



April 2024

# Roundtable Review

## Message from our CEO

Greetings,

April is National Minority Health Month. According to the National Minority Quality Forum, this month is designated as an inclusive initiative that addresses the health needs of people of color. The goal is to “strengthen the capacity of local communities to eliminate the disproportionate burden of premature death and preventable illness in minority populations through prevention, early detection, and control of the disease complications. Consistent with the mission of the Roundtable, we are leaders “who mobilize resources to improve the education, health, safety, nutrition and care for ALL children” in St. Lucie County. The Roundtable utilizes data to prioritize areas of focus for prevention and intervention strategies in our community for all youth and families across a range of areas including substance misuse, mental health, teen pregnancy, infant mortality, economic self-sufficiency for disconnected youth, unintentional injury, academic success, and childhood obesity. In addition, the Roundtable published an evaluation conducted by Georgetown University’s Center for Juvenile Justice Reform called “Entry into the Juvenile Legal System in St. Lucie County” on our website. In this report, you will find minority youth and families are overrepresented with poorer outcomes. Contributory factors such as food and healthcare deserts, low access to transportation, high-paying jobs, and affordable housing for families, or areas impacted by environmental factors, including high heat, unaffordable energy bills, or hurricanes and floods in low-lying areas to name a few, disproportionately impact minority residents. April is also Alcohol Awareness Month and I would be remiss if I did not mention the density of alcohol outlets identified in the Drug Free St. Lucie Community Assessment in the same vulnerable communities, also posted on our website. Investment in social services and supports to improve outcomes for all youth and families are essential, however, long-term improvement in the lives of all children will not be sustainable without intentionally addressing the lived environments and infrastructure in a significant way (both people and building projects) in underserved minority communities. Disparities are often a sensitive discussion to have amongst stakeholders, however, tackling these complex issues is necessary for our community to be true to its commitment to ensuring “all children are capable of success-no exceptions”. As always, we are better together.



**Teresa Bishop**  
Chief Executive Officer



### Inside this issue:

Drug Free St. Lucie .....	2-3
Kids at Hope .....	4
H.Y.P.E. ....	4
St. Lucie RISE .....	5
Drug Free St. Lucie .....	6-7
Mothers At Hope .....	8
Opioid Summit .....	9
Board Members .....	9
About Us .....	10

### Special Dates:

- World Autism Day 4/2
- National Walk to Work Day 4/5
- World Health Day 4/7
- Dog Therapy Appreciation Day 4/11
- Go Fly A Kite Day 4/17
- Volunteer Recognition Day 4/20
- Earth Day 4/22
- National Prescription Drug Take Back Day 4/27
- National Superhero Day 4/28

# 2nd Annual Marijuana Summit



The 2nd Annual Marijuana Summit was held on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at the Fenn Center with over 125 community partners in prevention in attendance. The Summit provided education, awareness, and prevention information as well as networking opportunities.

