

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Greg Giordano (727) 847-8179

Date: April 27, 2015

Pasco Tax Collector Mike Fasano Announces Start of “Lauren’s Kids Specialty Tag and Donation Check-off Month”

Pasco County Tax Collector Mike Fasano announces that *Lauren’s Kids* will be the tax collector’s featured charitable organization for the month of May. *Lauren’s Kids* is a statewide organization that works each day to prevent childhood sexual abuse through education and awareness. Additionally, *Lauren’s Kids* help heal survivors with guidance and support. *Lauren’s Kids* was started in 2007 by **Lauren Book**, herself a victim of years of childhood sexual abuse by a trusted nanny whose job it was to care for her. **Lauren Book** has taken her own experiences and has turned them into an opportunity to help children find hope and healing.

The Pasco County Tax Collector will promote the *Lauren’s Kids* specialty license plate and charitable check-off during the month of May. It is estimated that 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 5 boys in the United States are sexually abused before the age of 18. A staggering 90% of the victims personally know the predator who preys on them. Sadly, it is estimated that 30% of childhood sexual abuse is never reported.

Individuals who have vehicle registrations coming due in May can trade-in their existing license plate for a *Lauren’s Kids* specialty plate for an additional fee. Customers may also purchase the tag for newly registered vehicles, also for an additional fee. Customers who purchase a specialty tag will be entered into a drawing for Walt Disney World tickets. Additionally, customers may also check the box on the back of their registration form to donate \$1.00, \$5.00, \$10.00 or more to the cause. Thank you gifts for those who donate to *Lauren’s Kids* will be

available at each tax collector's office in Pasco County. Cash donations separate from vehicle registration and renewals will also be accepted.

“Nothing is more important than keeping Florida's innocent children safe, and through the sale of the *Lauren's Kids* 'Love & Healing' license plates we will be able to greatly expand our efforts,” said **Lauren Book**, child sexual abuse survivor and founder of *Lauren's Kids*. “*Lauren's Kids* is grateful to have an opportunity for the month of May to collaborate with **Honorable Mike Fasano** and the Pasco County Tax Collectors Office staff to help shine a light in dark places. With the help of the Pasco County Tax Collectors Office, we are raising funds to provide life-saving awareness and prevention education materials.”

“I encourage customers to consider supporting the excellent work that **Lauren Book** and her organization do to help children heal from dreadful abuse,” **Tax Collector Mike Fasano** suggests. “**Lauren Book** estimates that 95% of sexual abuse is preventable through education and awareness. It is an honor for the Pasco County Tax Collector's Office to team with *Lauren's Kids* to train a new generation of children about this crime and how they may find help and healing if they do become victims of it. Your purchase of a specialty tag or a donation in any amount to *Lauren's Kids* will make a world of difference to a hurting child in our community.”

The specialty tag and the check-off promotion run through the month of May. Contributions to *Lauren's Kids* can be made at all five tax collector locations in Pasco County: Wesley Chapel, Gulf Harbors – New Port Richey, Central Pasco Government Center - Land O' Lakes, East Pasco Government Center - Dade City and West Pasco Government Center – New Port Richey. Contributions can also be added to renewals that are processed via the mail. For more information about the specialty tag/ check-off promotion, please contact Greg Giordano, Director of Customer Relations, at the tax collector's office: 727-847- 8179.

Please visit www.pascotaxes.com for additional information about all services provided by the Pasco County Tax Collector's Office.