

HAPPENINGS

OUR MISSION: Creating safer, more productive lives for infants, children, young adults and families.

SUMMER 2023

A New Chapter of Hope and Healing

HomeSafe is proud to announce the opening of its third new specialized therapeutic group home for abused and abandoned children. The Sylvester Family Foundation North Campus in West Palm Beach is a safe and welcoming home for twelve teenage boys who have endured a childhood marked by trauma.

Kids who are referred to HomeSafe have not properly processed their trauma, and the resulting shame, anger, and sadness that they hold inside manifests in extreme behavioral, physical, and mental health issues. These children have been unsuccessfully moved from foster home to foster home before being “stepped up” to receive intensive therapeutic care at HomeSafe. Our passionate and experienced team members work with each child—building rapport and trust, making them feel safe and valued, and renewing a sense of hope in them that had long been abandoned.

HomeSafe’s new trauma-informed designed campuses give our kids the safety, space, and privacy that they need to work through

their trauma. The Stoops Family Foundation Grand Cottage includes twelve private suites where the boys can safely and comfortably practice their coping skills and work through their negative thoughts and emotions. The enrichment and therapeutic spaces allow them to socialize, burn off energy, and just have fun being kids.

“Kevin” is a quiet, introverted teenager who has autism and can easily feel anxious in a crowd. When he was younger, he was also subjected to physical abuse by his parents. It was challenging at first for Kevin to adjust to a group home environment.

Since moving onto the new campus, he has claimed a peaceful spot under a banyan tree. When he is feeling especially nervous or agitated, Kevin sits outside on his bench and practices his calming techniques. Our goal is for kids like Kevin to not only learn how to manage their negative emotions and behaviors, but also to reignite the spark of hope in them.

HomeSafe’s fourth new residential group home, the reimagined Bernstein Family Foundation Campus in Boca Raton, will open for twelve younger boys in summer of 2024. We are grateful to our generous donors who continue to make these transformative projects possible.



WHAT'S INSIDE: CLASSIC ROCK & ROLL PARTY | GOLF TOURNAMENT | CLIENT SUCCESS STORIES

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“...the work we do at HomeSafe is even more important than I imagined.”

I came to HomeSafe from a large nonprofit healthcare system because I wanted to have a more intimate connection between the work I do as chief philanthropy officer and the people we serve. Now in my second year, I couldn't be happier with my decision—because the work we do at HomeSafe is even more important than I imagined. As a mother of two beautiful young children, I know how important it is to share in their development, especially the importance of ensuring their health and safety. Over the last year, I have had the opportunity to meet many of the children we serve, from the young boy who came to us without shoes and had been sleeping on the floor, to the young girl who had experienced

sexual abuse by her mother's boyfriend.

The other day I visited with the boys in our new Sylvester Family Foundation North Campus. Though there are many stories to share, I felt an immediate connection to a young boy named “Nick.” Nick is thirteen and has a bright smile and a huge personality. He shares, “I just really love to talk.” He also loves school, in particular math, and he dreams of getting taller so that he can play high school basketball. Nick is motivated by one singular goal—to graduate from HomeSafe and move in with his grandmother.

“My grandma loves me, and she wants to adopt me. But first, she told me that I need to learn to manage my emotions and not be so angry.”

Nick was removed from his parents when he was just five years old. Both parents were gripped with substance abuse and physically abused him. Nick's grandmother cared for him the best that she could, but she was unable to manage his frequent outbursts and acts of aggression.

When kids like Nick are hurt by parents who are supposed to love and protect them, the sacred bond of trust is shattered. Feelings of safety and security evaporate as they feel the depth of loneliness and self-doubt. For every child that experiences unimaginable trauma at an early age, the resulting stress, fear, and shame can manifest differently. For Nick, it comes out as anger—punching walls, breaking things, and screaming profanities when he feels threatened.

After a number of emergency mental health visits to the hospital, Nick was deemed a danger to himself and placed in a statewide inpatient program, also known as a medical lockdown facility. After some time in this highly restricted environment, he was allowed to come to HomeSafe to reintegrate back into society. It was a tough transition for him. He felt alone and uncertain in yet another residential facility, surrounded by strangers that he didn't think he could trust.