## Our incredible speakers presented on the following topics:

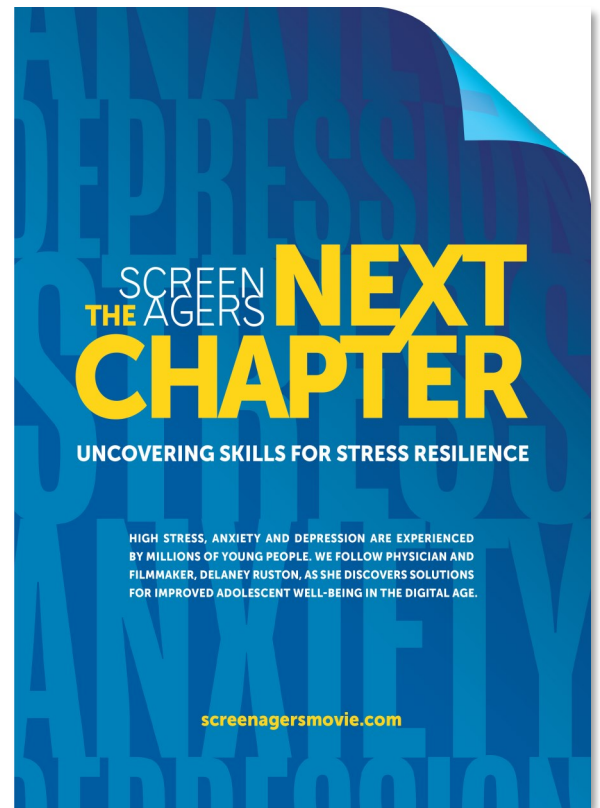
- **Cannabis – “A Substance With Many Names”** - Jemima Desir Dougé, M.D., MBA, Florida Poison Control Center
- **“The Impact Marijuana Has On Our Roadways”** - Stephanie Murphy, M.A.D.D. Florida
- **Law Enforcement Panel: “Vaping and Cannabis Use In Schools”**- Sgt. Ryan Register, St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office; **“Drugged Driving And Marijuana/THC Recognition”** - Deputy Cortland Jones, St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office, Officer Craig Yochum #1185, Jupiter Police Department, and Sergeant Andrew Borrows #1138, Jupiter Police Department
- **“Financial Model and Combatting Misinformation”** - Ed Shemelya, National Marijuana Initiative
- **“Marijuana and Pregnancy”** - Heather L. Horning, National Drug Free Workplace Alliance, Program Manager, Drug Free America Foundation, Inc.
- **“An Introduction To Understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder”** - Kristal Pollack, LCW, The Florida Center for Early Childhood
- **Q & A Panel Session** - Moderator: Lisa von Seelen, Executive Director, Healthy Start Coalition of St. Lucie County & Kids Connected by Design. **Panelists:** Kristal Pollack, Heather Horning, Ed Shemelya, Sgt. Ryan Register, and Jemima Desir Doug
- **“CALL TO ACTION”** - Sonya Gabriel, Community Health Nursing Consultant, Department of Health - St. Lucie County



# "SCREENAGERS: The Next Chapter"

Drug Free St. Lucie hosted a FREE Family Movie Night at Sunlight Christian Academy on Monday, April 1st for the showing of "SCREENAGERS: The Next Chapter", from the SCREEANGERS trilogy. This is the second SCREENAGERS Family Movie night organized by Drug Free St. Lucie with the generous sponsorship of the Children's Services Council. "SCREENAGERS: The Next Chapter" addresses the impact of social media and screen time by examining the science behind teens' emotional challenges and how parents and educators can empower teens to build crucial skills to navigate stress, anxiety, and depression, and build emotional agility, communication savvy, and stress resilience in our digital age.

Sixty (60) parents with their tweens and teens enjoyed a light dinner, followed by the movie screening and a Q & A session moderated by Cassey Chang, Tykes and Teens Trauma Informed Care Coordinator and Chair of Drug Free St. Lucie's Education, Training and Awareness Workgroup. Tykes & Teens and New Horizons of the Treasure Coast and Okeechobee representatives were also in attendance to provide resource information to families.



# Kids at Hope Corner



Kids at Hope is alive and well in our community thanks to the amazing partnerships with our stakeholders, schools, and youth-serving agencies. The Boys and Girls Club and Southport Middle School continue to participate in Time Travel and Aces activities with our Kids at Hope School and Community Liaison, Amanda DeMan. The Southport Middle School students Time Traveled to the Destination of Education and Career. Students wrote their goals for “Education & Career” on balloons and added the strengths they possess that will help them achieve those goals. Using those balloons, they participated in a fun activity that reminded them how a support system of caring adults, acting as a safety net of support, can help when challenges arise as they strive to reach their goals.

The Bayshore Elementary Jaguars fully embrace and implement the Kids at Hope culture. In their monthly “Time Traveler” ceremony, a student in every class is named “Time Traveler of the Month”. Those same students also participate in naming their “Ace of the Month”, identifying the caring adult that supported them in achieving their goals.

*More Than a Game* launched their fourth season in March. *More than a Game* is an incredible Children’s Services Council Initiative organized by their Community Engagement Coordinator, John Cesar in partnership with Kids at Hope. It is a ten week program offering opportunities for fathers and father figures to strengthen their parental skills, thus becoming stronger and more nurturing Aces of Hearts for their children.



