

# SOUTH CAROLINA

## the VOLUNTEERS



"If you really want to make a difference in this world - start with these children."

*Bill Pickle*  
Florence Volunteer GAL



"The most rewarding thing to me is knowing that I have the ability to serve the children in my life. They know they are not alone."

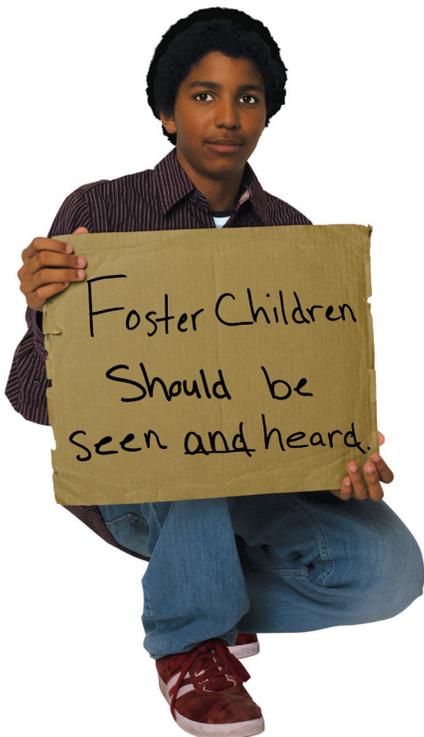
*Holly A. Cooper*  
York Volunteer GAL



"The bottom line is that this program is all about making a difference in the life of a child and breaking the cycle of abuse."

*Marilyn Milson*  
Oconee Volunteer GAL

**VOLUNTEER!**  
STAND UP FOR AN  
**ABUSED CHILD!**<sup>®</sup>



### What is a Volunteer Guardian ad Litem (GAL) ?

A GAL is a trained volunteer who advocates for abused children to find safe, permanent, loving homes where they can grow and thrive.

### How do GAL volunteers advocate for abused and neglected children?

GAL volunteers find out what the children want. They learn about their families, their school progress, and their special needs. When GAL volunteers appear in Court on behalf of a child, they will make recommendations to the judge that are child focused, and in the child's best interest for a safe and nurturing home.

### Who can become a Volunteer Guardian ad Litem (GAL)?

Anyone who has a desire to help abused children, time to spend each month visiting the child, and the commitment to appear in Court at hearings and advocate on the child's behalf. You must be 21 years of age or older, and be able to pass background and reference checks. GAL volunteers of all ages, races, and backgrounds are welcome.

### How do I become a GAL volunteer?

Prospective volunteers can obtain an application by calling 1-800-277-0113, or go to [www.scgala.org](http://www.scgala.org). Volunteers then complete a free, 30 hour training, that teaches the skills needed to be a powerful and effective advocate.

### What would I be doing as a GAL volunteer?

The most important thing is to visit the child. It is our core belief that to be an effective advocate, you must know the child. That knowledge will help you make recommendations to the Family Court and other agencies about what is in a child's best interest.

### Can I volunteer if I work full time?

You must have a somewhat flexible schedule to accommodate a few court appearances per year. You will have prior notice of the times. Other activities like visiting with children can usually be scheduled at your convenience.



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Guardian ad Litem



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