The first person that Nick connected with at HomeSafe was his therapist Ms. Brittney. In his words, “She is very direct and



Above left: Nick is developing coping skills and working on taking accountability for his actions so that he can go back to his grandmother. **Above right:** Having a private bedroom and bathroom creates a safer, happier living environment and gives our children the quiet space they need when they are overwhelmed.



HomeSafe’s therapist, Ms. Brittney, spends time with each child in a space that makes them feel safe and happy—the music room, fitness center, or on the basketball court—helping them open up and share feelings that they typically keep bottled inside.

honest with me, but in a caring way. She is helping me create the path back to my grandma.” Ms. Brittney found out that Nick loves basketball, so she began to hold their therapy sessions shooting hoops on the basketball court. One time, Nick let her know that they had missed their therapy session that week, and he was surprised to find out that their court time was technically therapy.

Mr. DeMarcus, a playful and active Youth Development Professional, also built rapport with Nick by finding fun games that they could play and working out together in the fitness center. It didn’t take long for Nick to open up to Mr. DeMarcus. “He has me on a workout regimen,” Nick shares. “He pushes me and he wants me to see how much I’m capable of accomplishing.”

Program Supervisor Mr. Derek also plays an integral part of Nick’s progress. Derek sees the best in all of our kids and he finds opportunities to congratulate

them on their successes, large and small. The boys had a group session while I was visiting. Nick asked to be excused to go back to his room for a few minutes. He was feeling irritable, and rather than let his anger build up into a giant outburst, he asked to go back to his room and take a quiet moment to himself. I watched Derek pull

him aside and acknowledge his accomplishment.

Nick still has good and bad days, but he is taking one step at a time and trying not to let the tough days turn into weeks. He is proud of how far he has come, and of the new coping skills he is using, like squeezing a stress ball instead of punching a wall. He loves his private bedroom at HomeSafe, because it is a safe place where he can go when he feels like his emotions are taking over. He is also happy that he has built positive relationships with adults who give him the nonjudgmental love and support that he needs.

We wrapped up our interview when Nick found out he had received a care package from his grandma. He beamed as he went off to his room to open it.

Laura Golden Barker
HomeSafe Chief Philanthropy Officer



Guardian Society recognizes individuals, foundations and corporations who have made lifetime gifts of \$50,000 or more.

HomeSafe celebrates our newest Guardian Society members!

Ballensles Charities Foundation
Doris and Neil Gillman Family Foundation
Larry and Gina Melby

To view the list of Guardian Society members or to learn more about HomeSafe’s major and legacy giving societies, please visit **HelpHomeSafe.org**.

For more information about the Guardian Society, please contact Laura Barker, Chief Philanthropy Officer, at (561) 383-9829 or LauraBarker@helphomesafe.org

This year's Classic Rock & Roll Party held at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood was the agency's **most successful with a net revenue of \$489,000!**

Don Felder, former lead guitarist of the Eagles, put on an amazing show playing the hits we know and love like *Take It Easy*, *Life in the Fast Lane*, and *Hotel California*. He also surprised everyone by auctioning off a signed replica of his famous white double neck guitar.

MorseLife Health System was honored as this year's HomeSafe Hero for going above and beyond to truly make an impact on the work of the agency.

We are grateful to our co-chairs, sponsors and supporters for their continued generosity. The dollars raised will give children and families who have experienced unimaginable trauma the gift of hope and healing.

Mark your calendar for January 27, 2024 for another one-a-kind Classic Rock & Roll Party you won't want to miss!

- 1)** Classic Co-Chairs - Larry & Gina Melby, Kelly Smallridge & Rex Kirby
- 2)** Lori Keezer & Steve Bernstein
- 3)** Chris & Jayne Malfitano with Don Felder
- 4)** Terry & Monica Mayotte
- 5)** Matt Ladika and Trisha Hewes, MorseLife (HomeSafe Hero)
- 6)** Don Felder
- 7)** Ward & Debbie Kellogg
- 8)** Mike & Amy Kazma, Jo Ann & Phil Procacci, Carrie Rubin
- 9)** Guests of Joe & Kimberly Scaggs and Chris & Jayne Malfitano
- 10)** Surprise guitar auction with emcee Jay Zeager

SUPPORTERS "ROCK ON" TO HELP TRANSFORM LIVES





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THE CLASSIC ROCK & ROLL PARTY

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Photos by Tracey Benson Photography



Golfers Enjoy High Ridge Country Club

On May 22, golfers were treated to the exquisite course at the exclusive High Ridge Country Club – a new venue for this year's tournament.

