**Family fall fun at Children’s Trust signature event, Lights On Afterschool**

*Event is Oct. 24 at the Boys & Girls Club location in northwest Gainesville*

October 21, 2024 —

The Children’s Trust of Alachua County and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida invite community members to a fall festival in celebration of Lights on Afterschool. The Oct. 24 event will be hosted at the Boys & Girls Club northwest site and kicks off at 4:30 p.m.

“The Children’s Trust of Alachua County is excited to be sponsoring this event for the fourth year and continuing to build it to become the Trust’s signature annual event,” said Marsha Kiner, executive director of the Children’s Trust. “We want to give a special ‘thank you’ to all the staff at the Boys & Girls Club for being our co-host this year and bringing some great ideas for a fun time for all.”

Lights On Afterschool is a national celebration dedicated to promoting the accessibility of afterschool programs to all families and children. This event highlights the valuable opportunities and benefits that afterschool programs provide to children, as well as their families and the community at large.

The Children’s Trust of Alachua County funds seven afterschool programs in Alachua County, serving children in grades K-12. During the event, other afterschool providers funded by the Children’s Trust will be present along with many of the youth they serve.

“We’ve designed this event to be both fun and informative, providing valuable resources to families while highlighting the strength of collaboration. By partnering with the Children’s Trust of Alachua County, we are demonstrating how united efforts can better serve the children of Alachua County,” said Deonte Lee, unit director of the Boys & Girls Club northwest site. “Support for afterschool programs is crucial, as the data clearly shows that children who participate in these programs are safer, less likely to get into trouble, and have access to more resources.”

Following the fall festival theme, attendees are encouraged to wear their Halloween costumes or fall attire and bring a bucket to Trick-or-Treat around the booths. All are welcome to join for an afternoon of exciting carnival games, creative arts and crafts stations, live performances, special presentations, food trucks, music and more.

 **WHAT:** Lights On Afterschool Fall Festival

**WHEN:** Oct. 24, 4:30-6 p.m.

 **WHERE:** Boys & Girls Club at 2661 NW 51st St., Gainesville, FL 32606

 **COST:** Free

“Lights on Afterschool is just one opportunity we have to celebrate all that our afterschool providers give to our community,” Kiner said. “These benefits are not only seen in our kids, who receive homework help and a social boost, but they also enable families to continue to earn a living while knowing their children are happy, healthy and safe.”

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**ABOUT THE CHILDREN’S TRUST OF ALACHUA COUNTY**

The Children’s Trust of Alachua County funds and supports a coordinated system of community services that allows all youth and their families to thrive, from physical and emotional wellness to educational supports and safety needs. Created by voter approval in 2018, the Children’s Trust is a special independent taxing district and works hand-in-hand with local children’s services partners.

[ChildrensTrustOfAlachuaCounty.us](https://www.childrenstrustofalachuacounty.us/) | [@ChildrenAlachua](https://www.instagram.com/childrenalachua/)