



October 2022

# Roundtable Review

## Message from our CEO

Greetings,

In October 2021, President Biden proclaimed October as National Youth Substance Use Prevention Month. Undoubtedly, the pandemic has placed significant stress on our communities, increasing mental health issues and substance misuse nationally. Though the most recent 2020 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey for St. Lucie County reported nearly a 40% decrease between 2010 and 2020 in youth who reported use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs in their lifetime, youth are reporting use of alcohol at rates higher than the state average (17.5% vs. 14.8% in the past 30 days). The coalition is also concerned by an emerging trend of vaping nicotine and marijuana. St. Lucie County youth are vaping nicotine at rates higher than the state (13.1% vs. 11.4% in the past 30 days).



Investment in substance use prevention is needed now more than ever. The Roundtable's Drug Free St. Lucie (DFSFL) Coalition, funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network, brings together diverse community stakeholders, including law enforcement, mental health providers, the Department of Health, St. Lucie County Schools, youth-serving agencies and community advocates to enhance our community's capacity to reduce substance use amongst youth. Led by C. Jovil Wharton, our DFSFL Project Coordinator and Casey Wood of New Horizon, DFSFL Chair, the coalition utilizes the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations' (SAMHSA) Strategic Prevention Framework to implement strategies to improve outcomes for youth. Drug Free St. Lucie is collaborating with our community-based and media partners to implement 2 norms campaigns, "Friday Night, Done Right" and SAMHSA's "Talk. They Hear You." to change the perceptions and attitudes of youth and families toward substance misuse. The coalition also works with our law enforcement partners to ensure retailers remain in compliance and do not sell alcohol, other substances or paraphernalia to minors by providing retailer education and periodic compliance checks. The coalition's "Hidden in Plain Sight" is a mock bedroom walk -thru to help parents and guardians identify signs of substance use. There is more work ahead.

Special thanks to Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network and our community partners for their investment to keep our youth "Drug Free". Prevention Works!

**Teresa Bishop**  
Chief Executive Officer



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## Youth Leadership St. Lucie's "Meet and Greet"

Parents of our Youth Leadership St. Lucie (YLSL) 2022-2023 members were invited to a unique, interactive "Meet and Greet" with the dual purpose of getting to know the advisors guiding their youth, and providing them a sampling of what their youth experience during our meetings. After an uplifting welcome by the Roundtable's CEO, Teresa Bishop, parents and teens participated in an icebreaker entitled "Human Treasure Hunt" wherein they had to seek out and engage with people in the room to try and answer a series of random questions.

With a liveliness in the room, we transitioned to an introduction of the YLSL leadership curriculum entitled "Habitudes" from Growing Leaders. Each lesson of the curriculum entails an activity, a student video, movie clips, and group discussion. The Habitude we selected to share is entitled "The Iceberg" and addresses the relationship between and value of one's character and one's skills. Parents viewed the student video, and were then invited to participate in an activity that illustrated the potential effects of even *mild* character flaws. Presented with a few thought-provoking questions regarding the activity and video, both YLSL members and their parents engaged in a transparent and insightful discussion.

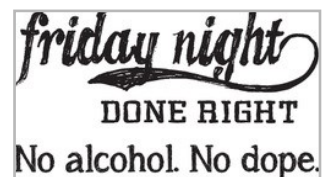
As we concluded the meeting, YLSL members were given an open forum to candidly share their experiences in YLSL thus far. Regardless of the length of their membership, the overwhelming consensus was that they were captivated by the welcoming and inviting atmosphere of YLSL, and excited to learn how to most effectively address and meet the needs of the citizens of St. Lucie County. We are so fortunate to have youth in our community with a desire to grow and hearts to serve. Stay tuned for exciting updates from Youth Leadership 2022-2023!



## Youth Leadership St. Lucie Member Takes Initiative

Youth Leadership St. Lucie (YLSL) member Makayla Smith, a cheerleader and senior at St. Lucie West Centennial High School, saw an opportunity to merge two of her interests and facilitate a community collaboration. Makayla presented her idea for YLSL members to participate in the homecoming activities at her high school to YLSL advisor Kevin Singletary and her cheerleading coach, which led to YLSL, Drug Free St. Lucie (DFSL) and Centennial High working together.

At St. Lucie West Centennial High School's Homecoming football game on September 9<sup>th</sup>, YLSL members, C. Jovil Wharton (Drug-Free St. Lucie Coordinator), and Kevin Singletary (KAH Project Coordinator) distributed various "swag" items from DFSL's Friday Night, Done Right (FNDR) campaign as well as YLSL business cards. Both adults and youth attending the game embraced YLSL and DFSL's presence as evidenced by parents who wore FNDR t-shirts while serving in the concession stand, and teens who paused to engage in conversation with YLSL members to hear about their experiences with the group and how they can join.



