



## Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes

# Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes

## *Residential Care Program*

---

**Patrick Addison, Nicole Andrus, Shea Antunes, Bil Gardner,  
Laurie Gardner, and Ella Keeley**

### Organization and Program Overview

#### **Introduction to Organization**

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes was founded in 1891 in downtown Nashville to provide a safe home for orphaned children. Today, TBCH welcomes children in hard places with the love of Christ into safe, nurturing homes across the state. Our Foster Care Program works with the Tennessee Department of Children's Services to provide foster homes for children in the custody of the state. Our Residential Care Program serves children at three campuses, one in each region of Tennessee.

#### **Program Description**

Our Residential Care Program provides homes for children whose parents or guardians cannot currently provide the day-to-day care they need. Each campus home is staffed by a Christian couple who serve as houseparents for up to eight resident children. Placement of children in Residential Care is voluntary, and the length of stay varies widely depending on their circumstances and plans.

The goal of our Residential Care Program is for each child to thrive, and to provide structure, services, and other support to help them succeed in all areas of development. We help children and their families develop a set of goals, including reunification whenever possible, and provide a plan, support and resources to reach these goals.

Residents entering adulthood also have the opportunity to receive Independent Living services, which provide them with continued housing and other support as they apply life skills furthering their education in college, attending trade school, or joining the workforce.

## Intended Impacts

1. **Kids in our care improve their holistic well-being.** They experience food security, benefit from regular health care, and actively participate in counseling.
2. **Kids in our care experience the love of Christ.** They see adults model what it looks like to walk with Jesus on a daily basis through actions, daily devotions, church attendance, camps, and other Christian influences.
3. **Kids in our care progress educationally.** They progress academically and socially by participating in extra-curricular and church activities, through the practice of skills that positively influence their development.
4. **Kids in our care build and maintain healthy relationships.** They express the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
5. **Kids fourteen and up are prepared to transition into adulthood.** They practice life skills necessary to maintain independence.

## Evaluation Methodology

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact TBCH's Residential Care Program is having on the residents, aged 10-21, who have been in physical custody of TBCH's Residential Care Program for at least 12 months. To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having on residents?
2. What aspects of our program are causing this impact?

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of TBCH's Residential Care Program. Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and emotional changes in residents. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

## Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. We delimited our population to residents who were at least 10 years old and had been in the residential program for at least 12 months. Our population size for this evaluation was 30. Because the sample size was limited to 20 we chose not to use other stratified sampling techniques.

Our interview team consisted of Patrick Addison, Nicole Andrus, Bil Gardner, Laurie Gardner, and Ella Keeley. We conducted one-on-one interviews lasting between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data using voice recording or the Otter voice-to-text transcription app.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all of the interviews collectively. We identified the overarching and inter-interview themes that emerged from the full scope of our data analysis to illuminate the collective insights and discoveries. We mapped these themes visually and examined the dynamics among the themes, causes and catalysts of the themes, new or surprising insights related to the themes, and relationships between the themes that were revealed in the data. We then determined the most significant and meaningful discoveries and brought them forward as findings.

## **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We administered this instrument to 34 residents by widening the age limits to 5–21, and for all residents who have been here for any length of time. We had a response of 32 (number of people who responded), a 94% response rate. The data were analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns, and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

## **Limitations**

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. The sample size was relatively small, with 20 interviewees (average age 15, age range 10–19) and 32 survey respondents (average age 14, age range 5–19). The wide age ranges, especially among survey participants as young as five, introduce developmental differences that may affect comprehension and the ability to express views reliably. Additionally, interviewees had all been in care for at least a year, while survey respondents had been in care for varying lengths of time, potentially leading to inconsistent experiences and perspectives. Younger children, in particular, were provided with assistance to participate, which could influence their responses.

## **Findings**

### **Finding 1. Education: Residents at TBCH experience growth in academic progress and learn the importance of continuing education.**

The data reveal that residents at TBCH are making significant strides in their educational journeys, growing in confidence as they learn to navigate academic expectations and systems. Many now express a sense of worthiness when it comes to receiving a quality education—something they did not always believe prior to coming to TBCH.

This newfound self-belief, coupled with strong support from residential staff and case managers, has helped residents take ownership of their learning through both self-advocacy and a willingness to accept guidance from trusted adults. As a result, more residents are beginning to view higher education as a viable path, expressing interest in college, vocational training, and military service.

Despite these encouraging trends, some residents continue to struggle with consistent academic engagement, underscoring the need for individualized support and additional resources. Overall, residents are developing not only the skills but also the vision and motivation necessary to pursue educational success beyond high school.

### Key Qualitative Themes

- Residents grow in confidence in navigating the educational process.
- Residents feel more worthy of receiving quality education.
- Some residents still struggle with engaging in the academic process.
- Residents engage in self-advocacy at school and allow for adults to advocate on their behalf.
- Residents are identifying the importance of post-secondary education and want to attend post-secondary programs.

*I used to do good in school just to play sports...but now I'm getting to reap the reward of working hard academically.*

*At first, I didn't think school was very important. I mean, we have Google now. But I learned that school is actually very important. I don't wanna be a bum on the side of the road all my life.*

*Getting accepted into my first college... that was a huge deal for me. I was on cloud nine.*

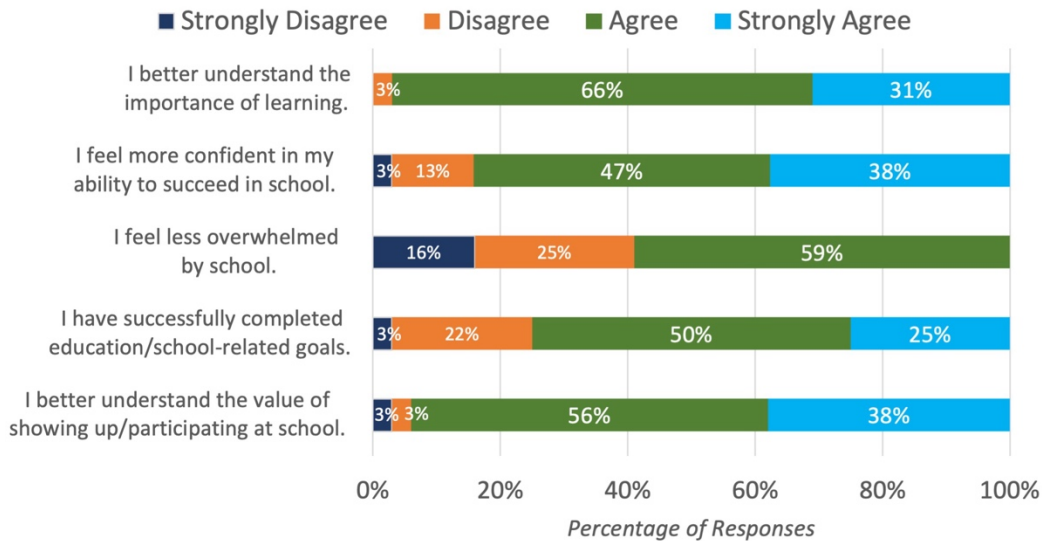
*I didn't really think I was going to be like, going to college or even graduating high school. But I'm here.*