Exciting new changes and partnerships are happening with our coalition! We have officially transitioned from being Youth Leadership St. Lucie to **H.Y.P.E.—Helping Youth Pursue Excellence**. As we move toward becoming an action-based, fully realized youth coalition, a new name comes with a new more richly defined identity as well. We are excited to announce that we are expanding our coalition to include 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students, in addition to our existing 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders, and we have also defined H.Y.P.E.’s Core Values, which include the following:

- ◆ **Substance Use Prevention**
- ◆ **Mental Health Advocacy**
- ◆ **Youth Health and Wellness**
- ◆ **Improving Community Environments**

In defining our core values, H.Y.P.E. will move forward as a coalition with specific objectives in mind, continuing the “Youth Led, Adult Guided” model. We are partnering with Y. Engage, to train our H.Y.P.E. youth leaders on advocacy skills to deliver impactful messages to local community leaders and legislators, such as *PhotoVoice*, video PSAs, and elevator speeches. As we have expanded our vision and mission with H.Y.P.E., we have also expanded our partnerships to include youth from other local agencies! We are proud to be partnering with Y.Engage to train not just our H.Y.P.E. youth leaders on *PhotoVoice*, but also the youth at the Lincoln Park Community Center and E.N.D. It! Beginning in April, H.Y.P.E. youth leaders will work in tandem with the youth at these agencies to produce a *PhotoVoice* exhibit that will offer a youth perspective on the state of mental health and substance use prevention in St. Lucie County.

Stay tuned as we also develop the **H.Y.P.E. Academy!** This exciting new opportunity will be available to all youth-serving agencies in St. Lucie County and will include training and personal development workshops for youth on life skills such as social connectedness, responsible social media usage, social etiquette, interviewing and resume writing skills, and more.

# From Tension to Tranquility National Stress Awareness Month



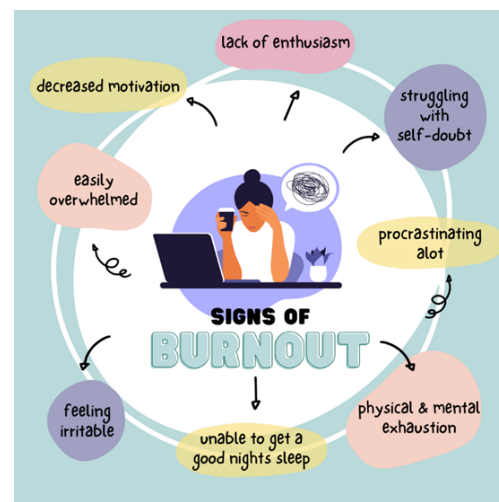
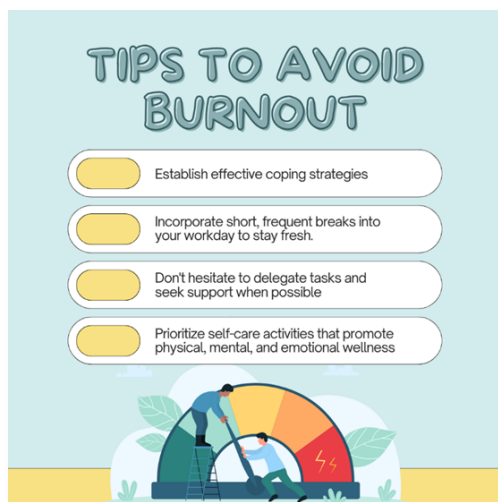
As April unfolds, so does National Stress Awareness Month – a time dedicated to highlighting the pervasive issue of stress and its impact on our well-being. Stress does not discriminate as it affects individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and professions. From demanding work environments to personal responsibilities and global events, stress can manifest itself in an array of forms that have significant repercussions on one’s physical, emotional, and mental health. One of the probable outcomes of stress is burnout. In a survey of just over 1,500 working adults in the United States, 79% stated they experienced work-related stress, approximately 60% experienced negative impacts from their stress, and 36% reported symptoms of cognitive fatigue.<sup>1</sup>

In recognizing National Stress Awareness Month and the influence stress has on one’s mental health, it is important to not only prioritize our own wellness journeys but to also operate from a trauma-informed lens. Understanding that others are experiencing their own difficulties and subsequently treating individuals with care contributes to creating a better community. The St. Lucie RISE Mental Health Collaborative, under the Roundtable, is dedicated to establishing a trauma-informed community through our partnership with the Children’s Services Council and Tykes & Teens on the *Peace 4 St. Lucie* initiative. *Peace 4 St. Lucie* aims to look at the root causes and widespread impact of trauma in our community and build the capacity and resiliency to respond empathetically, avoiding re-traumatization and promoting healing.

