BACKGROUNDER

It started as a joke

Hopping 4 A Cure began with a joke. In October 2010, two juniors at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., saw a Facebook event about "suiting up" like Barney Stinson from How I Met Your Mother. They put on suits, told friends they were dressing for success, and declared themselves the school's first varsity hopscotchers.

The joke had a reason behind it. Co-founder David Nassau's father has lived with Multiple Sclerosis since David was in elementary school. David and his friend Gary Wexler wrote their own competitive hopscotch rules, and with David's mother, Marla Jaffe, they turned them into the first Hopping 4 A Cure Hopscotch Tournament on Jan. 21, 2011.

The tournament grew into the Recess Olympics, a field day-style fundraiser where players of all ages compete in classic playground games. Before the pandemic paused in-person events in 2020, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit had grown to more than 10 chapters in communities and on college campuses nationwide.

On Nov. 15, 2026, Hopping 4 A Cure returns to South Florida with Recess Olympics South Florida at Clive Daniel Home in Boca Raton, splitting proceeds 50/50 with the Arielle Anacker Cancer Foundation, Inc. to fight childhood cancer.

Diane Trivelli founded the Arielle Anacker Cancer Foundation, Inc. in Coconut Creek in 2009 in memory of her daughter, Arielle, who was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a rare bone cancer that most often strikes children and teens, at age 7. Arielle endured three years of treatment before passing away in 2001. The foundation helps needy pediatric cancer families pay their bills, supports Ewing's sarcoma research and supports the four memorial funds set up in Arielle Anacker's name.

Timeline

Oct. 13, 2010	Two Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School juniors, David Nassau and Gary Wexler, put on suits, inspired by the "Suit up!" catchphrase from How I Met Your Mother, and declare themselves their school's first varsity hopscotchers.
Jan. 21, 2011	David, Gary and David's mother, Marla Jaffe, host the first Hopping 4 A Cure Hopscotch Tournament, for Multiple Sclerosis.
2011–2019	Hopping 4 A Cure grows to more than 10 chapters in communities and on college campuses nationwide and awards college scholarships to students affected by MS.
2020	The pandemic pauses in-person events.
Nov. 15, 2026	Recess Olympics South Florida returns to Boca Raton, with proceeds split 50/50 with the Arielle Anacker Cancer Foundation, Inc.

Leadership

David Nassau, Co-founder
David Nassau co-founded Hopping 4 A Cure in 2010 as a junior at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, inspired by his father, who has lived with Multiple Sclerosis since David was in elementary school. He co-wrote the original rules of competitive hopscotch with Gary Wexler and today leads operations, business development and chapter expansion for the organization.

Gary Wexler, Co-founder
Gary Wexler co-founded Hopping 4 A Cure with his friend David Nassau in 2010, when the two Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School juniors suited up as their school's first varsity hopscotchers. Together they wrote the made-up rules that became the Hopscotch Tournament.

Marla Jaffe, President
Marla Jaffe is president of Hopping 4 A Cure and leads its South Florida chapter. She helped her son David and Gary Wexler host the first Hopscotch Tournament on Jan. 21, 2011, and has guided the family-run nonprofit since.

Leya Aronoff, Fractional CMO
Leya Aronoff is the fractional chief marketing officer of Hopping 4 A Cure, leading its social media, email and community outreach as the organization rebuilds its chapter network and brings the Recess Olympics back to South Florida.

Event partner

Diane Trivelli, Founder and president, Arielle Anacker Cancer Foundation, Inc.
Diane Trivelli founded the Arielle Anacker Cancer Foundation, Inc. in Coconut Creek in 2009 in memory of her daughter, Arielle, who was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma at age 7 and passed away in 2001 after three years of treatment. The foundation helps needy pediatric cancer families pay their bills and supports Ewing's sarcoma research. She is available for interviews before and on Nov. 15.

Hop in the hope of a cure.