

# Roundtable Review

## Message from our CEO

Greetings,

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Youth need support today more than ever. They face so many things that impact their mental health, often informed by social media. As a kid, after school or during recess, we played “tag”, “red light, green light” and “Mother, May I”. Kickball in the streets, jumping Double-Dutch rope, and skipping the chalk-made hopscotch on the cement was the norm. On snow days in Connecticut, snowball battles, surfing the snow on our sleds, and chicken noodle soup to get warm when we came inside were routine. Friends would pile into someone's house to play cards and a variety of board games on a snow day. Physical activity, socializing, and engaging our minds in strategizing to win relieved the stress of problems at home or simply growing up. Today, young people have substituted opportunities to be active with spending inordinate screen time on social media or texting, while parents, guardians, and caring adults are oblivious to its impact on the mental well-being of our youth. We must stay informed to protect our children in an ever-changing world. A Roundtable’s initiative, Drug-Free St. Lucie, has been hosting a free movie series called “Screenagers”, a trilogy of documentaries that explore the impact of digital technology on kids' mental health, well-being, and decision-making. Stay tuned for the next showing coming soon in July. We are also excited about our partnership with the Boys and Girls Club (BGC) to implement Teen Mental Health First Aid training (tMHFA) at the clubs. Club youth will receive tMHFA to help them identify and assist their peers who may be having mental health challenges. Club staff that work directly with youth were recently trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid as well. Unlike physical injuries that are apparent to the eye, a child's state of mental health is not always obvious. We need as many “hands on deck” as possible to support our youth. Teen Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-based practice and once implemented at the BGC sites will be a great support for many club members. Thank you to the Boys and Girls Club for partnering with us. As we often say, “It takes a village”. We are better together!



*Teresa Bishop*  
Chief Executive Officer



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### Special Dates:

- International Firefighters Day 5/1
- Teacher Appreciation Week 5/6-10
- School Nurse s Day 5/8
- Mother’s Day 5/12
- Prevention Week 5/12-18
- National Employee Health and Fitness Day 5/15
- Memorial Day 5/27



## St. Lucie RISE Mental Health Collaborative Spotlight

April was a productive month for the SLR MH Collaborative. In our partnership with the Boys & Girls Club (BGC) of St. Lucie County to implement Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) with their youth, we were able to facilitate the Youth Mental Health First Aid training of all staff that directly interact with the teens. This training provides the adults with the skillset to support teens who may be experiencing mental health challenges. We will return to BGC this summer to train teens 15 to 18 years of age in tMHFA.

The highlight of the month was most certainly getting into the community and working with local youth on a PhotoVoice exhibit. PhotoVoice is an evidence-based practice that incorporates the creative activity of photography with reflective discussions on how a particular topic is perceived in different environments. In this case, the purpose of our project is to capture a visual representation of what local young people think mental health looks like. To do so, the Roundtable's H.Y.P.E. youth coalition partnered with Y.Engage, a national youth leadership development training organization, to provide technical assistance for executing a PhotoVoice exhibit. Youth from E.N.D. It! and the Lincoln Park Community Center joined our H.Y.P.E. youth leaders and were tasked with taking photos that can in turn foster community dialogue or even educate and tell a story to legislators and key stakeholders about the real-life impact of mental health. While the training course has officially ended, caption writing work continues in order to accurately express what it is each photo symbolizes for the young photographer who took it. We are looking forward to the unveiling of the PhotoVoice exhibit soon!

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.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY



Lincoln Park Community Center youth brainstorming ideas for their PhotoVoice projects.



# Mindful May: Highlighting Mental Health Awareness Month



The Roundtable's St. Lucie RISE Mental Health Collaborative is working hard to bring awareness to the prevalence and impact that our mental health has on everything we do here in St. Lucie County.

## A National Perspective

Throughout the country, millions of individuals are affected by mental health challenges. According to data cited by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), 1 in 5 adults and 1 in 6 youth in the U.S. will experience a mental health condition annually.<sup>3</sup> By the time a young person reaches the age of fourteen, they are at high risk for enduring challenges, as 50% of all mental illnesses stem around that time. The statistic jumps to 75% by age 24, emphasizing the widespread impact of mental hardship, even with the youth. Furthermore, the stigma associated leads many to endure quietly from fear of judgment rather than accessing the support needed.

