



## We are so grateful to our supporters!

Children First would like to thank all who attended and provided support to make our first special events of the season - Flip Flops & Fashion and Rockin' Lobster - more successful this year than ever before! In fact, the funds raised will cover the approximate cost of ***one infant classroom for a year!***

We cannot express our appreciation enough to the donors, volunteers, event sponsors and attendees who support our work and mission. A few event highlights and photo gallery links are below. Enjoy!

### "Flipping" for Children First



Co-chairs Andree Keebaugh, Audrey Coleman, Janna Kim and Sarah Macrae.

On November 3rd, approximately 350 guests in fashionable beach attire enjoyed soft breezes, sand under their feet, and a spectacular view of the Gulf of Mexico during ***Flip Flops & Fashion*** at Sharky's on the Pier in Venice. Guests were treated to a delicious lunch and wine, raffle items, and a fashion show that was emceed by the ever-fashionable Sally Schule. Clothing and accessories featured were from L. Boutique, Malibu Fox, and Sun Bug.



4-yr old Jazzibella

Guest speaker Tiffany Morales spoke of how Children First helped change her life after the father of her daughter, Jazzibella, "exchanged us for a single man's life with no responsibilities." She described her transition from anger and fear of their limited prospects to joy and hope. She graduated from Meridian College summa cum laude and is working as a registered medical assistant.

### **Rockin' for a Cause**

On November 5th, guests at the **Rockin' Lobster** nautical-themed beach party enjoyed a picturesque sunset on the beachfront at Sharky's on the Pier, live music by Big Night Out, huge Maine lobsters for dinner, and a small silent auction with trips, jewelry and items made by Children First students.



Co-chairs Jim and Jackie Rolfes, Jeff and Lisa Jackson, Katrina and Matt Otchet, and Lisa and John Giglio.

The emotional high point of the evening was when Children First grandparents



Grandparents Jon and Maria

Jon and Maria spoke about their experience raising their grandchild, Valentina. There

wasn't

a dry eye in the house as Maria spoke about her granddaughter's story, special needs, and the loving support of the Children First staff.

The evening ended with a lantern release, delectable make-your-own s'mores over open fire pits, and fireworks that lit up the night sky.

**The money raised at both events will go directly back to programs.  
Big thanks to all who contributed to the weekend's success!**

*Here are links to photo galleries featuring our events - please enjoy and share:*

[The Observer \(Flip Flops\)](#)

[The Observer \(Rockin' Lobster\)](#)

[Sarasota Herald-Tribune](#)

[Sarasota Magazine](#)

## **SAVE THE DATE!**

Mark your calendars now for our 17th Annual Celebration Gala:  
Saturday, March 25, 2017!



Children First, Inc.  
1723 N. Orange Ave.  
Sarasota, FL 34234

Children First is Sarasota County's exclusive provider of Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Find out more by visiting [childrenfirst.net](http://childrenfirst.net) or calling (941) 953-5507, ext. 152.