

BARIUM SPRINGS &
GRANDFATHER HOME
HAVE JOINED FORCES
UNDER A NEW NAME



children's hope

— ALLIANCE —

the journey

Fall/Winter 2016

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR

Katherine's life changed drastically in a matter of minutes

KYLAN'S ROUGH START

Kylan finds safety & security with a loving foster family

CALLING A COMMUNITY

First In Families Program helps family in need

BRUSHING AWAY THE HURT

read how a simple daily routine turns traumatic for a child in our care





PO Box 1, Barium Springs, NC 28010
www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org
1-800-320-4157

The Journey, 2015
Volume 2, Number 2

Our mission is to provide a safe, healing journey for hurting children and families - creating hope now and in the future.

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every journey is different...

we're committed to helping children and families along the way

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2016 is a big year for Children's Hope Alliance. We're celebrating the 125th anniversary of Barium Springs – one of the organizations that founded Children's Hope Alliance.

The world was a very different place when Barium Springs opened its doors in 1891. There were no televisions or computers, and the radio wouldn't even be invented for a few more years. Back then, the hottest new tech devices were telephones and phonographs. Now, we have combined many devices into one device, a smart phone, that will fit in your pocket. We're much more connected now, and are able to be a lot more productive. The last 125 years have also seen a lot of changes for us at Children's Hope Alliance.

When Barium Springs opened its doors, the average adult only lived to be around 50 years old. As you can imagine, that led to the need for places like Barium Springs to take care of orphans who didn't have both parents to take care of them. Thanks to advancements in modern medicine, we live a lot longer now, so the need for a traditional "orphanage" has all but disappeared. What has replaced it though, is the need to help children facing traumatic pasts, mental health issues, and families facing economic hardships. We've adapted our programs and services to meet the needs of children and families as they've changed, and I'm proud of how we've accomplished that.

With around 30 different programs designed to help children and families, Children's Hope Alliance offers the state's most robust array of services for a child welfare agency. In order to keep helping children in the most effective ways, we know we have to be forward-thinking and meet children right where they are. Join us in making futures brighter and communities stronger. Together, we can transform lives.

Peace,

John Koppelmeyer, President & CEO



Child's name and photo have been changed for her protection, but her story is very real.

MEET KAT,
age 17

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR

Katherine's life changed drastically in a matter of minutes

by :: adam hicks

Katherine remembers the knocks at the door. They sounded both heavy and hollow. Earlier that afternoon, her dad had gone to run a few errands, but he should have been back an hour-and-a-half ago. Now, the knocks. Katherine heard the police cruiser pull onto her gravel driveway. She watched as a police officer and the pastor at her church walked onto the front porch. She knew something terrible had happened before she ever heard the knocks.

Katherine and her father were two peas in a pod. It had always just been the two of them. Katherine's mother had been out of the picture since she was three years old. She left the home while struggling with mental illness and substance abuse. Katherine's father was

more than just her dad; he filled the role of mother and many times, best friend.

Now, her pastor was telling her that he wasn't coming home after being involved in a head-on collision with a drunk driver. At the delicate age of 14, Katherine was suddenly faced with the reality of life without either of her parents.

A DOWNWARD SPIRAL

Her paternal grandfather was the closest family member Katherine had left. He took guardianship over her, and brought her into his home, but he never could fill the void in her heart left by her father's passing. Katherine kept trying to find something to make her feel special, the way her father used to make her feel. She tried boys, alcohol, marijuana, and even some

of her grandfather's prescription pain medicine, but nothing helped. In fact, everything seemed to make her think about her mother and how she turned her back on her when she was just a toddler. As the months and years progressed, Katherine's relationship with her grandfather deteriorated and she slipped deeper into depression.

