

Keeping Up With Advocates

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

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Brett's journey from homelessness to hope

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Being the someone who does
something

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Dear Advocates Friends & Champions,

I am thankful to be a part of our caring community. Your response to our Back-to-School appeal was nothing short of **amazing!** In total, we received more than 50 book bags and charitable donations totaling \$10,000. Thank you for being a blessing to our children!

This fall, we look forward to our major fundraising event, Graze and Raise. Thanks to the commitment of our event planning committee and our Celebrity Team volunteers, the event will be the culmination of nearly two months of many small group fundraising activities. Thank you for your commitment to Advocates for Children. We could not do this work without you!

With gratitude,
Rachel Castillo
President/CEO

Rising to the Occasion

Brett's journey from homelessness to hope

The RISE Independent Youth Housing Program assists young people ages 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness obtain and maintain housing, become self-sufficient, and grow into independent and successful adults. One of our clients, Brett*, took that mission to heart and excelled in the program. This is his story.

23 year old Bret joined RISE in Spring of 2021. He had been sleeping in his car for months and barely scraping by. However, within the first 2 weeks of the program, Brett signed his first ever lease.

Within the first 2 months, Brett completed the financial literacy and workforce training offered by his case managers. Within his first 4 months, Brett had been so successful at work and budgeting his money, he was financially stable enough to pay half his month's

rent. "The independent living skills were quite different for me. They taught me how to budget and to only spend what's necessary."

"I'm not homeless anymore because I asked for help, which was a very hard thing for me to do. But I couldn't do it on my own, so I did ask for help, and I'm very thankful."

From aging out of foster care to a lack of parental support, there are any number of reasons a person may experience homelessness. At Advocates for Children, we are proud to offer the support and care that every person deserves to build a life where they are safe, thriving, and loved.



*Names and photos are changed to protect the privacy of our clients



Being homeless and sleeping in my car just wasn't working anymore... I had to ask for help.



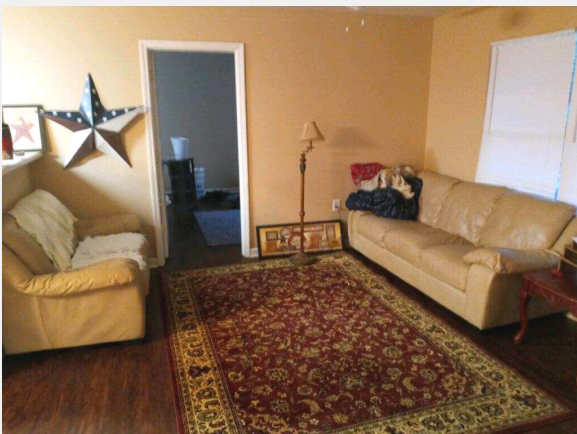
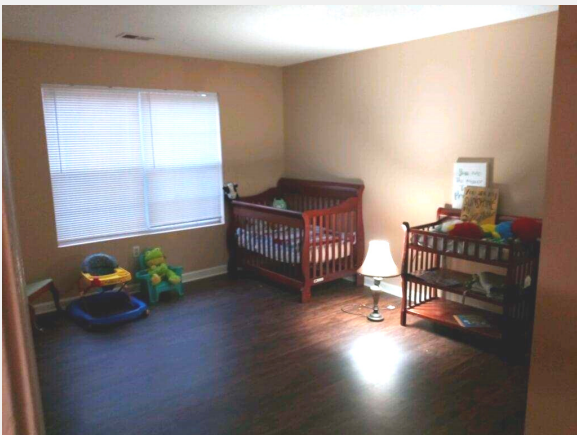
To learn more or make a referral for RISE, visit <https://advochild.org/rise-independent-living-program/>

BLESSed Beyond Belief

Collaboration between nonprofits in Bartow

Our kids need to know at least **one** person cares.

”



Jenny Peterson wants the children and families of Bartow County to know that somebody cares. As the Executive Director of BLESS Coalition, Jenny can do just that by partnering with and facilitating other organizations and nonprofits in the area to make sure the members of her community have the resources they need.

Since the RISE Independent Youth Housing Program launched in November 2019, BLESS Coalition supported the program by providing monthly “goodie bags” filled with basic hygiene items, cleaning supplies, and other household essentials for clients exiting homelessness. But Jenny wanted to do more. She thought about not only what people would need, but also what they would want and be able to use. Through BLESS, Jenny asked the community for higher quality & a more diverse range of products, but while she was at it, she also asked for furniture, home décor, and baby items for our RISE clients as well.

The response was overwhelming! Thanks to Jenny’s help and the generosity of the community, we were able to fully furnish a young mother’s home, including a nursery for her newborn baby. Jenny continues to serve our RISE clients by staying up-to-date on their needs and by putting the call out. “Our community is just so wonderful,” says Jenny. “If I put it out there, people step up. My biggest problem is that so many people say, hey we have this, do you still want it? And I have nowhere to put it!”

Advocates for Children isn’t the only local nonprofit that BLESS works with either—the organization also has partnerships with Red Door Food Pantry, the Bookmobile, and 17 different local churches. “We don’t want to replicate services. Someone says, ‘oh we need mentors,’ I don’t have to create a mentor program. We have fantastic mentoring programs already, how can I bring them in? If we come together, we can do so much more... so one of our main goals is facilitating those needs.”

BLESS coalition was founded in 2018 and has encouraged collaboration between nonprofits in Bartow County for four years. In addition to providing resources to different programs, BLESS also facilitates volunteer opportunities. “Not everyone has the time to serve on a board or committee. BLESS offers ‘bite sized’ volunteer opportunities. People want to help; they just don’t always know how. We provide manageable ways to get involved.”

To learn more about BLESS Coalition or how to get involved, visit www.blesscoalition.org, or get involved with the RISE program directly by going to www.advocchild.org/rise-independent-living-program/



**Advocates
for Children**

P.O. Box 446
Cartersville, GA 30120

Gratitude Attitude

Thank you to our Private Foundations who supported us this year!

Atlanta Braves Foundation • American Family Dreams • Bartow Collaborative • Betty & Davis Fitzgerald Foundation • Cobb EMC Foundation • Cartersville Service League • Enterprise Holdings Foundation • Food Lion Charitable Foundation • GreyStone Power Foundation • Gordon Collaborative • Help for Children • Mary Allen Lindsey Branan Foundation • Northwest Georgia Community Foundation • United Way of Bartow County • United Way of Gordon County • Virgil P. Warren Foundation • Wells Fargo Foundation

Your generosity makes such a difference in the lives of 13,000 children and families each year.

Upcoming Events & Fundraisers

Gourmet Graze & Raise

November 13th @ 5:00 pm

Tidwell Cabin & Grounds

Tickets on sale at advochild.org/fallbenefit



Giving Tuesday 2021

November 30th

Harness generosity this year with Advocates for Children



Very Merry Movies

Presented by Yanmar

featuring *The Polar Express*

December 11th @ Sam Smith Park

Parking opens at 5:00 pm

Admission: \$10 per car

Learn more at

advochild.org/verymerrymovies

For details about all our events and more visit <https://www.advochild.org>