Youth players, including several who are learning the game through the local nonprofit, First Tee – Palm Beaches, made up four of the 22 foursomes that participated. Generous donors sponsored these foursomes.

Tournament ambassadors were Jim MacCutcheon and Fern Schmidt, Patty Larkin, Logan Shalmi of The Atlantic Group of Oppenheimer & Co., and Phil Engman of Northern Trust. The tournament raised \$50,000 for services that provide hope and healing for young victims of child abuse and families affected by domestic violence.



PLATINUM SPONSORS

Jim MacCutcheon & Fern Schmidt





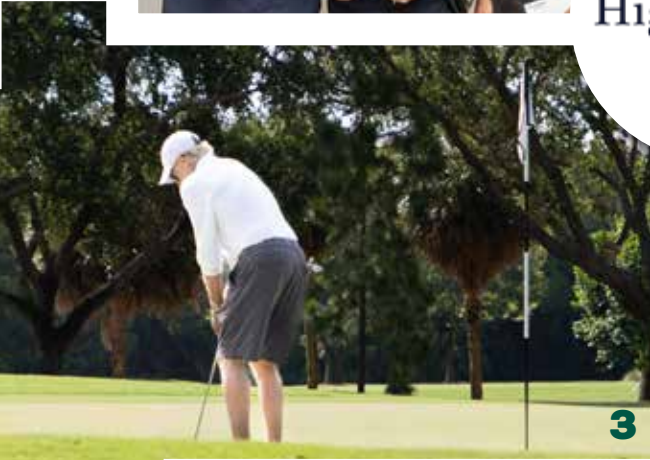
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High Ridge
PALM BEACH



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1) Phil Procacci, Laura Barker, Matt Ladika **2)** Mixed Team winner - ConnectOne Bank - TJ Izzo, Danielle Webel, Eric Schmidt, Michelle Browning **3)** Peter Austin, Steve Bernstein, Neil Gillman, Greg Bernardo **4)** Forrest Heathcott & Chris Malfitano **5)** Scott & Patty Eckert, Cathy & Rich Johnson **6)** Cindy Krebsbach, Susan Scaggs, Brooke Qualk, Sue Diener **7)** Men's Team winner - SageView - Jeff Petrone, Graig Theobault, Mike Arsanault, Keith Diego **8)** Lori Smith, Donna Parlapiano, Patty Larkin, Paulette Comparato **9)** Clayton Tadler & Val Perez **10)** Dave Englert, Mike Hahn, Bill Burke **11)** Golf ambassadors Logan Shalmi, Phil Engman & Patty Larkin **12)** Ladies Team winner - Teri Kennedy, Jayne Malfitano, Jori Farrell, Michelle Bernardo

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SAVE THE DATE!

**Saturday,
January 27, 2024**



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Congratulations to Our Recent High School Graduates!

For foster youth, high school graduation is far from guaranteed. Only 30-50% of foster children obtain their high school diploma, and 3-5% obtain a four-year college degree.

As a child, Katie struggled in the foster care system and was shuffled from home to home. When she came to HomeSafe's residential program, she connected with her therapist, Ms. Becca, who helped Katie work through her trauma, develop coping skills to combat her anxiety, and think seriously about her future. When she turned 18 and moved into HomeSafe's independent living housing program,

Pond Place, Katie worked with Independent Living Supervisor, Mr. Kehan, to manage her high school classes, obtain transportation, and develop important life skills.

Katie and Ghonelle (also a client at Pond Place) each worked tirelessly to obtain their high school diploma. Both are enrolling in Palm Beach State College for the fall semester. Katie, who was especially drawn to the curriculum in her biology class, is considering pursuing a career in the medical field. She shares, "HomeSafe has been there for me, motivating me to stay in school...I don't think I would have ever graduated without their help."



Katie



Ghonelle