

# Roundtable Review

## Message from our CEO

Greetings,

Often, the holidays come with lots of time off to read a good book. December is “National Read a Book” Month. This a good time to encourage our young people to pick up a book to read instead of playing games on their cell phones, right? In my youth, I recall an organization and its tagline “Reading is Fundamental” or RIF. The name of that organization stuck with me all of my life and is still in existence today. In my home, I always had access to books and understood how reading benefited my use of language and overall literacy. Unfortunately, that is not the case for all children in communities across our nation.



In St. Lucie County, Sean Boyle and his staff at Children’s Services Council understand the importance of reading especially for disadvantaged children and communities. Its investment in the St. Lucie Reads initiative, led by John Cesar is a game changer for children, and aids in closing the literacy gap in our community. I learned through this campaign that middle-income families have 13 books per child while low-income families only have ONE book for every 300 children. This initiative is a campaign that focuses on ensuring that all students in St. Lucie County are reading on grade level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade by emphasizing the importance of reading and placing little libraries throughout the community. Did you know there is a correlation between reading below level at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and poor outcomes for youth including incarceration? According to the Children’s Defense Fund summary report, we have an opportunity to interrupt the “Cradle to Prison” pipeline through education. Education begins with reading and is a key factor in increasing opportunities for success for all children in St. Lucie County. With the multifaceted impact of COVID on the economy and projected learning loss for so many youth, it is more important than ever to get books into the hands of our children, especially in disadvantaged communities. Let’s continue to support St. Lucie Reads and wrap a book or two as a present to donate to a young person. Why-- because Reading is Fundamental! Happy Holidays to you and yours.

**Teresa Bishop**  
Chief Executive Officer



DID YOU KNOW DECEMBER IS  
NATIONAL READ A NEW BOOK MONTH?



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### Special Dates:

- World AIDS Day 12/1
- Special Education Day 12/2
- National Cooke Day 12/4
- National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day 12/7
- Crossword Puzzle Day 12/21
- Hanukkah 12/18-26
- Christmas Day 12/25
- National Thank You Note Day 12/26
- Kwanza 12/26-1/1



# YouthCon Is Here!

Drug Free St. Lucie and Youth Leadership St. Lucie will be hosting One St. Lucie Youth Con for middle and high school teens, on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 10 am – 3 pm at the IRSC Pruitt Campus- STEM Center.

The purpose of this event is to provide youth with the skills and knowledge to make positive decisions, give youth a forum to discuss and provide input on matters that affect them, and empower youth to make a difference in their community.

This FREE event promises to be fun and interactive with lots of giveaways and prizes, a 360 photo booth, lunch, and music provided by the popular DJ Zoe Papi. All teens who attend will benefit from topics that will cover **Mental Health and Social Connectedness, Online Safety- Stranger Things, Do You Know Who you are Talking To?, and Making Healthy Choices to Resist Peer Pressure.** In addition, there will be a Teen Talk session in which teens will be giving their input/ideas on issues that impact them.

Scan the QR code or visit our website [www.RoundtableSLC.org](http://www.RoundtableSLC.org) to register today! The deadline is Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> and parental consent is required for teens under 18 years to attend. All participating teens will receive a t-shirt, lunch, and volunteer hours.





Scan the QR Code to Register Today!

**FREE!**  
For Middle & High School Students  
Lunch Provided

**Invite a Friend**

**Saturday, December 10th**  
**10:00am - 3:00pm**

Cultivating Conversations About Important Topics:

- Mental Health and Social Connectedness
- Making Healthy Choices to Resist Peer Pressure
- "Stranger Things" - Do you know who you are talking to?
- And More...!

**YOUTH VOICES AND CHOICES TO IMPACT TODAY AND TOMORROW'S WORLD!**

**DRUG FREE ST. LUCIE**  
A Network of the Roundtable of St. Lucie County

**IRSC, Pruitt Campus - STEM Center**  
**500 NW California Blvd.**

**Giveaways!**

- PS4 Gaming System
- Wireless Party Speaker
- Visa Gift Cards









Questions: C. Jovill Wharton - [JWharton@RoundtableSLC.org](mailto:JWharton@RoundtableSLC.org) or (772) 871-5880

## Most Local Alcohol Retailers Pass Compliance Checks

The St. Lucie County Sheriff's office continues to work in partnership with Drug Free St. Lucie on substance misuse prevention of underage drinking, by utilizing the evidence-based strategy of "compliance checks". The purpose of compliance checks is to discourage the sale of alcohol to minors.