Additionally, recognizing that young people are enduring hardships to their mental well-being similarly to adults has been the driving motivator for implementing Teen Mental Health First Aid training. This training equips teens with the skills and knowledge to provide initial support to their peers experiencing challenges. In partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of St. Lucie County and other youth-serving organizations, our objective is to mentor 125 teens annually in this curriculum to strengthen the capability of our local youth to triumph over adversities now and later in their lives.

Throughout this month, St. Lucie RISE encourages the promotion of self-care practices to holistically cultivate a stronger county, one person at a time. As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, let us reaffirm our commitment to stress management and overall well-being. Together, we can foster environments that prioritize mental health, not just during National Stress Awareness Month, but year-round.

For more information on the St. Lucie RISE Mental Health Collaborative, visit the initiative page at [www.roundtableslc.org/stlucie\\_rise](http://www.roundtableslc.org/stlucie_rise) and follow us on Facebook @StLucieRise.



**Reference:**

Abramson, A. *Burnout, and stress are everywhere.* <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/01/special-burnout-stress>

## Alcohol Use Among Girls and Young Women: A WORRYING TREND

In the past boys were thought to be more likely to drink alcohol than girls. But the reality is that in recent years this thinking is no longer true. Additionally, data shows that 31% of girls ages 12 to 20 consumed alcohol in 2021 compared to 26% of boys. The rate of girls and young women reported past-month alcohol use was also higher than the rate reported by boys and young men. Why are more girls drinking alcohol than boys? Here are some facts that organizations and those working in prevention should know as they design strategies to curb harmful drinking behaviors among girls and young women.

**Mental Health Affects Underage Drinking:** Evidence suggests that problems with anxiety and depression are increasing among adolescents, particularly young women. Girls and young women are more susceptible to internalizing stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. This, in turn, may make them more likely to drink as a way to cope. In fact, when girls have high levels of anxiety, they are more likely than boys to use alcohol and do so at earlier ages. Helping girls and young women handle difficult emotions in healthy ways may help them reduce their consumption of alcohol or possibly avoid it altogether. Because of the association between underage drinking and mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety, girls and young women who have these challenges need strong underage drinking prevention support coupled with general mental health support.

**Alcohol Increases the Risk of Certain Health Problems:** Girls and young women differ biologically from boys and young men. Females tend to have less water in their bodies than males of the same weight, therefore the alcohol they drink becomes more concentrated in their blood where it then travels to the brain.

**Other gender-specific physical risks faced by girls and young women who use alcohol include:**

- ⇒ **Increased risk of memory problems.** Compared with boys, girls' memories are more likely to be affected negatively by drinking. Young females are more likely to experience memory impairments from alcohol, such as alcohol-induced blackouts. Furthermore, girls and young women who report binge drinking show less brain activity and poorer performance on memory tests than peers who either drink a little or abstain. Boys and young men do not show the same outcomes.
- ⇒ **A greater risk for long-term health consequences.** Females are more susceptible than males to experiencing long-term health consequences like alcohol-induced liver inflammation and liver cancer, as well as cardiovascular disease. Drinking alcohol, even in girls and young women, contributes to future breast cancer. Among adult women, even one drink per day has been linked to a 5% - 9% higher chance of developing breast cancer compared to those who abstain from using alcohol.