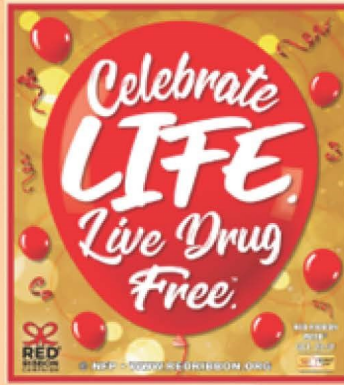
Makayla successfully utilized several leadership skills to include recognizing an opportunity, taking initiative, networking, planning, relationship-building, and effective communication to bring different entities together to work towards a common goal: to encourage and support teenagers in enjoying their Friday nights free of drugs and alcohol. Makayla's efforts have exposed hundreds of her peers at SLW Centennial High School to the leadership development she is experiencing as a member of YLSL.

Kids at Hope Universal Truth #2 states that youth succeed when they have caring adults (Aces) in their lives. Youth Leadership St. Lucie states that their operational model is "Youth led, Adult-guided". Makayla's undertaking is a beautiful marriage of the two: Makayla led the way, and with the support and guidance of adults who care about her, she succeeded in bringing her idea to life! Congratulations, Makayla, for being an emerging young leader positively impacting St. Lucie County!





# Red Ribbon Week



**October  
24-29**

**Oct  
24**

## We Are RED-Y To Say "NO" To Drugs and Alcohol!

**Parents & Teens:** Take the online pledge at [www.redribbon.org/pledge](http://www.redribbon.org/pledge). **Afterschool Clubs:** Wear Red Ribbon Swag and take the "Not a Lab Rat" pledge at: [www.swatflorida.com](http://www.swatflorida.com) **Community:** Watch our SAMHSA PSA's on TV CBS12 and Azteca; listen to the radio-The Flame 104.5.

**Oct  
25**

## Don't Get Mixed Up In Drugs!

**Parents & Teens:** Like and Follow our Facebook page @DrugFreeStLucie for free resources each day. **Afterschool Clubs:** Wear Red Ribbon Swag. **Community:** Watch our SAMHSA PSA's on TV CBS12 and Azteca and listen to the radio-The Flame 104.5.



**Oct  
26**

## Wear Red Today!

**Parents, Teens & Community:** Wear as many red items as possible and post pictures on your social media while tagging @DrugFreeStLucie & #RedRibbon. **Parents:** Download SAMHSA's new "Talk. They Hear You." mobile app that helps parents/caregivers prepare for the most important conversations they may ever have with their kids. Watch video: <https://youtu.be/JL2XMiOOOFg>



**Oct  
27**

## Let's "Chalk The Walk" To Prevent Substance Use!

**Afterschool Clubs:** Use brightly colored chalk to write prevention messages on sidewalks. Share pictures on your social media and tag @DrugFreeStLucie and #RedRibbon. Wear Red Ribbon Swag & take the "Not a Lab Rat" pledge at: [www.swatflorida.com](http://www.swatflorida.com). **Community:** Watch our SAMHSA PSA's on TV CBS12 and Azteca; listen to the radio-The Flame 104.5.

**Oct  
28**

## Let's TEAM UP Against Drugs!

**Boys & Girls Club/Percy Peak:** "Friday Night, Done Right" Fall Dance! **Afterschool Clubs:** Wear Red Ribbon Swag. **Community:** Watch our SAMHSA PSA's on TV CBS12 and Azteca; listen to the radio-The Flame 104.5.



**Oct  
29**

## DEA Drug Take Back Day!

**DEA Drug Take Back:** Incubate Neighborhood Center 10am-2pm. **Community:** Watch our SAMHSA PSA's on TV CBS12 and Azteca; listen to the radio-The Flame 104.5.



For more information contact: C. Jovil Wharton, Drug Free St. Lucie

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[www.RoundtableSLC.org](http://www.RoundtableSLC.org)





“As an adult and a Treasure Hunter, I am committed to search for all the talents, skills, and intelligence that exist in all children and youth. I believe that ALL children and youth are capable of success, No Exceptions!”



As you may already know, IGNITE Youth Alliance is a year-round program which means that when school is “out” we still have to be all “in” with the kids! Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> was a school holiday, so the Outreach Team was ready with a fabulously fun day planned for our youth! The female Outreach Workers took their young ladies to *Painting with a Twist*, they were allowed to select their own project and were able to bond and encourage one another to explore their creative sides. After they finished their works of art, they enjoyed lunch and conversation at Chili’s!

Our male Outreach Workers took their young men to *Defy* (an indoor trampoline park) where they spent two (very exhausting) hours growing closer in their brotherhood and improving their bilateral balance, along with body and brain coordination! After that, they enjoyed a live hibachi lunch, a group favorite, at Hokkaido.

A blast was had by all, check out our photos below!



