

# Therapeutic Boarding School, Shepherd's Hill Academy, Welcomes Therapy Bunnies in Partnership with Peppermint Rose Ranch

MARTIN, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES, August 21, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Shepherd's Hill Academy, a [Northeast Georgia therapeutic boarding school](#) for teens in crisis, is thrilled to announce the arrival of two new members of its therapy animal team — therapy bunnies Teddy and Eleanor. The Bunny Therapy Program addition to the campus is thanks to another local organization, Peppermint Rose Ranch, based out of Carnesville, Georgia.



"We would like to extend a special, heartfelt thank you to Peppermint Rose Ranch in Carnesville, Georgia for providing Teddy and for their continuous support and guidance. Teddy now resides in a luxurious rabbit hutch, a project designed and built by our Ag class," stated Allison Wallace, CEO of Shepherd's Hill Academy. "Within the bunny hutch project, our students gained invaluable skills in welding, woodworking, and blueprint creation, culminating in what can only be described as a royal castle for our bunnies."

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*Allison Wallace, CEO of Shepherd's Hill Academy*

The charming furry team members, like many of the therapy animals throughout the nature-based campus, play a crucial role in the overall growth and experience of the students at Shepherd's Hill. According to research from [Christian Health](#) and the [American Heart Association](#), animals like Teddy and Eleanor can significantly reduce stress, anxiety, and loneliness, while promoting empathy, improving mood, and enhancing social skills. The bunnies

have quickly become beloved figures throughout Shepherd's Hill, bringing joy, comfort, and

plenty of snuggles to students and staff.

The therapy bunnies continue to contribute in various therapeutic settings, providing emotional support, encouraging social interaction, and facilitating mindfulness and relaxation. Specifically, Teddy helps students within therapy sessions in the following ways:

**Emotional Support:** Teddy provides comfort and reduces stress through petting and cuddling, promoting calmness and well-being.

**Social Interaction:** Therapeutic bunnies act as a non-threatening icebreaker, facilitating communication and connections between students, therapists, and group members.

**Sensory Stimulation:** Teddy's soft fur and gentle presence offer sensory stimulation, benefiting those with sensory processing difficulties or those who are on the autism spectrum.

**Mindfulness and Relaxation:** Students are better able to focus and relax while holding Teddy.

**Therapeutic Activities:** Used in various activities, Teddy can aid in storytelling and creative expression, tailored to each student's needs.

**Building Trust and Empathy:** Teddy helps Shepherd's Hill students develop empathy, compassion, and trust through care and bonding.

"The response to Teddy and Eleanor has been overwhelmingly positive. We have seen students eagerly look forward to their morning chores to interact with the bunnies," Wallace pointed out. "One of our students expressed immense pride and responsibility in caring for Teddy,



Shepherd's Hill's Ag students hand-built the bunnies' hutch as part of their class.



recognizing the therapeutic benefits of her role. We have seen a notable enhancement in our students' emotional regulation, social skills, and confidence. It's truly amazing how these bunnies make such a huge impact."

The idea to incorporate therapy bunnies at Shepherd's Hill was a thoughtful, research-driven process. With a history of utilizing therapy animals, the organization's therapy team carefully considered and selected rabbits for their gentle nature and suitability for indoor environments. After thorough research and consultations, Teddy and Eleanor were chosen, marking a new chapter in the academy's therapeutic approach.

The introduction of Teddy and Eleanor continue to reflect Shepherd's Hill's dedication to innovation, compassion, and holistic well-being in its diverse and synergistic therapeutic programs.

"We invite the community to share in the joy and comfort these bunnies bring to our students," Wallace added.

For more information about Shepherd's Hill Academy and its therapy animal program, please contact the team at 706.779.5766.

#### About Shepherd's Hill Academy

Shepherd's Hill Academy is a Christ-centered therapeutic boarding school for teens in crisis. Located in Martin, Georgia, Shepherd's Hill offers a holistic approach to healing and growth through a combination of therapy, academics, and nature-based experiential living. Their mission is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where students can thrive emotionally, spiritually, and academically.

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Shepherd's Hill Academy is a Christ-centered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization offering therapeutic services to teens in crisis, located in Martin, GA.

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