*I feel like they've really let me feel like I can do well for my whole academic journey, like all the way through college.*

### Quantitative Insights

- 97% of surveyed residents now have a better understanding of the importance of learning, while 85% feel more confident in their ability to succeed in school (see Figure 1).
- However, despite this progress, 41% still feel overwhelmed by school, highlighting the challenges that remain.
- On a more positive note, 75% of residents have successfully completed educational and school-related goals, a testament to their hard work and determination.
- Furthermore, 94% of residents have gained a deeper understanding of the value of showing up and actively participating in school, emphasizing the role consistency and engagement play in their academic success.

Figure 1. Since being at TBCH, how has resident's school experience changed. (n=32)  
Since being at TBCH...



### Possible Responses

In order to further bolster the confidence of our residents as students, TBCH recognizes the need to reach out to the community and recruit more tutors. This support will play a key role in ensuring our residents are equipped with the skills and encouragement they need to succeed academically. Additionally, rising juniors should be exposed to a wide array of options for success after high school graduation. Whether it's pursuing a trade school, attending community college, joining the military, enrolling in a university, or entering the workforce directly, it's crucial to provide residents with a comprehensive understanding of their possibilities. To enhance this exposure, TBCH plans to facilitate one-on-one contact with successful adults who have navigated these diverse paths. This will offer residents real-life insights into each option, fostering motivation and inspiration. Furthermore, TBCH envisions developing college and career days on each campus, giving residents the chance to explore these pathways in more depth and prepare for the future with confidence.

### Finding 2. Spiritual Growth: Many children experience spiritual growth after living on a TBCH campus.

Residents are growing in their understanding of faith and spiritual practices. Their increasing exposure to the Bible, engagement in daily devotions, and participation in church and faith-based family activities reflect a shift toward deeper spiritual awareness and personal reflection. Through consistent guidance from adults who model biblical principles, many residents begin to experience the love of Christ and, in some cases, choose to become Christ followers.

These developments highlight the importance of creating nurturing environments where children can explore faith at their own pace and in accordance with their individual levels of understanding. While spiritual growth varies among residents, the consistent presence of gospel-centered teaching and

Christlike mentorship provides a strong foundation for lifelong faith. Overall, TBCH residents are being introduced to the hope of the gospel and are surrounded by opportunities to grow spiritually in a supportive, grace-filled community.

### Key Qualitative Themes

- Residents grow in their understanding of God's character.
- Residents recognize and extend grace to others.
- Residents learn to offer forgiveness.
- Residents are identifying the importance of spiritual disciplines.

*They're teaching me not to hold anything back from the Lord...to give it all to Him.*

*Learning that Jesus died on the cross... is more like to be chosen and not like an obligated thing... that relates to me more.*

*I remind myself what it says in the Bible, like God says I'm his child and he wouldn't change anything about me.*

*Thankful that He put [TBCH staff] in my life... He loves me so much more, which is like crazy, because I feel loved here.*

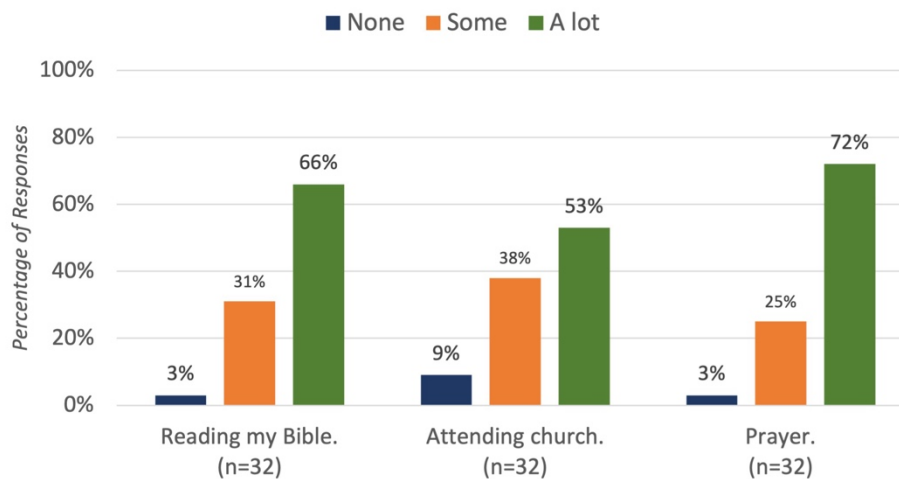
*I learned a lot about God and the Bible. We read the Bible front to back at the ranch, so I've definitely learned a lot of biblical knowledge and then a lot about applying it to my regular day.*

*I've grown so much that even when I don't do devotion with a family, I do my own daily devotion.*

### Quantitative Insights

- Over 90% of survey respondents report an increase in their ability to recognize the value of spiritual disciplines since being at TBCH, with the majority showing a significant improvement (see Figure 2).
- Specifically, 97% of surveyed residents better recognize the value of prayer and attending church, while 91% see the importance of reading their Bibles.

Figure 2. Spiritual Disciplines  
Since being at TBCH, I better recognize the value of...



### Possible Responses

While the data is encouraging, TBCH is committed to helping residents internalize these spiritual disciplines as part of their daily lives, not just during their time on campus. To support this, we plan to offer opportunities for older residents to lead house devotions, give all residents the chance to pray before meals, and encourage residents to pray for one another. Additionally, older residents who have shared their faith stories will be encouraged and trained to continue sharing their experiences, helping to deepen their personal connection to their faith and inspire others.

### Finding 3. Motivation: The residents at TBCH have demonstrated a notable development in their motivation, moving from extrinsic pressures to intrinsic drives.

