



**2023-2024
GRANT FINALISTS**

**ONE WOMAN.
ONE VOTE.**

2023-2024 GRANT FINALIST

American Association of Caregiving Youth Caregiving Youth Project



IMPACT FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION/FAMILY

The Organization

American Association of Caregiving Youth champions, supports and celebrates youth who provide care for chronically ill, injured, elderly, and/or disabled family members. Founded in 1998 in Boca Raton, FL, what evolved to become the American Association of Caregiving Youth (AACY) by 2010 has been at the forefront of addressing the needs and challenges faced by this huge, hidden population for over 16 years. The organization offers direct services to middle and high school students in Palm Beach County and is a leading national authority on matters related to Caregiving Youth.

The Program

In 2006, AACY's Caregiving Youth Project made history by becoming the first program in the U.S. to provide direct services for caregiving youth. The agency currently serves 538 students at 37 middle and high schools across Palm Beach County. They plan to use impact funding to expand services to an estimated 30 students at two Title 1 middle schools in northern Palm Beach County: Jaega in West Palm Beach and Crestwood in Royal Palm Beach. Through a Cooperative Agreement with The School District of Palm Beach County, AACY provides needs-driven wrap-around support customized for each family.

- In-School: Skills-building support groups using a copyrighted AACY-developed curriculum, individual caregiving coaching support, and Lunch and Learn sessions.
- At home: Family assessments from a qualified social worker Family Specialist, special projects (such as ramps for wheelchairs), respite care and house cleaning for those who qualify, laptop/computers as needed, tutoring services, educational support, and more.
- Out of School: overnight camp, picnics, education, Holiday celebrations, and fun/educational activities are provided. These activities allow much-needed freedom away from adult responsibilities and

stressors. Services are provided at no cost to families and continue throughout the calendar year until either the care receiver is no longer in need of assistance, is deceased, or the student opts out, moves or graduates. Students are 89% minorities, 85% are financially insecure, and 20-25% live in single-parent or grandparent homes. The program aims to prevent school dropout due to caregiving responsibilities, and empowers students to achieve success despite challenges.

How will this program impact Palm Beach County?

The program's impact in Palm Beach County arises from its compelling reduction of the dropout rate among Caregiving Youth in Palm Beach County schools, breaking the cycle of limited educational attainment and fostering a more resilient and educated community. Early research in Palm Beach County indicated that there were more than 10,000 public middle and high school students who were doing some level of caregiving. One-third report they are missing school, not completing homework, having trouble focusing, or a combination of all these. Research shows Caregiving Youth have more stress, anxiety/depression, physical issues, and sleep deprivation. Caregiving Youth exhibit remarkable qualities such as maturity, compassion, the ability to form strong adult relationships, altruism, selflessness, adept problem-solving skills, and a drive for excellence in life. A significant number of them aspire to pursue careers in healthcare, a field in urgent need of attention and dedicated professionals.

Measurable Outcomes

At least 90% of Caregiving Youth participants will graduate from high school
At least 90% of students will move on to the next grade level on time
85% of students will learn to manage stress

How will Impact Palm Beaches grant be used?

\$55,000 for existing staff salaries/benefits; \$5,000 for office supplies; \$5,000 for student transportation; \$5,000 for tutoring services; \$6,000 for laptops and IT support; \$1,000 for basic needs support; \$5,000 for background checks; \$10,000 for professional cleaning services; \$5,000 for client field trips; \$3,000 for rent and insurance

2023-2024 GRANT FINALIST

Busch Wildlife Sanctuary Rehabilitation Flight Cages for Large Birds

IMPACT FOCUS AREA: ENVIRONMENT



The Organization

For 40 years, Busch Wildlife Sanctuary has been dedicated to the conservation of Florida's wildlife and natural resources through its mission of wildlife rehabilitation and environmental education. Each year, the agency treats 6,000 injured, sick and orphaned wildlife, and over 50% are avian species. The Sanctuary also provides over 500 free educational classes to more than 220,000 visitors. In October 2023, the agency opened a new 19.4-acre site in Jupiter Farms. The facility is free and open to the public.

