

Why Do We Need Liberty House?

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Liberty House provides assessment, counseling and support for children and families facing concerns of abuse, neglect, trauma or grief.

That is our mission statement and it describes what we do. In conversation, we explain that we have medical providers, interviewers, family support specialists and therapists who have all had special training in the art of listening to children, developing a diagnosis, creating a treatment plan, and supporting the family in order to help heal the hurt. But why do we do these things? Let's talk about why.

In our community there is an excessive amount of pain and trauma resulting from many types of physical and sexual assaults on children, severe neglect, out of control cell phone texting attacks and online cruelty. The results of allowing this type of maltreatment to children are costly and plain to see in our community. Don't believe me? When was the last time you heard a teacher joyfully say that all the children in the classroom were consistently present, eager to learn, and achieving wonderfully? That's not what I hear. I hear teachers of all grades describing how overwhelmed they are by the out of control and, in some cases, sexualized behaviors they see in their classrooms. I hear school administrators and community leaders perplexed by rising absenteeism. I hear medical colleagues noticing a rise in childhood depression and suicidal ideation. I see young runaways walking the streets. I see communities saddened by an increasing number of completed youth suicides. I also see a failure to connect the dots. Allow me to help.

If you hurt children badly enough, they will do anything they need to do to avoid the pain. We grownups might see absenteeism as a problem but skipping school might be the simplest way to avoid the humiliating stares of a hallway of students who have seen a picture of you naked and tell you that you are fat, ugly and should kill yourself. We grownups see teen runaways as a problem, but many runaways see it as a solution: they are running away from abuse or rape and gaining control compared to the chaos they are used to. We grownups see youth suicide as a horrible trend, but for some youth, ending life means an end to the shame of childhood rape or the humiliation of a sext gone viral or the accrued pain of all of the above.

Let's be clear: childhood trauma, if left untreated, can prevent children from achieving their full potential and their dreams. In a rising number of cases, physical, sexual and online assaults can result in the end of life far too early, leaving behind a traumatized family and a worried community.

Thankfully, most children can heal with the right therapeutic intervention. In our Liberty House Clinic and Hope & Wellness counseling programs, we listen, we diagnose, we treat and we support. We bring compassion to pain and healing to hurt. With compassion and healing, we help change hurt into hope. We work with parents and caregivers to empower them with skills, knowledge and confidence to engage in more positive relationships with their children. Equally as importantly, we know that with the right public education, consciousness-raising and training, child maltreatment and online assaults can largely be prevented from happening at all. That is why Liberty House has launched a full prevention program designed to engage all members of the community in the movement to protect children and prevent abuse.

Healing trauma, preventing harm, strengthening families and helping young people get on the path to achieving their dreams: THAT is why we need Liberty House.