On November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022, the St. Lucie County Sheriff's office conducted alcohol compliance checks at 18 pharmacies and all 18 were in compliance. Walgreens store# 4391, located at 2501 Virginia Avenue in Fort Pierce, was one of the pharmacies that was involved and Manager Jeff Lipston, who has been with Walgreens for 24 years, stated that it is Walgreens' policy to ask all customers for ID and employees who sell alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 are terminated.

To recognize retailers who are in compliance, Drug Free St. Lucie has implemented a retailers recognition program for all those who pass compliance checks. "It is very nice to be appreciated, these things mean a lot," commented Manager Jeff Lipston when his store was presented with a congratulatory certificate for doing their part in preventing underage drinking by checking for ID on alcohol purchases.

Other stores in compliance included:

- ♦ Walgreens store # 1954, 1954 SW Gatlin Blvd
- ♦ Walgreens store # 6388, 2901 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd
- ♦ Walgreens store # 4001, 280 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd
- ♦ Walgreens store # 5465, 1025 SE Port St. Lucie Blvd
- ♦ Walgreens store # 12302, 9000 S. US HWY 1
- ♦ Walgreens store # 6383, 2901 SW Port St Lucie Blvd
- ♦ Walgreens store # 10741, 1603 S. US HWY 1
- ♦ Walgreens store # 4804, 1661 St. Lucie West Blvd
- ♦ Walgreens store # 10705, 2592 S. Jenkins Rd
- ♦ Walgreens store # 5335, 7620 S. Us Hwy 1
- ♦ Walgreens store # 3110, 692 SW Prima Vista Blvd
- ♦ CVS store # 4254, 301 NE Prima Vista Blvd
- ♦ CVS store # 5157, 1300SW St. Lucie West Blvd
- ♦ CVS store # 5902, 9197 S. Federal Hwy
- ♦ CVS store # 7923, 2873 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd
- ♦ CVS store # 2220, 2220 S. US Hwy 1
- ♦ CVS store # 4041, 9801 US Hwy 1



Data collected by Drug Free St. Lucie indicates that there were over 125 stores that were a part of this year-long operation, and 106 of those were found to be in compliance.

Drug Free St. Lucie and the St. Lucie County Sheriff Office are committed to continuing to work together to develop and implement a coordinated and proactive approach to reducing and preventing youth substance use and misuse in St. Lucie County.







## Farewell, Monica!

As most of you may already know, the Roundtable and IGNITE said farewell to Monica Jakobsen on Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022. She has been with IGNITE Youth Alliance (formerly Restoring the Village Youth) since its beginning. Monica is many things, too many to mention, but to read comments her Outreach Team collectively shared is to get an honest picture of what she meant to all of us at the Roundtable and IGNITE. Outreach Worker Marcus Mills, "I'll never forget the first time I interacted with Monica, her choice of music as I signed my employment documents surprised me, and Monica has been showing up and surprising me ever since." Outreach Worker, Ismael Angervil, who is the newest team member, "Monica is nothing but caring, willing to put her own stuff aside and step in to help with everything she could." Outreach Worker, Markesha Brockington "Monica is a strong fighter, the most understanding, solution-finding, step-on-your-toes to get things done kind of person." Outreach Worker, Lee Davis "She's the most down to earth, optimistic, open, and honest individual I've ever met.." Outreach Worker, Lakenya Ruffin, "Monica is always in the trenches alongside each one of us, she's a saver, and has saved an uncountable number of individuals throughout the years." Outreach Supervisor, Darcy McFolley, has been with Monica since day one, "Monica is more than just a supervisor, boss, or project coordinator, she is my friend. Monica is caring, compassionate, outgoing, aggressive (when she needs to be), and shows a tremendous amount of both sympathy and empathy along the way. I believe that she wants to understand all sides of the perspective, she seeks the answers and does the research when there is something she doesn't know, which isn't often. Monica was the top of our totem pole, the head honcho, our number one advocate, someone who fought until the death for not only us, but the youth in St Lucie County."



