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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Local Young Adults in Foster Care Lose Homes Due to Accidental Kitchen Fire

16 young people living in Boys & Girls Haven's Pre-Independent Living Program lost their apartments to fire and smoke and water damage.

Louisville, KY – In the early hours November 27th, 16 young people living in apartments in the Boys & Girls Haven Pre-Independent Living program on Klondike Lane lost their homes due to an accidental kitchen fire in one of the apartments in the building. No residents or staff were injured in the fire.

Boys & Girls Haven, a 501c3 nonprofit foster care agency, offers one of the few full Pre-Independent Living programs for boys and girls in the state of Kentucky. The program offers fully staffed and supervised dorm-style living to provide young adults, aged 17-21, with the independence, accountability, and support needed to successfully transition from foster care to adulthood. Each teen in the program has a private, one-bedroom apartment and access to 24/7 on-site youth counselors to provide guidance and care.

“While many of our young people made it out of the building with only the clothes on their backs, we are so thankful no one was hurt,” says Boys & Girls Haven CEO, Read Harris. “Our biggest concern right now is for the stability and safety of our young people. Most of these kids have experienced severe trauma and loss in their lives, so this incident is a significant additional challenge for them.”

The young people are currently being housed in the gym on the Boys & Girls Haven campus at 2301 Goldsmith Lane. According to Read, the American Red Cross responded quickly to help meet immediate needs for the youths, including cots, blankets, and emergency care kits. Says Read, “These unsung Red Cross heroes came in the middle of the night and provided both material support and kindness when it was needed most.”

“Right now, we are working on contacting our insurance company and assessing the overall damage. It may be a significant amount of time before we are able to house young people in the building again,” says Read. “With nearly 10,000 kids in foster care right now, the loss of a single bed is significant.”

From shoes and underwear, to cell phone charges and backpacks, Boys & Girls Haven is currently helping youth replace essential items. For individuals wishing to assist during the recovery process, donations of gift cards for clothing, technology (tablets, cell phones, etc.), and home goods would be appreciated as the young people work to replace lost property. Cash donations can also be made online at www.BoysAndGirlsHaven.org. Boys & Girls Haven is unable to accept used items or furniture at this time.

***Boys & Girls Haven** is a full-service foster care agency located in Louisville, Kentucky. Since 1948, the 501c3 nonprofit has transformed the lives of thousands of 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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