GFWC
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GENERAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS
MASSACHUSETTS

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GFWC Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children is designed to encourage all GFWC Clubs to make a difference in the life of a child by being an advocate. Clubwomen can be an advocate by working to ensure that children are protected from harmful situations, encourage healthy physical and emotional lifestyles, and be the voice through state legislation for bills that benefit children's physical and mental health issues.

Take the time to identify the children's programs in your local communities that your club can focus their efforts on. After school programs, youth centers, food programs for kids, hospitals, child advocacy centers are good places to start. Make connections with the facility directors, ask what their current and long-term needs are, then decide how the club can support them. Talk with your local schools and law enforcement because these institutions know where the needs are for children and their allies.

GFWC recognizes **Advocates for Children's Week** the third week of October each year and asks clubs to participate by planning a club project that week. Projects clubs have done in previous years included: snack collections delivered to after school programs, knitted hats for babies at the hospital NICU units, pajama collection delivered to YWCA shelters, Halloween costume collections, Birthday Wishes gift collections, and home goods item collection given to teens aging out of the Foster Care Program. Make sure your club plans at least one project that week.

On March 2, 1998, the National Education Association created **National Read Across America Day,** as a day to celebrate reading throughout the United States. Plan a project with your local schools or libraries. Contact the school department or school Principal and see if your club can read in the classrooms, donate books or bookmarks, or provide event snacks to celebrate this day.

Kids and technology now go hand in hand. Keeping these activities safe from predators is a constant concern. Consider partnering with a local advocacy group and hosting a speaker for parents and care givers to learn how to keep children safe from cyber bullies and scams. **GFWC has a new affiliate, Safe Surfin' Foundation** which shares GFWC's commitment to promoting online safety and digital responsibility for youth and families.

GFWC Massachusetts donates time, scholarships and donations to MassSTAR, an organization that promotes confidence, leadership skills, and collaboration with 10th graders across the state each year at their conference***. Join GFWC Massachusetts leaders in June to volunteer at their yearly conference held at Lasell University.***

To see the full GFWC Manual page for Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children, go to gfwcma.org > About GFWC > What We Do~GFWC Manual > Scroll to Advocates for Children