



Dear Child Advocates,

We hope our community's children and youth enjoyed their summer break and that the upcoming school year brings joy, adventure and learning. We also want to thank our partners for hosting and supporting numerous back-to-school activities to help make the transition to school seamless and less stressful for both students and their parents.

Birth to 22 has been busy during the summer, working with many partners throughout the county. We want to highlight three of these important initiatives. The first one is focused on youth mental health and wellness. In late August, community members, youth-serving organizations, youth, system partners and funders gathered to discuss the crisis within our community, and ways we can help. As the work unfolds, we will share more information.

The second and third important updates relate to data, much of which has been used to demonstrate the urgent needs of our youth and help our community strategize solutions. We hosted 11 youth community conversations over the summer and one of the main issues identified was mental health. Youth shared what they are experiencing at home and in school, as well as issues with relationships. They also provided ideas on what they think will help. To view this report, please click here: <https://pbcirthto22.com/engagement/pdf/2023 - Community Conversation - Data.pdf>.

The other data project we want to highlight is our updated Birth to 22 data report - 2023 Palm Beach County Indicators of Child, Family, and Community Risk, Well-being and Access to Supports. To view this report, please click here: https://pbcirthto22.com/pdf/2023_Birth_to_22_Indicators.pdf. We know that this information/data is critical to improve the outcomes for our children and youth. This report also is a great data resource for our partners to use when preparing grant applications and doing strategic planning.

Thank you to all the teams working tirelessly on these three initiatives, as well as so many more intensive action-oriented teams across our community. This Alliance would not be possible without everyone's commitment.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lisa Williams-Taylor
CEO, Children's Services Council

Tammy K. Fields
Director, Palm Beach County Youth Services Department



Birth to 22 United for Brighter Futures NEWSLETTER

Volume 4 | Issue 4 | September 2023

Birth to 22 Hosts Community Conversations

Birth to 22 hosts eleven community conversations in 2023 to capture the voice of Palm Beach County youth.

Alliance Spotlights

Since its inception, Birth to 22 and its community alliances, have been working towards providing youth and young adults resources to reach their fullest potential.

Upcoming Events

Check out the Birth to 22 community alliance upcoming events.

Share Feedback & Stories!

Do you have feedback or have an inspiring story to share? We'd love to hear from you!

Contact us at, pbc-birthto22@pbcgov.org

Palm Beach County Earns National ‘Best In Category’ Achievement Award For The ‘Level Up’ Mentoring Program



Palm Beach County Level Up Mentoring Program has been recognized with a Best in Category for Children and Youth Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents.

Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, in partnership with the United Way of Palm Beach County’s Mentor Center and the Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County, launched the Level Up Enhanced Mentoring Program in 2021 to offer mentoring opportunities for youth ages 11 to 19 who are involved with or at risk of entering the juvenile justice or dependency systems. The goal is to match youth with a long-term, positive role model, make referrals to community-based services, and provide opportunities to continue education or career exploration. When a young person has a consistent supportive adult in their life, they can overcome adversity and build resiliency. Often young people involved in the dependency or delinquency system lack that supportive adult.

“Collaboration is key in providing opportunities for young people in Palm Beach County, and we are very appreciative that the NACo recognizes this unique collaboration with United Way and the Children’s Services Council,” said Tammy K. Fields, Director of Palm Beach County Youth Services.

Each year, NACo’s Achievement Awards are given in 18 categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services counties provide. The categories include children and youth, criminal justice and public safety, county administration, information technology, health, civic engagement and more. One program is selected as Best in Category in each of the categories from all the submissions from across the nation.

Launched in 1970, the program is designed to recognize innovation in county government.

“The Achievement Awards demonstrate excellence in county government and the commitment to serve our residents every day,” said NACo President Denise Winfrey. “This year’s winners represent some of the most innovative and collaborative efforts we have seen in over 50 years of presenting these awards.”

