



Shults-Lewis Child and Family Services  
**Love.Value.Respect**

# Telegram

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## Always a home for kids, for the holidays!

SHULTS LEWIS CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES



## We need your support!

Scan the QR Code and it will take you directly to our donation page. God Bless you all and thank you for your continued support of the wonderful things we are doing here at Shults Lewis.





# Shults-Lewis Child and Family Services

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Shults-Lewis  
Child and Family Services

# TRANSFORMATION

**Johnnie Coley, Executive Director**  
johnniecoley@shultslewis.org



The chill of winter is in the air, but the hearts of the children and our amazing team of residential treatment providers are warm. We continue to work together to honor God by standing in the gap to help children who need love and resources in order to survive in a world that may not understand their individual challenges and set of circumstances. We are so pleased to have been given this opportunity at Shults Lewis. It is a lot of fun at times, and other times we are seeing how God is using us to make an impactful difference in lives whom God created. My staff and I embrace this work and the blessed outcomes He always make happen.

I have been talking to our Board about ideas to add to the work we are doing to impact the Kingdom of God, the community and the world we live in. Providing a child with hope helps this world because help turns a child's heart closer to what is good and honorable. As we stretch our imaginations we can see a possibility for a potential Single Parent Program on our campus. Additionally, we are researching and exploring opportunities to reach out to hurting children internationally. I had the privilege to oversee a Single Parent Program for twelve years. It was there that I learned we could impact two generations with one opportunity. I would love to steer a vibrant program like that at Shults Lewis. Single parents are a population of people who need direction and supervision on how to "train a child in the way they should go..." Proverb 22:6. Sharing the light of love of Jesus with these parents so they can share that with their children is priceless. I am getting very excited just writing about that possibility.

My heart was so grateful for the success of our Annual Day event. You assisted with making this event wonderful. We met new friends. We heard more stories about others who used our services in the past and others who have worked at Shults Lewis. Ah, the beauty of those moments causes me to feel so proud of what we are doing and the direction we are heading in.

It is my hope that we will find value in our efforts to continue to make Shults Lewis strong and ready for today and many years to come. Your support and prayers are needed and always very much appreciated.





# KINGDOM WORK IN ACTION!

(groups that come to our campus to help)

This year we've been blessed with amazing groups coming to serve — some brand new, others longtime friends — and each one has made a lasting impact. Whether working in the yard, helping inside, preparing meals, or creating crafts, every act of service is deeply meaningful to everyone here at Shults Lewis. Your time, energy, and love remind us of what it truly means to serve in God's kingdom. Even if you were only here for an afternoon, please know that you are valued and cherished. One special highlight this year came from a

group that brought friends all the way from Australia! They connected so deeply with our kids that they've become pen pals across the world — a beautiful reminder that God's family knows no borders. Looking ahead, we're excited to share that we plan to add a garden near the school — a place where the kids can learn, grow, and enjoy the fruits of their labor, both literally and spiritually. Thank you to each and every group for being the hands and feet of Christ here at Shults-Lewis.





**FINDING HEALING  
IN THE SADDLE:  
EQUINE THERAPY  
AT TRUE NORTH  
TRAINING STABLE**



Starting this spring and going until fall, our residents embarked on a unique and life-changing journey, one that doesn't take place in a classroom or counseling room, but in a quiet stable, beside a horse. Thanks to the partnership with True North Training Stable, our residents were able to participate in a six-week rotational Equine Therapy Program starting in April and going until October. With each visit, they were able to step into a space designed not just for learning, but for healing.

True North's mission is clear and compassionate: to provide a safe, structured environment where at-risk youth and their families can learn essential life skills and grow spiritually all through the powerful connection between human and horse. The program has been a beacon of hope for children and teens facing a wide range of challenges, including depression, anxiety, ADHD, autism, trauma, addiction, and family instability. It offers more than therapy; it offers transformation.

Every lesson at True North is built on purpose and intentionality. The curriculum is designed around a series of core character qualities: relationship building, teamwork, respect, patience, perseverance, communication, and trust. These traits are not only taught but they are experienced through meaningful interaction with the horses. From leading and grooming to groundwork and guided exercises, each moment is a steppingstone toward confidence, connection, and growth.

