

Diamond Anniversary: Sunnybrook Celebrates 60 Years of Providing a Safe Haven for Foster Youth

Sunnybrook provides far more than lodging and food, creating a unique ecosystem for transitional-aged foster care residents that call its Ridgeland campus home.

RIDGELAND, MISSISSIPPI, U.S.A., January 31, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Sunnybrook](https://www.sunnybrook.org) is thrilled to announce the 60th anniversary of its founding, a milestone that marks six decades of providing safe and nurturing homes for foster children and their families.

Since its inception as a nonprofit ministry in 1963, Sunnybrook's staff, volunteers and partners have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of foster children and families. Over the years, the greatest need in this community has shifted from housing young children to supporting adolescents and young adults who are about to age out of foster care services.

"It was increasingly older teens and young adults who were being lost in the system, contributing to a bleak outlook for foster graduates," explained Sunnybrook Executive Director Dr. Myrle Grate. "These young people face significant struggles to become productive adults, due to poor education, unaddressed psychological



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The 60th Anniversary logo for Sunnybrook, founded in 1963 to serve foster children and their families in Mississippi.

issues, and myriad other obstacles.

“These factors combine for rates of pregnancy, addiction, incarceration and early death that are dramatically higher than their peers from stable homes. In many cases, Sunnybrook is the first time these individuals have felt the love of a stable, Christian, family environment.”

Sunnybrook provides far more than lodging and food, creating a unique ecosystem for transitional-aged residents. Its services are tailored to address the modern breakdown of our cultural systems, which were not areas of concern at Sunnybrook’s founding.



You can help support society's most vulnerable members by donating household goods, needed funding, and your valuable time at our Ridgeland, Mississippi campus.

“It’s just the best thing that ever happened to me and my family,” former Sunnybrook youth and houseparent Bubba Martin said of his time at Sunnybrook. “This is the greatest place on earth.”

Sunnybrook’s nurturing ecosystem offers:

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We are grateful for the support of our donors, volunteers, staff, and community partners, without whom we could not provide safe and loving homes for society’s most vulnerable members.”

*Sunnybrook Executive Director
Dr. Myrle Grate*

- Safety and privacy, especially in a digital landscape;
- An emphasis on educational attainment and trade skills;
- Job placement and financial literacy training;
- Adapting our housing and facilities to meet modern needs;
- Responsibility and self-reliance to exit the cycle of dependency;
- Christian values in a family environment.

“I wish they could start more transitional living facilities across the state of Mississippi because what they have there is incredible,” CASA of North Mississippi Executive Director Erin Smith said about Sunnybrook. “They have

moved from what they used to do many years ago into teaching these kids to live independently.”

Sunnybrook’s impact extends far off campus as well, proudly championing House Bill 1313, which created the FAITH Scholarship Program, dedicating \$1 million in college scholarships for

kids in the foster system.

Sunnybrook also hosts foster families throughout the South, inviting them to enjoy revitalizing respite care and counseling at its pastoral, [Sunset Hills estate](#).

In early 2023, Sunnybrook was pleased to collaborate with Southern Christian Services and Mississippians Against Human Trafficking to create Mississippi's only safe home for adolescent survivors of human trafficking. The safe home protects young survivors, empowering them to receive specified and evidenced-based therapeutic services in an undisclosed location for up to two years.

In its 60th year, Sunnybrook is better than ever at properly matching the needs of neglected youth and struggling families with their best chances of lifelong success.

To commemorate its Diamond Anniversary, Sunnybrook will continue its mission of solving modern problems in our community. Members of the media, caseworkers from Child Protective Services, and independent child advocates are invited to schedule a visit for first-hand knowledge of Sunnybrook's services.

"We are so proud to have served the children and families of Mississippi for 60 years," Grate emphasized. "We are grateful for the support of our donors, volunteers, staff, and community partners, without whom we would not be able to continue our mission of providing safe and loving homes for society's most vulnerable members."

Sunnybrook invites the community to celebrate this milestone through prayer, volunteer work, and the donation of supplies and money. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of children and families in need.

For more information on Sunnybrook, or to make a donation, please visit [Sunnybrookms.org](#).

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More About Sunnybrook: Children and youth have called Sunnybrook "home" for 60 years. In order to respond to the growing disparity between foster youth and other young people, Sunnybrook launched its Transitional Living Program in the fall of 2020. We are dedicated to expanding our services to meet the needs of society. Sunnybrook is licensed by the State of Mississippi to provide residential care for older youth who are capable of functioning in a family environment as part of the community.

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