



GANGALTERNATIVE, INC.
BUILDING CHARACTER THAT LASTS

July 2026 NEWSLETTER



A Healing Tool for Talking About Trauma

We are pleased to share What We Carry Together, a new digital storybook created through Gang Alternative, Inc.'s (GA) Collective Action for Addressing Trauma and Stress (CAATS) initiative, serving Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties.

This illustrated story follows youth, caregivers, and community members in South Florida as they navigate stress, grief, pressure, and exposure to violence. It shows how connection, faith, creativity, and trusted relationships can support healing. Designed to be accessible and realistic, it can be used with children, teens, and adults.

What We Carry Together can support you and your community by helping to:

- open honest conversations about stress, trauma, and emotional wellness
- normalize the idea that communities can hurt and heal together
- point families, educators, faith communities, and partners toward supportive resources

You are invited to use this storybook in:

- community conversations or listening sessions
- youth groups, classrooms, and family gatherings
- support groups, mentoring, or small group discussions

To learn more about the CAATS initiative or to explore collaboration opportunities, please contact Gang Alternative at info@myga.org or visit MyGA.org.

Thank you for walking with us as we support emotional wellness, resilience, and hope across South Florida communities.

Flip through the storybook here. You can also **download here.**





Bright Futures Start with Bright Smiles

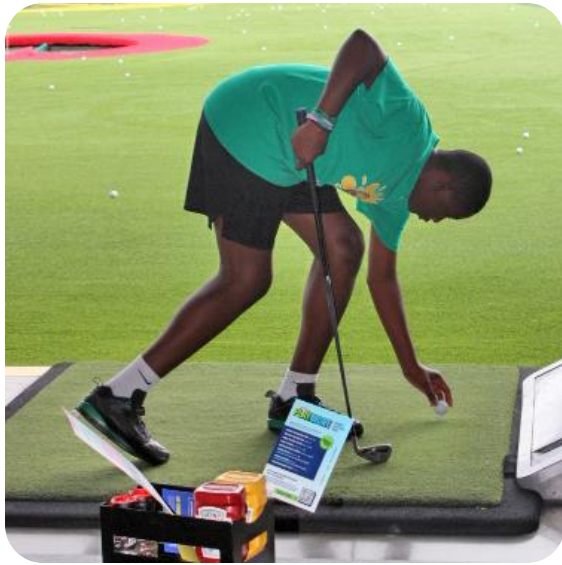
At GPS Summer Camp, our students recently got a visit that felt a little different from the usual camp day. The Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures mobile unit pulled up, and suddenly the parking lot turned into a mini dental classroom on wheels.

Campers climbed aboard for a simple, down-to-earth presentation on why brushing, flossing, and regular checkups actually matter in real life, not just at the dentist's office.

In small groups, students walked through how to brush and floss step by step, talked about what really happens when you skip it, and looked at how snacks and drinks can either help or hurt their teeth and overall health.

The staff encouraged questions, let campers try out what they were learning, and made a topic that can feel routine actually stick. Before heading home, every child received a small dental care kit with a toothbrush and toothpaste so they could keep practicing on their own.

It's one more way GA is helping young people build everyday habits that support long-term health and resilience.





Building Leaders: BLOC Summer Camp Highlights 2026

What an incredible season! The Building Leaders of Character (BLOC) Summer Camp officially wrapped up today across our three sites in Little Haiti, North Miami, and Homestead. This summer, our middle and high school students stepped out of their comfort zones, explored new passions, and built character that lasts.

From Virtual Reality career simulations and Topgolf to Brazilian Capoeira and entrepreneurship workshops, our youth made unforgettable memories. Every field trip, workshop, and hands-on activity was designed to empower our students by developing essential life skills, building confidence, and inspiring future leaders.

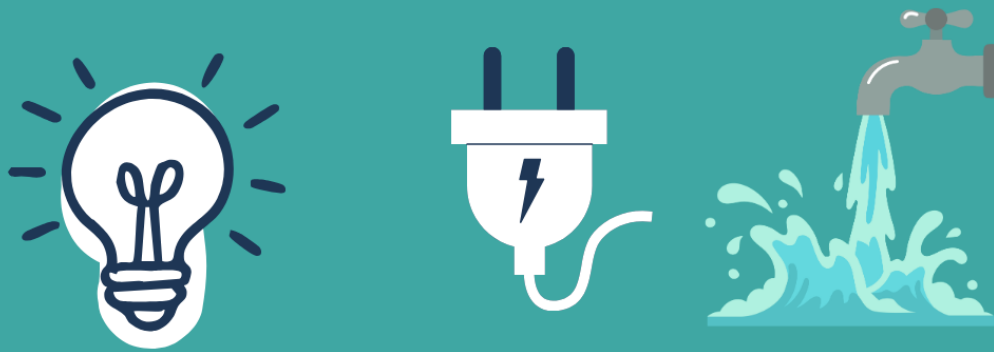
As we celebrate these summer milestones, we are excited to keep the momentum going!

Fall Enrollment Is Now Open!

We are inviting middle and high school students to join us for our BLOC After-School Program this fall. Give your teen a safe, supportive environment to excel in academics, strengthen life skills, and prepare for the future.

Register today: <https://myga.org/bloc-after-school-program-6-12-form/>

Utility Support for



66 Families

Tides Foundation Partnership Powers Relief

Gang Alternative, Inc. recently completed the **Tides Foundation** Utility Assistance Program, a \$20,000 emergency fund that helped 66 households across Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties keep up with utility bills.