What makes equine therapy so unique is the way it reflects life back to the student. Horses are incredibly intuitive creatures. They respond not to words, but to energy, emotion, and presence. As our residents worked alongside these animals, they began to develop emotional awareness, self-control, and empathy. They learned to approach with gentleness, to lead with intention, and to respond with wisdom. In doing so, they also start to rediscover their own strength and value.



Grooming is a cornerstone of each session, both at the beginning and the end. This quiet time of care and attentiveness fosters a connection between the resident and the horse. It teaches gentleness, responsibility, and love. Checking for any signs of injury, cleaning the hooves, brushing the coat—it's all part of learning to be present, to notice, and to give care freely. Post-lesson grooming is also an act of gratitude—an opportunity to thank the horse and honor the time shared together.

Each weekly session builds upon the last, reinforcing core values while introducing new concepts and spiritual insights. From developing focus and critical thinking to practicing forgiveness and grace, every lesson is a step deeper into emotional growth and spiritual healing. Lessons are carefully tailored to meet the individual needs of each student, ensuring that no one is left behind, and everyone is given the opportunity to thrive.

At the heart of this program is a simple, yet powerful belief: connection brings healing. Through the bond between horse and human, students are invited to experience safety, trust, and hope—often for the first time in a long while.

We are deeply grateful for the opportunity our residents have been given to participate in this incredible program. Their courage to engage in the process, their willingness to learn and grow, and their openness to healing is inspiring. Over the last few months, we were able to witness the transformation and healing that equine therapy brought to our residents.

At True North, it's not just about learning to handle a horse. It's about learning to handle life with grace, strength, and the belief that change is possible.



# SHULTS LEWIS CREATES SPACES FOR GROWTH AND EXPRESSION

This past summer, we worked hard to transform empty spaces into functional, inspiring rooms for our residents. We're proud to share that we've created three new spaces, a Music Room, Steam Room, and Meeting Room, all of which are now fully set up and in use!

## MUSIC ROOM

Our new Music Room provides residents with a safe and supportive place to express themselves through sound and rhythm. Equipped with drums, a sound system, microphones, and a piano, the space offers opportunities for both structured music activities and open creative expression. Music serves as a therapeutic outlet while also helping residents build confidence, teamwork, and joy. Our music room is much like a healing center. Music can often calm a traumatized child.

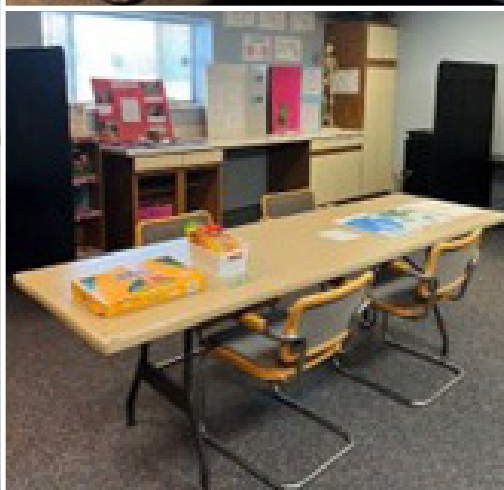
## STEAM ROOM

The Steam Room is designed to spark imagination and encourage hands-on learning. Stocked with a wide variety of art supplies and materials for science projects, it gives residents the freedom to explore creativity, problem-solving, and discovery. It's a space where self-expression, innovation, and learning come together in meaningful ways.

## MEETING ROOM

*(2nd Calming Room)*

Our Meeting Room is a versatile, multi-purpose space that supports emotional, academic, and therapeutic needs. It provides a private setting for DCS workers and other providers to meet with residents and is also used for tutoring, one-on-one sessions, and as an extension of our Calming Room. Equipped with various emotional regulation tools, the room helps residents practice coping skills, focus on academic growth, and receive individualized support in a comfortable, calming environment.





