***Step right up! The Children’s Trust signature event, Lights On Afterschool, heads to the circus.***

*Event is Oct. 23 at the Gainesville Circus Center.*

October 6, 2025 —

The Children’s Trust of Alachua County and the Gainesville Circus Center invite community members to a fun and interactive celebration of *Lights* *on Afterschool,* a nation-wide event that brings awareness to the importance of safe and engaging afterschool programs. The Oct. 23rd event will be hosted at the Gainesville Circus Center and kicks off at 4:00 p.m.

“The Children’s Trust of Alachua County is excited to sponsor Lights on Afterschool to highlight the role afterschool programs play in the community,” said Marsha Kiner, executive director of the Children’s Trust. “Afterschool programs are a vital extension of the school day. They provide children with safe, structured environments where they can continue learning, explore new interests, and build important life skills. When we invest in afterschool, we’re investing in the future of our community.”

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.

One of those programs, the Gainesville Circus Center, takes afterschool engagement to new heights with their unique and creative programming. Dr. Corey Cheval, director and founder, shares, “Gainesville Circus Center looks forward to showcasing the youth artists in our program. This feat would not be possible without our on-going partnership with the Children's Trust. We invite families to discover all this community has to offer for kids afterschool!” Circus Center students will be both performing and engaging families with hands-on circus activities at the event. Learn to juggle, enjoy free food, bounce, craft, and play at this year’s Lights on Afterschool at the Gainesville Circus Center!

 **WHAT:** Lights On Afterschool

**WHEN:** Oct. 23, 4:00 -6:30 p.m.

 **WHERE:** Gainesville Circus Center, 1925 Northwest 2nd

Street, Gainesville, FL 32609

 **COST:** Free

“Lights on Afterschool is just one opportunity we have to celebrate all that our afterschool providers give to our community,” Kiner said. “By keeping kids safe, supporting working parents, and fostering the next generation of leaders, these programs create a positive impact that reaches every corner of our community. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our afterschool providers, whose commitment and care make these outcomes a reality.”

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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/)