Residents consistently described a transformational shift from external compliance to internal drive, fueled by deepening relationships and a growing sense of self-worth. These elements have played a central role in encouraging personal growth and goal achievement. As social bonds strengthened and spiritual guidance provided meaning and direction, intrinsic motivation emerged as a powerful foundation for sustained progress.

Throughout the interviews, residents shared that they are now accomplishing things they never believed possible – succeeding academically, forming and maintaining safe relationships, and recognizing both their own value and the value of others. This shift includes a deeper appreciation for learning and personal challenge, no longer seen merely as a pathway to rewards (e.g., sports participation or incentives), but as meaningful in and of themselves.

Many expressed a renewed sense of possibility, grounded in the realization of how far they've already come. When facing adversity, they feel empowered to persevere—not just to achieve something, but because they now recognize the inherent value in overcoming hardship. For these residents, the struggle itself has become a source of motivation and growth.

### Key Qualitative Themes

- Residents move from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation.
- Residents experience personal connections with others as a source of motivation.
- Residents naturally feel more motivated as they see their own self-worth.
- Residents' understanding of God's love and biblical principles fuels their desire to try harder and live better.

*Seeing other people achieve [health goals], then maybe I would want to achieve it also.*

*Before I was just doing it because I had to, and now I'm doing it because I know how much it will benefit me.*

*The relationships I have with other people, knowing that they're counting on me...I don't want to let other people down.*

*My view of myself wasn't that high when I got to TBCH, so now it's part of the reason that I try.*

### Quantitative Insights

Additional findings reinforce the idea that residents are developing a deeper appreciation for the value of consistent participation and the importance of learning. As illustrated in Figure 1, the data reflects increased engagement and a shift in mindset—residents are showing up more regularly and expressing a clearer understanding of why learning matters, beyond external rewards.

### Possible Responses

TBCH would like to begin inviting families of origin to participate in *positive staffings*—strengths-based conversations that highlight residents' progress and growth. These meetings intentionally focus on achievements and positive behaviors, rather than areas of concern or deficit, helping to reinforce supportive family connections and shared encouragement. TBCH also seeks to establish regular *nurture groups*—small, supportive group sessions designed to foster emotional and social development. These groups create safe spaces for residents to share, reflect, and build healthy peer relationships, while also reinforcing emotional regulation and interpersonal skills.

### **Finding 4. Empathy: The residents at TBCH are developing significant emotional maturity through empathy.**

Residents are demonstrating a growing capacity for empathy, as evidenced by their increasing ability to understand others' feelings, practice forgiveness, and live by principles like the golden rule. These shifts indicate a move toward healthier relationships and deeper emotional connections. Importantly, residents are also learning to apply this same compassion inward—recognizing the value of self-care and forgiving themselves for past actions that caused harm.

This emerging empathy is closely tied to the supportive environments in which residents are placed. Many, especially those in the Independent Living program (ages 14 and up), report feeling connected to a community that encourages emotional reflection and growth. They frequently spoke about



recognizing a range of emotions in others and emphasized the significance of forgiveness as a means of healing and moving forward.

These findings align with research by Xu, Liu, Gong, and Wu<sup>1</sup>, which identified a “significant positive correlation...between empathy and secure attachment.” This research underscores the critical role of a supportive community in cultivating empathy and fostering secure, emotionally healthy relationships.

### Key Qualitative Themes

- Residents recognize the importance of not judging others too quickly.
- Residents develop a need to treat others as they wish to be treated.
- Residents grow in their ability to see others’ pain.
- Residents develop a desire to give and receive forgiveness.

*When you care for others, it teaches you to care for yourself, too.*

*Now I'm willing to work stuff out even after I've been hurt, and I'm willing to forgive people.*

*Even if I don't like the person...I care if they're upset.*

*I feel like I'm a little more self-aware when I talk to people, so I don't judge right off...I hold a higher value for people and myself.*

*I used to gossip, and I realized it's hurtful, so I'm trying to change that around.*

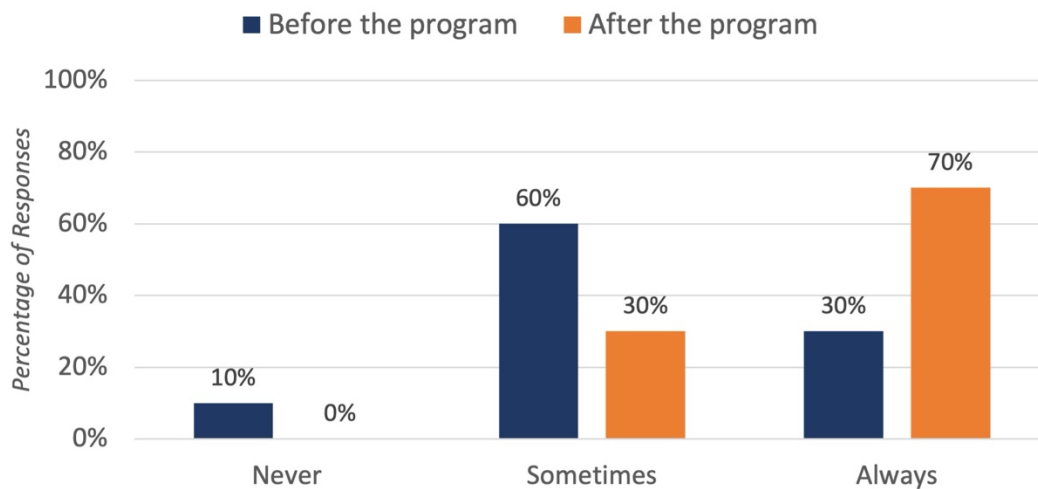
### Quantitative Insights

- 100% of surveyed residents in the Independent Living Program report that, after the program, they *at least sometimes* feel consistently connected to a community of support (see Figure 3).
- 70% report that they *always* feel this sense of connection.
- In contrast, only 30% reported feeling consistently connected to a community of support prior to arriving at TBCH.
- This shift highlights the powerful role of a stable, supportive environment in fostering emotional connection resulting in an increase in empathy for self and others.

---

<sup>1</sup> Xu X, Liu Z, Gong S, Wu Y. The Relationship between Empathy and Attachment in Children and Adolescents: Three-Level Meta-Analyses. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022 Jan 26;19(3):1391. doi: 10.3390/ijerph19031391. PMID: 35162410; PMCID: PMC8835466.

