



# JUNIORS' SPECIAL PROGRAM: ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

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GFWC Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children is designed to encourage all Woman's, Junior Woman's, Juniorette, and International Affiliate Clubs to make a difference in the life of a child by being an advocate. The definition of child advocacy is "support for children who are in a vulnerable position in society or in a vulnerable situation."

Choosing to advocate, sponsor projects within the Community Connection Initiative, focus on children's health and safety, working with special needs/foster care, and providing needed scholarships are many ways in which to provide a voice for children and to teach and encourage parents on ways to advocate for children at the grassroots level.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION INITIATIVE: REFRESH AND REVIVE



Community Connection Initiatives are designed to answer the need to build awareness and recognition of who GFWC volunteers are, what the organization accomplishes, and making GFWC recognizable in local communities. This branding effort assists in giving GFWC a more human side, which will help to build your recognition and grow your membership.

Juniors Special Program's Community Connection Initiative encourages clubs to work with a local shelter, youth center, social service office, or other emergency location to add a little "sparkle" to one or many of their rooms.

Club members can come together to clean, paint, and add new items to the room to bring warmth and caring into the surroundings. Invite potential members to join and work with local merchants on donating supplies for the refresh. Get the word out to your community on what you are doing and maybe one room can turn into many rooms that will assist with making the situation more manageable for the child.

## AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

(Confirmed as of date of printing)

Depending on club intent, projects/programs from these GFWC Affiliate Organizations could be reported here as well:



## RESOURCE ORGAN

(Located in the Resources Area of the Club Manual.)

**"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world." — HARRIET TUBMAN**

- Work with your city, county, or state to have the fourth week in October recognized as **Advocates for Children Week (October 23-29, 2022 and October 22-28, 2023)**.
- Advocate through your state legislature for bills that benefit children's physical and mental health.
- Advocate for law enforcement training on mental health awareness for children.
- Research and engage with advocacy groups in your area that support children's physical and/or mental health.
- Advocate for Big Brothers/Big Sisters and other programs that provide children with mentors and/or offer activities to help them develop positive social skills.
- Pediatric Unit Playtime: Ask members to donate items such as coloring books, small jigsaw and cube puzzles, Play-Doh, and other small toys for hospitalized pediatric patients to enjoy during their stay in your local pediatric unit.
- Investigate grants, such as those available through the U.S. Department of Education, including the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Funding.
- Create "worry rocks" with children who are attending school for the first time.
- Support under-funded schools and after-school enrichment programs by collecting and donating supplies for all types of art programs, including music and theater.
- Provide volunteer support to community youth organizations that promote arts, outdoor activities, and/or other enrichment programs including civic engagement.
- Advocate for law enforcement training on mental health awareness for children.
- Research advocacy groups in your area that support children's physical and/or mental health.
- Screen Time Awareness: In this age of digital media, children are being exposed to cell phones, tablets, and electronic screens as early as infancy. Educate the members of your club about the new guidelines for screen time use for young children.
- And many more provided in Club Manual.

(This list is a brief offering of project ideas. Please visit Club Manual for other grassroots projects and/or programs as well as those with Affiliate Organizations or Resources.)