



General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts
T Jablanski, President



GFWC Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children ~ 2022-2024

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The Junior's Special Program: Advocates for Children is designed to encourage all clubs to make a difference in the life of a child. Clubwomen can be the voice for children. Teaching and encouraging parents and other caregivers to advocate for children can happen at the grassroots level. Advocacy can include those children experiencing these living situations: homelessness, foster or residential care, child abuse in the home. First rate children's health care should be available to everyone in each unique situation.

Here are some suggestions your clubs can do right here in Massachusetts and worldwide to help children feel safe and to make a difference in the life of a child.

- Encourage clubs to put the following information on their FaceBook page and website:
 - Massachusetts Children's Alliance ~ <https://machildrensalliance.org/locate-a-cac/>
 - Massachusetts (Court Appointed special Advocates) CASA ~ <https://www.macasa.org/>
 - Children's Trust ~ <https://childrenstrustma.org/for-parents/need-help-now>
 - Save the Children ~ <https://www.savethechildren.net/>
 - Prevent Child Abuse America ~ <https://preventchildabuse.org/>
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ~ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/index.htm>
 - Kids Online ~ <https://www.kids-online.org/>
 - Student Support and Enrichment Grants ~ <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/ssae/index.html>
 - Project Learning Tree ~ <https://www.plt.org/>
- Contact your local shelters or agencies to see what their needs are for children.
- Provide scholarship opportunities for summer camps and other programs for children.
- Provide family day/night passes to local sporting events or festivals.

Hold Club fundraising activities focusing on children's health and safety. Topics can include: screen time safety, children's choking awareness, furniture safety, special needs children, children in foster care, Ecotherapy/Nature Therapy, and NAMI programs addressing depression and suicide in children and teens. Request help/support from local stores and businesses and reach out through social media town sites for assistance.

- **Advocacy:** Encourage clubmembers to develop and influence federal and state legislation to support programs that benefit children. Advocate for and support Ronald McDonald House and Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs
- **Affiliates:** March of Dimes, Operation Smile, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, UN Foundation Shot@Life Campaign, UNICEF
- **Community Connection Initiative:** Add a little sparkle to a local shelter, youth center, social service office or any other emergency location. Clean, paint, add fresh items to bring warmth and caring to the surroundings.
- **Important dates:** Advocates for Children Week: October 23-29, 2022, October 22-28, 2023

For many more ideas check out the 2022-2024 GFWC Club Manual pages on the GFWC Massachusetts website by going to the **ABOUT** tab and click on **What Do We Do?**