Figure 3. Residents in the Independent Living Program felt/feel consistently connected to a community of support. (n=20)



#### Possible Responses

Involving residents in volunteer work beyond their church communities can help foster empathy across a broader range of people.

#### **Finding 5. Future-Oriented Thinking: TBCH residents are developing a future-oriented mindset, characterized by goal setting, personal responsibility, and hope for long-term success.**

Through their experiences at TBCH, residents talked about shifting from short-term, externally motivated actions to long-term, internally driven goals. In the interviews, many now express intentional plans for their education, careers, and independent living. This mindset includes both practical preparation, such as budgeting, setting academic and career goals, and planning for housing, as well as increased emotional resilience and belief in their ability to succeed. Residents demonstrate not only hope for the future but also a willingness to take steps today to build the life they envision.

#### Key Qualitative Themes

- Residents describe a move from doing things because they have to (obligation), toward doing things because they want to achieve long-term success (purpose).
- Residents articulate clear goals—college, careers, independence—and are taking steps to prepare for them.
- Residents express hope and belief that their efforts now will produce future stability and success.

*I feel like I'm going to be in a really good state because...I'm learning things that are going to help me in the long run.*

*I'm hopeful I'll become successful. I think I can do it...own my own house, start a family, be the father I want to be.*

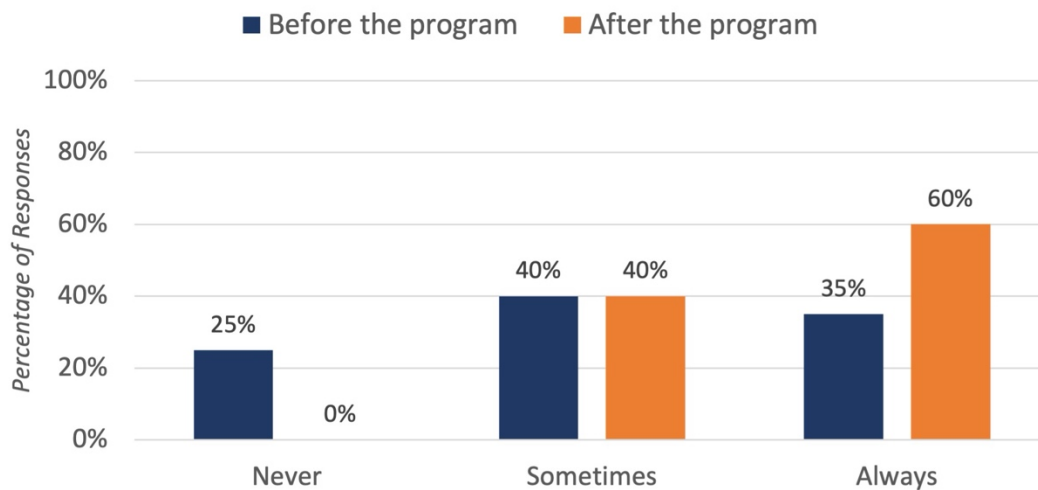
*I went from not wanting to go to college to now I'm planning on going for more than four years.*

*I'm already thinking about, like, what do I need for an apartment when I move out.*

### Quantitative Insights

- Before coming to TBCH, 25% of surveyed residents in the Independent Living Program had never experienced a hopeful vision of their future (see Figure 4).
- In fact, only 35% reported that they consistently felt hopeful about what lay ahead.
- However, since arriving at TBCH, that outlook has dramatically changed. Now, 100% of residents say they at least sometimes have a hopeful vision for their future, with 60% reporting they always do.
- These numbers reflect a powerful transformation and highlight the critical role TBCH plays in helping residents rebuild not only their lives, but also their sense of hope and possibility.

Figure 4. Residents in the Independent Living Program had/have a hopeful vision for my future. (n=20)



### Possible Responses

Residents aged 14 and up consistently recognize staff members as their primary community of support at TBCH. However, being future-oriented means helping our residents build connections beyond TBCH as well. It's not just about having support; it's about equipping residents with the skills to develop their own sustainable communities of support outside of our organization. With this in mind, TBCH plans to recruit mentors for residents receiving Independent Living services. These mentors will serve as valuable role models, guiding residents as they transition to adulthood and empowering them to cultivate lasting, meaningful relationships that will continue to support them long after their time at TBCH.

### Finding 6. Healthy Boundaries: Residents at TBCH have learned how to create healthy boundaries with their family, peers, and authority.

Residents are developing a clearer understanding of healthy boundaries in relationships with family, peers, and authority figures. Their growing ability to recognize both healthy and unhealthy dynamics,

verbalize the traits of respectful interactions, and apply these insights in daily life reflects a shift toward stronger relational awareness and emotional maturity.

Additionally, many residents are discovering that positive relationships with parent figures are possible, even when previous experiences suggested otherwise. These developments illustrate the importance of cultivating safe, supportive environments where youth can learn and practice healthy relational skills.

While progress is evident, there remains opportunity for growth, particularly in strengthening collaboration within each child's support team, including family members, case managers, and houseparents. Overall, TBCH residents are learning to establish boundaries that foster trust, respect, and personal well-being.

### **Key Qualitative Themes**

- Residents learn to create healthy boundaries with peers.
- Residents learn to create healthy boundaries with family.
- Residents learn to create healthy boundaries with authority.

*A safe person is someone doing the right things for the right reasons.*

*I'm, like, more protective over my purity...not even just physically...a lot of my friends know now they can't joke about certain things with me.*

*Someone who's trustworthy...someone who respects you and doesn't hold stuff over your head.*

*You want to have good boundaries, but you also don't want to, like, push your friends out.*

*I was told I had RAD and would never have a relationship with a parent figure...but being here helped me see maybe they weren't right.*

### **Quantitative Insights**

- Response themes from the survey question, "List 3 words you have learned to describe a healthy relationship since being at TBCH" (n=32):
  - Trust – Mentioned multiple times (e.g., Trust, Trustworthy, Knowing I can go to them anytime), indicating it's a key foundation.
  - Communication – Repeated and highlighted in different forms (Communication, Talking things out, Interested in what I am talking about), showing its importance in connection and understanding.
  - Supportiveness – Reflected in terms (Supportive, Helps me, Comforts me, and Makes sure I'm okay), suggesting emotional presence and care are highly valued.