**Organizations and Communities Like Yours Can Help:** Prevention works when we work together! National and community-based organizations play crucial roles in helping girls and young women avoid the harms caused by underage drinking. By educating young people and adults about the risks and consequences of alcohol use, we can work to continue the downward trend and address gender patterns of underage drinking and risky alcohol use. Parents and other caring adults play an important role in young people's decisions to consume alcohol, so it is imperative that adults support girls and young women as they work to protect their mental and physical health. SAMHSA's Prevention and Treatment of Anxiety, Depression, and Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among College Students, and the HHS Office on Women's Health and Girls' Health websites have information to help caring adults navigate the mental health challenges girls and young women face as they transition to adulthood. Likewise, SAMHSA's "Talk. They Hear You." substance use prevention campaign and the Drug Enforcement Administration's publication "Growing Up Drug Free" have resources to help adults start and continue conversations about alcohol use with children, teens, and young adults.

To get a copy of this fact sheet click on this link. [Alcohol Use Among Girls and Young Women: A Worrying Trend | SAMHSA Publications and Digital Products](#) Publication ID PEP23-03-10-006, Publication date May 2023



## DFSL Accepted to the ICCPUD's Alcohol Policy Academy!



Drug Free St. Lucie (DFSL) has been accepted to participate in the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking's (ICCPUD) Policy Academy for Implementing Community-Level Policies.

### The Policy Academy is:

- A collaboration among the (ICCPUD) and SAMHSA's National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory, led by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP).
- Held from April 2024 through March 2025, with required monthly webinars and an in-person meeting immediately following attendance at the Alcohol Policy 20 Conference in Arlington, VA, in May 2024.
- Limited to 28 participants from 14 coalitions (two representatives per coalition).

### The Policy Academy's goals are to:

- Reduce demand for, the availability of, and access to alcohol by persons under the age of 21.
- Build the capacity of community coalitions, states, tribes, territories, and jurisdictions interested in and committed to using evidence-based tools to establish a multifaceted approach to preventing and reducing underage drinking.
- Work towards implementation of evidence-based local and state alcohol policies.

Drug Free St. Lucie will be represented by Jovil Wharton, Project Coordinator and Melanie Trewyn, Coalition member.

## National Prescription Drug Take Back Day!

The next **National Prescription Drug Take Back Day** is **Saturday, April 27, 2024, from 10:00 am—2:00 pm at Jackson Drugs in Fort Pierce.** This event, which happens twice a year, is a safe, convenient, and responsible way to dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs at locations in communities throughout the country. Our October 2023 Take Back Day brought in 157 pounds of medication!

**Proper Use:** Always take your medications exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not take medication from someone else or share your medication with others. Be open with your doctor about all of the medications you are taking, even over-the-counter medications.

**Proper Disposal:** Unused prescription drugs thrown in the trash can be retrieved and abused or illegally sold. Unused drugs that are flushed contaminate the water supply. Check your local pharmacy to find out if they collect expired prescription and nonprescription medications.

**Proper Storage:** Secure your medication from children and pets. Take regular inventory of your medicine to make sure nothing is missing. Spread the word and encourage family and friends to take a stand against prescription drug misuse.

**DRUG FREE ST. LUCIE**

# DRUG TAKE BACK DAY

**DISPOSE UNUSED MEDICATION RESPONSIBLY!**  
Bring your expired or unused prescription medications to the event for safe disposal or stop by to pick up a Deterra Drug Deactivation Kit for safe home disposal and a locking prescription medication vial.

**Saturday, April 27, 2024 | 10:00 am - 2:00 pm**

**LOCK YOUR MEDS!**  
Prevent prescription drug misuse, overdose, and unintentional injury/poisoning in St. Lucie County.

Poison Emergencies or Questions Call:  
Florida Poison Control Center: (800) 822-1222

**LOCATION:**  
JACKSON DRUGS  
2301 OKEECHOBEE RD.  
FORT PIERCE, FL 34950

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

For More Info: Jovil Wharton, DFSL Coordinator at [JWharton@RoundtableSLC.org](mailto:JWharton@RoundtableSLC.org)

**SAFE**

**LOCK YOUR MEDS!**  
Prevent prescription drug misuse, overdose, and unintentional injury/poisoning in St. Lucie County.

Poison Emergencies or Questions Call:  
Florida Poison Control Center: (800) 822-1222

Follow us: @DrugFreeStLucie  
[www.RoundtableSLC.org](http://www.RoundtableSLC.org)

*(This sticker will be placed on all locking pill bottles distributed.)*

# MOTHERS AT HOPE



## NO EXCEPTIONS!



A Kids at Hope themed peer support group for moms in St. Lucie County with children 0-24 months.