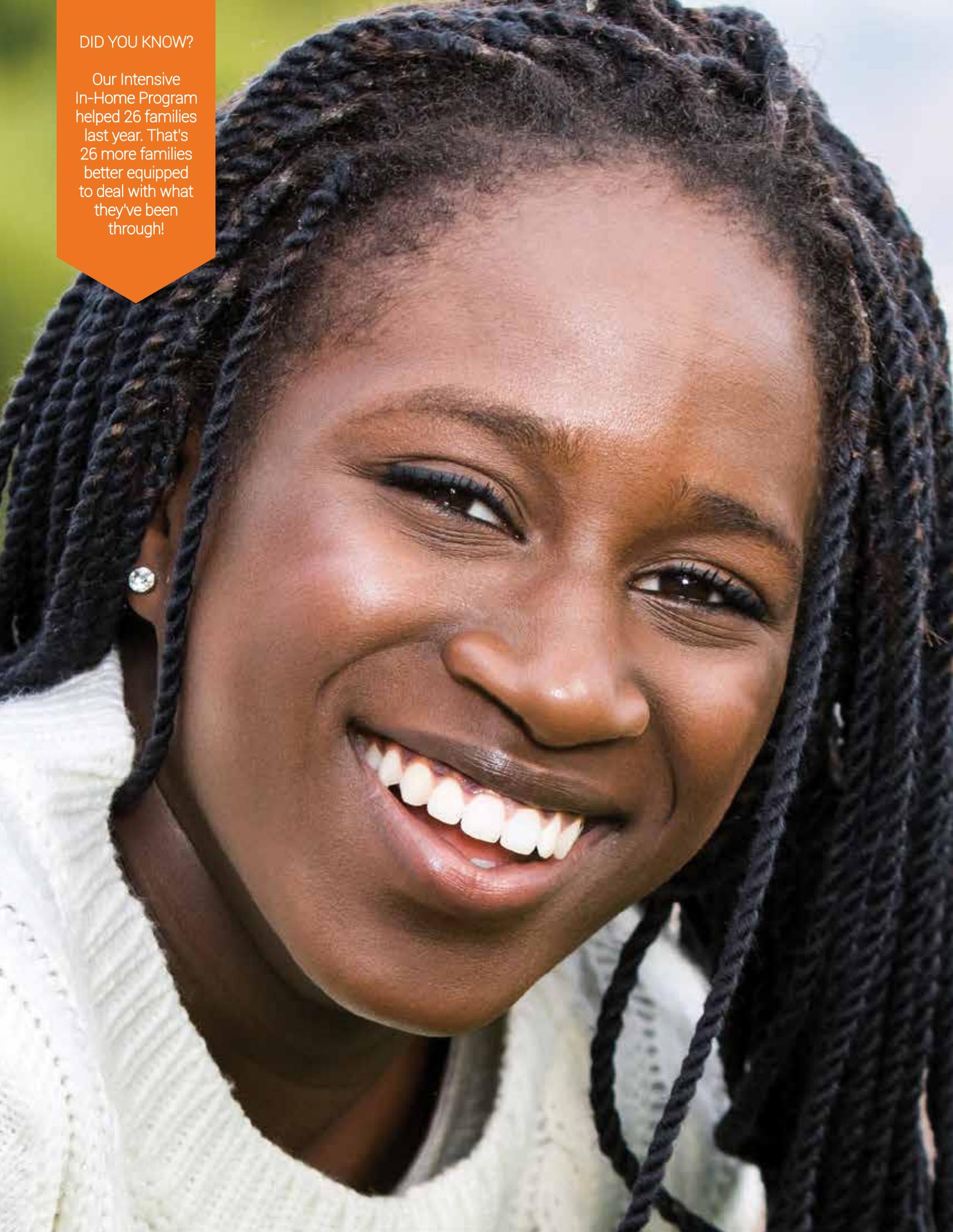
A CRY FOR HELP

The first time Katherine cut herself, she was 16. There were so many things in Katherine's life that she couldn't control – like her father's death and her mother's abandonment - but with the razor blade in her hand, she had the power. She ran the blade horizontally across the inside of her forearm. The first time, it just scraped along the surface of her skin. The second, she dug a little deeper, until tiny droplets of blood formed along the wound. The third time was very deep, and it surprised Katherine how much it hurt.

:: story continued on page 5 ::

DID YOU KNOW?

Our Intensive In-Home Program helped 26 families last year. That's 26 more families better equipped to deal with what they've been through!



:: continued from page 3 ::

She fumbled through her dresser for a sock to press against her arm to stop the bleeding. While the cut hurt, strange as it may sound, Katherine felt empowered.

Katherine didn't cut every day, or every week, just when the need to control something overwhelmed her. She was good at hiding it, though. She would always wear long sleeves, even in the summer. One night, Katherine's cutting went too deep, and she couldn't get the bleeding to stop. Her grandfather went in her room to tell her good-night and he was appalled to see several socks soaked in blood. He took her to the emergency room. There, the doctors put three stitches in her arm and then referred her to see a psychologist. After speaking with the psychologist, Katherine was then referred to Children's Hope Alliance.