For more information about Level Up Mentoring, click [here](#).

For more information about NACo’s Achievement Awards, click [here](#).

(Photo from L to R) Maria Marino, Palm Beach County Commissioner, Denise Winfrey, President of NACo, Gregg Weiss, Palm Beach County Mayor, Tammy Fields, Director of Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, and Dorritt Miller, Palm Beach County Assistant County Administrator.



Birth to 22 Community Conversations

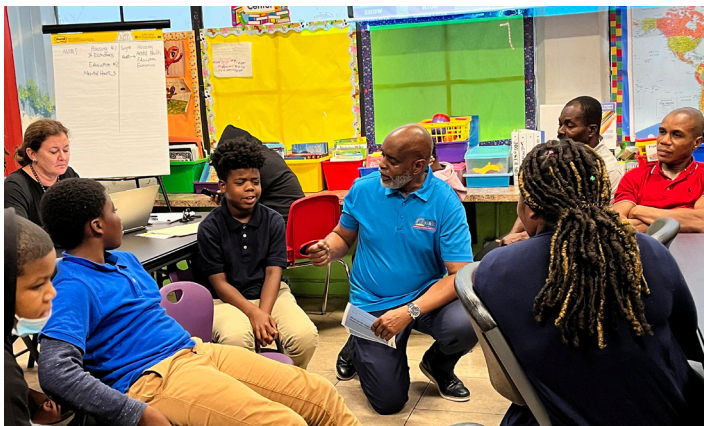
As Birth to 22 creates the updated Youth Master Plan 2.0, it is vital that the voices of youth and the adults who care about them are being heard. Palm Beach County's Youth Services Department – Outreach and Community Programming Division engaged our communities in eleven targeted Community Conversations in 2023. These in-person events were held throughout the county in April and May. These conversations were open to the public and utilized locations that previously had regular participants in attendance.

The Community Conversations started by providing youth and county data through a game of 'Family Feud.' Questions centered around the possible strategic priority topics of mental health, economics, and education; such as "What are the leading causes of mental health struggles for high school students?" and "What Palm Beach County city has the highest number of juvenile arrests?" Two groups of

five competed as either youth versus youth or youth versus adults. Then the group transitioned into an open discussion about the data, and concerns related to their community, and to provide possible solutions.

In total, 402 participants attended the eleven Community Conversations, and 222 of those participants identified as youth. Next, the information will be provided to the Birth to 22 consultant, Jeanette Gordon, to see how the Youth Master Plan 2.0 can take the recommendations and concerns gathered by the community and create a plan to be executed over the next three to five years. Another set of Community Conversations is scheduled to occur towards the fall before the plan is finalized.

Additional information can be found on the [Birth to 22 Engagement Team website](#).



'Get Your Green On' Proclamation 2023

At the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners meeting on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, Palm Beach County Mayor, Gregg K. Weiss, presented a proclamation declaring May 2023 as Mental Health Awareness and Trauma Informed Care Month in Palm Beach County.

Members of the 'Get Your Green On' (GYGO) Campaign Committee and the Birth to 22 United for Brighter Futures Alliance were present and encouraged everyone to wear green on Thursday, May 18, 2023, to support mental health awareness and trauma-informed care.



PBC 'Gets Its Green On' For Eighth Year In Support of Mental Health Awareness



The Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures Alliance and the Becoming a Trauma Sensitive Community Action Team, celebrated the Eighth Annual “Get Your Green On” (GYGO) campaign and invited Palm Beach County to wear green on May 18, 2023.

The GYGO campaign aims to raise awareness by creating visible support and fostering safe spaces to talk openly about mental health and trauma. Lauren Zuchman, Executive Director of BeWellPBC, and Katherine Murphy, Chief Executive Officer of NAMI Palm Beach County, co-chairs the campaign.