At Mothers at Hope, we will:

- ✓ Help you find your village of supportive women, and bond with your baby.
- ✓ Discover the power of self-care and stress management in your motherhood journey.
- ✓ Find new ways to help you prioritize your mental health and well-being.
- ✓ Connect to resources in St. Lucie County that serve families; Q&A sessions with local agencies.



Seating is Limited!

**Sign up today!**



[bit.ly/4abO3yR](https://bit.ly/4abO3yR)

### When:

Starting May 28th, 2024

**Mondays:** 4:00-5:00pm | June 3rd

**Tuesdays:** 1:00-2:00pm | May 28th

### Where:

**Graceway Village**

1780 Hartman Rd,

Fort Pierce, FL 34947

### For more information:

**Amanda DeMan,**

Kids at Hope School & Community Liaison

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

(772) 871-5880

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





## **SAVE THE DATE!**

The 2nd Annual Opioid Summit will take place on Thursday, May 30th from 8:30 am—3:00 pm. Drug Free St. Lucie is partnering with the Treasure Coast Opioid Taskforce to host this important event.



**DRUG FREE ST. LUCIE**

# **OPIOID SUMMIT**

**MAY 30th**  
8:30 am - 3:00 pm

**Save The Date!**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Bringing together stakeholders, community members, and agency programs that are addressing Opioid Use Disorder/ Substance Use Disorder
- Providing relevant education on topics related to Opioid Use Disorder/ Substance Use Disorder
- Allowing programs to share their current projects and promote networking
- Developing collaborative program partnerships
- Discussing evidence-based best practices in clinical settings

**FREE EVENT!**

Location:  
**FENN CENTER**  
2000 Virginia Ave.,  
Fort Pierce, FL 34982

### **Our Funders:**



## **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
- ◆ Richard Del Toro, Jr., Port St. Lucie Police Department
- ◆ Sean Boyle, Children's Services Council
- ◆ Joseph Cracchiola, Department of Corrections
- ◆ Carol Deloach, Communities Connected for Kids
- ◆ Thomas Epsky, United Way of St. Lucie & Okeechobee
- ◆ Sonya Gabriel, Steering Committee Chair
- ◆ TBD, City of Fort Pierce
- ◆ Diane Holey-Burney, Fort Pierce Police Department
- ◆ TBD, 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
- ◆ Troy Norman, St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office
- ◆ Heather Parker, Guardian ad Litem
- ◆ Nathan Peterson, Department of Juvenile Justice
- ◆ David Pickett, City of Port St. Lucie
- ◆ Dr. Jonathan Prince, St. Lucie Public Schools
- ◆ Jeff Lee, St. Lucie County Fire District
- ◆ Clint Sperber, FL Health Department - St. Lucie County
- ◆ Peter Tesch, Economic Development Council
- ◆ Dana Trabulsky, 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.

# 2023-24 Executive Committee

**CHAIR**

Tony Loupe, Early Learning Coalition

**VICE-CHAIR**

Heather Parker, Guardian ad Litem

**SECRETARY**

Bob McPartlan, Department of Children and Families

**TREASURER**

Ann Berner, Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network

**PAST CHAIR**

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

**STEERING COMMITTEE**

Sonya Gabriel, Florida Health Department - St. Lucie

**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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TBishop@RoundtableSLC.org

**Dana Espinosa, Operations Manager**

DEspinosa@RoundtableSLC.org

## OUR INITIATIVES:

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

◆ Kevin Singletary, Project Coordinator

KSingletary@RoundtableSLC.org

◆ Amanda DeMan, School & Community Liaison

ADeMan@RoundtableSLC.org

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

◆ C. Jovil Wharton, Project Coordinator

JWharton@RoundtableSLC.org

### **St. Lucie RISE—Mental Health Collaborative**

◆ Shamra Gilles, Mental Health Collaborative Coordinator

SGilles@RoundtableSLC.org

◆ Hamsa Mazou, Administrative Assistant

HMazou@RoundtableSLC.org

