



**Contact:** Rebekah Farley  
[rfarley@boyshaven.org](mailto:rfarley@boyshaven.org)  
Boys & Girls Haven  
2301 Goldsmith Lane  
Louisville, KY 40218  
859-351-7384 (cell)  
502-458-1171 X109 (office)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Boys & Girls Haven Announces New Chief Executive Officer**

*Community leader returns to Louisville from San Diego to shepherd the 68 year old foster care agency.*

**Louisville, KY** – In September, Boys & Girls Haven announced the hiring of new CEO, Read Harris. Mr. Harris is just the sixth individual to lead the organization since opening their first cottage for abused and neglected teens on Goldsmith Lane in 1950.

Although he currently resides in San Diego, CA, Read Harris is a Louisville native. A graduate of Waggener High School, Harris holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Louisville and a Master of Public Administration from Western Kentucky University.

While service at a foster care agency may be new to Harris, the plight of kids suffering from abuse and neglect is one close to his heart. “This new mission is a very personal one for me,” says Harris. “It is a life mission. I’m coming home to give back to the community that saved my life.”

In the preface to *The Child Cried Alone*, Harris’ 2008 book documenting his own journey of discovery and recovery from childhood sex abuse, he states, “When I realized it was my time to heal, I promised myself I would find a way to give something back to the community for stepping forward and supporting me when I needed it most.”

Harris brings a strong legacy of leadership in both public and nonprofit service roles, including a career as an officer in the U.S. Army. After graduating from Officer Candidate School in 1985, he went on to serve as a Special Agent in U.S. Army Counterintelligence before retiring as a major in December 2001.

Upon retirement from the army, Harris accepted the position of Director of Community Health Services at the Louisville Metro Health Department before embarking on a lengthy career at the local, national, and international levels of the Red Cross. He served as Director of Health, Volunteer and Youth Services in Louisville, KY, Chief Services Officer in Columbus, OH, Division Preparedness Health and Safety Service Director (MI, IN, OH, KY, TN), and Red Cross Europe Division Director in Ramstein, GE. His most recent role as Service to the Armed Forces Division Director is headquartered out of San Diego and covers eight states comprising the American Red Cross Pacific Division.

“This transition is not about me,” says Harris. “The focus is to care for the children, to stay true to the mission, and to never deviate. I look forward to partnering with our compassionate staff, trustees, volunteers, supporters, and community partners to take the mission of Boys & Girls Haven to the next great stage.”

Boys & Girls Haven is indebted to Amanda Masterson, Boys & Girls Haven Director of Programs, for continuing to serve as interim CEO until Mr. Harris assumes the permanent role later this month.

***Boys & Girls Haven** is a full-service foster care agency located in Louisville, Kentucky. Since 1948, the 501c3 nonprofit has transformed the lives of more than 7,000 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, transitional and independent living programs, career and life skills training, preventative community-based counseling services, and a variety of other programs and services.*

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