
2019 Annual Recap

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ANGELS AGAINST ABUSE, INC

Recap of Programs

2019 Annual Review

(Updated August 2019)

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(Mother Teresa)



**How the Angels Are Making a Difference?
Recap of Programs We Provide
Annually & As Needed**

Angel Mission Statement

The mission of Angels Against Abuse is to build awareness and educate the community regarding existing neglect and abuse against children. We provide support, monetarily and through hands-on volunteer hours, to neglected and abused children who are removed from an abusive situation, and to those children and families who are at risk of losing their children because of such situations. We strive to bring together all available resources to help families achieve the best possible result from available government agencies, courts and services in the fastest possible manner when help is needed most. In some cases it is as easy as pointing people in the right direction and making sure that they get there. We are making a real difference in the lives of many children who are unfortunate victims of abuse and systems that fail to help them.

The Angels take pride in the fact that we could research what the needs are within the Welfare System and work towards meeting those needs. Our ability to be the “quick responders” when it comes to a child’s needs has proven to be a huge benefit to the many agencies that we work with daily. The Angels can only touch the surface of the many needs that these children and youth need in our community, but we are making a difference and giving “HOPE” for a better tomorrow to children, youth and families who suffer at the hands of their abusers.

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THE ANGEL JOURNEY

Founded in 2007, Angels Against Abuse started with four women whose hearts were captivated when they visited an emergency shelter for children ranging in ages newborn to 11 called the Sallie House. Immediately after their visit, they vowed to start a movement that would positively impact the lives and futures of the children who had unfortunately suffered from child abuse and/or neglect in our local community.

We started Sallie's Angels and hosted our **1st Annual Blue-Ribbon Gala** fundraiser to help kick-start the capital campaign for construction of a much needed, new Sallie House. Once the new Sallie House was completed and running smoothly, it became clear that our work was far from over as we realized there were thousands of children in our local community needing our help. We formed a non-profit organization, changing our name to Angels Against Abuse Inc., so that instead of solely focusing on the Sallie House, we would additionally begin to offer assistance throughout our local community to those children and families that have unfortunately been placed into the child welfare system.

Since then, Angels Against Abuse has been blessed with the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of so many children and families who have been abused and neglected. The Angels continue to find ways to increase our assistance, develop new programs, and strive to make a difference in the lives of many. We take pride in our ability to establish strong relationships with our community partners to develop programs that will have the biggest impact on the children we advocate for. As the system changes, the programs change, and the Angels could quickly adjust our programs or develop new ones to meet the need.

Sallie House/Children's Village

- **Themed Birthday Parties** (Donated by Diana & Kerry Helinger – Angels – for over 12 years this amazing couple has provided birthday parties for children who would have never been given a themed party designed just for them, if not for Diana and Kerry Helinger. Their generous hearts have made such a difference in the lives of these children and they have given them a memory that their birthday is a special day!

Eckerd Community Alternatives (Lead Agency for Children in Foster Care)

- **Uniforms** - 2 sets per child ranging in ages from elementary to middle school age
- **Pack N Plays** - Prevention of Infant deaths from sharing beds
- **Christmas Giving Program** –The Angels adopt 6 families every year and provide everything from the Christmas Tree & Decorations, Christmas Dinner and filling the Wish List of every child in the family. These families would not have a Christmas if it were not for the Angels. These gifts are distributed annually at the Angel Christmas Celebration.
- **Car Seats** – Every case manager receives a car seat for the children they transport

Friends for Children Mentoring Program

- **School Uniforms** – This program consists of both girls and boys ranging in ages kindergarten thru high school. The Angels provide 2 uniforms per child every school year. This year we are providing uniforms and school backpacks and supplies to 50 children in our community.

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- **Tablets** – This program does not have adequate funding for items of this nature and the mentors cannot afford this expense. The Angels have provided tablets for not only the Mentors but the children as well in this program to assist with their learning needs for both the Mentor and the Child.
- **Backpacks/School Supplies**– Each school year the Angels provide backpacks and school supplies for these children in preparation for their school year. The Angels bridge the gap for this need since there is not funding for this type of assistance.
- **Christmas Giving**– The Angels and some very generous donors provide Christmas for 25 boys and 25 girls that make up this program. Their wish list is filled and there is a large Christmas Bag for every child that is filled from top to bottom. Our hope is to give them a reason to believe and have Hope for a better tomorrow.

