



What Is Everyday Blessing?

Everyday Blessings, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization serving foster care children (newborn through 17 years of age) who have been removed from their homes due to physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse, abandonment or neglect.

Everyday Blessings is the only facility of its kind in the area which provides sibling groups the opportunity to remain together in a safe and stable environment. Their reason for keeping the sibling groups together is because these kids have already lost so much. They should not have to lose each other.

Live-in, 24/7 caregivers provide ongoing emotional and social support, transportation and child advocacy. Additionally, the agency's support staff provides counseling, medical oversight, crisis intervention, case management, tutoring and developmental daycare. Through the generosity of volunteers, educational, social, spiritual and leisure activities are also part of the daily activities.

The mission of Everyday Blessings, Inc., as a licensed child caring agency, is to provide the above mentioned services while working alongside case managers, placement agencies, government officials and the children's families, with the ultimate goal of each child's placement into a safe, stable and permanent home - preferably with his or her biological parents.

About Everyday Blessings

Program

Everyday Blessings, Inc. cares for up to 36 children while they await permanent placement. The children in the program range in age from newborn through 17 years old. They come from all economic backgrounds and ethnic groups and have been removed from their previous home due to abuse, neglect or abandonment.

At EBI, a strong emphasis is placed on the quality of care:

- Caregivers live on campus full-time with children.
- Everyday Blessings attempts to keep sibling groups together.
- Children are assigned mentors and tutors.
- Children are active and involved in leisure and sports activities.
- Children receive age-appropriate therapeutic services.
- On-grounds nursery and daycare for children under school age

License

Everyday Blessings, Inc. is licensed by the state of Florida as a Child Caring Agency

Funding

Everyday Blessings, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit receiving partial funding from community based care agencies of southwest Florida and partial funding from private donors. Approximately 50% of the operating expenses come in the form of donations.

More Information on Residential Group Care

There are approximately 2,500 children in Hillsborough County who are in out-of-home care. When sibling groups come into care--groups as large as 5 or more children--there is seldom a single home with more than one or two available beds. Therefore, the Everyday Blessings, Inc. (EBI) residential facility serves as an alternative in order to keep these siblings together. There has been a lot of evidence that shows that it is more disruptive for children to be removed from their siblings than from their parents.

The EBI residential program is designed to serve up to 36 children at any given time. These children are matched with live-in caregivers (a 4:1 ratio). Together they live in a two-room efficiency. The live-in caregiver fulfills the role of "parent" to these children from 4:30 in the afternoon until 8:30 in the morning, Monday through Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday. They go on recreational, educational and church outings as a "family".

Monday through Friday, children who are of school age attend school daily. Younger children attend the on-site day care center where each one receives the nurturance and developmental stimulation appropriate to each one's age. In the evening, everyone eats dinner prepared in the central kitchen and dining room. After a period of outdoor play, they each go to their "home" within the larger facility where the bed and bath routine begins. The same person who has put these children to bed is the person who greets them in the morning.

The greatest challenge of the residential program is to recruit, train and retain mission-minded live-in caregivers. The children come with behaviors that are indicative of abuse, neglect, frequent moves and accompanying attachment issues, insecurity and fear, confusion and anger. It takes a while to trust, it takes a while to believe, it takes a while to allow themselves to build a relationship that will bring about behavioral change.