This year the campaign committee, in collaboration with Deon C. Jefferson and Kenya Madison, hosted a county-wide signature event on May 18 called the ‘Express Yourself

Fashion Art Ball 2.0.’ The theme of the Art Ball was ‘Super Hero,’ where guests were encouraged to wear their favorite superhero costume or create a new mental health superhero. Attendees were entertained with special performances supporting mental health awareness from Palm Beach County talent. Special giveaways were awarded to the “Best Expressed” attendees; treats to eat and a live DJ for dancing were also provided.

The event was free, open to the public, and held at the ARTS Warehouse in Delray Beach. Sponsors for the Fashion Art Ball were Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, BeWellPBC, NAMI of PBC, United Way of PBC, Healthier Delray Beach, Birth to 22, United Way of PBC, and Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County.

Birth to 22 2023 Community Indicator Report

The Child Youth and Community Data Team of the Birth to 22 United for Brighter Futures Alliance in Palm Beach County is comprised of representatives from Children’s Services Council Palm Beach County, the School District of Palm Beach County, Palm Beach County Community Services, Florida Department of Children and Families, Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County, and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. The team recently completed the 2023 Palm Beach County Indicators of Child, Family, and Community Risk, Wellbeing, and Access to Supports report.

This presentation-style data deck provides information on a comprehensive array of indicators for Palm Beach County children and families beginning prenatally and continuing through the transition to adulthood.

The data team hopes this information sparks curiosity and further exploration by all of you. To access the complete 2023 slide deck and companion guide containing definition and source information, please click [here](#).



Birth to 22 Palm Beach County United for Brighter Futures

Palm Beach County Indicators of Child, Family and
Community Risk, Well-being and Access to Supports



Advancing the Mission

On May 31, 2023, Tammy Fields, Director of Youth Services Department (YSD), Geeta Loach-Jacobson, Outgoing Director of Outreach and Community Programming at YSD, and Ike Powell, Incoming Director of Outreach and Community Programming at YSD, represented at the Advancing The Mission (ATM) III session held at the Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County. The session opened with special recognition for Geeta’s efforts and contributions, serving over the past few years as a co-chair for the Birth to 22 Alliance Racial Equity Core Team.

Ed Chase, Division Director for Intergovernmental Affairs and Community Engagement, presented information regarding recent immigration legislation and provided updates on other bills and initiatives relative to advancing racial equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging. In addition, attendees shared best practices across participating organizations, and facilitators provided technical assistance as needed.



2023 Back to School PBC!

On July 22, 2023, the Annual Back to School PBC Event was held at the Palm Beach County Convention Center, Village Academy in Delray, Palm Beach State College in Belle Glade, and the Edna W. Runner Tutorial Center in Jupiter.

The event is presented by the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners through the Office of Community Revitalization, and in partnership with the Spirit of Giving Network, the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBCSO), and many other County Agencies and local organizations.

The event ensures Palm Beach County students are ready for the upcoming school year by providing families with essential school supplies. As in years past, thousands of kids received backpacks, school supplies, shoes, socks, books, dental kits, soaps, health checks, haircuts, spa treatments, and much more.

Thank you to the many community members, organizations, and volunteers who made these events possible to serve our youth and families and Palm Beach County.



Super Summer Spelling Bee 2023



Palm Beach County Youth Services Department hosted its Ninth Annual Super Summer Spelling Bee on July 25, 2023. The competition was held at Pahokee Middle Senior High School with 157 registered spellers and 20 Summer Camp Scholarship Program sites in attendance.

The spelling bee is for students enrolled in the Summer Camp Scholarship Program’s participating camps and provides academic activities to encourage the spirit of learning while preventing summer slide. This was the first year the bee has been in person since 2019. In addition to the spelling bee, the event also included activities with Digital VibeZ, Crazy Games, Palm Beach Behavioral Health Coalition, and the Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department. The final round also featured dance performances by Bethel Evangelical Church, Pahokee Dance Academy, and Ascension 33.