## Florida's Landscape

Florida, with its rich cultural diversity and varied demographics, presents both opportunities and challenges in managing the needs of its populace. In the state, the occurrence of mental health difficulties is higher than what is seen throughout the country. Florida is ranked number 46 in access to mental health care by Mental Health America.<sup>2</sup> With compounding factors such as a vast spectrum of socio-economic statuses, varied demographics, and significant population growth, the state has many barriers to improving the conditions. Understanding the complexity of these intersecting factors will help shape effective strategies to support individuals and communities.

## Insight into St. Lucie County

Our county could be considered a microcosmic representation of the broader mental health landscape in the state. Every two years, the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) is conducted to collect data on topics of substance misuse and mental health and how those two things are impacting the youth of St. Lucie County (SLC). It tells us what is going on throughout the state of FL as a whole, but most importantly, it provides local data. Between 2018 and 2022, there was a 28.6% increase in youth who agreed with the statement: "Sometimes I think life is not worth it", which expresses feelings of hopelessness.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, there was a 36.5% increase in youth that noted agreement with the next statement "All in all, I am inclined to think I am a failure". When SLC youth were asked about suicidal thoughts in the last year, 33.5% identified that they did think about taking their own lives. Almost 8% went on to attempt suicide. Without even getting into the data for adults in Florida, the data for our young people alone depicts a need for mental health support in our community. St. Lucie RISE aims to reduce those numbers through our sub-network workgroups formalized to address the local needs on multiple fronts; however, the more individuals that are awakened to the prevalent issue, the more that can be done to change the current trajectory of youth mental health challenges in St. Lucie County.

## Moving Forward

As we observe Mental Health Awareness (MHA) Month, it is critical to recognize the scope of the challenge and the urgency in addressing it. It is great that awareness has appeared to increase in recent years and more discussions are being had; however, we would be remiss in not acknowledging the significant gaps that persist in the access and affordability of mental healthcare services, particularly in marginalized communities. By operating from a place of understanding, empathy, and support, it is possible to work toward a nation, state, and county where mental health is prioritized, stigmas are dismantled, and everyone has the opportunity to flourish. With evidence-based initiatives like *Mothers at Hope* which provides support to post-partum mothers, and Teen Mental Health First Aid to equip our youth with the knowledge and skillset to support their peers' mental health hurdles, we are keen on enacting meaningful change within the realm of mental health. During MHA Month, let us all commit to taking supportive action by starting conversations, advocating for policy reform, and supporting local organizations that are actively doing the work to make changes. Adopting a collective impact approach is one of St. Lucie RISE's guiding principles and should be our community's as well.

To get involved in fostering a supportive environment for Mental Health Awareness, refer to our Mindful May calendar of personal wellness activities for daily ideas. Moreover, prepare to "**Be Seen in Green**" throughout the month and more specifically on **May 14<sup>th</sup>** as the official color for Mental Health Awareness.

### References:

- Florida Department of Children and Families. *St. Lucie County Data Tables 2022 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey*.
- Mental Health America. "Ranking the States 2023." *Mental Health America*, [www.mhanational.org/issues/2023/ranking-states](http://www.mhanational.org/issues/2023/ranking-states).
- National Alliance on Mental Illness. "Mental Health by the Numbers." *NAMI*, Apr. 2023, [www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-by-the-numbers/](http://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-by-the-numbers/).

