



WOMEN IN DISTRESSSM
OF BROWARD COUNTY, INC.
ESTABLISHING S•A•F•ESM
STOP ABUSE FOR EVERYONESM

Leadership Broward Class XXVIII hosts You Are Special event and donates \$500 to Women In Distress



They walked the red carpet and got to meet a football star from the Miami Dolphins. They kicked off their shoes and jumped into the bounce house. They offered up their tiny faces for painting and sparkles. They laughed, ran, showed off creativity in art projects, enjoyed a yummy lunch and danced like they didn't have a care in the world.

That was the scene on May 23rd at the *You are Special* event hosted by members of the current Leadership Broward Class at Signature Grand for families and children who are participants at Women In Distress of Broward County, Inc.

Acting like kids everywhere on a sunny Sunday afternoon here in South Florida. The difference is that these kids do have cares and often feel the weight of the world on their small shoulders. They are caught up in the vortex of domestic abuse. They've watched the words - and the fists - fly and often that anger is directed at them. With the free and confidential help provided by Women In Distress, these children are seeing light at the end of that dark tunnel. Through counseling programs, these children are working

through their emotions and realizing that family violence is not their fault.

The *You are Special* event was a chance to forget the fears for a few hours and enjoy being a child again, thanks to a caring and talented group of Leadership Broward Class XXVIII members. In real life, these LB members are business executives, marketers, lawyers, healthcare professionals. But on this Sunday afternoon, they were the ringmasters in this circus of fun.

In addition to the party, each child received a Kid Kit with gift cards, electronics and special items selected just for them. The Kid Kit items also will be distributed to many dozens more children not able to attend the event, but who are part of the Women In Distress program.

But it was the human touches that made this day so special. NFL player Davone Bess, with his wife and toddler daughter, taking time to greet each family and pose for the important "photo opp." Katina Taylor, wife of football great Jason Taylor, serving as the official photographer for the day. And, Katina handing her phone to a young boy so he could talk to Jason. All the LB members reaching out to hold those small hands, reassuring them not to be afraid, exchanging high fives.

So many in our community pulled together to make this a special day. Without you, this would not be possible! Special thanks to the WID team: Erica, Lammy, Haley and Advocates in Outreach and Residential Departments for their help. Also, special thanks to the LB members - Xiomara Fraga, Dan Whitaker, Stacy Ostrau, Lily Garcia, Lissette Egues, and Janet Buchanan. It was truly a special outing for our families!

The *You Are Special* project was selected as "Class Choice" by the entire Leadership Broward class as the best project and WID will receive \$500 as the recipient of that award.

Pictured L to R: WID Director of Social Change Erica Herman, Lily Garcia, Xiomara Fraga, Janet Buchanan, WID Manager of Professional and Community Education Haley Cutler, Stacy Ostrau, Lissette Egues, WID President and CEO Mary Riedel, and Dan Whitaker.