The Project

Busch Wildlife Sanctuary seeks funding for the construction of five modernized and expanded flight cages at its newly established facility. Flight cages play a pivotal role in rehabilitating large native birds, such as owls, falcons, and other key species by providing a secure enclosure where birds can practice flying, gradually regaining muscle strength until they reach a point where they are strong enough to be released back into their natural habitats. The four flight cages at the previous facility were 20 years old, outdated, and not transferred to the new facility. Currently, injured birds are being transferred to other facilities. The five new state-of-the-art cages were designed with the help of a Master Falconer, and will be 18 ft. tall, 120 ft. long, and 50 ft. wide and built to hurricane code. The cages will require concrete work, fencing, masonry, wood working to build perching, plumbing, utilities, landscaping, and gates for the enclosures. The cages will include cameras with technology for live streaming on social media, YouTube channels, and website. The live streaming technology will encourage more ecotourists to visit the Sanctuary and expand the Sanctuary's capacity to educate audiences about the rehabilitation process, which in turn will help people become more invested in the vital role birds play in keeping our ecosystem healthy. The project would begin in May 2024 and be completed by February 2025.

How will this program impact Palm Beach County?

Since 2017, the Sanctuary has seen a 25% increase in the number of animals in need of care. This is due largely to urbanization and development, as 90% of the injuries the agency treats are caused by human interaction (car accidents, poisoning, electrocutions, fishing line entanglement, attacks by pets, etc.). In 2023, 2,473 birds were treated. The Sanctuary hopes to mitigate the negative effects of development on our environment through conservation efforts and environmental education. The combination of upgraded flight cages and live-streaming technology addresses both needs directly. Once the birds are ready to be released from the flight cages, the Sanctuary will collaborate with partners at Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management (ERM) to identify natural areas that have experienced species depletion, and releases will be conducted in these specific locations. By actively participating in repopulating these areas, the Sanctuary contributes to the preservation of ecological balance and the protection of vital water resources, which are of critical importance to our environment. Live streaming will help educate the community about the importance of environmental conservation and the work being done to care for these animals. The goal is to allow those tuning in to make connections with wildlife and inspire them to make environmental conservation a priority. Live streaming also reduces barriers to residents who cannot physically visit the Sanctuary.

Measurable Outcomes

- Number of birds being treated = Approximately 2,400 – 2,500 annually
- Number of successful releases of birds into the wild = 33% or 808 birds
- Number of birds from other organizations using the Sanctuary's enclosures = Conservative estimate of 25 birds
- Number of views generated through live-streaming = 7,000 views generated through live-streaming
- Number of visitors who attend public releases of the birds = 200 visitors based on 1 public release per quarter

How will Impact Palm Beaches grant be used?

\$30,000 plumbing for the cages; \$15,000 on roofing for the cages; \$5,000 substrate surface material; \$20,000 on electric for the cages; and \$30,000 on video technology for the cages.

2023–2024 GRANT FINALIST

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Basics4Babies Emergency Pantry



IMPACT FOCUS AREA: HEALTH & WELLNESS/FAMILY

The Organization

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Palm Beach County's (HMHB) mission is to nurture healthy births and families by meeting the physical, emotional, economic, and social challenges of pregnancy and infant wellness. HMHB was established in 1986, when Palm Beach County experienced a tragic increase in poor birth outcomes from a lack of available prenatal care, especially for low-income women. Begun as a volunteer-driven agency, HMHB grew through the decades and now boasts 67 professionals on staff serving more than 10,000 expectant women each year. The organization's 38-year history is packed with leading edge initiatives to prevent and eliminate health disparities for diverse pregnant women, infants, and families in Palm Beach County.

The Program

In 1986, HMHB created the Basics4Babies Emergency Pantry for food insecure families in Palm Beach County. In 2016, the agency realigned the focus of the pantry solely on baby basics, and it is currently the only infant focused pantry in Palm Beach County. Whether battling food insecurity or facing financial challenges stemming from job loss, illness, or foreclosure, HMHB offers local families support by providing diapers, baby food and formula. The agency has brick and mortar locations in Belle Glade and its soon-to-open new office in West Palm Beach. They also have a mobile pantry that distributes in underserved parts of Palm Beach County. Three languages are spoken collectively between pantry staff. Through the pantry model, families receive 7-10 days of basic needs and may access pantry services once every 30 days. Distribution includes up to 1 container of formula, 1 infant food pack containing 6 fruits, 6 vegetables and 1 container of rice cereal/oatmeal, and 1 pack of diapers. Driven by inventory shortages of baby essentials as well as rising costs, HMHB has seen an increase in need for pantry services. In 2016, the pantry was serving an estimated 300 clients per month and now the agency is serving 800-1,100 clients per month. In 2023, the

pantry served over 15,000 babies, distributed nearly half a million diapers and over 13,500 containers of formula – exceeding the prior year by 34% in number served – the highest in its 38-year history.