We know that she will go on and continue to do great things, no matter where life takes her, because that's who she is. Whenever she decides to stop and put her feet down, whether that's a few hours into this coming Monday morning, or years from now, whoever will call her "boss" or "employee" next better be ready because she's going to be the best thing that ever happened to them, too.



## Youth Leadership is Tallahassee Bound!



Albert Camus said, "Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present." The members of Youth Leadership were presented with an early gift in this season of giving. State Representative and Roundtable Board Member, Dana Trabulsky made a generous donation to Youth Leadership St Lucie. Earlier this year, Representative Trabulsky participated in the Youth Leadership's "Civic Engagement" panel discussion. She was impressed with their knowledge of the current issues and how they presented questions to the panelist. Rep. Trabulsky told the members on that day, she would love to host them in Tallahassee when the State House of Representatives is in session. Her generous donation will help support the cost of bringing some of the Youth Leadership members to Tallahassee during their spring break in March of 2023. The members of Youth Leader are excited about this opportunity and they look forward to visiting the State House and seeing Representative Trabulsky in action. The members of Youth Leadership would like to thank Rep. Trabulsky for the tremendous act of kindness and for exemplifying the words of Albert Camus by making a deposit into the future of our youth in this present moment.

*Thank you*

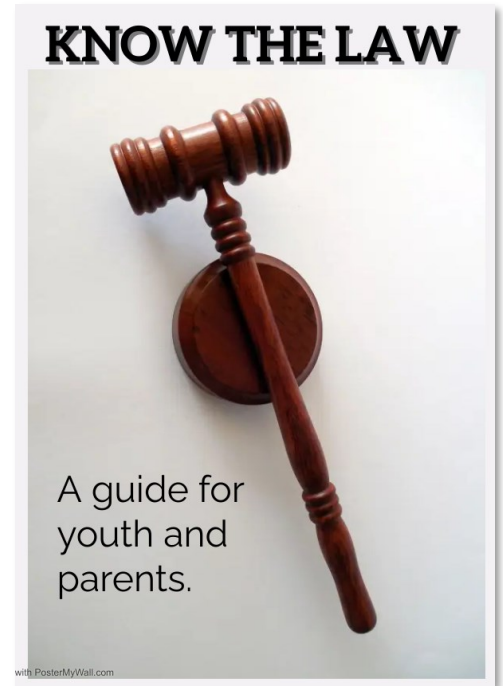


## **KNOW THE LAW**

KNOW THE LAW (A guide for Youth and Parents) – For copies of this booklet email : C. Jovil Wharton, Drug Free St. Lucie Project Coordinator at [Jwharton@roundtableslc.org](mailto:Jwharton@roundtableslc.org)

You must be 21 years of age to purchase, possess, or drink alcohol. If you try to buy an alcoholic beverage in a store or a bar, you will be asked to prove your age. If you cannot prove you are 21 or older, the dealer cannot sell you an alcoholic beverage.

If you are under 21, it is illegal for you to attempt to purchase an alcoholic beverage. If you are 18 years of age or older and this is your first violation, you could be fined up to \$500, confined for up to 60 days, or receive 6 months of probation. If you are under 10 years of age you will face juvenile delinquency sanctions. Anyone who sells or gives alcoholic beverages to a person under 21, or who lets the person drink alcoholic beverages in a bar or store is breaking the law.



## **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**

[DEspinosa@RoundtableSLC.org](mailto:DEspinosa@RoundtableSLC.org)

## OUR INITIATIVES:

### **IGNITE Youth Alliance—(772) 448-5712**

- ◆ **Darcy McFolley, Intervention & Outreach Coordinator**

[DMcFolley@RoundtableSLC.org](mailto:DMcFolley@RoundtableSLC.org)

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

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

- ◆ **Kevin Singletary, Project Coordinator**

[KSingletary@RoundtableSLC.org](mailto:KSingletary@RoundtableSLC.org)

### **Drug Free St. Lucie**

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

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