

A **CENTURY** of
DIVINE LOVE
and RESTORATION.

April 2024



OUR MISSION: To restore the identity of children so they can realize their great value and be a blessing to others.

Because of you, ACH can serve children through God's grace, embracing His purpose in submission, and eagerly anticipate the next **100 YEARS OF RESTORATION.**

AmarilloChildrensHome.org

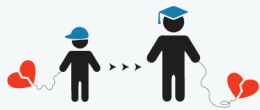
AMARILLO CHILDREN'S HOME began out of a single decisive moment.

In 1923, Dr. R. Thomsen, *minister for today's First Presbyterian Church*, and some friends were meeting for coffee. They saw 3 children crying outside, orphaned and hungry. At this critical point, these men chose to act: **to feed and clothe the little ones and find them proper care.** As a result of that event, Amarillo Children's Home officially opened in March 1924.

OUR MISSION

TO RESTORE THE IDENTITY OF CHILDREN
SO THEY CAN REALIZE THEIR GREAT VALUE AND BE A BLESSING TO OTHERS.

WHO WE SERVE



primarily children removed from their homes by the foster care and judicial systems, ages 5 - 18+



young people from difficult, traumatic, often impoverished situations with a history of abuse and neglect



our specialty is kids who are more challenging to find a home for, such as sibling groups and older teens



the length of stay is based on a child's needs: a few months to many years

HOW WE SERVE

we intentionally seek out each child's needs, gifts, and passions to provide opportunities for growth and a new identity to cling to



we are highly adaptable: quick to respond and swift to implement new methods to best serve each young person who comes to us



our unique Transitional Living Concepts program trains our high schoolers for adulthood and allows them to take gradual steps towards independence within close boundaries



COMING SOON!

WHO WE PLAN TO SERVE

our SIL program is extended foster care for teens who would otherwise 'age out' of the foster care system, ages 18-21

youth 'graduate' from our traditional family style cottage to one with roommates and a life coach; young adults experience independence with a safety net

WITH THE UPCOMING LAUNCH OF OUR NEW SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

youth develop skills related to jobs, finances/budgeting, time management and learn to manage responsibilities necessary to become a successful adult

with the SIL safety net, foster youth who participate in the program are less likely to become homeless, incarcerated, substance abusers, and impoverished

AN OPPORTUNITY to GIVE IN KIND

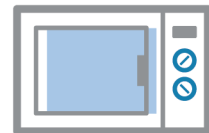
OUR SIL HOMES NEED
WHAT YOUR HOME NEEDS!

WILL YOU HELP SUPPLY ITEMS
FOR OUR SIL COTTAGES?

The young adults entering the SIL cottage will need supplies similar to those a new college student would need.



kitchen essentials



small kitchen appliances



paper goods



COMING HOME

a decision
rooted in
LOVE

The Raven we know today is gregarious, outgoing, and bubbly! With her vivacious personality and dreams in tow, she discovered a sense of belonging at ACH. Within these walls, protection is offered fiercely, forgiveness is extended readily, and each day begins anew. Raven admires the approach of her current House Parents, Bob and Debbie, who grant both the girls and each other a clean slate every day. It's not just the teenage girls who are expected to mature; spiritually and emotionally, everyone is growing and reaching their goals together.

Don't let other people write your story;
let God write your story.

-Raven

In the heart of every child lies a longing for a place to call home, a sanctuary where love flows freely, and safe bonds are forged to last. For Raven, ACH became that cherished haven, a chosen family amid the uncertainty of the foster care system. She has been placed at ACH three times, with a combined length of stay of about four years. Two of her three placements with us are a result of her choosing. With an angry and wounded heart, Raven first crossed the threshold of our Union Cottage at the tender age of 11. Initially grappling with the ache of separation from her biological family, she remembers thinking, "I don't like any of you, I don't want to do church, I don't want to do anything, leave me alone!" She vividly remembers learning, very quickly, that at ACH "They're not going to yell at you if you do something wrong." She went on to say, "They're going to show you the support and the love that I never grew up with."