### **Possible Responses**

TBCH wants to strengthen healthy boundaries within the support system for residents and their families. First, we plan to involve families in counseling sessions during a resident's stay, helping to establish healthy boundaries that extend beyond reunification. Including families of origin in staff training, especially around trauma-informed practices, could provide a unified approach to supporting the

residents in maintaining healthy boundaries. TBCH envisions a future where families are part of regular positive staffings with their child's program team, further fostering collaboration and support of healthy boundaries for the entire family.

### **Finding 7. Improved Health: Residents at TBCH experience improved health since living on a TBCH campus.**

Residents are experiencing notable improvements in their physical health. Their growing awareness of personal hygiene, access to nutritious meals, and increased opportunities for physical activity reflect a shift toward healthier daily habits and routines. Guided by case managers and house parents, residents are learning the value of consistent self-care and making choices that support their overall well-being.

These developments highlight the importance of structured support in promoting lifelong health habits. While many residents express a desire to grow further in their physical wellness, the foundation being built at TBCH provides them with the tools and encouragement to do so. Overall, TBCH residents are embracing healthier lifestyles and gaining the knowledge and support needed to maintain their well-being.

#### **Key Qualitative Themes**

- Residents have nutritious food available.
- Residents engage in healthy daily hygiene habits.
- Residents receive guidance from case managers.
- Residents are encouraged to engage in physical activities.

*[My houseparents] helped me eliminate some of my bad habits...that's helped me become a healthier person.*

*I eat a lot of salad and good food that [the houseparents] make.*

*Probably eating more healthy food than I used to before, like more vegetables.*

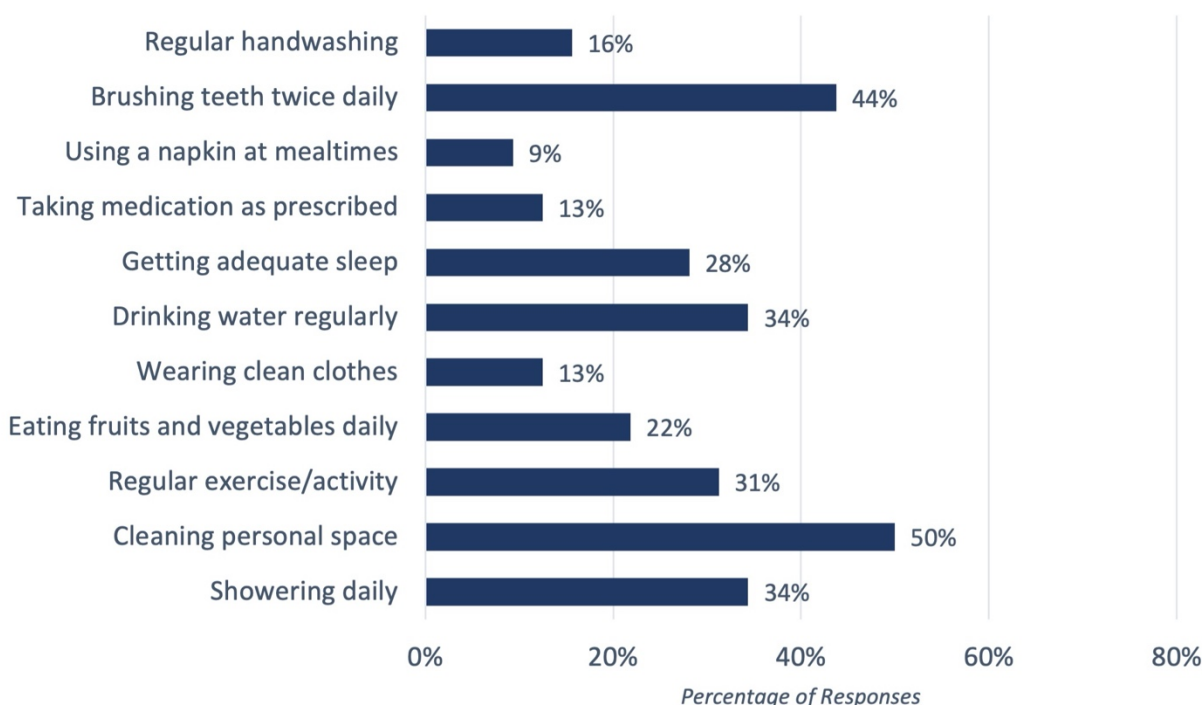
*Make sure to walk nearly every day...and probably just simple hygiene things because like before that was not really a thing.*

*I've made a bigger commitment to the gym, so I've been going to the gym a lot more for my physical health and mental.*

#### **Quantitative Insights**

- Since coming to TBCH, residents surveyed reported learning several healthy habits (see Figure 5). The top three habits learned are:
  - cleaning personal space (50%)
  - brushing teeth twice daily (44%)
  - showering daily and drinking water regularly (34% each)

Figure 5. Since coming to TBCH I have learned following healthy habits (choose 3). (n=32)



#### Possible Responses

Since only 31% of our residents have adopted regular exercise or activity as a healthy habit, TBCH plans to introduce a scheduled time for weekly exercise. While 50% of residents recognize the value of cleaning their personal space, only 13% have adopted the healthy habit of wearing clean clothes. This disparity will be addressed by focusing on increasing residents' sense of self-worth and helping them understand the importance of maintaining this habit for their overall well-being.

#### **Finding 8. Trust: Residents at TBCH experience an increased ability to trust safe adults and peers.**

Residents are learning how to identify safe people and what it means to build trust. Their increasing ability to recognize trustworthy adults, experience healthy relationships, and open themselves to care and support reflects a shift toward emotional safety and relational growth. Through consistent, compassionate interactions with staff and caregivers, many residents begin to develop trust in ways they had not before. These developments emphasize the importance of stable, nurturing environments in helping children rebuild their sense of security.

While many residents are becoming more confident in trusting others, some still wrestle with vulnerability and emotional openness, highlighting the need for ongoing support. Overall, TBCH residents are learning to navigate relationships with greater confidence, discernment, and hope for safe, supportive connections.

## Key Qualitative Themes

- Residents learn to recognize and experience growth in healthy relationships.
- Residents are allowing others to care for them.
- Residents are identifying the importance of trust in relationships.
- Residents continue to struggle with the vulnerability required for deep relationships.