## **BUILDING SKILL AND MEMORIES THAT LAST A LIFETIME**

We had a blast this summer visiting the waterpark, swimming each week, exploring the zoo, watching movies, and enjoying lunch outings — all while continuing to grow both academically and spiritually.

During the summer months, our focus shifts from earning academic credits to building life skills, social skills, and mindfulness. Students also polished their writing abilities, engaged in STEAM activities, and strengthened their independent living skills.

Throughout our summer program, residents completed a research paper,

hosted a science fair, took on the egg drop challenge, and learned how to budget monthly expenses. They also began reading the Keeper of the Lost Cities book series, which quickly became a group favorite. The slower pace of summer offered residents a chance to recharge, reflect, and stay grounded in preparation for the upcoming school year.

As the school year began in August, each resident received three online classes in subjects such as history, economics, geometry, English, and even cooking! After completing 1st quarter of the school year, we had 2 residents make the A-B Honor Roll, though we are so proud of all our residents for passing all their classes! In addition to their academic work, residents took part in daily physical

education and rotated between the STEAM and music rooms. The music room has become a favorite. Several residents have even begun writing their own songs!

As we continue through 2nd quarter of the school year and with the holidays approaching, we ask that you please pray for our residents. Pray that they may feel peace, joy, and a sense of belonging during this season, and continue to grow in confidence and faith. Pray that they remain encouraged in their studies, find comfort and hope, and continue to see the beauty in the progress they're making each day. Lastly, pray for strength, healing, and continued growth as they navigate the school year and the emotions that often come with the holidays.



# VIBRANT STORIES ARE EVERYWHERE



In most non-profit organizations, there is a need for specialized skills such as financial accounting, reporting, auditing etc. In our quest to be responsive and responsible for the funds we receive from donors, we hired an accountant who quickly became Partner at CLH, CPAs & Consultants firm after eleven years in the field. In a community where

excellence is expected, we were blessed to hire this firm and especially rewarded with Lisa Human who oversees all of our finances and reporting. As a supporting organization, we invited and celebrated Lisa's new adventure as a full partner with her firm.

During her celebration on the Shults Lewis campus, like many of us, Lisa was instantly drawn to the children we serve. As a matter of fact, while talking to the kids, she begins to tell her story. She explained to the children she started her career a little later in life. She was so relatable to the kids as she explained she grew up in poverty and did not go to college right away. She shared that she was a high school dropout. She said in a laughable fun way, "I don't recommend that

path". She went back to school and got her GED, associates and then her bachelor's degree. When she started out it was tough and challenging because she also had a child. She had a taste of accounting and loved the work. That led her to go back to school to get her master's degree. She courageously sat for the CPA exam and passed! Applauds erupted from our staff and children as she concluded, all her hardships led to, "here I am now".

What a story! The children were mesmerized as they gave Lisa their full attention. It was as if they were listening to Lisa's story, looking in a mirror, and seeing a picture of themselves. It was refreshing to see the kids selflessly celebrate someone else and being encouraged by someone who has also come from a place of hardship and overcoming. All the children appeared to be inspired. Lisa sharing her story was natural and the kids loved that moment. We are honored to partner with people who understand our cause and value the work we are doing with traumatized children. Lisa and CLH, CPAs & Consultants have supported our work financially and provided us with exceptional services. We are looking forward to a long-time relationship with Lisa and CLH, CPAs & Consultants.





# A Message *from the* Facilities/Maintenance Supervisor

**Don Jones, Facilities/Maintenance Supervisor**

Thanks to our hard-working Sojourners, Annual Day was a tremendous success! Our dedicated team spent countless hours sorting, organizing, and displaying a gymnasium full of clothing, furniture, and miscellaneous items. They also helped with the setup and teardown of tables, chairs, and tents — ensuring everything ran smoothly from start to finish.

In addition to their event support, several Sojourners lent their skills to special projects around campus — including the finishing touches on our new wheelchair-accessible ramp, as well as electrical work and drywall repairs. Their servant hearts and steady hands truly keep things moving at Shults-Lewis!

