



Fighting for Children's Rights

Check out our new website! [www.floridaschildrenfirst.org](http://www.floridaschildrenfirst.org)

## Florida's Children First, Inc. Who We Are & What We Do

**Who We Are:** Florida's Children First (FCF) is a child advocacy organization that is dedicated to helping Florida's at-risk children and youth. Much of our current work relates to children in the child welfare system. We also work on issues for children who have disabilities, or who are in the delinquency system. FCF brings public awareness to issues affecting children in care through statewide training efforts, publications, interaction with the media and by hosting awards presentations in many cities throughout Florida.



Executive Director Christina Spudeas  
and Board President Howard Talenfeld

Florida's Children First uses many approaches to advocate for children in state care depending on the issue, the result desired and the population to be served.



Fort Lauderdale Child Advocacy Awards  
Reception

Our advocacy gives a voice to the most vulnerable children whose problems, concerns and interests are not being heard. While seeking to ensure that children have access to needed services or opportunities that will benefit their lives both in care and out of care, our advocacy can focus on an individual child, a problem within a region, or on the statewide level. When there is a systemic issue that negatively affects our children, FCF focuses its advocacy efforts on policy reform and systemic changes through education of the legislature, policy research and development with the state agency and involvement in litigation.

### **Florida Youth S.H.I.N.E. (FYS) – 300% Growth**

*FYS is a statewide, youth driven organization that empowers current and former foster youth to become self-advocates. FYS, founded by Florida's Children First in 2005, has become Florida's leading youth organization comprised of current and former foster youth who participate in public policy advocacy to improve child protection and foster care services. Growth of FYS chapters and membership statewide is off the charts -- currently 11 chapters and growing!*



### **Justice For Foster Youth – Lawyers Assisting Successful Transition**

#### **120+ Youth Matched with Free Lawyers**

*The JFFY—LAST program teams pro bono attorneys with young adults ages 18-25 who have spent time in foster care. The Legal Health Check-Up is designed to provide legal advice and ascertain unmet legal needs for this vulnerable population. This program is possible through grants from The Florida Bar Foundation.*



# Educating the Community



## Over 19 Trainings with 1000+ Floridians

Florida's Children First works to educate judges, attorneys, guardians ad litem, caseworkers, supervisors, and other child welfare personnel who work directly with children in need by providing publications, CLE trainings, youth presentations, and media involvement.

### 2010 TRAININGS

January	Dept. of Children & Families Regional Trainings on APD	120
	JFFY-LAST Trainings at Florida Bar Meeting	15
February	Broward Training on How to Be an Effective Advocate (and Counselor) for Foster Children in Court Proceedings Involving the Administration of Psychotropic Medications	40
April	Children's Week Training by FYS	60
June	Tampa Training on How to Be an Effective Advocate (and Counselor) for Foster Children in Court Proceedings Involving the Administration of Psychotropic Medications	60
August	Dependency Summit: FYS Trainings	120
	Understanding the Issues of Child on Child Sexual Abuse	240
September	Training by Independent Living Coordinators on APD	50
	Jacksonville Training on the Medical and Educational Rights of Foster Youth	50
October	Tampa Training on Affirmative Litigation	23
	Palm Beach Training on Understanding the Issues of Child on Child Sexual Abuse	90
November	Training on Current Custody	20
December	Training on Surrogate Parenting	60
	Training on Mental Health Access	80

## Over 12 Publications in Print

- On Your Own, But Not Alone: A Handbook to Empower Florida Youth Leaving Foster Care
- Transition: The Passage from Youth to Adulthood
- Hearing Your Voice: A Guide to Your Dependency Court Case
- FCF Recommendations for Inter-Agency Actions to Improve Educational Opportunities for Florida's Foster Youth
- Fostering Success: Strategies to Empower Youth to Succeed as Adults (Report of Proceedings)
- Frequently Asked Questions for Foster Youth Transitioning to Adulthood
- The Money Book: A Financial Guide for Youth Transitioning From Foster Care (in publication)

