

Dear Heather,

I hope this message finds you healthy and in good spirits. It is hard to believe that we are rapidly approaching the end of summer and the beginning of a new school year. At SafeSpot, we have had a productive and impactful summer. In May, we hosted a delegation of law enforcement officers, child welfare agents, and government officials visiting from Mongolia to learn about the role of Children's Advocacy Centers in improving child safety. We kicked off June with the 2023 Passion for Fashion Show & Fundraiser, which exceeded everyone's expectations by raising \$215,000 for the children and families we serve. In July, our entire multidisciplinary team (MDT) participated in a site visit with the National Children's Alliance, the accrediting body for Children's Advocacy Centers across the Country, resulting in SafeSpot being recommended for full re-accreditation.



Looking ahead, we anticipate the increasing demand for forensic interviews, family advocacy, and trauma-focused therapy that inevitably comes with the beginning of the school year. At the same time, we look forward to piloting new services for survivors and families, including support groups for both teens and caregivers. And we look forward to the 2023 Champions for Children Golf & Pickleball Tournament (see below for details).

Finally, it is with mixed emotions that we say goodbye to SafeSpot's long-time Executive Director, Michele Thames. Michele will be leaving SafeSpot at the end of August to join the FBI as a Child Forensic Interview Specialist. Michele has made a profound impact at SafeSpot and for children in the Fairfax community. We wish her the best of luck with this exciting new chapter in her career!

With Appreciation,

**H. L. O'Malley**

Heather Lyn O'Malley  
CEO, SafeSpot Children's Advocacy Center of Fairfax County

## SafeSpot Says Goodbye To Michele Thames

Michele Thames joined SafeSpot at a pivotal time in the agency's early growth, leading the development and expansion of our multidisciplinary team, the establishment of our mental health and family advocacy programs, and the addition of facility dog program. The contributions she has made to SafeSpot and the Fairfax community will be felt for years and generations to come.

Michele's last day with SafeSpot will be August 23rd. We wish her the best of luck in her new role as a Child Forensic Interview Specialist with the FBI, where she will continue advocating for the safety and well-being of children.



## 2023 Champions for Children Golf Tournament



Now in its seventh year, SafeSpot's annual **Champions for Children Eagles n' Aces Golf Tournament** will return to Westwood Country Club on Monday, October 16th. As in past years, golfers will enjoy 18 holes and contests on the Gene Bates' designed premiere championship golf course, followed by cocktails and a silent auction, then culminating in a dinner program and exciting live auction.

***New this year, a round-robin Pickleball Tournament!*** Registration is just \$225 for individuals, \$450 for teams of two. Registration includes cocktails, raffles, and complimentary tickets for dinner.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR GOLF, PICKLEBALL, OR DINNER](#)

## SafeSpot Receives 4-Star Charity Navigator Rating



Charity Navigator, the world's largest and most trusted nonprofit evaluator, has awarded SafeSpot its' highest, four-star rating, recognizing us as an effective, well-managed nonprofit organization making a meaningful difference in the community. This prestigious rating is yet another signal to the philanthropic community that SafeSpot is a strong, sustainable organization where charitable contributions are maximized for the greatest possible impact.

SafeSpot has also been recognized with a Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid (formerly Guidestar), and was selected as a charity of choice by Spur Local (formerly the Catalogue for Philanthropy).

## Denise Balzano Earns 2023 Volunteer Leadership Award

We are proud to share that SafeSpot Founder and Board member, Denise Balzano, was selected by the National Children's Alliance as their 2023 Volunteer Leader of the Year!

The award, presented in June at the National Children's Alliance Annual Leadership Conference, recognizes an individual volunteer our group that has demonstrated perseverance and dedication to a local Children's Advocacy Center.



## 2023 Passion for Fashion Breaks Records!

This year's Fashion Show returned to the Tyson's Corner Bloomingdale's, where fun, fashion, and food took center stage. Also taking center stage were the children and families served by SafeSpot. Thanks to our sponsors and donors, we raised \$215,000 for our programs and services, ensuring children impacted by abuse have a safe place to be heard, believed, and supported.

Our most sincere thanks to Mistress of Ceremonies, News4



Melissa Mollet, Auctioneer Phil Simonides, Co-Chair's Kathy Dominguez and Jennings Johnston, our entire volunteer committee, models, and our generous sponsors and donors.

To see more pictures of the fun and fashion, visit our [website](#).

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*The mission of SafeSpot Children's Advocacy Center is to provide a safe environment and support services for child abuse victims and their families as they navigate the investigation and aftermath of abuse.*

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