

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Epworth Children's Home



- **Why do children need to come and live at Epworth?**

The children who call Epworth home have experienced a great deal of hurt and suffering. About 75% of our residents are placed at Epworth by the SC Department of Social Services after being removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. The remaining 25% of children arrive through private placements. On average Epworth has 20 sibling groups on campus at any given time. The average stay for a child at Epworth is around two and a half years.
- **How many children are on campus and what are their ages?**

The children on campus are between the ages of four and 18. We have nine cottages on campus and serve between 70 and 80 children at any given time. Cottage parents and staff provide consistent and ongoing CARE and supervision for children while on campus, using the C.A.R.E. Model developed by Cornell University. C.A.R.E. is a comprehensive model of research-based practices that enables Epworth staff members to consistently guide children in ways that lead to a higher range of social, emotional and behavioral functioning.
- **What do the children do while they are at Epworth?**

During the school year, children are enrolled in Richland Country School District One public schools including Dreher High School, Hand Middle School and Brennan Elementary School. They participate in school sports and extra curricular activities like baseball, softball and band on a regular basis. Many of the children are not performing at their grade level when they arrive at Epworth. Our Chief Academic Officer works with the children, the schools, certified teachers and volunteers to provide private tutoring sessions after school at the Barnes Learning Center on the Epworth campus. During the summer, many of our older children secure jobs, while all of our children enjoy the pool, camps, riding their bikes and fun trips.
- **What services are offered to the children while on campus?**

Epworth's campus consists of a dining hall, tutoring center, gymnasium, health center and the Center for Children, Youth and Families. Health care, fitness, counseling, tutoring sessions and meals are all provided on campus. A needs assessment for each child is done upon arrival. This assessment evaluates where each child is academically, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Directors and staff from each of these areas work together to develop a CARE plan tailored to each child.
- **Specifically, how are mental and physical health issues addressed at Epworth?**

Upon arrival each child is given a physical. Many of the children have not received adequate health care prior to their arrival at Epworth. They arrive with conditions ranging from lice to cavities; and depression to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. One of Epworth's two onsite nurses will arrange for the appropriate doctor visits and sit with the child during the exam. At our onsite Health Care Center the children visit with a psychologist on a monthly basis as needed. When a child in a cottage comes down with a contagious illness one of our two nurses care for them in the center by providing all the things a loving mother would provide, including chicken-noodle soup.

- **What about the Spiritual development of the children at Epworth?**  
Epworth is home to Epworth Memorial United Methodist Church. A UMC pastor lives and works on campus and provides worship and spiritual direction for the children each week. Sunday school is provided by faithful volunteers on a weekly basis. The older children participate in youth group (UMYF) and the younger children are invited to the Good News Bible Club.
- **What is the ultimate goal for each child at Epworth?**  
Each child who comes to Epworth has varying needs and abilities. For this reason assessing progress for our children is done on an individual basis. Epworth's Mission is to serve children, youth and families through a caring, accepting and safe Christian community, where hurts are healed; hope is nurtured; and faith in God, self and others is developed. The purpose of Epworth is to break the destructive cycle of abuse, neglect and shame and replace it with an opportunity for each child to live a life of self respect, responsibility and productivity.
- **What happens to the children when they turn 18?**  
Occasionally, when a child ages out of care, they will return to their previous home. For the last several years Epworth has successfully implemented a Higher Education Program that accompanies residents who are enrolled in four-year colleges where housing is available. These young adults are mentored by our Minister of Higher Education and receive assistance applying for scholarships, moving into the dorms and paying for additional expenses. Epworth provides housing on the Epworth campus during breaks and holidays. In the last year it has become ever more apparent that there is a need to provide housing to students entering trade schools or technical colleges where campus housing is not available. The success rate for children between the ages of 18 and 25 increases when they have a safe and supervised place to live. For this reason, Epworth is expanding the Higher Education program into the Independent Living Initiative. This pilot program will allow Epworth to accommodate up to 20 students between the ages of 18 and 25. Through this program residents will receive structure and training in life skills; clean, safe and supervised housing on campus; and career development.
- **Is Epworth a non-profit organization?**  
Yes, Epworth Children's Home is recognized as a 501(c)(3) private child and family service organization. We are also licensed by the SC Department of Social Services and we are a member of the United Methodist Association of Health & Welfare Ministries.
- **How do you pay to provide care for the children?**  
Each year more than 45% of our annual operating revenue is contributed by congregations, individuals and the corporate community. A minimal amount of funding, around 10%, comes from government resources. The remaining portion of the annual operating budget is provided by our modest endowment, which includes the combined gifts from those who chose to leave a legacy to Epworth and from the sale of original property.

*"Epworth is the place where I learned as a child that I have Spiritual worth."*

The. Rev. Ken Nelson  
- previous resident of Epworth Children's Home

we live **CARE**  
Compassion, Acceptance, Respect & Encouragement