The impact grant will be invested in overall pantry needs, including inventory purchases (diapers, formula, baby food), staff to operate the program, and overhead/vehicle costs. The agency anticipates these purchases will be provided to approximately 22,000 children ages 0-3 during the 2-year grant period.

How will this program impact Palm Beach County?

While food banks serve food insecure populations, they do not specifically focus on infant food insecurity. Additionally, the cost of diapers is not covered by state/federal child safety-net programs. Basics4Babies supports infants in the community whose essential needs are not being met. According to Feeding America, 37,530 children in Palm Beach County are food insecure or 13.2%; however, 34% are likely ineligible for federal nutrition programs. Breastfeeding continues to be the preferred method of feeding for new moms; however, many new moms do not produce enough milk to feed their infants and supplement with formula. Many clients water down formula or reuse diapers due to product cost, which can lead to health-related issues. Breast milk/formula form the cornerstone of nutrition during the first year of life, enabling babies to develop strong immune systems and brain/tissue. Through Basics4Babies, HMHB helps ensure Palm Beach County children are well nourished to meet developmental milestones.

Measurable Outcomes (over 2-year grant period)

Babies/toddlers have clean and hygienic diapers – 700,000 diapers distributed
Babies/toddlers receive nourishing food – 2,000 food packs distributed

Babies receive life-sustaining formula – 12,000 canisters of formula distributed
Overall health of vulnerable babies/toddlers is boosted – 22,000 total children served

How will Impact Palm Beaches grant be used?

\$92,048 of the grant would be to purchase infant formula, baby food, and diapers; \$7,952 for existing staff salaries

2023-2024 GRANT FINALIST

The Lord's Place Project Divert: A Homeless Shelter Diversion Pilot Initiative



IMPACT FOCUS AREA: HEALTH & WELLNESS

The Organization

The Lord's Place is dedicated to breaking the cycle of homelessness by providing innovative, compassionate and effective services to men, women and children in our community. The agency has served vulnerable households in Palm Beach County for more than 40 years, starting as a soup kitchen in 1980 and then creating the first shelter for homeless families in Palm Beach County a few years later. Today, the agency provides street outreach, housing, job training, health care support, and other essential services for the homeless community. Altogether, The Lord's Place houses 175 households a day and serves more than 1,800 people a year.

The Program

Shelter diversion programs play an important role in addressing homelessness. These programs offer an alternative way to access housing (such as staying with friends and family, re-negotiating leases with landlords, moving away, finding a roommate) without staying at an emergency shelter, the most common entry into homeless services. Despite the diversion model's benefits, there is a lack of research to support it. The Lord's Place is addressing this deficit by launching a national, multi-site pilot project to study the impact of diversion in ending homelessness in partnership with Notre Dame's Lab for Economic Opportunities, the Pulte Foundation, Family Promise of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Family Promise of Spokane, Washington. The pilot project aims to prove that diversion reduces the trauma of becoming homeless by facilitating quick access to housing, and that diversion can lead to long-term housing stability with similar outcomes as standard homeless services, and in a more cost-effective manner. The Lord's Place will contribute to the project by serving more than 160 individuals experiencing homelessness over the two-year impact grant period. Project participants will receive a combination of housing navigation, financial assistance, and post-housing placement case management. Ideal candidates for the project are those who recently became homeless, have not experienced repeated

episodes of homelessness, and do not exhibit other characteristics (e.g. serious mental illness) that would render them more suitable for standard housing services, such as placement into supportive housing.

The Lord's Place launched the diversion project in October 2023 with previous fundraising dollars, but requires additional funding to complete the project by March 2026. The project will provide valuable data on which homeless interventions are most effective, for whom, and at what cost. Study findings will be shared on a national platform, enabling stakeholders across the country to learn from the results. Providers will be able to enhance programs based on the evidence. Policymakers and funders will have the research to prioritize programs that incorporate proven strategies.

How will this program impact Palm Beach County?