*[On being diagnosed with RAD. She was told she would never have meaningful relationships with adults.] I think that ...I tried to stay in a box...I'm never going to [have good relationships] so I'm not going to try. I think being here...changed my view... And maybe I do, like need relationships like that.*

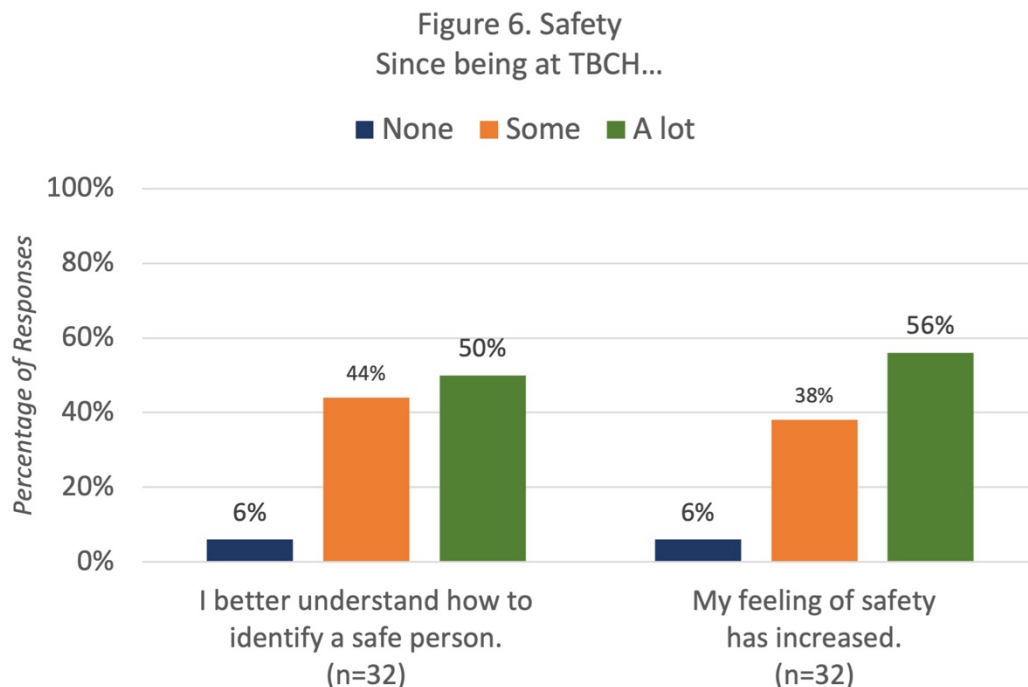
*I felt [prior to TBCH] like the more, you know people, or the more people know you, the worse the relationship gets. Being here has caused me to see, like, that's not true because I've known some of these people since I was little.*

*I can tell [my case manager] cares about me, because if she didn't, she wouldn't take the time out of her job to, like, call me down to the office to talk to me about, like, my goals.*

*I think you shouldn't really hang around people that make you feel uncomfortable, like, if they do stuff to you that you don't feel comfortable with you should just tell someone.*

## Quantitative Insights

- 94% of residents surveyed report that they now better understand how to identify a safe person and have experienced an increased sense of safety since being at TBCH, with over 50% reporting a significant increase in both areas (see Figure 6).



### Possible Responses

To help residents overcome ongoing struggles with the vulnerability required for deep relationships, TBCH case managers could begin facilitating small groups that use role-play scenarios. These sessions would allow residents to practice identifying who can be trusted and how to respond in situations where they feel unsafe, building both confidence and relational skills in a supportive environment.

### **Finding 9. Self-Confidence: Residents at TBCH are becoming more confident in their abilities to succeed academically, socially, and professionally.**

Residents are experiencing meaningful growth in self-confidence. Their increasing belief in their ability to succeed—both academically and socially—reflects a broader shift toward greater self-worth and personal empowerment. Through active participation in school and faith communities, deeper relationships with God, and everyday accomplishments such as maintaining personal spaces and trying new things, residents are learning to value themselves and their potential. These developments are further supported by the example of houseparents, who model healthy boundary-setting and teach residents to do the same. As a result, residents are becoming more hopeful about their futures and more confident in their ability to achieve their goals. Overall, the data demonstrate a strong trend of growing self-assurance, resilience, and purpose among TBCH residents.

### Key Qualitative Themes

- Residents are more confident in their ability to succeed in school.
- Residents are growing in their confidence for their future.
- Many residents are becoming more confident in setting safe boundaries with others.
- Residents at TBCH experience an increase in self-worth.
- Residents acknowledge that self-improvement takes time and effort, and they're beginning to take ownership of that process.

*I want to be who I am in all circles...not change just to fit in.*

*My mom always told me I couldn't do anything, but now I'm making A's and B's, and I have applied to some colleges.*

*At first it was kind of weird [having tutors], but they've helped boost my confidence in school, which helps me out with everything.*

*I didn't think I was gonna make anything of myself. Now I know I'm smart enough to go to college and actually be successful.*

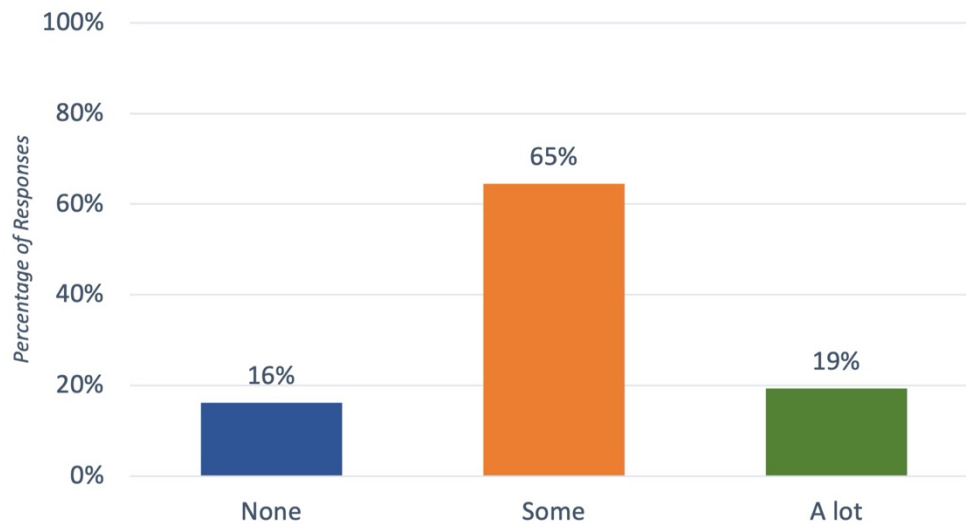
*I feel like [at TBCH] I can go baby steps and get what I need to get.*



## Quantitative Insights & Charts

- 84% of residents surveyed reported at least some decrease in anxiety since coming to TBCH (see Figure 7). Research by Guo and Lai et al. (2023)<sup>2</sup> found that “low self-esteem and anxiety symptoms bidirectionally predicted each other,” suggesting a close connection between the two. Based on this, the significant reduction in anxiety among residents can be interpreted as an indicator of increased self-esteem and confidence.