“This year the Super Summer Spelling Bee returned to an in-person event. It allowed us to engage all of our campers in fitness, competition, and academics. The top three spellers in each category showed off their hard work in the final round on stage in front of their peers. They received trophies, books, gift cards, and tons of applause,” said Valerie Messineo, Palm Beach County Youth Services Department senior program specialist. “We can’t thank our hosts at Pahokee Middle Senior High School enough. Their campus is beautiful, and their staff welcomed us with open arms.”

Among the winners were campers from Bethel Evangelical Church, Destiny Fulfilled, Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders Today, For the Children, Wells Recreation, Tate Recreation, Rosenwald Elementary, and Florence Fuller summer camps.

Participating agencies include the County Attorney’s Office, City of West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County Library System, Choice to Change, Early Learning Coalition, Prime Time Palm Beach County, the Girls Coordinating Council, and Friends of Youth Services and Palm Beach County, Inc.

2023 Spelling Bee Winners

K-2nd	3rd-5th	6th-8th	9th-12th
<i>Lissandra Thompson (1st)</i> FTC Youth Zone	<i>Jacoby Gowie (1st)</i> FTC Youth Zone	<i>Mia Valentina Velazquez-Lopez (1st)</i> Destiny Fulfilled	<i>Jemuel Augustin (1st)</i> Bethel Evangelical Church
<i>Mark Hall (2nd)</i> Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders	<i>Nyla Davis (2nd)</i> Tate Recreation	<i>Louis Barrera Gonzalez (2nd)</i> Florence Fuller	<i>Regina Jones (2nd)</i> Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders
<i>Davens Jean-Louis (3rd)</i> Wells Recreation	<i>Austyn Oakley (3rd)</i> Rosenwald Elementary	<i>Daniela Figueria-Alfaro (3rd)</i> Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders	<i>Fidely Joseph (3rd)</i> Bethel Evangelical Church



Behavioral Health Technician First Graduating Class

We celebrate the first graduating Seniors (40 total from 3 schools) to complete the Behavioral Health Technician Program in The School District of Palm Beach County. This curriculum (brand new this school year) was designed to provide high school students with the learning and experience necessary for them to pass the Behavioral Health Technician Certification given by the Florida Certification Board. Upon graduation, the students can begin working in an entry-level position while they work toward the 1,500 field hours required for the full Behavioral Health Technician certification.

The Behavioral Health Technician program is the first of its kind to be offered in secondary curriculum statewide. Developed in partnership with BeWellPBC and the School District of Palm Beach County's Choice and Career Options and Behavioral and Mental Health Departments, and in-

cluded Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, CareerSource Palm Beach County, United Way of Palm Beach County, and several other partners.



Girls Coordinating Council Responds to Girls Mental Health

On May 23, 2023, the Girls Coordinating Council (GCC) hosted a webinar titled 'Responding to Girls Mental Health' in partnership with the Hanley Foundation for Palm Beach County parents. Responding to Girls Mental Health focused on current mental health trends for girls and young women and helping parents recognize the signs of mental health concerns and how to promote mental health and well-being.

Attendees also heard from local community agencies on the services and resources available for girls and young women, including Palm Beach County Youth Services, Palm Beach County Victim Services and Sexual Assault Response Team, Center for Child Counseling and Pace Center for Girls.



RESPONDING TO GIRLS' MENTAL HEALTH FOR PBC PARENTS

Hear from local experts & recognize signs of



Alliance Spotlights

Florida Guardian Ad Litem Office host multiple 'Coffee Breaks'



Throughout the month of July, our Office hosted multiple 'Coffee Breaks' for our volunteers to meet and greet each other across Palm Beach County. Our Guardian ad Litem Volunteers met with others who shared the same passion as them: to make a difference in the lives of children. It was a great way to connect members of our community, share stories, and learn more about each other!

from their community who will be a consistent, positive presence in the child's life as part of a multi-disciplinary team that includes an attorney, child welfare professional and hopefully a community volunteer providing the highest quality community advocacy and legal representation to protect each child's legal interests. Also to provide dependency judges with thorough and accurate information regarding the children under the court's jurisdiction.

