



News and Updates



Adapting - Pivoting - A new normal.

We have all heard these buzzwords over and over this year. **Elk Hill has spent the last 50 years adapting and pivoting to new challenges along the way.** We adapted in 2006 when then First Lady, Anne Holton, transformed foster care and asked us to serve less kids in group homes and more children in their communities. Over the last decade, Elk Hill pivoted our residential homes from an outdoor, behavioral modification program to trauma informed, clinical driven, therapeutic group homes. **Every day our dedicated staff adapt the way they teach, engage, and provide therapy to meet every child where they are in that moment.**



This fall was no different. **In the face of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Elk Hill's staff knew the impact on our youth and how they access the necessary support programs and treatment that help them, and their families, learn the skills to thrive.** Elk Hill's group homes, schools and community-based services have worked tirelessly to adapt.

A bold idea is what Pam Pitchford, Community Service Coordinator for the Richmond region, came up with. Pam saw that the youth who received emotional and behavioral support from our Community Service teams in their public-school systems would be entering the school year with an avalanche of barriers to success in virtual learning; distractions, access to reliable internet and technology, and caregivers who need to work out of the home. Working in partnership with Journey Christian Fellowship in Quinton, Richmond Community Services organized what we have lovingly coined, Elk Hill Academy. The makeshift academy, located in the church, welcomed 23 students on September 8. While the students learn virtually through New Kent Public Schools, the staff provide emotional and behavioral support in the classroom, as well as daily clinical groups and fun filled activities - all while socially distanced. In addition, staff worked with New Kent Public Schools to start a weekly food pickup program for the children and their families.

Our schools have remained open since Day 1 of this school year. Across Elk Hill's three schools, everyday upon arrival, over 90 masked K-12 students have their temperatures checked, they answer a short survey, and proceed directly to their classroom or designated work area. Our educators know that for many of our students to be successful this year, they need the structure, routine and support that our 8-students-to-a-classroom has always provided. During the summer, our educational team spent weeks

developing safety protocols, procedures, and an integrated learning plan both online and offline - ready to pivot to online, if needed. We are proud to say that we have had zero students test positive for COVID these past 2 months.

There is a new normal for our youth in Elk Hill's group homes. Often the youth that come to Elk Hill's group homes have been moved around a lot. For these boys and girls, these multiple transitions have severely impacted them academically, leaving them behind in reading and math, and often behind in school credits. Elk Hill's team decided to take virtual learning as an opportunity not only to help our youth keep up in their current class schedule, but help students catch up. Every one of our group homes now has a special education teacher available daily to support them while they are doing their synchronous and asynchronous learning with their public schools.

Elk Hill's ability to adapt, pivot, and settle into these new challenges is in a large part due to the ongoing support you, our donor, provides. Every dollar we have received from you has provided flexibility, allowing us to provide many of these educational services even in the face of limited, and often no, public funding. Elk Hill hopes to return to a sense of normalcy in our schools, residential homes, and community services sooner than later. However, until it is safe to do so, we will continue to adapt as leaders in the educational and behavioral health community for our youth – all thanks to your support!

To hear stories and see pictures as Elk Hill and our youth continue to adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic, like us on Facebook [@ElkHillVA](#).



One thing is for certain, the bond between student and staff has never been more important during these changing times. If you drive by or visit one of our schools or group homes, you will notice our signs that **'HEROES WORK HERE' – and we mean it!**

Missed the Virtual 50th Celebration?

You can watch online! Elk Hill celebrated the 50th anniversary of our first student arriving on the Goochland campus virtually on September 30 – many thanks to all that attended! You can still join in the celebration by viewing the 34-minute webinar on [YouTube](#). Watch students, alumni, board members, and staff share stories, successes, and challenges ahead - with a special musical



performance written by one of Elk Hill's youth.

Consider a Special Gift to the Scott & Farley Innovation Fund

Help us honor our past and celebrate the future of Elk Hill with a gift to our anniversary campaign. Your investment today allows Elk Hill to create a fund that ensures we can continue to help families transform overwhelming challenges into successful futures. To learn more please visit our website at elkhill.org or contact Erin Nord at enord@elkhill.org.



(above) This month, we were joined by Susie Scott, S. Buford Scott Jr., Mary Denny Wray, M. Bagley Reid, and Michael Farley for a tree planting and dedication in commemoration of Elk Hill's 50th Anniversary and in honor of Mr. S. Buford Scott, our founder and a champion for children.

Calling All Young Professionals!

Are you a young professional or “young at heart”? Do you live in the Central Virginia region? Are you looking to use your love for Elk Hill to give back and/or expand your resume? **Friends of Elk Hill is returning and wants to hear from you!**

Friends of Elk Hill, which disbanded about 10 years ago, is seeking interested individuals to serve on the 2021 class. Friends of Elk Hill will meet quarterly with various social activities, events, and subcommittees throughout the year. Candidates from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Visit our [website](#) to learn more!

Questions? Email Bartley Mullin, Elk Hill liaison to the Friends of Elk Hill at bmullin@elkhill.org or call 434-808-4031.

***Did you know?** Elk Hill's Board Chair, Charles E. Bradshaw, III, was a member of the former Friends of Elk Hill group!*

For the past 50 years Elk Hill has been rooted in our responsibility to advocate on behalf of the children and families we serve. We have and continue to be a voice for the voiceless. The upcoming election is a reminder that we, as citizens, can use our voice and play an active role in our society by simply voting. Due to COVID, and the anticipation of long lines on Election Day, we want to make things a little easier for

**YOUR VOTE
IS
YOUR VOICE**

Here is a [list](#) of important voter information based on your

you.

county.

ElkHill.org