# Kids at Hope Corner



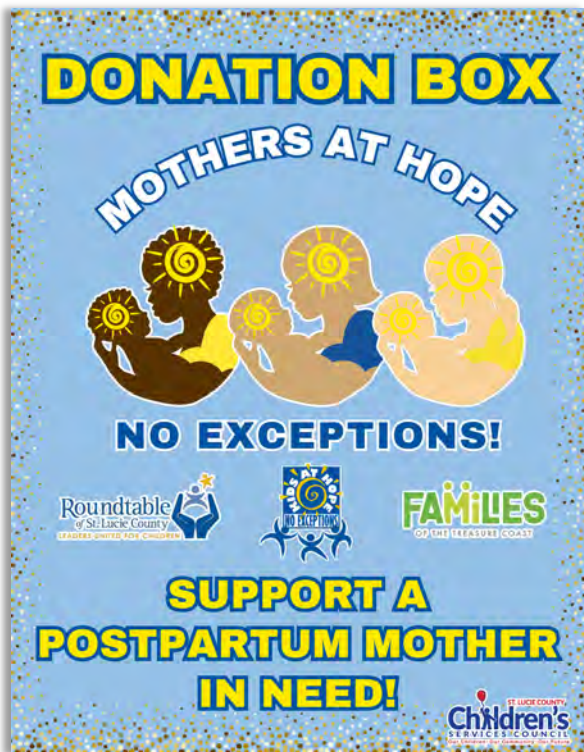
Last month, Kids at Hope was out and about in the community receiving support and engaging in partnerships with a variety of incredible schools and agencies! At Lindsay School of the Arts, we continued our Time Traveling adventures with the middle school students. The students envisioned their futures, learned about SMART Goals, and identified their support system of caring adults who can help them along the way in achieving their goals. Kids at Hope also participated in Tradition Preparatory High School's College and Career Symposium by Time Traveling with these high school students to the destination of Education and Career. The students also took the Myers-Briggs personality test to help them identify their individual talents, skills, and intelligences to help align their potential careers with their personality types.



Kids at Hope also had the opportunity to participate in the Early Learning Coalition's Family Fun Fair, where families came out to enjoy the activities planned by a multitude of agencies here in St. Lucie County. The Kids at Hope School & Community Liaison enjoyed a fun-filled day interacting with parents and children, and sharing the upcoming KAH events - **Mother's Day Crafts in the Park** on May 11th (see page 11), and **Mothers at Hope** beginning May 28th (see page 5).



The launch of our *Mothers at Hope* donation box was a great success. The donation box is located inside the St. Lucie West Walmart Supercenter, in front of the Blue Cross Blue Shield offices. Please consider donating, as all donations will go directly to postpartum mothers in need via our new *Mothers At Hope* sessions starting in May!



# 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, for 9 weeks

**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

(772) 871-5880

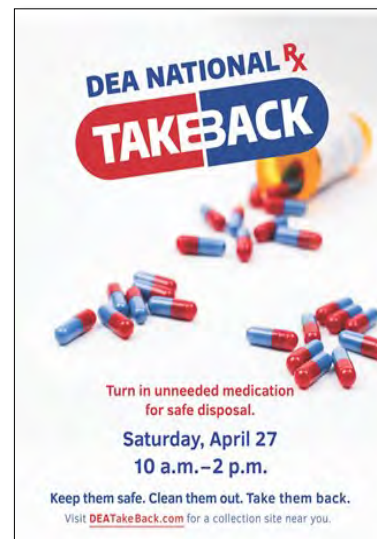
[www.RoundtableSLC.org](http://www.RoundtableSLC.org)

# National Prescription Drug Take Back Day



Sixty-two (62) pounds of medication was collected on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at Jackson Drugs in Fort Pierce during the National DEA Drug Take Back Day. A big thank you to the Fort Pierce Police Department, Army National Guard, Jackson Drugs, and the residents of Fort Pierce for helping to keep our community safe by preventing accidental injuries and poisonings.

**Missed Drug Take Back Day?** Use the [collection site locator](#) to locate the closest authorized collector for year round disposal. The **NEXT Take Back Day will be in October** - stay tuned!



## Upcoming Events

### National Fentanyl Awareness Day is May 7th, 2024

The safety and well-being of our community is always of utmost importance, which is why Drug Free St. Lucie is proud to be a part of the third annual National Fentanyl Awareness Day. We're doing our part to raise public awareness about an urgent problem: Americans are dying at alarming rates due to illicitly manufactured fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid.

Currently, fentanyl is being found in nearly all street drugs including cocaine and heroin, and in fake pills being sold on social media and in communities across the country. Fentanyl is now involved in more deaths of Americans under 50 than any other cause, including heart disease, cancer, homicide, suicide, and other accidents.

Initiated by parents who have lost children to this crisis, National Fentanyl Awareness Day is supported by a coalition of experts, corporations, non-profits, schools, families and elected officials who are working to empower our youth and their families. We invite you to take action with us today to help spread the word and save lives.



