

February 21, 2023 – GRACE Court with Judge Zayas

1. The Guardian ad Litem Office and Guardian ad Litem volunteers are so helpful to all the judges. You are on the ground, you are the eyes and ears, and you get the interactions between the children/caregivers and family members
2. GRACE court is a specialty problem-solving court for victims of human trafficking (both sexual exploitation and labor or both). It is a trauma-informed court that deals with the needs of children who have been victimized. There are special homes, trained therapists, and targeted case managers.
3. In Court, the words **human trafficking** are never used. They don't get into the "nitty gritty details." The reason for this is they don't want to cause shame or have the victims relive negative experiences.
4. Attached is a referral sheet for GRACE court. Please review the various items in the checklist. These are extremely good indications that a child is involved in human trafficking or at risk for becoming a victim.
5. There is no such thing as a child prostitute.
6. Many children are picked up for something other than human trafficking (i.e., battery, drugs, etc). When the situation "doesn't add up," oftentimes the children are identified as victims.
7. Look at the social media activity of your teens -- What is their messaging? Who are their friends? Do they have material/costly things that a child in the Dependency System wouldn't be able to afford?
8. Some advice for Guardians ad Litem for teens/GRACE court victims:
 1. They are there because they have been 2x victimized -- once as a child (throughout their lives) and again if they have been recruited.
 2. Kids in foster care are vulnerable, and groomers know this.
 3. They don't trust anybody.
 4. They run away -- it is easier to run away than to face their traumas/problems.
 5. They run, self-medicate, and seek refuge w/traffickers.
 6. You need to have PATIENCE -- it's not about you!!!
 7. FIU offers a trauma-resiliency course which is highly recommended
 8. You can't "buy" them -- no gifts, \$, etc.
 9. LISTEN!!!
 10. Informed judges make informed decisions
 11. Celebrate the little things.
 12. Report something positive before you talk about what needs to change.
9. GRACE court meets Mondays and Wednesdays in the morning. Guardians ad Litem are invited to observe.
10. CHANCE foster homes are specifically trained in trauma and sexual exploitation.
 1. Behavior contracts must be signed.
 2. Placement contract (e.g., no phones or electronics).
 3. Children must agree to go into a CHANCE home
 4. There are not enough CHANCE homes.
11. In GRACE court, there are specialized therapists and services.
 1. During Court hearings there is always a rep from Citrus and a mental health professional present.
 2. There are specialized therapists and services.
12. The children are constantly reminded NOTHING IS THEIR FAULT!
13. Cases are staffed on Tuesdays.

14. National Hotline information:

1. By phone: 1-888-373-7888
2. By email: help@humantraffickinghotline.org
3. By text: text HELP to 233733 (BEFREE)
4. Online chat: www.humantraffickinghotline.org

15. Local State Attorney information:

1. [Home page \(miamisao.com\)](http://humantrafficking.miamisao.com) (humantrafficking.miamisao.com)
305-FIX-STOP (305-349-7867)