Raven soon found solace in the warmth and acceptance of her House Parent, affectionately known as Grandma Jennie. Raven expressed, "It took me 3 days, at most, to feel like this could be my home." She shared, "If I did something wrong, I'd be scared and go hide somewhere." She remembers Grandma gently telling her, "It's ok to be sad. Just don't unpack and stay there."

As she looks toward the future, Raven sees ACH not just as a place of refuge but as a stepping stone for kids in need. "As foster kids, we have a rough start at life," she open-heartedly shares, and "ACH is God's step to help kids." Raven dreams of one day becoming a House Parent herself, just like Grandma Jennie, paying forward the love and support she once received. Her ambitions also lead her to learn the skills of either a veterinarian or a cosmetologist.

Raven marvels at the bonds she's formed, the memories she's cherished, and the growth she's experienced. "I chose to come back to ACH because it felt like home," she shared. The people at ACH have become my family in every sense of the word." While she remains connected with her local biological family, a relationship our team fosters, she recognizes the value of finding family and a bright future at ACH. Despite the challenges she faced as a younger child, Raven wouldn't change a thing. "Don't let other people write your story; let God write your story," she advises, her words resonating with wisdom beyond her years.

Raven's journey is not just a story of survival but of restoration, love, and the power of finding family in unexpected places. At Amarillo Children's Home, every child has the chance to thrive, grow, and rewrite their story with love and grace.

Quotes from Board Minutes 1923



“First of all because we should all do for others’ children what we would have others do for our children if they were left homeless and friendless in this world.”

Our **ROOTS RUN DEEP** growing and adapting

ACH 1924-2024
100 YEARS of HOME TOGETHER

“It will be a joy to every citizen of Amarillo to have a part in this work of love for little children.”



At Amarillo Children's Home, we're embarking on a transformative journey in our centennial year, growing alongside our children as we expand our programs to meet their needs. With the upcoming launch of our **Supervised Independent Living (SIL) program**, we're enhancing our cottage living experience to provide a supportive environment for youth transitioning into adulthood. Simultaneously, through our **"Beauty on 34th Street"** project, we're revitalizing our campus and the surrounding neighborhood with a beautiful row of trees, inviting signage, and a new sidewalk along 34th Street.

As we embrace this period of growth and renovation, we invite you to support our mission. Through your generous support, we can expand our programs and improve our campus for the betterment of our kids and our community.

From a financial standpoint, it will cost less to **take care of the homeless children** in the right way than to let them go to waste and then build jails and penitentiaries and reform schools for them.



“We have homeless and friendless children among us who in **no way are responsible** for their existence or their condition.”



A HISTORICAL DISPLAY AND ART SHOW FUNDRAISER

ACH 100 CENTENNIAL ART EXHIBITION
ACH CENTENNIAL ART EXHIBITION

September 19, 2024
Amarillo Art Institute
Vermillion Gallery
6:00 – 8:00 pm

Tickets go on sale this summer

Join us for the ACH Centennial Art Exhibition, where we'll journey through a century of restoration for children at Amarillo Children's Home! From the past 100 years to present day, we'll celebrate milestones and highlights of our mission. But that's not all - it's also a silent auction where you can bid on amazing artwork, with local artists generously donating 50-100% of proceeds to our cause.

Don't miss this unforgettable event.

For artist involvement and sponsorship opportunities, email tjackson@amarillochildrenshome.org



GROWING, ADAPTING *and* RETURNING *to our* ROOTS



THE VISION OF LOVE

THE NEXT GENERATION *of* RESTORATION

Our story is one of devotion to the Lord's calling. One hundred years of faith in an unchanging, eternal God that has empowered ACH to 100 years of following His call to faithfully meeting the needs of past, current, and future kids. Our faith and hope in God moves us into how we can continue to evolve our services to be a conduit of His restorative work.