The beautiful fall weather in September and October has been a blessing, allowing Jim and me to enjoy working

outdoors — keeping the grounds mowed, trimmed, and looking their best as the trees change color and leaves begin to fall. It's a wonderful reminder of God's handiwork all around us.

We've also had the privilege of traveling to several Churches of Christ across Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Iowa over the past few months to pick up commodities such as food, paper products, hygiene items, gift baskets, and change cans. With just three commodity runs remaining for 2025, we continue to be amazed by the generosity and faithfulness of our church families and individual supporters.

We are deeply grateful for your continued prayers, donations, and encouragement. May God bless each of you abundantly for your partnership in helping us serve His children with love and purpose.





# STAFF APPRECIATION

**Paris** is the newest member of our treatment team. He has come to us with a deep love for God and enthusiasm that could raise any child in care out of depression. He has been a psalmist on campus also. Leading praise and worship in our Bible classes has been a place where he shines. In the full-time staff position as a behavioral technician, he deals with kids that experience anger, heartbreak, sadness, and deep sorrows. He has a special gift in the way that he helps the kids calm down. Once they are calmed, they can then learn and engage in the treatment services. He attends the Harvey Church of Christ, and we are so happy that God place him at Shults Lewis.







**James** is a quiet doer. He coordinates all of the pantry donations, ensuring that the children are not eating any food that is out of date. This important and is in sync with our licensing guidelines. One of the other talents James uses at Shults Lewis is his gift for sound and music. When we have events on campus, he is the music man who put the sound system together and getting all microphones. He is very dependable and working as a team member, he is chief. Our team enjoys his dedication and commitment to Shults Lewis. He is also a wonderful supporter of the work we do. We are blessed to have him on our team.

### What It Means to Be a Christian House Parent at Shults-Lewis Children's Home

Being a Christian house parent at Shults isn't just a job — it's a calling. It's about opening your heart and home to children who need love, stability, and the hope that comes from Christ. It takes faith, patience, and a deep commitment to showing God's love in everyday moments.

As house parents, our relationship with God must be strong and growing. It's through Him that we find the strength and wisdom to care for children who've come from difficult or broken situations. We're here to help them heal, to teach them life skills, and to model what it means to live with faith, kindness, and integrity. Everything we say and do leaves an impression — our example can show them what love and trust look like.

Many of these children are hurting. They may test limits, struggle to trust, or act out of pain. That's why patience, compassion, and consistency are so important. We're called to guide them with grace — to correct them in love, not

anger — just as God lovingly guides us. We have to create a safe environment for them to know we are here to help.

Along with emotional and spiritual readiness, there are practical responsibilities too. House parents manage the home, keep routines and structure, help with school and homework, and work closely with our program director, caseworker, teachers and other staff. Communication, organization, and flexibility are all part of creating a stable, nurturing environment where each child can grow and thrive.

Being a house parent is both a ministry and a mission — and it's one of the most meaningful ways to live out the love of Christ every single day.

The House Parent question of a lifetime is..... Are you ready to bring more children to Christ in your parenting here at Shults-Lewis by providing them with all of the spiritual tools to live life and become a disciple for Christ?

Shay Thompson





# EVENTS

## Car Show

The event was filled with shining cars, smiling faces, and generous hearts. Beyond the fun and fellowship, this event made a meaningful difference by helping support the children and programs here at Shults Lewis. The funds raised go directly toward our mission of providing a loving, faith-based home where kids can heal, learn, and thrive. We are so grateful to everyone who helped make the car show a success — your time, talent, and compassion truly keep our ministry moving forward!



## Shults-Lewis at the Valparaiso Popcorn Festival!

Have you ever been to the Valparaiso Popcorn Fest? Each year, over 50,000 people come out to enjoy the big parade, delicious food, amazing crafts, and friendly faces — and Shults Lewis was blessed to be part of it! We had so many people stop by to share their appreciation for the work we do for children. A special joy was meeting former residents who stopped to tell us about their time at Shults-Lewis — such heartwarming stories! What a wonderful day of smiles, gratitude, and community. Thank you to everyone who continues to support the mission of Shults-Lewis — you help make moments like this possible!







