



**DATE:** January 4, 2022

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## **Chambliss Center for Children Celebrates 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Serving Chattanooga Families**

**Chattanooga, TN . . .** Established in 1872 by women from five churches in the Chattanooga area, Chambliss Center for Children is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. In addition to naming Katie Harbison as President & CEO in late 2021, the agency plans for program growth and a special celebration of their history throughout the year.

While Chambliss Center for Children operated as an orphanage for nearly 90 years, the agency changed its focus in the 1960's to meet the needs of the Chattanooga community by offering 24-hour child care. This program continues today on the main campus in Brainerd, providing early childhood education and extended child care for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old, primarily from lower-income, single-parent families. Additionally, the agency revolutionized a shared services model in the 1980's by partnering to operate six off-site childcare centers and offering on-site care for the children of teachers in 12 Hamilton County Schools. Chambliss Center for Children continued providing residential care after the transition away from orphanages by placing children who have been removed from their homes with safe and loving foster families. The agency's Transitional Living Program, established in 2017, provides stable housing and supportive case management for youth who have aged out of the foster care system at 18.

"This agency has an incredible 150-year history of support for all that we undertake," says Katie Harbison, newly named President and CEO of Chambliss Center for Children. "While we still struggle to recover from the negative effects the pandemic has had on our operations and our fundraising events, there are so many things to look forward to in 2022 as we continue to try and serve more children and families!"

The agency's newest endeavor is a partnership with Isaiah 117 House, an East Tennessee-based nonprofit that provides physical and emotional support in a safe and loving home environment for children awaiting foster care placement. The Isaiah 117 House at Chambliss Center for Children will be the first in Hamilton County, and is set to open at the end of 2022.

For 150 years, Chambliss Center for Children has evolved to continuously meet the needs of children and families in this community. Currently, the center and its management partners care for more than 750 children each day and employ over 300 employees. Chambliss Center for Children invites the community to join them in celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary all year with special events, community engagement opportunities, and partnerships.

### **About Chambliss Center for Children**

Chambliss Center for Children is a local non-profit organization that has been caring for this community's children 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year since 1872. The mission of the agency is to preserve family unity and to help prevent the dependency, neglect, abuse and delinquency of children by responding to the community's child care needs. This is done by providing affordable, accessible and quality care for over 750 children every day through an Early Childhood Education and Extended Child Care Program, as well as a Residential Program,

which recruits and trains foster families and operates a Transitional Living Program. The newest addition to the Residential program, the Isaiah 117 House at Chambliss Center for Children, is currently in development and will provide a welcoming space for children and teens to await foster or kinship placement after being removed from their homes due to abuse, abandonment, or neglect. The agency also manages six off-site childcare centers and educates and cares for the children of teachers in several Hamilton County Schools. For more information about Chambliss Center for Children, please visit [www.chamblisscenter.org](http://www.chamblisscenter.org) or call 423-698-2456.



Youth from The Children's Home pose after an Easter Egg hunt in 1937.



Local teenagers volunteer outside of The Children's Home main campus, located off Germantown Road in the 1960's.



Board members, children, and CEO Emeritus, Phil Acord, gather on a rock structure at the dedication of the new playground area in 1978.



Current photo of Chambliss Center for Children, formerly The Children's Home/Chambliss Center.



Current photo of children enrolled in Chambliss Center for Children's Extended Early Childhood Education Program.

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