Department of Children & Families (DCF)

- **Camp for Champs Summer Program** - The Angels have participated in this program for several years to partner with some of our community partners to provide a summer program for these children. The amount depends on the request made to the Angels. Every year the camp request varies with one year the focus on girls and the next year the focus on boys. DCF provides the Angels with the information and we host the event along with Fun Packs for each child to take with them at the end of the camp.

Guardian ad Litem Foundation (GAL)

- **Birthday Angel Bag Program** - We provide 25 Angel Bags per month to the GAL volunteers who use these bags for first time visits or Birthday Bags. These bags have proven to be instrumental for first-time visits when the Guardian meets the child for the first time. There is a wait list for our monthly distribution of these bags since the children are so excited when someone remembers their birthday. Every bag is filled with personal items, activity coloring books, crayons, a learning book, stuffed animal, a toy, and a \$20 gift card that is specifically for them to use.
- **Gas Card Program** - The rising gas prices has made it more difficult for the GAL volunteers to make timely visits to the children they advocate for. This program has made it easier for the Guardians to make their visits since these children are moved frequently from county to county. With the Gas Card assistance, the Guardian has more flexibility to make their visits since this person is most often the one stable person in this child's life.
- **Angel Assistance Program** – All of our programs that we have developed with our Community Partners have requests that occur that are either under-funded or not funded at all that are important to a child's well-being. These requests range from an immediate need to a need that will benefit the child. When the request is received, if it is more than \$500, it is sent to our Board for review. The review process is completed within 24 hours with an answer. If we are unable to assist, we try to find a solution. The Angels work closely with our Community Partners to assure that we are addressing these needs and making a difference in the lives of these children.

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Suncoast Voices for Children

- The Angels have recently collaborated with Suncoast Voices for Children to bridge the gap for the need of car seats, uniforms and pack n plays. These are 3 items that are always requested by our community partners since keeping children safe is the goal of what we do. We are thrilled to be partnering with Suncoast so we can make a much bigger impact in our community. Removal is at an all-time high and there are so many needs for these children, and it is very important to have strong partnerships to address these needs.

The Kind Mouse

- **Mouse Nibbles Program** – We partnered with The Kind Mouse to assist with the growing population of hungry children in our community. There are over 7000 children in Pinellas County going hungry every day at the elementary school level and the angels feel no child should go to bed hungry. We want to be a part of this solution.

Pinellas County Sheriff's Office CPI Division –

- **Wish List Requests** – Throughout the year, the Child Protection Division of the Sheriff's Office requests items from the Angels which is largely based on removals. These requests are items for the food pantry, infants, children of all ages and gender, bedding, beds and other needs of a child.

Child Advocacy Expo – Hosted Annually by the Angels (The Angels have Passed the Torch)

For the past 10 years the Angels have hosted the Child Advocacy Expo. The purpose of this event was to bring all our community partners together to network with one another and find solutions to problems in the child welfare system that will benefit the children and the agencies who are involved in these children's lives. This event has been so successful that over the years the many agencies who have attended have not only learned from one another, but they have learned better ways to communicate and work together as a team. It was decided that the 10th year of our Expo would be our final year for this event since we felt we had accomplished our goal. October 12th, 2018 was our 10th Annual Child Advocacy Expo where we announced that this would be our final year. Before we left the stage, we had one of our Community Leaders request to take this event over. This was very exciting for the Angels since it confirmed that we were making a difference with this event and the impact was so beneficial that our legacy for this event would continue for years to come.

Christmas Giving Program

Every Christmas the Angels create magic at their Christmas Giving Event! This day is very special to us because it is a day where each of us realize and **BELIEVE** there is good in the world and good people all around us. The Angels help you **BELIEVE** in miracles and everybody needs an Angel in their life and especially the children and youth that the Angels advocate for! Here is the current list of Agencies we worked with this past year which was comprised of 300 children and youth!

