



THE HERITAGE OF HANNAH NEIL

The Heritage of Hannah Neil: The Journey Continues

Six years ago, Eastway Behavioral Healthcare embarked on a journey. As one of the state's most comprehensive not-for-profit organizations helping Ohio residents struggling with mental illness, they knew all too well the critical need for services aimed at youth and their families. Upon purchasing, and then extensively renovating, a 36,000 square-foot building on 22 acres in Franklin County, Eastway opened The Heritage of Hannah Neil.

"It is an honor to uphold the heritage of Hannah Neil and provide a strong system of care for children and their families in Franklin County," Eastway President and CEO John Strahm remarked at the 2016 groundbreaking.

"Our goal is to provide a safe, home-like environment for those receiving care through The Heritage of Hannah Neil program. We are with them every step of the way as they work through challenges and overcome the barriers that limit success at school and in their communities."



Eastway has stood steadfast in working toward achieving that goal. Since opening in 2016, over 100 children and their families have turned to Hannah Neil for day treatment, outpatient care, in-home counseling, and educational services. At Hannah Neil, children come first, and are treated with respect, compassion, and dignity, while their families are offered ongoing, extensive support. The organization's culture and evidence-based programming provides children the best treatments possible.

Assembling a caring and experienced staff is necessary to doing that. At Hannah Neil, team members receive top-quality training in trauma-informed care, including nationally recognized models such as Collaborative Problem Solving and Safe Crisis Management. The result is a team that offers both therapeutic and psychiatric care designed to help children who have experienced trauma overcome it.

“Children in our programs are learning new skills and emotional regulation that will help them succeed in any setting,” said Lesley Puett, Hannah Neil’s Executive Director. “At The Heritage of Hannah Neil, we are focused on providing a caring and safe environment so that our kids can heal, grow and reach their full potentials.”



That need has only intensified during the COVID pandemic. While most schools turned to remote learning, Hannah Neil recognized that virtual learning would be a real struggle for their students. Therefore, maintaining services throughout the pandemic was essential. We partnered with local schools to be a haven for students, picking up kids at their homes and bringing them to Hannah Neil to log on and learn.

“Many of our kids don’t have accessible Wi-Fi at home or parents who could monitor their remote learning,” Puett explained. “So, we offered outreach classrooms on site. We logged them on to our Wi-Fi daily and supervised as they moved through their virtual day. The result was that our students didn’t fall too far behind.”

As children have returned to their classrooms, Hannah Neil continues to partner with Westwood Academy to offer integrated mental health and educational programming. Children in this therapeutic setting receive the educational components they need while giving them space to learn the skills necessary to return to their home school.

In 2018, Hannah Neil added Prevention Services to its offerings. Thanks to a collaboration between Franklin County ADAMH and the YWCA Family Center, the Heritage of Hannah Neil is providing prevention services to the homeless population living in the shelter.

Now, Eastway and Hannah Neil are adding another important component to its continuum of care, a residential program for boys and girls ages 5 to 11. Tremendous care has been taken to create a comfortable, colorful, creative, one-of-a-kind environment that is safe, kid-friendly and designed to nurture a strong sense of belonging and security at The Heritage of Hannah Neil's 40-bed residence.



“We’ve recruited a dedicated and committed team that has received exceptional training,” said Residential Director Kris Denny. “Collectively, we have a proven record of delivering positive outcomes in residential settings, and that is what we will do at Hannah Neil.”



Denny is joined by Clinical Director Dr. Maria Houston, Psy. D. Her work at all levels of care uniquely qualifies her to lead the clinical team. In addition, all residential staff have been vaccinated and The Heritage of Hannah Neil is a Qualified Residential Treatment Program meeting all the state requirements of a fully compliant facility.

“The need for residential treatment has never been greater,” added Strahm. “Eastway is pleased to offer the full continuum of care, so whatever challenges children are facing, The Heritage of Hannah Neil can be there for them and their families.”

More Information?

For residential services, contact our Admissions and Discharge Specialist, Robbin Kendall, at robbin.kendall@eastway.org

For all other services, contact Executive Director, Lesley Puett, at lpuett@eastway.org