

PFLAG Donates to Interface

11-19-13 PFLAG* of Gainesville members collected items to donate to the CDS Interface Youth Shelter during their November meeting. Interface is the only shelter for homeless and/or runaway youth in the region accepting all youth age 10-17. Since LGBTQ* identified youth are an over-represented minority in the total population of homeless youth, PFLAG members wanted to show their support by collecting items on the CDS wish list. Items donated included games, towels, bedding, jackets, and toiletries. CDS Interface Youth Shelter participants will be happy to use these items. CDS is so grateful for this community support!

Between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth run away from home each year. Running away from home has always been dangerous but in recent years, the risk of catastrophic experiences has dramatically increased. The number one risk factor for becoming a human trafficking victim is to be a runaway. Within the first 48 hours on the streets, 1/3 of homeless youth are recruited into the commercial sex trade! The average age a person enters into the commercial sex trade in the USA is 14 but in Florida it is 12. Once involved in prostitution, between violence and disease, the average life expectancy is only 7 years. CDS Interface Youth Shelters are part of the National Safe Place network of shelters around the country to help save and protect vulnerable youth from becoming victims.

CDS Interface Youth Shelters in Gainesville, Palatka, and Lake City Florida help youth who are on the streets or at-risk for running away. Homeless, runaway, truant, and ungovernable youth are welcome in the shelters. In addition to room and board, the youth attend school, have daily counseling, and work through a social skills development curriculum. Most are able to successfully return home. Approximately 500 youth per year spend a few weeks or longer in the residential program and another 300 families are helped through Family Action (out-patient) counseling. CDS does not charge participants for these services. For help or information call (352) 244-0618 (24/7-shelter) or 244-0628 (office). www.cdsfl.org. Contributions are tax-deductible.

<http://www.cdsfl.org/donations/wish-list/>

*PFLAG: Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. <http://pflaggainesville.org/> LGBTQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning



PFLAG Gainesville leaders in front of a table full of donations for CDS Interface Youth Shelter