CLIMBING OUT OF DISPAIR

Katherine enrolled in Children's Hope Alliance's Intensive In-Home service, which helps children and families learn new and effective ways of dealing with trauma. Through the program, Children's Hope Alliance sends therapists to meet with children and families in their homes, where they may feel more comfortable.

Within a few weeks, Katherine stopped cutting herself, and her depression and anxiety decreased. Because the Intensive In Home program focuses on the whole family, Katherine's grandfather learned how to better communicate with his granddaughter, and their relationship improved.

After four months, Katherine transitioned into Children's Hope

Alliance's Outpatient Therapy program, meaning Katherine's grandfather began bringing her to one of the organization's counseling centers for regular appointments. Throughout her counseling sessions, Katherine began to dig below her surface struggles with substance abuse and relationship issues down to the root abandonment issues she was facing from her mother leaving, as well as the grief and confusion caused by her father's death. It hasn't been an easy process, but having professionals help Katherine navigate and process the horrible events in her past has made it manageable.

TIME TO SHINE

Katherine is in her senior year of high school, and because of the support of her grandfather and her therapists at Children's Hope Alliance, she is doing exceptionally well. Her grades are up, she's the treasurer of her high school's Spanish Club and she even decided to try running cross country – which she finds very therapeutic. Katherine has several college applications out, and is expected to be accepted by a few of them. She wants to pursue a career in art therapy, so she can help children in the way the staff at Children's Hope Alliance helped her.

The next time Katherine hears a knock, it will be opportunity; a future where she will have the chance to really shine and use her gifts and passion to make the world a brighter place.

There are many ways to help programs like Intensive In-Home at Children's Hope Alliance. To learn more, call 1-800-320-4157 or visit www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org. Find us, like us and follow us on social media through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT :: Intensive In-Home Services

At Children's Hope Alliance we want to make sure the children in our care have a safe and protective family environment. One way we can help families where children are at risk of, or currently experiencing, an out-of-home placement is to offer services that will help not only the child, but the family learn new and effective ways of dealing with trauma.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS ::

// services are primarily delivered to families in their home & community settings by our team of licensed therapists and qualified professionals trained in the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Model; average length of treatment is 4 months

// specific services include:

- crisis-resolution
- establishing home stability with an emphasis on keeping the family intact
- coping and social skills development including self-help and living skills for the child and parenting skills to help family members cope with the child's disorders
- providing support through monitoring effectiveness of interventions and progress and making connections to needed community resources for food, utilities, housing, clothing and other needs

// eligibility:

- youth and/or family issues are unmanageable in school based or behavioral program settings
- youth is at risk, or currently in an out-of-home placement and reunification is imminent
- youth is eligible for Medicaid or NC Health Choice

For more information about this program, please call 1-800-395-2591 or visit www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org.

Child's name and photo have been changed for his protection, but his story is very real.

MEET KYLAN,
age 2



KYLAN'S ROUGH START

for the first time in his short life, Kylan has found safety & security in a stable home with a loving foster family

by :: adam hicks

Just a few minutes after Kylan was born, he began crying uncontrollably. Most newborns cry because they want to nurse, but little Kylan didn't want milk. Kylan's first experience in life was the pain and hunger of the physical withdrawal from drugs, heroin to be exact.

Kylan's mother lived in a small, run-down apartment with seven friends, and all of them struggled with substance abuse. She would do anything to get high and would

go on drug binges with her friends for days at a time. During one of her binges, she became pregnant with Kylan, but she was unsure who the father of her child was.

Although Kylan's mother tried to scale her substance use back, she still used recreationally from time-to-time throughout her pregnancy. It was enough to have an impact on Kylan's development in the womb. Kylan was born a month-and-a-half early, and needed to

stay in the hospital for three weeks after his birth so his body could successfully rehabilitate from his mother's heroin abuse.

FACING HOMELESSNESS

After being discharged, Kylan's mother knew she couldn't go back to the apartment and expose her newborn to the dangers of her friends' abusive behaviors, but she didn't have anywhere else to go. She would park her car at different

truck stops around the county and sleep there with Kylan. When her brother heard about her living situation, he invited Kylan and his mother to stay with him and his family, with one stipulation – no more heroin.

