



Florida Youth SHINE NEWS

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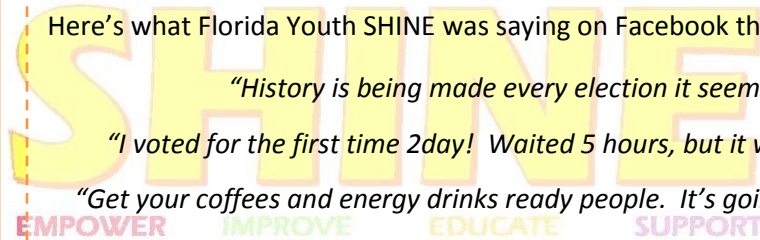
We voted!

Early voting. Election Day. First time voters. Democrats. Republicans. Members and mentors alike came out and lived Florida Youth SHINE's mission. Together we became the voice for our brothers, our sisters, and our fellow members who are still in care. Together we had a say in who represents us in our courts, in Tallahassee, and in Washington, DC. Together we voiced our opinion. Together we voted!



Over 38 members & 18 chapter mentors from ALL 12 FYS chapters captured their post-vote moments.

Here's what Florida Youth SHINE was saying on Facebook throughout Election Day:



"History is being made every election it seems, very cool." - Rob

"I voted for the first time 2day! Waited 5 hours, but it was well worth it. ☺" - Elijah

"Get your coffees and energy drinks ready people. It's going to be a long night!" - Manny

"Just 3 more hours to vote!" - Lacey

"They gave me a flower for my first time voting." - Edward

"Rocked the VOTE!" - Otto

"Finally voted! Got there at 7:15am. It took about an hour. If you're voting today don't forget an umbrella!! ☺" - Tara

"In line to vote!" - April

"Go vote!" - Katrina

"Get out and VOTE!" - Antron





Florida Youth SHINE NEWS

FCF Honor's Members in Orlando & West Palm Beach

Florida's Children First, our parent non-profit, hosts award receptions in various cities throughout the state to honor some of the best child advocates in Florida. This fall, 3 FYS members were selected by their local host committee members as Outstanding Youth Advocates in 2012.

Orlando

Ashtavia Maddox, FYS Orlando chapter leader was recently honored by FCF for overcoming a challenging life that placed her in foster care at an early age, and also for her courageous battle with Lupus. Even though Ashtavia's advocacy efforts have taken a back seat in recent months to allow her to focus on her health, she remains an active role model for her peers in Orlando and across the state. At the reception in Orlando, Ashtavia's story and acceptance of her award was extremely touching. Several of the folks in attendance came just for her honor and were brought to tears by her courage and strength.



West Palm Beach (article by Ryan Hampton)



Our very own **Francis Jeune** and **Na'Kira Hodges** were presented with very prestigious awards from Florida's Children First for their hard work and commitment to success after recently aging out of foster care. Francis was given this award for his outstanding and diligent work he put into bettering his life after aging out of an area group home, graduating high school and starting college. Na'Kira has had a bit of a tougher road to success as she faced instances of homelessness and lack of supports to get back on track. She credits Vita Nova Independent Living and her own internal strength to pull herself up and graduate high school, enroll in college and begin working. Our local chapter is proud of the achievements of our peers and wanted to share their accomplishments so that others can find the strength to continue setting and achieving their own goals.

FYS Southwest FL Walks to Prevent Child Abuse



On October 20th, members of our Southwest Florida chapter (Ft. Myers area) got up early to participate in the 7th annual Walk to Prevent Child Abuse organized by the Children's Network of Southwest Florida. Before the walk, members and mentors staffed a table to tell the other walkers about FYS and get them excited about our newest chapter. The group then

had fun walking with the other teams through a beautiful subdivision and natural preserve, all to support the prevention of child abuse. It was a lot of fun...and it all too place before 10 o'clock in the morning!

Pictured are chapter president, Brandon Jennings, and chapter mentors Lori Burke and Irvine Bourdeau.





Florida Youth SHINE NEWS

FYS Pinellas Chapter Hosts 2nd Annual Truly Amazing Resource Race

by April White, FYS Chair and Pinellas Chapter Leader

In need of a new and innovative way to teach our chapter members about resources in our community, Ready for Life (FYS Pinellas's main chapter support) came up with an idea last year to host a Truly Amazing Resource Race loosely based off of the TV show *The Amazing Race*. This year was our second year holding the race and already it has become something all of our members look forward to. It is also our best attended event of the year and volunteers from all over Pinellas County get involved too. Our members are split up into teams of four plus one volunteer driver to ensure all traffic laws are obeyed. The teams really got into the spirit of the event with teams names, "war paint" for themselves and their team cars, etc. Each team received their first clue at the starting line and from there the race was on! Teams had to work together to figure out where each clue would take them and each stop was a location of an important resource somewhere in Pinellas county; from local schools to the food stamp office to a local garage. Teams had to complete a challenge at each stop like learning about impaired driving, how to fill out a food assistance application or change a tire in order receive their next clue. All of the team members, drivers, and volunteers wore BRIGHT yellow race day shirts so they are impossible to miss racing all over Pinellas County and if one team crossed paths with another the competition ramped up even more! Community partners in Pinellas were awesome about partnering with us and donating different prizes for our first, second and third place teams. We even held a Finish Line party held at Quaker Steak and Lube where food, music, and an awards ceremony were enjoyed by all. Ready for Life staff, chapter members, and volunteers are already talking about how to make next year even more AMAZING!