Figure 7. Since coming to TBCH, my anxiety has decreased. (n=31)



## Possible Responses

To continue building self-confidence, TBCH aims to provide residents with opportunities within the community that gently stretch them beyond their comfort zones while keeping them supported within the safety of campus. Additionally, case managers should intentionally take time during the quarterly Individualized Program Plan (IPP) review process to reflect on and celebrate each resident’s successes, reinforcing growth and encouraging continued progress.

## Conclusion

### Insights Into Impact

Evaluating our Residential Care program has been a journey of rewarding encouragement and challenging discoveries, which has led us to a more robust understanding of how impactful our work is in the lives of the children we serve. Clearly children in our program begin to thrive in many areas of development, but this evaluation has given us a fresh motivation to improve and innovate, believing

---

<sup>2</sup> Li, W., Guo, Y., Lai, W. *et al.* Reciprocal relationships between self-esteem, coping styles and anxiety symptoms among adolescents: between-person and within-person effects. *Child Adolesc Psychiatry Ment Health* 17, 21 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13034-023-00564-4>

that our work is both biblically mandated and inherently good for the children and the communities in which they will live.

Although collecting data through interviews with children can be an exercise in patience, the interviews were a rich source of insight for us. Throughout the interview process, we recorded a pattern of children expressing increased self-awareness and empathy in various ways. Similarly, the survey data showed that the children experienced improvements in areas of self-improvement, which led to an increased feeling of hope for their futures. In many cases, this could be attributed to the spiritual component of our program, and the modeling of Christian faith by adults with whom they interact.

The data we analyzed also revealed that residents are becoming increasingly aware of their personal growth academically, emotionally, and behaviorally. Through consistent practice, persistence, and positive reinforcement, they are gaining confidence and beginning to see themselves as capable individuals. This development is often anchored in the supportive, structured environment at TBCH, where residents are both challenged and encouraged. These experiences provide the space needed for meaningful growth and self-discovery, reinforcing the belief that they are capable of success and personal transformation. Residents identified measurable improvements in their school performance, which boosts their self-esteem and sense of capability, and expressed an increase in thinking and acting more responsibly, demonstrating an increased readiness for adulthood.

## **Steps Forward**

This evaluation served as a catalyst to explore potential areas of improvement and innovation. We can now begin to fill in the gaps we have identified in the microcosm of campus life and make space for more interaction between residents and non-staff adults from the community. This would include recruiting more tutors and mentors, and scheduling college tours, guest speakers and career day events.

We also see the need to allow residents to practice agency in the impact we hope to see in their lives. This can be achieved through leadership development opportunities like allowing children to lead devotions, role-play scenarios for building trust in relationships, and involvement in the decision-making process for group and individual goals or projects. Additionally, we can strive to encourage parents and custodians to take active roles in their children's plans beyond current expectations to include training, counseling, and positive staffing sessions.

## **Opportunities for Future Evaluation**

Our evaluation and findings were limited to our Residential Care program, which accounts for roughly half of the children we serve. Going forward, our intent is to expand this evaluation process to include our Foster Care program, and to be incorporated into our four-year accreditation cycle. We also expect that our findings will inform future updates to procedures relevant to training, recruitment, communication with stakeholders, and the services we provide to the children in our care.

## Appendices

### Appendix A - Indicators of Impact

<b>Direct Impact #1</b> – Kids in our care improve their holistic well-being.	
<b>What we mean:</b> They experience food security, benefit from regular health care, and actively participate in counseling.	
<b>E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)</b> <b>Know</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize they have access to consistent food and shelter</li> <li>Learning about general health practices and/or the importance of those practices</li> </ul> <b>Do</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice daily hygiene/health skills</li> </ul> <b>Feel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in felt safety</li> <li>Decrease in anxiety</li> </ul>	<b>E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)</b> <b>Believe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believe there are safe/trustworthy adults</li> </ul> <b>Become</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become more confident in caring for themselves</li> </ul> <b>Love</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-acceptance</li> <li>Themselves enough to care well for their overall well-being</li> </ul>

<b>Direct Impact #2</b> – Kids in our care experience the love of Christ.	
<b>What we mean:</b> They see adults model what it looks like to walk with Jesus daily through actions, daily devotions, church attendance, camps, and other Christian influences.	
<b>E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)</b> <b>Know</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize the value of spiritual disciplines</li> <li>Aspects of the character of God</li> <li>Know the gospel</li> </ul> <b>Do</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend church regularly</li> <li>Participation in regular devotions</li> <li>Observe corporate prayer</li> </ul> <b>Feel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Felt safety</li> <li>More hopeful</li> </ul>	<b>E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)</b> <b>Believe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worthy of being loved</li> <li>In the value of others (image bearers)</li> </ul> <b>Become</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More empathetic of others</li> <li>More trusting of safe adults</li> </ul> <b>Love</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A relationship with Jesus</li> <li>Love God and others</li> <li>Living a life committed to Biblical principles</li> </ul>

<b>Direct Impact #3</b> – Kids in our care progress educationally.	
<b>What we mean:</b> They progress academically and socially by participating in extra-curricular and church activities, through the practice of skills that positively influence their development.	
<b>E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)</b> <b>Know</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Importance of learning</li> <li>Showing up/participation is valuable</li> </ul> <b>Do</b>	<b>E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)</b> <b>Believe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capable of learning</li> <li>Others will/should advocate for them</li> </ul> <b>Become</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently participate/advance in school activities</li> <li>experience accountability</li> </ul> <p><b>Feel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful–accomplishing goals</li> <li>Less overwhelmed by academic endeavors</li> <li>Confident in their educational abilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competent in general academic skills</li> <li>Motivated to engage in the academic process</li> </ul> <p><b>Love</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lifelong learning</li> </ul>
--	--