Individual awards ranged from \$70 to \$500, helping families maintain essential utility services during periods of financial hardship. Assistance included payment of electric, water, and gas bills, with the majority supporting Florida Power & Light customers.

Families came to us with many different stories: a lost job, cut hours, a hospital stay, caring for aging parents, or simply not being able to keep up as rent, food, and fuel kept climbing. Households supported included those with children, seniors, or relatives with disabilities.

For them, this support meant the lights stayed on, water kept running, and they could use what little money they had for groceries, medicine, transportation, and childcare instead of shutoff notices.

In their own words, participants talked about feeling more stable, sleeping better at night, and being able to stay safely housed. This kind of focused \$20,000 support shows how short-term help can ease a crisis and move families one step closer to long-term stability, right in line with GA's mission to build resilience and offer positive alternatives to crisis and despair.



BLOC College Tour A Success!

Last month, our high school students wrapped up an incredible two-day college tour (June 25–26), visiting Florida Atlantic University, UCF, Southern Technical College, and Bethune-Cookman University. This immersive experience gave our future leaders a front-row seat to campus life, academic opportunities, and post-secondary pathways.

With our BLOC program at GA, we take planning for our students' futures seriously. During the school year, our focus centers on SAT/ACT prep, college readiness, FAFSA assistance, and so much more. We organize this annual college tour to actively broaden their horizons and keep them on the path to success.

Thanks to **The Children's Trust**, this life-changing exposure trip was completely free for our families. Students actively engaged with tour guides, explored facilities, and documented their journeys to showcase the direct impact of this generous investment.

We are incredibly proud of how our youth represented the BLOC program.





GPS Camp Closes Season: After-School Enrollment Opens

As another unforgettable summer comes to a close, the GPS Summer Camp celebrates eight incredible weeks of learning, laughter, and adventure. This summer, nearly 300 kindergarten through fifth-grade participants attended camp across seven sites serving North Miami, Little Haiti, Homestead, and Florida City.

Each week was filled with exciting STEM projects, creative arts and crafts, literacy, educational activities, physical fitness, and fun-filled field trips that encouraged curiosity and exploration. From hands-on science experiments to unforgettable adventures, campers had countless opportunities to learn new skills while having fun.

As summer comes to an end, the learning and fun don't have to stop! Families are encouraged to enroll in the GPS After-School Program. We look forward to welcoming both returning and new students for another exciting year of learning, discovery, and success.

FALL ENROLLMENT IS NOW OPEN!

We are inviting kindergarten through 5th-grade students to join us for our GPS After-School Program this fall.

Give your child a safe, nurturing environment to grow in reading and math, build positive social skills, and develop healthy habits that support their success in school and in life.

Register here: <https://sl1nk.com/1pa0th>.



GA's EIAC: Turning Employer Insight Into Action

On June 24, GA brought employers, trainers, and workforce partners together for its quarterly Employer Industry Advisory Committee (EIAC) meeting. At the center of the conversation was a simple question: What are employers looking for right now?

Employers talked about the struggle to hire and keep people who are ready. They named the gaps they see every day and the pressure of a labor market that keeps shifting.

This quarter, Miller Electric took the lead. Area trainer Mike Milanes described the pace on construction sites and the growing demand for trained, credentialed electricians. He called for more hands-on practice, realistic expectations, and clear steps so an entry-level job can become a career.

For Gang Alternative's Workforce Development Department, that kind of direct input guides how GA shapes training and support so our program participants can move toward steady work and healthier futures. This is one of the core ways GA lives out its mission of strengthening youth, families, and communities.



GA Youth Take the Lead on Drug Prevention

Gang Alternative, Inc. youth recently traveled to Orlando to join the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) conference, where they took part in a series of Youth Key Essentials sessions.

The 25th Annual Mid-Year Training Institute brought together nearly 2,500 attendees, which included 365 youth. The primary goal of the event is to provide intensive, hands-on training, expert-led sessions, and networking for substance use prevention professionals, law enforcement, public health workers, and young leaders.

GA's approach to substance use prevention programming remains youth-led and adult-guided. By sending our young leaders to CADCA, we equip them with the skills and confidence to design and lead prevention efforts in their communities.

In small groups, young people shared how substance use touches families, schools, and their own plans for the future. They also named what can push someone toward drugs in the first place: pressure from friends, feeling alone, not having safe places to go after school, and seeing drug use treated as “normal” in some spaces.

From there, they shifted into solutions. Youth talked about building stronger friend groups, finding and offering mentorship, getting more involved in community activities, and being more upfront about the long-term impact of substance misuse.

This event reinforces GA's work to build healthier, safer paths for young people across our communities.





UPLIFT's Provider Resource Fair Strengthens Network of Support

On July 23 GA hosted our UPLIFT Provider Resource Fair, bringing together a strong network of organizations dedicated to improving outcomes for children, youth, and families across Miami-Dade County.

Unlike a traditional community fair, this event was intentionally designed for service providers, creating a professional forum for collaboration, resource-sharing, and partnership development aligned with GA's mission to build healthier, safer communities.

More than 30 organizations participated, representing behavioral health, housing, education, healthcare, employment, financial stability, youth development, and family support. GA's facility became a dynamic hub of engagement as attendees exchanged insights, explored innovative service strategies, and strengthened referral pathways for the families they serve.

The day featured a curated slideshow highlighting each organization and raffle giveaways that added warmth and connection.

Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive, underscoring the value and necessity of this initiative as GA's UPLIFT program continues to expand cross-sector collaboration and access to essential services.



Back to School Month has many things coming up. Click here to find events as August unfolds.



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