Each day, more than 1,100 people in our community are living outside and in places not meant for habitation. This is a 30% increase from the previous year. According to the data, 70% of those experiencing homelessness are experiencing it for the first time, significantly higher than the state average of 28%. With 550 emergency shelter beds available in Palm Beach County, even if every available spot were filled, more than 500 people would still not have a place to sleep at night. Diversion programs address this gap. They strengthen the homeless system's capacity by increasing the pathways people can take to access housing. Although diversion programs are a valuable tool in tackling homelessness, they are often overlooked and underfunded compared to traditional housing approaches. Through the multi-site study, this project will produce actionable findings that nonprofits, governments, and other stakeholders across the country can use to strengthen their homeless prevention programs and provide more effective services, tailored services.

Measurable Outcomes

In the short term, the agency will measure whether participants obtain permanent housing within 90 days of receiving assistance through the diversion program. In the long term, the agency will track participants to see if they are still housed one and two years after receiving help.

How will Impact Palm Beaches grant be used?

\$78,250 of the Impact grant award will help fund a diversion case manager to assist participants; \$1,750 is for office supplies/technology; and \$20,000 is for financial assistance for clients (rent, furniture, IDs, transportation, etc.).

2023-2024 GRANT FINALIST

Take Stock in Children Palm Beach County Program Expansion for Central and Northern Palm Beach County



IMPACT FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION

The Organization

Founded in 1995, Take Stock in Children is the only college attainment-focused mentoring program of its kind in Florida. No other mentoring program in Florida includes a guaranteed 2-year college scholarship and wraparound college access support services that spans 8+ years of direct service (beginning as early as the 6th grade.) Take Stock's mission is to promote self-worth and academic success for disadvantaged youth by providing evidence-based wraparound services: one-on-one mentoring, college readiness coaching, post-secondary retention and a guaranteed college scholarship. Since its founding, Take Stock has impacted over 2,000 students in Palm Beach County and awarded over \$20M in full-tuition scholarships to underserved youth, 100% of whom live at/below the federal poverty guideline.

The Program

Take Stock in Children is an existing college readiness program that effectively provides a pathway to success for underserved youth by providing the resources they need to achieve academic success. The program targets at-risk students (94% are minority and 80% are first generation college students) attending Title I schools. Take Stock's multi-year program model provides wraparound support services to students throughout middle and high school and continues throughout their entire college experience. The agency currently serves 365 middle/high school students in central and northern Palm Beach County, and has a long wait list of underserved students in need of program services. Currently, the agency is not able to enroll new students without additional funding. An Impact the Palm Beaches grant would allow Take Stock to enroll 20 additional students.

Every student is assigned a College Readiness Coach who monitors success indicators to identify when the student is getting off track. Take Stock in Children's goal is to prevent students from falling behind

in school by providing the educational and social/emotional support services they need to succeed. Each student receives:

- Weekly One-on-One Youth Mentoring
- Weekly Academic Coaching & SAT/ACT Prep
- Monthly Afterschool Club-Meetings & Workshops • College Access and Transition Services

How will this program impact Palm Beach County?

- Guaranteed 2-year College Scholarship • Post-Secondary Advising
- Workforce Development Opportunities

With the benefit of mentorship, college readiness coaching, and scholarship services, Take Stock Scholars graduate from high school, attend college, and earn postsecondary credentials at a 60% higher rate than their peers in Florida. Take Stock students are more likely to secure higher-paying jobs, which helps to lift their families out of poverty and contributes to the overall long-term economic growth of the community. The agency targets areas with higher poverty rates, lower educational attainment, and limited access to resources and services, offering an evidence-based opportunity to succeed, while ensuring economic equity, thus allowing students to go to college and become valued members of the workforce. Student outcomes create a positive ripple effect on their families and the wider community.

Measurable Outcomes

95% of students will graduate high school and receive a 2-year college scholarship (vs. 80% of at-risk-students)

96% will enroll in college (vs. 30% of at-risk-students)

74% will complete a post-secondary credential (vs. only 29% of at-risk-students)

While in the program, 85% of students will meet regularly with their assigned mentor and their college readiness coach.

How will Impact Palm Beaches grant be used?

\$80,000 of the Impact grant will be used to purchase 2-year Florida Prepaid college scholarships; \$3,000 for mentor recruitment, training and background checks; \$2,000 for 1-on-1 support in college; \$15,000 for the partial salary of a college readiness coach



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