## Board Member Spotlight:

This month our board member spotlight is on Jessica Parrish, CEO of United Way St. Lucie & Okeechobee. Jessica has been with the United Way for six years, but she has been a resident of St. Lucie County since she was a child. Jessica was born and lived in Venice, CA until the age of nine when she moved to Florida. She attended Garden City Elementary and is a graduate of Port St. Lucie High School. Jessica went on to attend the University of Florida where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Advertising and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from NOVA Southeast University. After college, she worked in marketing for local home builders. With the 2008 housing crisis came the time for her to seek employment elsewhere. She worked in government for over 10 years, starting at St. Lucie County and ending with the City of West Palm Beach. Working at the City of West Palm Beach led her to switch trajectories and begin working with nonprofits. Prior to starting at United Way, Jessica was the Vice President of Housing Services for Community Partners in Riviera Beach. She is a mother of three teen girls, a dog, and a cat. She loves to travel and would do so monthly if she could. She considers Italy her ultimate dream vacation, saying that if she ever makes it there, she may never come back. Her volunteer work includes a "recovering" Girl Scout Troop Leader, President of the Port St. Lucie Business Women, and a member of Women on Wall Street. One of her hopes for our community is the importance of lifting individuals out of poverty by teaching them financial independence and stability. You may be surprised to learn that Jessica is 50% Mexican and is applying for dual citizenship. Her father was born in Mexico and her mother in Pennsylvania.



Jessica Parrish, CEO  
United Way St. Lucie & Okeechobee



### Our Sponsors:



## Our Board Members

- ◆ Terissa Aronson, St. Lucie Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Tom Bakkedahl, 19th Judicial Circuit—State Attorney
- ◆ Rosetta Bartell, Housing Authority of Fort Pierce
- ◆ Linda Bartz, Board of County Commissioners
- ◆ Brian Bauer, CareerSource Research Coast
- ◆ Ann Berner, SE FL Behavioral Health Network
- ◆ John Bolduc, Port St. Lucie Police Department
- ◆ Sean Boyle, Children's Services Council
- ◆ Michael Davis, Department of Corrections
- ◆ Carol Deloach, Communities Connected for Kids
- ◆ Debbie Hawley, Steering Committee Chair
- ◆ Brian Hester, St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office
- ◆ Diane Holey-Burney, Fort Pierce Police Department
- ◆ Curtis Johnson, City of Fort Pierce
- ◆ Michael Linn, 19th Judicial Circuit-Judge
- ◆ Diamond R. Litty, 19th Judicial Circuit—Public Defender
- ◆ Tony Loupe, Early Learning Coalition of St. Lucie County
- ◆ Robert McPartlan, Department of Children and Families
- ◆ Heather Parker, Guardian ad Litem
- ◆ Jessica Parrish, United Way of St. Lucie & Okeechobee
- ◆ Nathan Peterson, Department of Juvenile Justice
- ◆ David Pickett, City of Port St. Lucie
- ◆ Dr. Jonathan Prince, St. Lucie Public Schools
- ◆ Nate Spera, St. Lucie County Fire District
- ◆ Clint Sperber, FL Health Department - St. Lucie County
- ◆ Peter Tesch, Economic Development Council
- ◆ Dana Trabulsy, State Representative
- ◆ Andrew Treadwell, Indian River State College
- ◆ Lisa von Seelen, Healthy Start Coalition of St. Lucie County

## Roundtable of St. Lucie County, Inc.

### **Our Mission:**

To sustain a team of county and business leaders who mobilize resources to improve the education, health, safety, nutrition and care of all children in St. Lucie County.

### **Our Vision:**

We envision a community where county leaders, businesses and residents are united to provide all children of St. Lucie County the resources they need to thrive, be successful and achieve their full potential.

# Executive Committee

## CHAIR

Tony Loupe, Early Learning Coalition

## VICE-CHAIR

Heather Parker, Guardian ad Litem

## SECRETARY

Jessica Parrish, United Way of St. Lucie & Okeechobee

## TREASURER

Ann Berner, Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network

## PAST CHAIR

Lisa von Seelen, Healthy Start Coalition of St. Lucie County

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Debbie Hawley, St. Lucie Public Schools

## AT LARGE

Carol Deloach, Communities Connected for Kids

[www.RoundtableSLC.org](http://www.RoundtableSLC.org)

## Roundtable of St. Lucie County, Inc.

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## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE:

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**Dana Espinosa, Operations Manager**

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- ◆ **Darcy McFolley, Outreach Supervisor**
- ◆ **Shantel Lariosa, Project Assistant**
- ◆ **Marcus Mills, Senior Outreach Worker**
- ◆ **LaKenya Ruffin, Outreach Worker**
- ◆ **Markesha Brockington, Outreach Worker**
- ◆ **Lee Davis, Outreach Worker**
- ◆ **Ismael Angervil, Outreach Worker**

### **Kids at Hope & Youth Leadership St. Lucie**

- ◆ **Kevin Singletary, Project Coordinator**  
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- ◆ **Kim Reid, School & Community Liaison**  
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### **Drug Free St. Lucie**

- ◆ **C. Jovil Wharton, Project Coordinator**  
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