How to Become a Guardian ad Litem Volunteer:

- Pass a background check
- Provide three letters of reference
- Participate in an interview
- Complete free, online training.

If you are interested in making a difference, volunteer today by visiting www.guardianadlitem.org.

The mission of the Florida Guardian ad Litem Office is to provide the most vulnerable children in Florida with an adult



It was time for a... Coffee break!

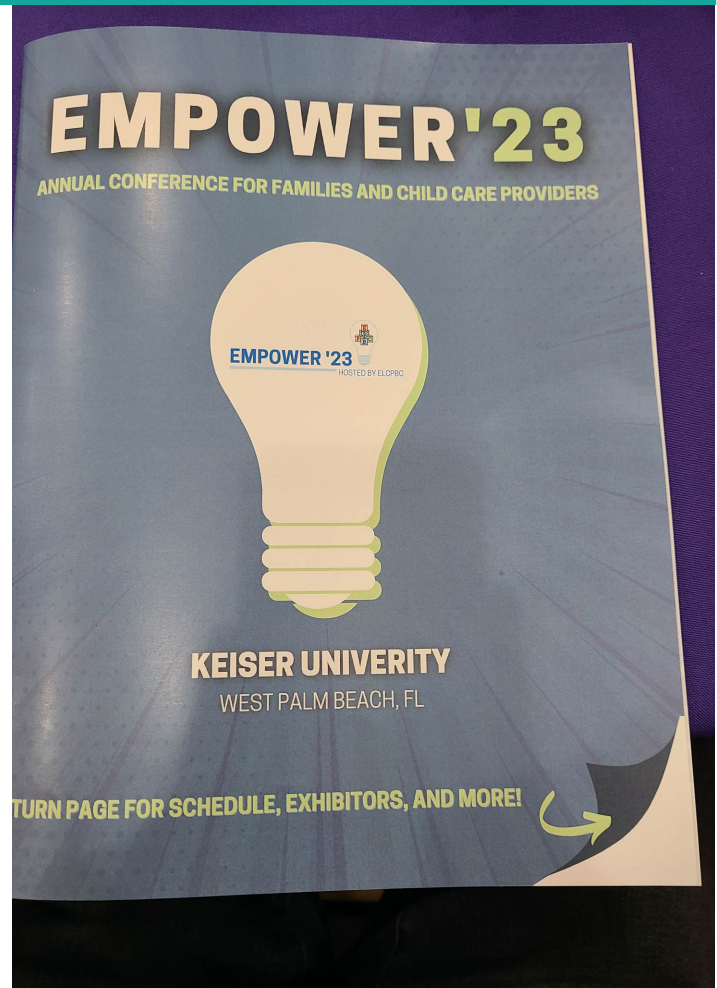
Our Guardian ad Litem Volunteers met throughout the County to meet others who share the same passion as them: to make a difference in the lives of children



Thank you to all our volunteers and staff who came out!

**Early Learning Coalition (ELC) Empower 23
Childcare Conference**

On Saturday, May 6, 2023, the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County hosted the ‘Empower 23’ Conference at Keiser University in West Palm Beach. The Empower 23 conference is an annual conference for families and child-care providers. The day provided early childhood educators and parents an opportunity to grow in the areas of Family Engagement, Developmentally Appropriate Practices, Inclusion and Early Intervention, Cultural Responsiveness and Trauma Informed Care, Strengthening Families Protective Factors, Self-Care, and many more exciting program areas.



**Prime Time Palm Beach County Announces
Well-Being and Life Skills Initiative**



productive relationships, and engage in acts of kindness and service to others.

Click [here](#) to learn more.