Kylan's mother obliged and stopped using for a few months, but heroin's grip on her life was too strong for her to completely quit alone. She gave in to temptation and when she was visibly inebriated at home, her brother called the Department of Social Services (DSS) to intervene.

A GLIMMER OF HOPE

DSS came to the home and took custody of Kylan and referred his mother to seek substance abuse counseling. The social worker contacted Children's Hope Alliance for an emergency placement for five-month-old Kylan. He was placed with Steve and Trish Killian, who had completed their foster care license with Children's Hope Alliance a few months before.

"When I first saw little Kylan, my heart just melted," said Trish. "I knew he was meant to be with us." While the Killians were thrilled to have Kylan in their home, the infant was still dealing with repercussions from his mother's heroin abuse. "Kylan was just very 'jittery,'" explained Steve. "He also spit up a lot more than most healthy babies do, and he was very, very fussy." Despite the additional challenges Kylan's condition brought, the Killian's loved him unconditionally.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

With the nurturing help of his new foster family, and the close eye of a pediatrician, Kylan's jitters and upset stomach began to ease as the months went by. Kylan is now

Take a tour and see our mission at work!
Learn how we're building stronger communities by giving hope to children and families in need.
Call 1-800-320-4157 for more information or visit www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org.

two-and-a-half years old and is one of the most loving little boys you'll meet. At his recent two-year checkup, Kylan's pediatrician gave the Killians some great news – Kylan is completely healthy and is developing at the same pace as other toddlers.

Kylan has fit perfectly with the Killian family. "It just feels like he is supposed to be here," said Trish. "We have some older nieces and nephews who love to come over and play with Kylan. And he and our cat, Snowball, have really become the best of friends, too. I love to see them cuddle up together when we read books at night."

While Kylan's mother has continued to struggle with her substance abuse since she lost custody of Kylan, she has recently enrolled in the substance abuse program at Children's Hope Alliance's counseling center. "I understand my behavior was destructive and not at all healthy for my son," she said. "I deeply regret all the pain and danger I put him through. I'm working to get my life together now. One day, I'd like to be a part of Kylan's life again. Before I can safely do that, though, I have to work on myself. I know that now, and I finally realize that I need help in getting over my struggles with substance abuse."

Kylan's mother still has a long road to recovery ahead, but she's on the right track. She will have to prove to the Department of Social Services if and when she is ready

to be a part of Kylan's life again. In the meantime, the Killians are supportive of her. "We're here for Kylan," said Trish.

"We love him with all our heart, and we want what's best for him. Whether that means he's with us another year or a lifetime. We'd love to adopt him someday, if that becomes an option. But, we're prepared if his birth mother gets her life together and is stable enough to raise him. If that is what's best for Kylan, we'll be okay with that, too."

- Kylan's foster mom

Through the support of the Killian family and Children's Hope Alliance, Kylan has a bright future, because he will grow up with a strong family support system. Children's Hope Alliance is looking for people like you to open your heart and your home to a child in need. We have many children needing foster homes but not enough homes for them to thrive.

For more information about how you can impact the life of a child, call 1-800-320-4157 or visit www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org.

CALLING A COMMUNITY

First In Families Program helps a family in need

by :: april miller

We've all heard the saying it takes a village to raise a child, and that highlights the pivotal role that community plays in all of our lives. We'd all like to hope that rough times and devastating accidents won't happen to our family, but the honest truth is that everyone needs help at some point in their lives. When fires, floods, and other catastrophes wreak havoc on our world, communities rise up to help those in need.

FIRST IN FAMILIES

Housed within the Children's Hope Alliance array of services is a special program that illustrates the importance of community. High Country First in Families (HCFIF) is housed in our Wilkesboro office and is part of the larger organization, North Carolina First in Families. The mission of First in Families is to help people with disabilities and their families to believe in their dreams, achieve their goals and give back to others. They do this by offering support to families and individuals according to their self-defined needs. That support varies from family to family. Often the support is for specialized equipment, therapy devices or even help making car payments because a care giver has missed so much work caring for a loved one in the hospital; areas where insurance and Medicaid fall short. Support can also be the connect-

ing of an individual to vocational, social, and educational opportunities in the community; whatever it takes - for people to live and participate fully in their community.

