSoto Counties



[First name],

We can hardly believe how quickly 2023 is flying by! I'm sure like all of you, here at CPC we're doing our best to stay cool from these record temperatures. We hope that despite the heat, you're enjoying these longer days and summer months and have had the time to enjoy your family, have a small adventure, or simply recharge in some nice AC!

Summer (specifically July) at the Child Protection Center means the end to our previous fiscal year and the start of a new one. It's a time of year when we pause to reflect on the previous 12 months, taking note of the challenges and successes, of the immense work that's been put into building a safer community, of the numerous children who've bravely paved their paths on the road to healing, and the always-inspiring network of supporters that surrounds this organization and our mission to protect children.

This summer feels particularly promising as we look back on such an impactful year of fundraising for CPC's ongoing expansion at our Campus of Healing and having services readily available for more victims of child abuse than ever before. This is momentous! We hope you'll join us in celebrating these milestones, all of which would not be possible without such a strong community of advocates and donors. It is because of your courage, compassion, and generosity that countless children are able to find healing and hope.

As we enter into our 44th year of service, we'd like to sincerely thank you for standing alongside us as partners in advocacy. We hope you enjoy reading through this edition of Hopeful Happenings, are able to learn a bit more about our organization, and find some helpful ideas on how each of us can make a positive difference in the world of our children.

Cheers to a new fiscal year and all it will hold in store!



Douglas and the CPC Team

"Hope is the sun. It is light. It is passion. It is the fundamental force for life's blossoming."

-Daisaku Ikeda



Updates of positivity and hope from the Child Protection Center.

IT TAKES A *Village!*

We're so thankful to have such an incredible community of support surrounding us and our mission- the prevention, intervention, and treatment of child abuse. Thank you!!



Such incredible generosity from STC's Fire Academy, who chose CPC for their project. Fire safety, body safety, public safety- when we come together for kids, the safety nets around them are strengthened!



At almost 90 years old, Audrey brings smiles to our clients with her hand-sewn bears.



Not only did our friends at Macy's award a grant for CPC's prevention services and education, they also held a donation drive to collect all kinds of goodies for our clients in therapy and visitations!



Elizabeth K. Topp is changing the world for our clients as our Capital Campaign Manager.



Each year during Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, the ladies of GFWC plant a pinwheel garden at CPC's Sarasota office to sprinkle joy and awareness around the entire property.



Maya, Miss Sarasota Jr. Pre-Teen, donated dresses to bring sunshine to our clients!



Thank you to Josh Kitchner & Kitchner Solutions for gifting staff with yummy bagels from 99 Bottles.



A generous donation of supplies for our clients thanks to Sydney and Everglades University.

THE BUTTERFLY

A symbol of growth, transformation, and resilience

Let's talk about the butterfly. The butterfly is a particularly significant symbol for us at the Child Protection Center. For our readers who have toured our offices or attended a CPC event, you've probably seen how butterflies are incorporated into the decorations and used in various talking points. We'd like to share why this symbol means so much to us.

The transformation of the butterfly symbolizes a child abuse victim's transformational journey from

victim to *survivor* into one who *thrives.*

CPC serves as the chrysalis that helps these children heal, develop, and grow, providing a safe place for our clients to share their experiences and rewrite their story. This transformational healing is made possible because of YOU, our advocates and supporters. Your compassion and generosity is what gives the children of CPC their wings. Together, we can work to continue providing space as a community to believe victims and ensure safety and resilience for all.



"Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly."

We've placed a butterfly on each page of this newsletter to serve as a gentle reminder throughout your time reading, so be sure to keep an eye out and take a moment to reflect on the healing you make possible!



PAWSITIVELY AMAZING

Animal Advocates!

Meet Dawn and the Story Behind the Badge

Dawn Buff, Assistant State Attorney, is an integral part of our P.A.W.S. program (Pet Advocates Working in the Suncoast) and we thought now is the perfect time for an introduction!

We'll start at the very beginning, when as a young child, Dawn saw the critical work her father did as a K-9 officer for the City of Miami Police Department. Many years later in her role as the Assistant State Attorney, she knew the unique abilities and benefits of dogs within the legal system, particularly the positive and comforting effects they have on children in high-stress situations. Around 2009, Danielle Hughes (Team Coordinator of the Child Protection Team) sent Dawn an email asking her thoughts on building a program at CPC for pet advocates. By 2010, they secured and trained their first three volunteer handlers, their dogs, and promptly started services for victims of child abuse! With this small but mighty group, the PAWS program was officially born!

"This program would not be where it is today without Dawn."

-Danielle Hughes, CPT Team Coordinator and Founder of PAWS



To honor her guidance and assistance in creating PAWS, the program's logo, badge, and challenge coin all depict a beloved photo of her father's police dog, Otto, being hugged by a young child. "My mom was a teacher and loved kids, and she's gone now. My dad is just so proud to be a part of this."