Prime Time Palm Beach County’s Well-being and Life Skills Initiative is an innovative professional learning opportunity designed to build resiliency and life skills among children and youth in afterschool based on best practices in the field and in alignment with national and state health and resiliency standards.

This new initiative is focused on building an afterschool climate and culture whereby youth thrive physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially, succeed in academic and extracurricular endeavors, build more positive and



Local Youth Leaders Reimagine the Future of Out-of-School Time

Since Spring 2022, Prime Time Palm Beach County has had the exciting opportunity to partner with a team of local youth leaders to reimagine the future of out-of-school time. This partnership is part of an expansive initiative called “Powered by Youth Voice: Future Directions for Afterschool,” which is made possible by funding from the Mott Foundation and support from Every Hour Counts and Youthprise. Prime Time’s participation in this initiative has strengthened its determination to embed engaging design thinking processes and meaningful decision-making into current youth leadership efforts, as well as to compensate young people for their contributions.

Six communities were selected to participate in the initiative, including representatives from Chicago, Michigan, Tennessee and Rhode Island. Working closely with a group of eight young people from the Delray Beach-based Milagro Teen Center and Milagro’s Teen Program Supervisor Blair Williams, Prime Time’s Middle School Professional Development Specialist Anton Spalding, coordinated the efforts of the Florida community and helped to provide a warm, supportive environment in which the group could learn and lead authentically.

Through design thinking, peer learning and networking, the team worked alongside the other communities to identify best practices to authentically engage youth in program development and in designing the future of afterschool.

After months of planning and reflection, both virtually and in-person, the Palm Beach County team traveled to Chicago in December 2022 to present their ideas and recommendations for the future of the afterschool field to key stakeholders. The youth representatives in attendance were also given the exclusive task of determining how project implementation dollars would be allocated. As a

result of several youth-led conversations, the Palm Beach team was awarded \$10,000 to implement its arts-based career program proposal locally.

In May 2023, at Every Hour Count’s “Let’s Make Waves!” annual conference, Anton and a selection of young people from the Milagro team were invited to participate in a special opening panel (pictured below) about their hopes for the future of afterschool and also in a workshop session about their learnings from the initiative.

Authentic youth voice was embedded throughout the conference (gallery below) and young people were given a platform alongside organization leaders to tell their stories and empower others. The conversations were inspiring; the exposure helped to boost the confidence, self-esteem and leadership experience of the youth involved.

What’s to come?

The Palm Beach County team will take the next steps in this initiative: putting the funding they received to work by beginning to implement their ideas locally. They are excited and eager to continue their journey towards creating a brighter future in the out-of-school time field.

Empower Your Teens

Do you want to engage the teens you work with in a meaningful way and at the same time prepare them to become future leaders? Starting a Teen Advisory Council (TAC) is a great way to do both! When teens are part of a Teen Advisory Council, they become your partners in designing, planning and implementing programs, and this often leads to stronger youth engagement and higher program participation and attendance. Prime Time Palm Beach County is providing training, support and coaching to help you set up, run and sustain a fun and effective Teen Advisory Council that will empower your teens, enhance your program, and strengthen your community.



Restorative Justice Practices in Afterschool Programs



Restorative justice can be a valuable and effective approach in afterschool youth programs for addressing conflicts and behavioral issues among young participants. By incorporating restorative justice principles into these programs, facilitators and staff can create a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages positive behavior, builds stronger relationships, and fosters personal growth. This webinar featured afterschool practitioners who have successfully integrated restorative justice practices into their programs. It will also feature restorative justice ex-

perts on why it is important for youth, available curriculum and materials, and how to get started using restorative justice practices in your afterschool program.

To watch a recording of the webinar please visit: <https://youtu.be/d7bCWfx8mvl>



Restorative Justice Practices in Afterschool Programs



Familias Latinas



Children's Services Council (CSC) launched Familias Latinas Facebook Group last September as a private online community where Spanish-speaking parents and guardians can share their thoughts, advice, concerns and find information and connection to resources.