<b>Direct Impact #4</b> – Kids in our care build and maintain healthy relationships.	
<b>What we mean:</b> They express the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships.	
<p>E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)</p> <p><b>Know</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to identify safe people</li> <li>Characteristics of healthy relationships</li> <li>Characteristics of unhealthy relationships</li> </ul> <p><b>Do</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate boundaries with other</li> <li>Show respect (others)</li> </ul> <p><b>Feel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confident in their ability to maintain healthy relationships</li> </ul>	<p>E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)</p> <p><b>Believe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They are worthy of respect</li> <li>Healthy relationships are worth the work</li> <li>Worthy of safe relationships</li> </ul> <p><b>Become</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vulnerable with safe people</li> <li>Self-protective with unsafe people</li> </ul> <p><b>Love</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being in healthy relationships</li> </ul>

<b>Direct Impact #5</b> – Residential kids fourteen and up are prepared to transition into adulthood.	
<b>What we mean:</b> They practice life skills necessary to maintain independence.	
<p>E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)</p> <p><b>Know</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic life skills</li> <li>The importance of education, the workplace, and beyond</li> <li>Different paths to independence</li> </ul> <p><b>Do</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently connect to a community of support</li> <li>Ask for help when they need it</li> </ul> <p><b>Feel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hopeful vision for their future</li> <li>Less overwhelmed when connected to a community of support</li> </ul>	<p>E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)</p> <p><b>Believe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capable of being a successful adult</li> <li>Benefits of delayed/deferred gratification</li> </ul> <p><b>Become</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confident in their ability to live independently</li> </ul> <p><b>Love</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committed to a pattern of behavior that positively influences their future</li> </ul>

## **Appendix B - Qualitative Interview Protocol**

What kind of things have you done, since being at TBCH, to be healthy? What habits do you wish you could implement? → How has this impacted your motivation to take care of yourself and your health? (Do/Become)

What has been frustrating about learning/implementing healthy habits? What about being healthy (healthier) excites you? → How has being here helped you commit to a healthier lifestyle? (Feel/Love)

What have you learned about Biblical principles since being at TBCH? What do you wish you knew more about? → How has that changed how you view yourself as someone deserving of love? (Know/Believe)

In what ways have you been participating more in church & devotional activities since being at TBCH? → How has this changed the ways you approach and interact with others in your life? (Do/Become)

In what ways are you experiencing the love of Christ since being at TBCH? → How has this changed your love for God and others in your life? In what ways do you still struggle to see yourself this way? (Feel/Love)

How have you come to better recognize the importance of education that you didn't understand before you came to TBCH? → How has this changed your ability to see yourself as a capable learner? When do you still struggle to see yourself this way? (Know/Believe)

In what ways do you feel more confident at school since being at TBCH? What still worries you or stresses you out about school? → How has this helped you commit to your academic journey? (Feel/Love)

What have you learned about what a safe person looks like since being at TBCH? → How has that changed the way you think about placing your trust in people? (Know/Believe)

What steps have you taken to establish healthy boundaries in your relationships since being with TBCH? What do you find hard about establishing boundaries with others? → How have you grown in your ability to connect with safe people? And protect yourself from unsafe people? What needs to happen for you to continue to grow in this area? (Do/Become)

What gives you confidence, since being at TBCH, in your ability to connect with people? What still scares you about connecting with people? → How are you now more committed to relationships even when they are tough? (Feel/Love)

What are the lessons you've learned about transitioning to independence since being at TBCH? What community, outside of TBCH, have you identified to help you with challenging steps in your transition to independence? What is still confusing/difficult to understand? → How has this changed your perspective on your ability to be a successful adult in the future? (Know/Believe)

What steps have you taken to prepare for your own transition to independence? What have you been hoping to do, but haven't had the time or motivation? → In what ways has this affected your confidence in your ability to transition to independence? (Do/Become)

What are you hopeful about in your future that you weren't hopeful about before coming to TBCH? What still feels overwhelming about your future? → What keeps you moving forward when you don't feel hopeful? (Feel/Love)

## Appendix C - Quantitative Survey

### Project Impact Resident Survey

1. List 3 qualities of God that you have learned since being at TBCH?

--	--	--

2. List 3 words you have learned to describe a healthy relationship since being at TBCH?

--	--	--

3. What is the first thing you think of when you hear “the Gospel” since being at TBCH?

--

### Since being at TBCH

4. My feelings of safety have increased.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

5. My anxiety has decreased.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

6. I better recognize the value of prayer.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

7. I better recognize the value of reading my Bible.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

8. I better recognize the value of attending church.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

9. I better understand how to identify a safe person.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

**Since coming to TBCH, I have learned following healthy habits  
(choose top 3):**

- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Brushing teeth twice daily         | Regular handwashing             |
| Eating fruits and vegetables daily | Wearing clean clothes           |
| Showering daily                    | Changing undergarments daily    |
| Cleaning personal space            | Regular exercise/activity       |
| Using a napkin at mealtimes        | Taking medication as prescribed |
| Getting adequate sleep             | Drinking water regularly        |

**Before being at TBCH**

10. I participate in regular devotions.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

11. I was confident I could maintain healthy relationships.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

12. I had accountability that helped me succeed in school.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

**Since being at TBCH**

13. I participate in regular devotions.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

14. I am confident I can maintain healthy relationships.

**None                  Some                  A lot**

15. I have accountability that helps me succeed in school.

**None                  Some                  A lot**



## Since being at TBCH

16. I better understand the importance of learning.			
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
17. I more consistently participate in school activities.			
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
18. I better understand the value of showing up/participating at school.			
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
19. I feel less overwhelmed by school.			
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
20. I feel more confident in my ability to succeed in school.			
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
21. I have successfully completed education/school-related goals.			
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

## Independent Living Questions (Residents 14+)

1. List 3 options that lead to independence you have learned about in the IL?

--	--	--

2. List 3 resources/people you have learned you can ask for help when you need it since being in IL?

--	--	--

3. What are the 3 most important life skills that you have learned since entering IL?

--	--	--

### Before entering the IL at TBCH

4. I felt consistently connected to a community of support.

**Never**                      **Sometimes**                      **Always**

5. I had a hopeful vision for my future.

**Never**                      **Sometimes**                      **Always**

### Since entering the IL at TBCH

6. I feel consistently connected to a community of support.

**Never**                      **Sometimes**                      **Always**

7. I have a hopeful vision for my future.

**Never**                      **Sometimes**                      **Always**