# National Prevention Week

Join the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Drug Free St. Lucie, and other agencies working in prevention for **National Prevention Week, May 12-18, 2024**. This week will be a celebration of the many possibilities of prevention and the brighter futures that exist thanks to the ongoing work of prevention happening across the country! Visit SAMHSA's site to learn more, [samhsa.gov/prevention-week](https://samhsa.gov/prevention-week).



**DRUG FREE ST. LUCIE**

**NATIONAL PREVENTION WEEK**

**CELEBRATING POSSIBILITIES**

Proud partner in keeping communities healthy and safe.

**FOLLOW US @DrugFreeSt.Lucie**

## NATIONAL PREVENTION WEEK

is a public education platform showcasing the work of communities and organizations across the country dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of substance misuse prevention and positive mental health.



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



**FLORIDA  
GUARDIAN  
AD LITEM  
OFFICE**

## HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, volunteers with the Guardian ad Litem office in St. Lucie County will have the opportunity to have an in-person interactive experience of a mock teenager's bedroom containing 50+ hidden items to raise awareness and recognition of signs that may point to adolescent risky behaviors/drug abuse.

# Treasure Coast Opioid Awareness Summit

Drug Free St. Lucie, in partnership with the Treasure Coast Opioid Task Force, will be hosting the **Annual Treasure Coast Opioid Awareness Summit**, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm at the Fenn Center.



**Theme:** Responding to the Opioid Epidemic Across a Continuum of Care

## Objectives:

- To bring together stakeholders, community members, and agency programs that are working to prevent substance misuse and/or opioid use disorder and substance use disorder.
- To provide relevant education on prevention strategies, risk reduction, evidence-based treatment practices, and recovery support.
- To share information on programs designed to prevent and address the misuse and abuse of opioids, and treat or mitigate opioid use or related disorders because of the opioid epidemic.
- To promote networking and develop collaborative partnerships.

## Who Should Attend:

- Addiction and Mental Health Professionals
- Healthcare professionals (certified alcohol and drug counselors, community healthcare workers, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, and physicians)
- Prevention Specialists
- Community Coalitions
- Public health professionals and healthcare students
- Educators
- Treatment and recovery providers
- Law enforcement officials
- Emergency medical services personnel
- Peer Recovery Specialists/Coaches
- Social Workers
- Harm reduction staff
- Health educators
- Anyone in our community who may have a loved one struggling with addiction/mental health challenges
- Parents/guardians of youth who may be at risk of experimenting with opioids

**Register today—Seating is Limited! Registration information available on the flyer (page 9).**





DRUG FREE  
ST. LUCIE



## Treasure Coast Opioid Awareness Summit

May 30th | 8:30am - 4:00pm

“RESPONDING TO THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC ACROSS THE CONTINUUM OF CARE”

### Our Presenters



**Raman Baldizhar, MD**  
Deputy Chief Medical Examiner  
Office of the Medical Examiner,  
District 19



**Gary Grimm**  
Drug Intelligence Officer  
South Florida High Intensity  
Drug Trafficking Areas



**Jasmin L. Sibai, MPH**  
Public Health Analyst  
South Florida High Intensity Drug  
Trafficking Areas



**Joanna Greene, MSc.**  
Human Services Supervisor,  
Martin County Board of County  
Commissioners



**Michelle Peaslee, MPH**  
Public Health Services Manager,  
FL Dept. of Health, St. Lucie



**Ann Berner**  
CEO, SE Florida  
Behavioral Health  
Network



**Savannah Collier**  
Assistant Director,  
SE Rural Opioid Technical  
Assistance Regional Center  
Florida State University



**Jacob Barnes**  
Outreach Coordinator,  
SE Rural Opioid Technical  
Assistance Regional Center  
Florida State University



**Carli Lucius**  
Community Outreach Coordinator,  
SE Rural Opioid Technical  
Assistance Regional Center  
Florida State University



**Emil Caron**  
CRPS-Veteran, CTP  
Opioid Response Network  
Consultant



**Matt Kluckowski**  
Network Recovery Manager,  
SE Florida Behavioral  
Health Network



**Stephen Straubing, MD**  
Opioid Response Network  
Consultant

### Our Inspirational Speakers

FREE EVENT  
Register Today!  
Seating is limited.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KYBRWCW>