The PAWS pups have been busy visiting the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office and the State Attorney's Office, bringing joy and comfort wherever they go!



In loving memory... 🦋

We're saddened to share the news that PAWS dogs Fiona Marie and Raven have crossed the rainbow bridge. These sweet pups, alongside their dedicated handlers Diane and Eileen, brought comfort and love to countless children during times of fear and darkness. Through their long histories of advocacy and therapy work, the impact they have had on the children and families we serve is beyond measurement. They are true heroes in the fight against child abuse and will be dearly missed.

"Dogs have a way of finding the people who need them and filling an emptiness we don't even know we have."

-Thom Jones



DONOR PROFILE: *The Moores*

Throughout their friendship and marriage, Tony and Michelle Moore have shared a love for fun and games, a devotion to their thriving business, Gulfside Mortgage Services (which currently holds a 19-year streak of being voted the Best of Venice), and the belief that all children should feel safe and loved.

The Moores first learned of the Child Protection Center years ago when Michelle attended a Venice Area Board of Realtors Membership Meeting at which CPC's Sheila Miller spoke about the organization. It was an emotional experience for Michelle. "I started thinking of my childhood and how lucky I am today that God carried me through. I knew I was meant to be here at this time to hear this presentation." Her enthusiasm for the mission was powerful and instantaneous. Tony, of course, was immediately on board right alongside his wife. "Recognizing that children cannot protect themselves, I believe it is crucial for organizations like CPC to step in and provide them with a secure environment to seek refuge and heal."

Along with Gulfside, the couple has strengthened the nonprofit's ability to protect children through financial support and sponsorships, contributing auction items, using their platforms to speak against child abuse, and through Michelle's past service as the Co-Chair of CPC's popular Night of Hope & Healing event.

"The most important work CPC does is give hope, love, protection, and help children heal," said Michelle. "They show them they are not alone through this." After the turbulence of her own childhood, she knows how important safety and stability are while also recognizing that they are unfortunately not guaranteed. After years of being forced to witness abuse from her mom's ex-husband, Michelle and her mother were able to free themselves. While they were safe from the violent environment, they faced severe financial difficulties, often going without food and sometimes sleeping in the shed behind her mom's work. "I know my mom loved me, she just couldn't seem to find her way out. Today, my mom has been married to an amazing man for 34 years who would never dream of laying a hand on her. He is who I call dad as it doesn't matter if you are blood related or not."

Michelle went on to express her thankfulness for not only making it through her childhood, but to not have allowed it to hold her back as a mother herself. "I raised my son and told him I love him every day."

Tony's inspiration comes from his love for Michelle along with the belief that

"every child deserves a chance to shape their own life, to create their own story."

When asked what he'd like to see achieved in CPC's future, he responded with, "More awareness and less abuse." A simple sentence of five words that perfectly captures our deepest wish. The Moores make this wish more possible with each passing day through their support and advocacy, paving the way for more safe, stable, and loving childhoods.



SUNNY MOMENTS

from last quarter at CPC



PSCA

Personal Safety and Community Awareness

255 adults participated in professional workshops after which 100% could identify 3 signs of child maltreatment

CPT

Child Protection Team

Conducted 83 Medical Evaluations for children

CFSVP

Children and Families Supervised Visitation Program

113 safe family visits were facilitated

THERAPY

Sexual Abuse Treatment Program/Kid Kindness Program/Hanna's Hope

1,232.5 hours of individual and family therapy provided

June was Internet Safety Month

Thorn's 2022 online grooming research found that 2 in 5 kids have been approached online by someone who they thought was trying to "befriend and manipulate" them. This is the shocking reality for children as they continue to grow up with even more access to the internet and technology. It's important to ensure your child has personal safety skills to spot red flags when interacting with others online- CPC is here to help.



Internet Safety Tips:

Teach children to avoid sharing **personal information** like their name, address, or where they go to school.

Explain the difference between **strangers and friends** online. Someone you only know online is a STRANGER.

Be approachable. A child who's afraid of getting in trouble is less likely to tell when something makes them uncomfortable.

Safe Children Coalition Conference



CPC's Prevention Educators presented at the sold-out two-day event. Over 400 child welfare and youth mental health experts and practitioners gathered at the conference to learn, collaborate, and improve the safety nets we have in place for children.

Contact MichelleB@CPCSarasota.org to schedule a FREE training on Internet Safety or over 20 different topics!