Through surveys, focus groups and charlas, CSC learned that the diverse community of Spanish-speakers in Palm Beach County were hungry for information and answers to questions in raising their children. It was determined that we needed to expand our reach in new ways. With an intentional effort to engage with more Spanish-

speaking families, community residents were invited to participate in determining how best to do that. They helped decide that, beyond the use of Spanish radio, a Facebook group would be well-received. Community participants also helped to select the name – Familias Latinas. To date, we have more than 1,300 very engaged members. Many of our funded providers now have dedicated Spanish-speaking staff who are available to take direct calls and reach out directly to members with specific questions or who ask for help.

The content and engagement strategy - which includes social media posts, links to resources and Spanish-language videos, local Pop-Up events, and a successful moderated online Town Hall - has led to a noticeable uptick in interaction with Spanish-speaking families.

EveryParentPBC.org and the EveryParent app now better than ever!

The EveryParentPBC.org website is better than ever – with a new look and feel, easier navigation and open access to tons of helpful, local, trusted parenting information!

The refreshed website, created just for Palm Beach County parents and caregivers in August 2017, offers families: more videos, more expert content, more local resources and a friendlier user experience (including open access to all content without logging in). The site also boasts enhanced homepages in Spanish and Haitian Creole. Families can also create a personalized dashboard by logging in or creating an account in EveryParent+, which includes:

- A fresh list of fun, family-friendly things to do – updated weekly
- The ability to save and share favorite content
- Automatic account creation for the FREE EveryParent mobile app
- Access to local promos and perks!

Join almost 20,000 Palm Beach County families who enjoy easy access to helpful local resources and trusted parenting information through the EveryParent app and EveryParentPBC.org website!

Learn more about EveryParent at [EveryParent | Parenting Resources for Palm Beach County](#).

Upcoming Events

Join the Girls Coordinating Council of Palm Beach County for their 2nd Annual 5K Run/Walk on Saturday October 7, 2023, at Okeeheelee Park. To register, please click [here](#).



GIRLS COORDINATING COUNCIL
OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

2ND ANNUAL

5K RUN/WALK

REGISTER TODAY!

SATURDAY OCTOBER, 7 2023

OKEEHEELEE PARK

7:00AM - Check-in Opens | 7:30AM - Event Kickoff

MUSIC | FOOD | SWAG | PRIZES



Thank You Kathy Leone

Sending out a special thank you to Kathy Leone, past Birth to 22 business partner award recipient, for all her incredible work in the Palm Beach County Community and with the Center for Child Counseling.

Click [here](#) to view the thank you video that was presented to Kathy.



Collective Impact Pledge



Birth to 22 is committed to a common agenda, we are an alliance of community partners that engages and aligns existing coalitions, networks, systems and youth-serving organizations as well as connecting families, community members, and most importantly, young people.

Take the *Pledge*, be listed as a Collective Impact Partner of the Birth to 22 Alliance to improve outcomes from cradle to career for all Palm Beach County children, youth and families.

Click [here](#) to join us in envisioning and creating a culture that values our youth from cradle to career.

Steps to Success

The Steps to Success represent 6 domains of child and youth development – physical health, behavioral health, academic readiness, social/emotional well-being, career readiness and connection and contribution to community and society. These steps represent key markers of success that allows us to access developmental outcomes. As children and youth make their way up these stairs, we are able to track their progress or lack thereof. The indicators, or measures, for these different areas are shown above the stair steps in the green text (for things we are trying to promote) and orange text (for things we are trying to prevent). Understanding what this data looks like for different subpopulations within Palm Beach County is also essential. In order to achieve those outcomes, children and youth need key supports along the way, through a combination of effective parenting and safe and nurturing families and communities. A sample of possible measures are listed below.

Steps to Success & Supports for Success

