



CENTRAL FLORIDA
Grass Root Outreach Within

Our mission is to make a positive difference in children's lives by increasing opportunities for healthy living.

**GROW healthy kids,
GROW healthy communities**

**2019-2020 Annual Report
& Year in Review**

Nourish Run Play GROW



GROWCentralFlorida.org

Our Story

In 2009, our founder Colleen Gonzalez realized that not all schools could afford a school running program. Schools needed to have enough funds and volunteers to sustain such a program, and many schools lacked these resources.

After establishing a running program and supporting several schools, Colleen established GROW to provide resources for running programs at low-resource schools throughout Seminole County.

Since then, GROW has expanded & supports other grass root efforts that foster children's health and overall well-being.

Please join us on our journey and help keep the good GROWing!



Scan to see what an event looks like



Cross Country Running

5,618 children ages 5-12 registered to participate in this sport at no cost to their families or their schools

- GROW supported 74 volunteers in 37 schools
- On average, students received 1 hour & 15 minutes additional physical activity beyond normal school hours each week
- Participants had the opportunity to participate in eight running meets that were held on Saturdays between December & February
- GROW makes sure that volunteer coaches have all the durable goods and resources they need for their teams. These include shirts, shoes, and items needed for events.

Community Ball Drive for Law Enforcement

481 basket, soccer and sports balls were distributed by law enforcement

Fostering positive relationships with trusted adults in law enforcement helps us to GROW healthy kids & communities. Due to Covid-19, we had to be creative with our 3rd annual Ball Drive for Law Enforcement. In mid April, donated balls were distributed through the Seminole County Sheriff's Office School Safety Division. The balls allowed deputies and officers to connect with kids while working pick-up lines at schools or while out in the community. This program continues to be a driving force in creating positive experiences between law enforcement and our community.



2 play spaces were revitalized



Play Space Revitalization

During the 2019-2020 school year, GROW engaged community volunteers to revitalize the spaces for children to play. Spring Lake & English Estates Elementary had their playgrounds brightened up and their flagpole areas gardened.



Recess Toys for Schools



6 schools received recess toys

Due to growing student populations, at many playgrounds students face lines to use the large play equipment.

During the 2019-2020 school year, GROW furnished 6 schools with recess toys for such play. Quality recess toys help children to have physically active and enjoyable recess periods. With GROW's support, teachers need not buy such toys themselves, as many had been doing.

Since 2009, over 3,000 shoes have been distributed to children.

Each day teachers, social workers and school resource deputies encounter children in need of proper footwear that encourages physical activity.

Thanks to our partners at Fleet Feet Orlando, we received over 1,000 New Balance Shoes & Balega Socks to distribute to identified students in need.

Shoes for Students



Grass Root Outreach Within



During the 2019-2020 school year, GROW has supported Grass Root Volunteers who want to exceed expectations and defy odds. Efforts include:

- Providing nutrition and physical activity games for schools, law enforcement agencies or community groups to use and return
- Mentored & supported the Seminole & Lyman High Civic Engagement classes with programming that focused on stress reduction and safety tactics for student runners
- Supporting Wicklow Elementary School with their volunteer driven basketball program.

Thank you to our 2019-2020 Sponsors

2019-2020 GROW Board:

Executive Director & Founder: Colleen Gonzalez

President: Kerri Segrest - Red Bug Elementary, Physical Education Teacher

Treasurer: Fritz Voltaire - Recovery House, Community Relations

Secretary: Luis Gonzalez - Republic National Distributing Company

Directors:

Mandy Layman - Nemours Children's Health System, MS, RD, LD/N CDE

Lisa Di Leo Mercer - Wilson Elementary, Physical Education, Rollins College Adjunct Professor of Education, Ed.D., Ed.S, M.Ed

Eric Shivers - Rudolph & Shivers, Certified Public Accountant

Melodie Griffin - Action for Healthy Kids, State Coordinator

Amber Belanger - Seminole County Sheriff's Office



Thank you community partners!

Your collaboration, camaraderie & support helps us GROW the good!

Orlando City Soccer Foundation

The Home Depot Foundation

Orlando Magic Foundation

FL Department of Health

Action for Healthy Kids

Seminole State College

Oranole Foundation

RIP-ITT Foundation

Sports 4 the Kids

University of

Central FL

Presenting - \$10,000 or more

Fleet Feet Orlando
Track Shack Youth Foundation

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Benevolent, Patriotic Orders of the Does
Rudolph & Shivers CPA

Nemours Children's Health System
Publix Charities

Special thanks to our volunteer photographers who capture the work of grassroots efforts:

Michael Padgett Eric Padgett Miguel Cruz Robert Kliner Anna Jannotti

GROW Central Florida is proud to be an **Action for Healthy Kids** Parent Ambassador. Learn more at **Action4HealthyKids.org**

www.GROWCentralFlorida.org (407)461-2611 Info@GROWCentralFlorida.org

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