

Epworth's Monthly CARE Story – March 2013

The 9th and 10th grade girls of Waddell Cottage have been challenging lately—getting in to fights and talking back to their cottage staff. The other children on campus have noticed. A couple of weekends ago Rev. John Holler, President of Epworth Children's Home, was cheering on the boys' basketball team when he overheard Anderson Cottage residents, the oldest girls on campus, talking to the Waddell girls.

"I used to act out all the time," one of the Anderson girls said. "Just like y'all are doing right now. But I realized that I have to make good choices for myself. If you wanna do something with your life, you have to do the right thing now, not later."

Being a teenager can be a difficult and frustrating time without having experienced the abuse and neglect that many of our residents have. Teens act out, talk back or run away, to name a few. They don't often listen to advice unless it comes from someone they trust, someone who knows what they're going through. The Anderson girls know what that's like. Some of them used to make poor choices about school and friends, but they've changed.

"I don't know," an Anderson girl said to the Waddell girls. "I guess one day everything my staff said to me clicked, and I realized that I needed to grow up. You can't play around forever."

For many of the children who come to Epworth, school has not been a priority, and their role models were inappropriate. Their focus is not where it should be in order to become successful, independent members of society. They were surrounded by the wrong "crowd" and got off track.

It takes time and a safe environment for the children to learn or relearn how to make good decisions. Epworth Children's Home gives children opportunities to discover, grow and transform, as well as a community of better role models and peers with whom they can share stories and advice. With the seeds of wisdom planted by their peers and loving, nurturing Epworth staff to guide them, they will have the tools they need to transform their lives and make good choices.