Registration Closes May 20th

6 CEUs  
Pending  
Approval



**Patricia Roberts**  
Port St. Lucie  
Resident



**Danny Collins**  
Recovery and Prison  
Reform Advocate



**Maureen Kielian**  
SE Florida Recovery  
Advocates

FENN CENTER | 2000 Virginia Ave., Fort Pierce, FL 34982



For More Info:  
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# DRUG FREE ST. LUCIE

 Like, Follow, Share @drugfreestlucie



## VIRTUAL TRAINING

Friday, May 31st | 9:30 am - 11:00 am



### Jerria Martin

Executive Director  
Drug Free Communities  
Dallas County, Alabama

As a consultant, Jerria works with a variety of government entities and organizations including the United States Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Community Anti Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the Opioid Response Network (ORN). Jerria serves as President of the Rotary Club in Selma, Alabama, and Vice President of Leadership Selma. In 2017, she was elected as an honoree of Birmingham Magazine's "30 Women Who Shape Alabama" and in 2016 as a Top 20 Under 30 Honoree. In 2018, Jerria was named a National TIAA Difference Maker, securing a \$10,000 award for her coalition. She is a 2020 Graduate of the CADCA Graduate Coalition Academy and a CADCA trainer. In October 2020, Jerria was recognized by Former First Lady Melania Trump, Former President Trump, and the ONDCP as one of the top drug coalition leaders in the country. With a bachelor's degree in English from Stillman College and a Master of Divinity degree from Princeton, Jerria has preached and presented nationally and internationally, working with a host of world-renowned leaders.



#### ORN FUNDING STATEMENT

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### Straight, No Chaser: "Impact of E-cigarettes & Vaping"



#### Participants will be able to:

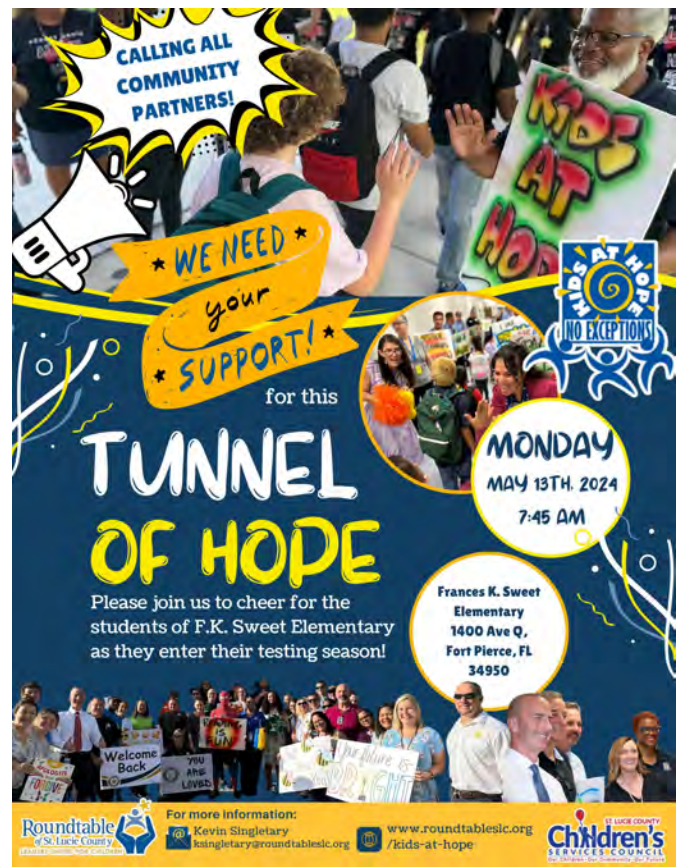
- Understand the nicotine content of e-cigarettes and vaping liquids.
- Articulate ways to talk to and treat adolescents and young adults with nicotine use disorders.
- Understand why youth are drawn to the allure of vaping and why they become easily addicted.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BLSVF6R>



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



## 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 Hobleby-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 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.

# 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

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## OUR INITIATIVES:

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