COMMUNITY FOCUS

That emphasis on community is one aspect that sets First in Families apart. While the state funded program can give financial assistance to qualified applicants, there is always a focus on connecting the family with resources and support from other community partners as well. "We are blessed that within our area there are several local businesses, churches and other organizations that are as dedicated to serving the community as we are." Says Penny Souther, Chapter Director of High Country First in Families. "We always want to make an effort to connect our customer leaders to other partners within our community as well."

While each case is different, the focus is always the same ... helping families with whatever they need. For one single mother of four that meant going above, beyond and way outside of the office.

This young mother contacted High Country First in Families requesting help in getting a double stroller. As a single mother of four children, the double stroller would

Children's Hope Alliance operates two chapters of North Carolina's First In Families Program:

- High Country First In Families

- Smoky Mountain First In Families



allow her to better care for and transport her young children, especially her two-year-old daughter who suffered from mobility issues stemming from cerebral palsy. When High Country First in Families contacted the mother, they learned she had several other immediate needs as well. The home had no air conditioning, which was unbearable for the family. There was also no wheel chair access into the house, only steps, which was nearly impossible for the youngest child to navigate with her special needs.

HELPING HANDS

"We knew we couldn't personally help with all of those needs by ourselves," says Souther "but we also knew of several local agencies who could help out in different ways." The organization was able



to purchase the family a double stroller for mom to use for her younger children as well as developmental toys to help the children who had delays. "We knew the family needed air conditioning for the home, so we referred them to Hope Ministries, another agency here in Wilkes County that helps families in need. Hope Ministries bought the family the air conditioner for their home. Also, we knew a ramp was most definitely needed for the safety of the children. We contacted Carolina Cross Connections, a local missionary group who assists with home modifications for families in need. They went out to the home and built the family a ramp. Since, the mom had to get her children to numerous therapy and doctor visits we also referred her to Parent 2 Parent Network, a local group

who assists families with developmental disabilities. They were able to provide the family with a gas card to assist with the cost of transportation. It's so encouraging to be a part of connecting people who have a need, with other people willing to help. That's what being part of a community is all about."

We couldn't do what we do without the support of our local communities! Because of people like you, children and families are finding hope, lives are being transformed, and futures are brighter. If you would like more information on partnering with our High Country First in Families Program through volunteering or community involvement, call 1-800-320-4157 or visit us on the web at www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org.



CHIDLIFE PODCAST :: stay informed about what's going on at Children's Hope Alliance and in child welfare across North Carolina

As one of the leaders in child welfare in North Carolina, Children's Hope Alliance is trying to connect to the community on a deeper level by launching its own official podcast called ChildLife.

The podcast features interviews with staff and stakeholders within the Children's Hope Alliance family, as well as professionals in the child welfare field across the state.

ChildLife highlights topics like the need for foster parents in North Carolina, the importance of mental health and why churches have been an integral part of our success. Each episode is different and strives to keep all of our staff and stakeholders informed of the impact we are making all over the state.

Stay informed about the ever-changing landscape of child welfare in North Carolina by listening to the ChildLife podcast. You can subscribe for free on iTunes or listen on our website at www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org.



Child's name and photo have been changed for her protection, but her story is very real.

MEET CHLOE,
age 15

BRUSHING AWAY THE HURT

simple daily routine turns traumatic

by :: adam hicks

Chloe's hair was always a mess. She had been in one of the group homes at Children's Hope Alliance for nearly four months, and she refused to brush her hair. Something that is a part of a daily routine for many folks would send Chloe into traumatic flash backs of sexual and physical abuse.

When she was seven years old, her parents divorced. After a messy custody battle, Chloe's mother was awarded full custody of Chloe. That's when Chloe's mom started a tradition of brushing Chloe's hair before tucking her in for the night.

Chloe's mother remarried when Chloe was 12 years old. At first, her new stepfather fit in the family very well, and quickly won her approval.

WORST NIGHTMARE

Around the couple's first anniversary, things began to turn sour. Chloe's stepfather was laid off work, and her mother picked up an extra shift at work to help make ends meet. One evening while Chloe's mother was working, Chloe's stepfather made her watch pornographic videos with him. The next weekend, while Chloe's mother was working late, he forced

13-year-old Chloe to reenact scenes from the explicit video they watched a few days before. A few days later, while Chloe's mother was at work, her stepfather did the same thing. It seemed that every time Chloe was left alone with her stepfather, he would look for opportunities to sexually abuse her. He told Chloe to keep it a secret, and said he would kill her if she said anything to anyone.

