

## Boys Home of Virginia: An Episcopal Ministry Since 1906



Spring is a time of transformation. The Boys Home setting in the scenic Alleghany Highlands outside Covington, VA reminds us of this and provides an ideal setting for growing boys to experience the simple gifts that living and playing in the outdoors brings.

In this Easter season we are reminded of new life. At Boys Home the staff works towards giving new life to each boy by:

- Providing him a stable, structured, and supportive environment in which to grow, learn, and play.

- Educating him so he may go on to success in the work world, trade school,

military, or college.

- Teaching him to be a caring, Godly citizen who gives back.

Fredrick Douglass had it right when he said, *It's easier to build strong children than it is to repair a broken man.*

The young men at Boys Home have experienced instability in their lives that cause most of them to underperform in school and many of them to be oppositional at home and/or in school. Providing them a new, healthier environment with positive role models is the best way to prevent negative outcomes. Without interrupting their troubled lifestyles, they are more likely to have problems in all areas of their development, including physical, academic, social, and spiritual. Children need safe and stable housing, enough nutritious food, secure relationships with adult caregivers, spiritual direction, and high-quality learning experiences to reach their full potential. Without proper development in those areas, children are at risk for dropping out of high school, poor health, and involvement in crime.

Boys Home serves 70 boys per year, ages 6-18, and of those about 70 percent progress from an initial 30-60 day evaluation period into the main program. Boys Home is similar to a private boarding school with a few significant distinctions: 1) no boy is turned away for the inability to pay; 2) the boys come from families suffering from poverty and/or domestic strife; and 3) most of the boys stay at Boys Home nearly year-round, including holidays and summers. Boys Home is the boys' family, and as such, the staff (which includes house parents, teachers, case workers, and a full-time Episcopal ordained chaplain) nurtures them to develop physically, academically, socially, and spiritually, guiding them to become productive, loving, happy men.

Boys Home was founded by Episcopalians in 1906 and continues to be Episcopalian supported. Boys Home is mission driven, not tuition driven. No boy is turned away from Boys Home because of financial reasons. Since Boys Home is 97% privately funded, the staff looks to Episcopal parishes such as ours and individual Episcopalian donors to help sustain their ministry. Your gifts and prayers are deeply appreciated.

This article is intended for you to include in your church newsletter. If you need this newsletter article in a different format, please email [shansen@boyshomeofva.org](mailto:shansen@boyshomeofva.org) and let me know what you need.