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COMMUNITY

Los Altos Flower Run benefits foster youth (/news/sections/community/178-upcoming-events/55305-los-altos-flower-run-benefits-foster-youth)

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Courtesy of Jessica Dickson Goodman
Debbie Crouse, left, and Joy Erf joined forces to organize the inaugural 5K Flower Run/Walk, set for May 21.

The inaugural 5K Flower Run/Walk is scheduled 9 a.m. May 21 beginning in front of On Your Mark, 378 Main St., Los Altos.

The course loops through Los Altos Hills and back.

All proceeds from the run will benefit the nonprofit Child Advocates of Silicon Valley, which supports foster children in Santa Clara County. Participants are encouraged to add a flower flourish to their running/walking gear and will receive a commemorative bracelet for participating in the event.

Los Altos resident and Child Advocates board member Debbie Crouse said she wanted to do more than fundraise for the 1,600 foster youth in Santa Clara County – she wanted to organize a fun event for the community while building awareness for her cause. She recruited her friend, Cupertino resident Joy Erf, an experienced distance runner, and six philanthropically minded Los Altos residents to help with the 5K.

"The Flower Run/Walk is a healthy, fun activity for friends and families to do together while supporting foster youth," Crouse said. "We hope this event is the first of many runs to benefit foster children in our community."

Los Altos resident Karen Scussel, executive director of Child Advocates, said the organization is "thrilled" to see its supporters kicking off the Flower Run/Walk in May, which is Foster Care Awareness Month in Los Altos.

"With the climate of uncertainty surrounding programs that help underserved children, it is vitally important that foster children – our community's most vulnerable population – have a caring, stable adult in their lives in the form of a Child Advocate," she said.

According to the American Medical Association, there is no more vulnerable group than children removed from the custody of their parents and placed in foster care. Child Advocates provides a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for foster youth to be a friend, advocate and mentor throughout their time in the dependency system. CASAs serve as a voice for children in foster care, ensuring that their emotional and educational needs are met.

Cost is \$25. Participants 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

To register online and for more information on the Flower Run/Walk, visit tinyurl.com/flowerrun4kids (<http://tinyurl.com/flowerrun4kids>).

For more information on Child Advocates, visit [bemyadvocate.org](http://www.bemyadvocate.org) (<http://www.bemyadvocate.org>).

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