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- **Eckerd Kids** - There will six families selected from Eckerd Community Alternatives that will have a wonderful and blessed Christmas from the Christmas Tree, all the decorations, Christmas Dinner and the wish list for all the children in that family.
- **Healthy Start PAT+** - New moms who are struggling to be good moms and in need of encouragement and assistance for their babies who are unable to provide for themselves much less have presents for their child on Christmas Day, we give **HOPE**
- **Friends of the Children Mentoring Program** - The children who are at most risk who have been assigned a mentor on their life journey from elementary school age to high school who need something to look forward to on Christmas Morning that will make them feel special, the Angels made it happen!
- **Directions for Living** - Families living in a motel until they can get back on their feet who will have nothing Christmas Morning if not for the Angels,
- **Pinellas County Sheriff's Office CPI** – A child who is struggling, afraid and alone who is most in need of an Angel to watch over her, we will surround her with letting her know there are Angels who care!
- **Ready for Life** – Youth aging out of the system who are many times alone and struggling to get through to their next moment. We want them to know they are not forgotten so we put together a small gift, a gift card for them to purchase something special for themselves and a personalized card to make them feel special and not forgotten. It may be small, but it sends a loud message to someone feeling alone without a family.

The Angel Center – Our Vision Became a Reality August 14th, 2017!

The Angel Center is now a reality. We opened our doors to our original Visitation Center in 2017 for supervised visitations. It was our vision to create a child-friendly, stress-free facility that would put smiles on the faces of children and their families who visited our Center. Thanks to the generous hearts of Nick and Kay Catizone, a couple who loved children but had none of their own, gave the gift that keeps giving. Thanks to their generous hearts, they will have created a legacy that is making a difference in the lives of children in our community every day. Thanks to the generosity of Clearwater Marine Aquarium, the theme of our Center is based on the two successful movies, Dolphin Tale 1 and 2. The murals that cover the walls bring life to the Center that creates an atmosphere for children that is soothing and comforting. We wanted to create a place for children of all ages to come be with their biological parents and be in a room that was age appropriate to them. There are 3 amazing rooms and a Learning Center for larger sibling groups, board meetings, private meetings and training and orientation space if needed. The four rooms that are utilized at our Center range in ages as follows:

- Hope Room – infants to toddler ages
- Winter Room – 4 to 9 ages
- Rufus Room – 10 and up and large sibling groups
- Mavis Room – our newest space The Learning Center

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The Angels have paid a great deal of attention to every detail in these rooms to insure successful visits between the child and their biological parents. The anticipated goal for these supervised visits is a successful reunification for the child to be reunified with their biological parents and hopefully breaking the pattern of abuse. In those instances where reunification does not occur, the Angel Center has been a healthy environment for that determination to occur. The Case Managers can properly evaluate the parent's behavior and make the determination of what is in the best interest of that child. Our Center is always impeccably clean which has been such a positive for the heavy traffic we see daily, and we have cameras in all the locations where visits occur to assure safety for all our visitors.

The Center is conveniently located across the street from Eckerd Connects and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office for convenience for the various parties who represent the children and on a main bus route for the parents to get to and from their visitations. The physical address is 2200 Tall Pines Drive, Suite 100, Largo, FL. We encourage tours of our facility by all our community partners and our donors to get a better understanding of what this Center is all about.

The Angel Center is a powerful tool in the Foster Care System for visitations and we are currently on a wait list for visits since we are the only free visitation center in Pinellas County. If we can be a part of helping to break the pattern of abuse, then we have accomplished our mission. Please come visit and see for yourself that you should never give up on a dream, we didn't! Contact Sandy Kearney at sandy@sandykearney.com to schedule a tour.



ANGELS give **HOPE** for a better tomorrow...

The Angels would like to thank everyone who has made it possible for us to grow and keep the momentum of our non-profit to continue to make a difference in the lives of our most precious asset, the children who represent our future. Every program we have developed has been very successful and had a huge impact on the children we advocate for 24/7. Our famous Mad Hatter Tea Party was a special day for children needing a smile, our highly anticipated Child Advocacy Expo brought our community partners together to collaborate and network with one another to become ONE strong force in our community. These programs will live on thanks to the generosity of people with the same passion as the Angels. This will pave the way for the Angels to focus on new programs that will have the greatest impact on the children and youth needing our assistance, and help us to bridge the with our community partners who do not have the means to provide all the resources needed for these children.

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The Angels want to thank all our many supporters, organizations, foundations and businesses for their support and their belief in what we do for these children. It is only thanks to their generous hearts that we can sustain our ability to give.

Special thanks to all our amazing volunteers. Volunteers is the voice of the people put into action. These actions shape and mold the present into a future for which we can all be proud. Some people give time, some money, some their skills and connections, some literally give their life's blood, but everyone has something to give!

Sandy Kearney, Founder
Angels Against Abuse, Inc.
The Angel Board
sandy@sandykearney.com
727-804-7710
www.angelsagainstabuse.org



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