LIFE AFTER CARE

Last spring, Adriana graduated from high school and was excited to enroll at Amarillo College. Coming into foster care as a teenager meant that she lacked many of the skills needed to begin life out on her own. She made the wise decision to stay in care at ACH to receive the same supports she had as a high school student. However, like most 18 year-olds, she longed for a life of independence. She loved her House Parents, loved her cottage family, but wanted to enter the next season of life like many of her peers. She wanted to live in an apartment with girls her own age, but she knew she was not quite ready to do so without support.

This is the story of many of our youth after they graduate from high school. They desire the same lifestyle as their peers, but are still in need of support. This May, ACH will launch a new program called "Supervised Independent Living." We will dedicate one of our current cottages and our after-care home to a program for 18-21-year-old foster care young adults. They will have roommates their age and will be guided by a live-in life coach that will help give the support and training for their new stage of life.

FINDING MY *forever* FAMILY

Nathan has been in care at ACH for five years. He is finishing 9th grade, thriving in school, involved in athletics, and a delight to have at ACH. As much as we would love to have him at ACH forever, we long for him to find his forever family through adoption. Nathan's obstacle at this point is there are not enough homes in our community looking to adopt teenagers. It may understandably be intimidating for a family to take in a teenager they have never met. As part of our vision, we seek to recruit and license foster homes and adoptive families for ACH youth. We see the opportunity for a family in our community to meet Nathan, invite him into their home, and build a relationship with him. As both Nathan and the family become comfortable with each other, ACH can come alongside to provide the needed support to set them up for success so that Nathan can find his forever family.

YOUR INVESTMENT IN ACH RESTORES CHILDHOODS & REDEEMS FUTURES.

They will have roommates their age and will be guided by a live-in life coach that will help give the support and training for their new stage of life.

Together, we are > (*greater than*).



LETTER *from* OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

EMBRACING OUR LEGACY OF DIVINE LOVE AND RESTORATION:

A CENTURY OF HOPE AND GENERATIONAL CHANGE

As we reflect on our journey over the past century, we are reminded of the countless lives that have been touched and transformed through God's love and the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and supporters. From our humble beginnings to our present-day initiatives, our mission remains steadfast: to provide a place of safety, belonging, and restoration for every child who walks through our doors.

At ACH, we believe in the power of community and the strength that comes from standing together in service to others. Our story is not just one of individual acts of kindness but of collective efforts to create a brighter future for the most vulnerable among us. It is a story of people who saw a need and chose to respond with compassion, love, and a deep sense of purpose.

... every child deserves a loving family and the opportunity to thrive.

In the coming months and years, we will embark on new initiatives to better support young adults aging out of foster care and to recruit and empower foster and adoptive families willing to open their hearts and homes to teenagers and sibling groups. These efforts are rooted in our firm belief that every child deserves a loving family and the opportunity to thrive.

Beyond our organizational efforts, the heart of our mission is deeply personal. As we celebrate our centennial milestone, we are reminded of the transformative power of love and the restoration that comes through fostering and adoption.

I am honored to be part of a greater village dedicated to serving children and families in our community. Together, we can continue to be ministers of reconciliation in the lives of those we serve, ensuring that the legacy of hope and transformation lives on for generations to come.

With gratitude and humility,

John Forbis,
Executive Director, Amarillo Children's Home



We extend our deepest gratitude to our incredible community of supporters, from **PACESETTER DONORS TO CENTENNIAL SPONSORS, TABLE HOSTS, AND ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED**, for making our Centennial Roots and Wings Banquet a resounding success, surpassing our goal by reaching 101% of \$330,000.

Thank you for your **generosity** and **support** of our mission and our kids!

Billy Smith, Vice Chairman, ACH Board of Trustees, and ACH Alumnus
Rene Butcher, Treasurer, ACH Board of Trustees