One afternoon, Chloe's mother got home early from work and walked in on her husband sexually assaulting Chloe. Much to Chloe's surprise, her mother calmly walked

in another room and acted like she didn't see anything at all. Chloe's mother didn't speak the rest of the day until it was time for Chloe to go to bed. Chloe's mother started brushing her hair just like she had done each night for the past six years, but each time she began a stroke, she would smack the wooden back of the brush and then dig the hard, plastic bristles deep into Chloe's scalp. As her mother began to drag the bristles through Chloe's hair, she would yank on her hair until clumps would pull out into her hands. Chloe tightened up with each stroke and began sobbing. Partly because her mother was hurting her with the brush, but mostly because at that moment, she realized her mother blamed Chloe for her stepfather's actions.

CHOOSING SIDES

"It was like she had to choose his side or mine," explained Chloe, "And it was clear that she chose his. Most days when mom was at work, my step dad would molest me, and every night before bed, my mom would beat me with my hair brush. It was horrible." One day at school, Chloe's P.E. teacher noticed a few bald spots on her head, and asked what was going on at home. After Chloe told her teacher what was going on, the teacher made a report to the Department of Social Services, who removed Chloe from the home and placed her with Children's Hope Alliance.

OVERCOMING

After staying in our care for several months, Chloe made a special connection with one of our staff

members named Stacy. "I'll never forget the night she asked me to brush her hair," said Stacy. "For her, that was the turning point in her recovery. Brushing her hair went from a 'trigger' back to being a normal daily routine."

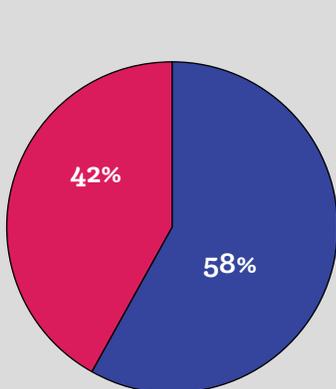
Chloe has been in one of our group homes for nearly eight months, and is close to being able to transition into a foster home. Counseling and therapy have helped Chloe tremendously and she's thankful for the help she's received.

For more information about how you can get involved or impact a child's life, visit our website at www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org or call 1-800-320-4157. Find us, like us and follow us on social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn.

an overview of WHO WE SERVED IN 2015

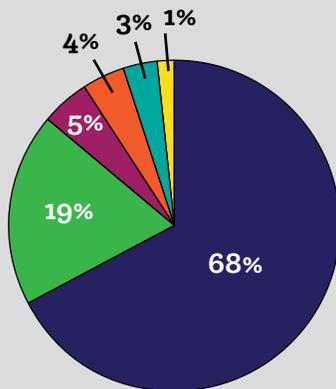
View the full 2015 report online at www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org under the 'About Us' tab.

In 2015, Children's Hope Alliance cared for 3,651 children, families and individuals from 61 North Carolina counties. As evidenced in the graphics below, those served came from a variety of backgrounds, ages and genders. We hope this information gives you a clear picture of the varied populations that we serve.



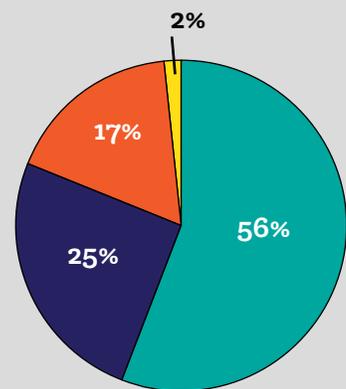
GENDER

- Male
- Female



ETHNICITY

- Caucasian
- African American
- Multi-Racial
- Hispanic
- Other/Unreported*
- Native American



AGES

- 0-9
- 10-19
- 20 & Over
- Unreported*

*Unreported numbers are from services that are provided anonymously.

**BARIUM SPRINGS &
GRANDFATHER HOME**

HAVE JOINED FORCES
UNDER A NEW NAME



Post Office Box 1
Barium Springs, NC 28010

*Check out our new
name and logo!*



www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org



If you're looking for a sign, this is it.
BECOME A FOSTER PARENT!

There are many children throughout our state who face growing up without the love and support of a stable family. These children need foster parents who are willing to share their homes, hearts and lives with them. Team up with Children's Hope Alliance to transform lives!

For more information about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, please call 1-844-791-3117 or visit our website at www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org.