Florida Ranked

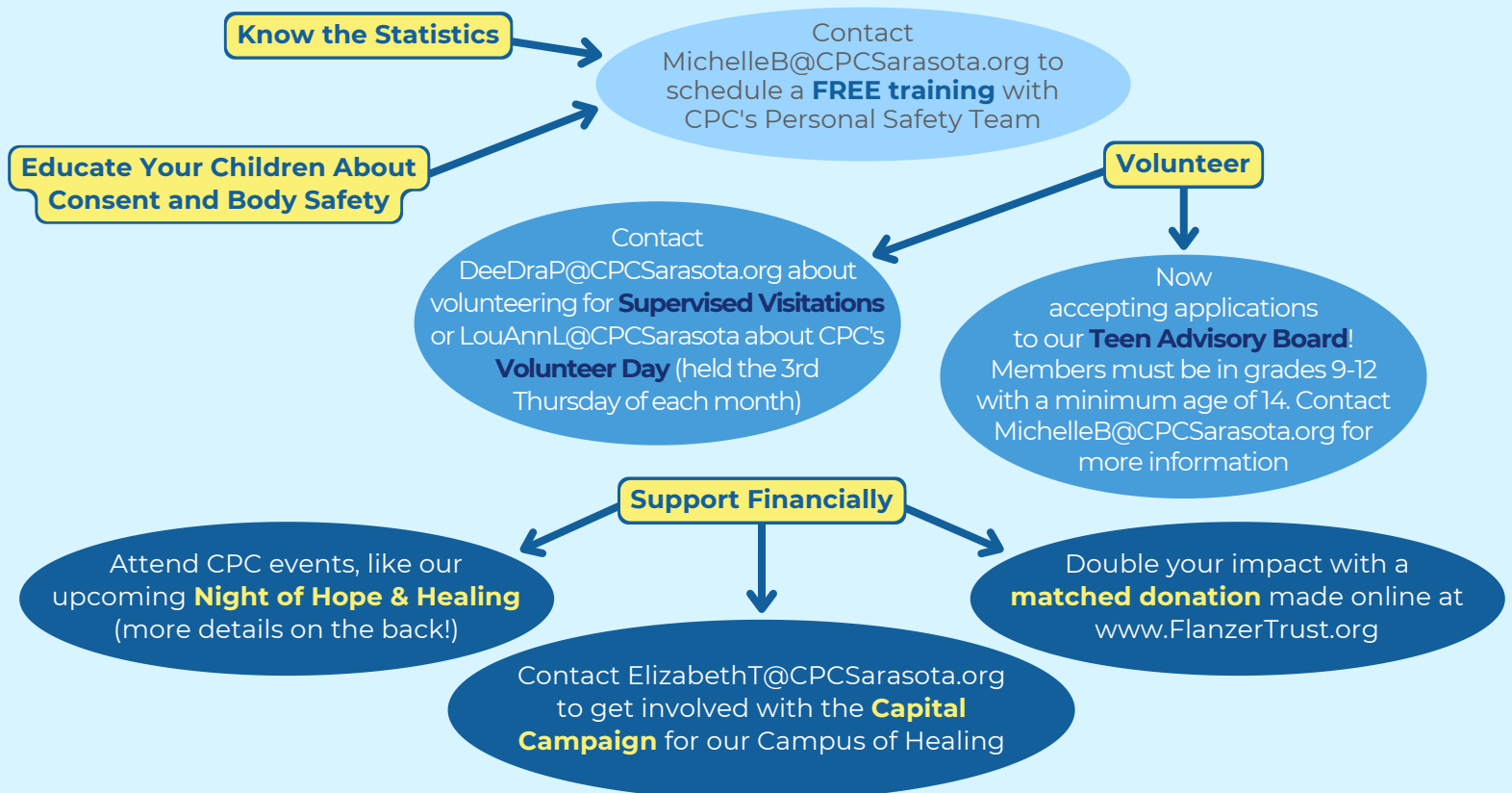
7th DEADLIEST STATE



per total child fatalities

according to the 2021 Child Maltreatment journal.

The good news is, we've decreased in the ranking for 2 consistent years. At the Child Protection Center, we believe child abuse can be prevented with knowledge and education, allowing our community to feel equipped to handle the issue, and by supporting local child advocacy centers. Child abuse prevention starts with YOU! Here are some great ways you can make a difference:



Save THE Date



New Location, Same Relaxed Feel!

Thurs | 11.9.2023 | 6PM
Plantation Golf & Country Club, 500 Rockley Blvd in Venice

Enjoy:

- ★ Tastings from local restaurants
- ★ Exciting live and silent auction items
- ★ An evening of changing lives!

Tickets:

- ★ \$100 - Individual Ticket
Purchase at cpcsarasota.org.
- ** cash bar available **

Pre-Party:

- ★ Thurs | 10.19.2023 | 5-9PM
- ★ Shuck N' Ale & BrewBurgers Back Porch
- ★ Celebrity Bartender competition
- ★ Get a sneak peak of auction items

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For more information on how you can make a difference with the Child Protection Center, please contact Sheila Miller at SheilaM@CPCSarasota.org or 941-365-1277 Ext. 111

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