



2021 First Quarter Newsletter



Note from the Executive Director

Last year was something that left all of us in a state of shock, trying to figure out how to manage each day's responsibilities while focusing on our safety and the safety of everyone around us. Harbor House was forced to make sudden, and highly creative, changes to the way that we provided our services. From installing sneeze-guards in our interview rooms to providing tele-mental health sessions, I am proud to report that we did not miss a beat when it came to making sure that every abused child was provided the opportunity to share their story and receive the services and the support that they so desperately needed.

None of this would have been possible without the support that we receive from wonderful people like you. From our amazing Board of Directors, to our MDT partner agencies, to our overwhelmingly generous citizens...it takes all of us, standing together, to continue the fight against child abuse. You are the reason that Harbor House remains one of the best Child Advocacy Centers in the state, and for that I say, "Thank You!"

As we enter a new year, Harbor House staff continues to work hard and to support our children when they need it the most. We are extremely proud to be a part of this amazing team, and we cannot say thank you enough for your ongoing and dedicated support as we strive to meet our goal of ending child abuse in Floyd and Polk Counties.

Thank you,
Joseph J. Costolnick
Executive Director
Harbor House

Welcome Message from New Board President, Melissa Phillips!



Happy New Year! I know that each of you were happy to kick off 2021 with thankfulness as well as some optimism during such unique times. Those two feelings are exactly my thoughts about the staff at Harbor House as we continue to progress into the future. I have been involved with this excellent organization since 2014 and have seen it grow

into the well-run ship that it is today. I could not be happier with our Executive Director, Joe Costolnick, and the amazing staff that we have on board.

January was a busy month for everyone at Harbor House as they were preparing for a compliance review of our grants from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). I am happy to say that Harbor House "passed" with flying colors, meeting all required standards with zero findings! Joe and staff have done a remarkable job adjusting to new Covid-19 protocols, new state and federal regulations, while also being available to serve our clients and MDT partners on a 24/7 basis. I have every confidence that Harbor House will continue to exceed the expectations of those that they serve daily in 2021.

A little background on myself. I am a wife and mother of two 10-year-olds, a Volunteer Equestrian Team Coach for Berry College, the President of Townview Garden Club, and in my spare time I try to keep my own house and farm running smoothly. I have a degree in Sociology from the College of Charleston, and I spent my employed years in Human Resources before adopting my children and becoming a stay-at-home Mom. I have always had a heart and desire for helping those in need, and I feel like my time at Harbor House has allowed me to help the most fragile children in our community. I am beyond excited to step into the position of Board President for Harbor House for the 2021 and 2022 term!

As we push on through winter, I hope for ongoing health and continued safety for you, your families, and for our community.

Most sincerely yours,
Melissa Phillips

Harbor House 2020 Services Overview:

Harbor House was able to conduct 157 Forensic Interviews, provide 221 therapy sessions with children, 51 therapy sessions with non-offending caregivers, reach over 8 elementary schools and hundreds of children through our SAFE program, facilitate 24 MDT meetings, and host the annual Roman Rumble 5K!

COVID-19 Safety Protocols

To ensure the safety of our community and staff we have put in place the following protocols:

- Facial coverings are required
- Families are encouraged to limit the amount of people they bring to appointments
- Meetings are conducted over Zoom whenever possible
- Health screening conducted with all staff and visitors
- Enhanced cleaning protocols

Please consider donating to the mission of Harbor House. Your donation goes directly to the care of hundreds of children and no matter the amount, you make a difference.

You may donate in any of the following ways:



Donate via PayPal at the link found on Harbor House's website.

Or send a donation to
P.O. Box 5143 Rome, Ga. 30162

New Staff Welcome!

Sarah Erdman
I graduated from the University of Georgia with a bachelor's in early childhood education.



I taught in the Athens-Clarke County area while working with the Clarke County Special Olympics, providing volunteer work, leadership roles, and fundraising skills. I am proudly a "Double Dawg", where I earned my Master of Education in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, while also working in a CAC setting for 3 years! My favorite part of CAC work is seeing the resiliency of children and their families, as well as reminding others of the strengths and value that they have.