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Local Foster Agency Recovering From Winter Weather Damage

Kentuckiana restaurants, corporations, and individuals answer call for assistance after severe damage to Boys & Girls Haven's main dining hall and commercial kitchen.

Louisville, KY – On January 2nd and 3rd, the main dining hall and commercial kitchen at Boys & Girls Haven were destroyed when frozen pipes burst and flooded the space. Thanks to local media coverage and advocacy from partners, the Kentuckiana community responded quickly to provide assistance.

“Once again, we are taken aback by the depth of generosity displayed by our community during this recent crisis,” says Boys & Girls Haven Chief Development Officer, Steve Luckett. “We are fielding calls, e-mails, and social media inquiries from every corner of Louisville.”

“Fortunately, none of our other plumbing was affected, so our kids are comfortable and safe in their cottages,” says Luckett. “The real challenge is adjusting our meals, schedules, and cooking methods. We’ll be cooking out of a small, home-sized kitchen until the commercial kitchen and dining hall are fully repaired, but our staff have made modifications to ensure a safe and workable space.”

Local companies like Texas Roadhouse, Kosair Charities, and Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Kentucky Medicaid have pledged over \$10,000 to help with immediate financial costs for equipment and adjustments to the temporary kitchen space.

“When we heard that the Boys & Girls Haven kitchen had incurred damage due to the weather, I immediately wanted to know what we could do to help ensure that the foster care youth, living at the site, have a warm meal or find out how Anthem Kentucky Medicaid could help with the renovation,” said Celia Manlove, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Medicaid president. “Foster youth already face hardships that no young person should experience, we hope our \$5,000 contribution will help return some normalcy and warmth to their lives when they break bread together,” added Manlove.

The Kentucky Restaurant Association also reached out early on to see how they could help. With their advocacy, dozens of local restaurants and national chains are providing dinners to help take the strain off of our staff. Texas Roadhouse, Louvino, Ramsi’s Café On the World, The Fat Lamb, Boombozz Craft Pizza & Taphouse, and Papa John’s were just a few of the restaurants offering catered meals in the immediate aftermath.

The agency is still assessing long term needs while waiting to hear from insurance adjusters, but it is expected that plumbing, electrical work, and fire suppression systems will all need to be completely replaced. According to Luckett, “We’ve already torn out dry wall and what was left of the ceiling. It’s going to be at least six weeks before we move back into the space.”

The [Boys & Girls Haven](#) residential program provides cottage-style housing for foster teens, aged 11 – 18, who are in need of a safe, stabilizing environment. In addition to experiencing extreme neglect and abuse in their homes of origin, most residents have passed through 12 – 16 placements before arriving on campus.

Since 1948, Boys & Girls Haven has transformed the lives of more than 6,000 abandoned, abused and neglected children by providing stability, education, and life skills that will lead to success in adulthood. We employ a multifaceted, therapeutic approach including residential and in-home foster care, independent living programs, career and life skills training, preventative community-based services, and a variety of other programs and services.

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