## 2025 Annual Day – Rain or Shine, We Made a Difference!

A little rain couldn't stop the joy—or the generosity! Thanks to our amazing donors, vendors, and guests, we raised vital funds to support the healing work at Shults-Lewis, helping kids and families find hope and restoration. What a wonderful day! Though the morning started off wet, the sun came out and so did the smiles. The auction baskets were amazing, the music uplifting, and the vendors brought great energy. We had delicious food, beautiful crafts, sparkling jewelry, and desserts so good that seconds were a must—because who can stop at one cookie or one slice of pie on Annual Day? Kids ran, adults shared stories, and our staff made it all happen. The rummage sale was a big hit, with treasures found and shared including a beautiful Victrola we played before the sale, a real piece of history. A huge thank-you to everyone who donated baskets, joined as vendors, or came to share in the fun. You make this event special every year. If you'd like to donate a basket, help with the auction or rummage sale, or have your church join as a vendor next year, we'd love to have you be part of this wonderful celebration.



## Golf-A Swing and a Blessing!

This year we were truly blessed to have not one, but two golf outings! Both events were filled with great fellowship, fun, and meaningful connections — truly a hole-in-one for everyone involved. Beyond the fairways, these outings play an important role in supporting the work we do here. The funds raised help us continue providing a safe, faith-filled home where children can heal, grow, and thrive. If you enjoy golf and would like to join us next year, let us know! We'll be happy to send you our 2026 golf outing information so you can be part of the fun and the mission.







## Honors & Remembers...

JUNE 1, 2025 - NOVEMBER 1, 2025

### HONORS

**Ed & Wanda Long**  
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**Jim & Kathy Stone**  
David Case

**Johnnie Coley**  
Suzan Jenkins

**Our Lord,  
the giver of all good gifts**  
Willie Taylor

**Mr & Mrs Norman Deckard**  
William Vermillion

**Phil, Cassie, Brynne &  
Brighton Vermillion**  
Patty Tallitsch

**Steve & Janice Adkins**  
Timothy Firm

### MEMORIALS

**Abigail Watson**  
Jim Watson

**Ann Billings**  
Joseph & Lori Mason

**Ann Fick**  
Houghton Lake COC

**Aunt Pat**  
Elizabeth King Pod

**Betty Reasoner**  
Royce Harbin

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Robert Conn

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William Seniker

**Carol Lathmore**  
Alex Jeal

**Chana Rhea Tapscott**  
Judy Brown-Anderson

**Charline Rehner**  
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Christopher Underwood

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Anthony Perkins**  
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Barbara Perrett

**Glen & Dee Martin**  
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**Grace Lollar**  
John Lollar

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Ann Eifler

**Harry & Jean Dimpfl**  
Mark Dimpfl

**Jan Reaves**  
Judith Church

Jane Sanders  
16th Ave COC

**Jeff Morehead**  
Ann Eifler

**Jerry Sinks**  
Michigan COC

**Joan Bivins**  
Ann Eifler

**Joseph Hoadley**  
Carla Weinmann

**Joyce Yarbrough**  
Crystal Lake COC  
James Vermillion  
Scott Valentin

**Katherine, Anthoney &  
Kenneth Green**  
Marie Canty

**Kenneth Slatton**  
Kenneth White  
Shults Lewis

**Lida Taylor**  
Park Forest COC

**Marjorie Christine Cranford**  
Vicki Harris

**Mark & Joyce Harmon**  
Nolan Family

**Martha Yarbrough**  
Glenda Lacefield  
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**Mary Evelyn Ladd**  
David Work  
Marci Hazard

**Mary Juanita Stockton**  
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# With Gratitude for Our Faithful Sojourners

We are deeply grateful to the small but mighty group of Sojourners who stayed with us—some past house parents and some board members—who generously helped around Compass and prepared for our Annual Day. Their dedication, teamwork, and generous spirit made the event truly special, and we look forward to sharing many more seasons of service together.



## Memorial/Honor Gift Certificate

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