In 2021, three of the nation’s foremost youth health advocacy groups declared a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health.

“We are caring for young people with soaring rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, loneliness, and suicidality that will have lasting impacts on them, their families, and their communities,” stated the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Children’s Hospital Association in their declaration.

Mental health challenges were the leading cause of disability and poor life outcomes in young people, with up to 1 in 5 children ages 3 to 17 in the U.S. having a diagnosed mental, emotional, developmental or behavioral disorder (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). Suicide is the second leading cause of death among people ages 10-24 and has been increasing every year since 2007, with emergency room visits for suspected suicide attempts spiking in 2021 (CDC).

In Georgia, over 70% of children who reported having a major depressive episode went untreated (Mental Health America, 2021). Nationally, Georgia ranks 48th out of 50 in access to mental healthcare (Mental Health America, 2021).

Each of these statistics represents real children whose lives have been turned upside down. Eagle Ranch steps in to show boys and girls that their identity is greater than their circumstances - that it is possible to understand their source of pain and achieve a better way to live.
We all know a struggling family. Maybe we have been part of one. Crisis can hit suddenly, or it can emerge from problems that have built up over generations.

Eagle Ranch comes alongside children and families going through a crisis, surrounding them with care, community and encouragement. We reassure them they are not alone. The bravest decision one can make is to seek and accept help.

We work with each child and family to get to the source of their crisis, address struggles, and teach new tools to foster communication and build relationships.

Life’s possibilities blossom when children learn about themselves, how to relate with others and how to live a life grounded in faith and positive choices. Families thrive when relationships are restored, working together to forge a pathway home.

**OUR MISSION**

Eagle Ranch helps make life better for children and their families, positively impacting communities for the glory of God.
Founded in 1985, Eagle Ranch is a community that is called to serve children and families, providing the support and care needed to work through a crisis.

Through its residential program, the Ranch offers children a peaceful, stable environment to help them and their families overcome challenges they have difficulty resolving on their own.

Eagle Ranch works with each child’s family through counseling, training and support for their parents and siblings – annually, over 200 family members receive these services. The goal is for children to return to families that have the tools needed to maintain healthy relationships and overcome future obstacles.

Our campus includes 10 neighborhood-style homes staffed by trained Houseparent Couples and Program Assistants.

Our Spiritual Life team provides mentoring and discipleship, integrating a faith perspective throughout our program.

Our SACS-accredited, on-campus school helps children close academic gaps in an environment that integrates therapeutic care.

Eagle Ranch provides a holistic, therapeutic environment where children take a step back from the pressures of the world and focus on healing. We slow down the pace of life, limiting screen time, and giving boys and girls time and space to reflect and work through their struggles. A Christ-centered perspective is woven throughout our program with intentional focus and activities. Our school delivers individualized instruction with staff that understands their struggles. In addition to scheduled sessions, children have access to their counselor throughout each day. We promote physical activity with athletic facilities, a therapeutic equine program and an abundance of outdoor fun. Children thrive with the structure and accountability of our residential program, while working together with their families to meet goals and return to stronger, healthier homes.
It’s hard to talk about emotions if you don’t know how to describe the way you feel or understand why you are feeling that way. Eagle Ranch helps children and families learn how to strengthen their relationships with tools for success in key life areas: communication, identity, learning and structure.

**COMMUNICATION**
Each family member learns communication skills that promote:
- Openness, honesty and respect
- Cooperation with family and peers
- Healthy and productive expressions of emotion

“If I didn’t have Eagle Ranch, I wouldn’t be where I am today. I would probably have a poor relationship with my mom, poor relationships in general, and life would be a lot worse. I learned how to communicate and be open to what others have to say. Eagle Ranch helped me grow up.”

“Eagle Ranch set me up for success for my future. I used to struggle with social anxiety, but now I know how to make friends and interact with others. I also learned how to work on a team, take responsibility, and focus on tasks to get them done, which has helped me in school and at home.”

**IDENTITY**
We help children and families see themselves as God sees them and establish an identity that:
- Defines their role in their family and how that impacts each family member
- Takes ownership of decisions and actions
- Demonstrates their value and ability to contribute to God’s Kingdom

“I never knew what a family was supposed to be like. My houseparents showed me that it was about doing life together – sitting down for meals, doing devotions, going to church, things like that. It made a big impact on me, and I’m a better husband and father because of it.”

“Eagle Ranch taught me a lot about work ethic, how to treat others, and how to grow closer to God. It made me a better man.”

**LEARNING**
Learning opportunities are created in the classroom and beyond that help children and families:
- Learn appropriate social skills and how to work on a team
- Set and accomplish measurable goals
- Acquire new tools for navigating difficult situations

**STRUCTURE**
Our program establishes a consistent schedule with clear instruction about choices and consequences to:
- Provide a structured, stable home environment
- Help children adjust to new challenges and practice healthy coping skills
- Help families balance discipline and grace when their child returns home

Eagle Ranch helps children and families learn tools for success in key life areas.
“It was like a war every day in our house,” reflected Wesley, 11, as he recounted what life was like before the Ranch.

His parents, Nick and Stephanie, nodded in response. “The word divorce had been thrown around a few times,” said Stephanie. “Home was chaos. There were arguments that would escalate into us having to separate into different rooms of the house; we even took separate vacations to have moments of peace. Our family unit could not function together, our marriage was suffering, and that ultimately affected our children. Things felt hopeless, and we needed help.”

Wesley had become a master at manipulation to get what he wanted from his parents, whether it was stepping into the middle of an argument to get attention, pitching a fit while at a restaurant or throwing tantrums that were much too intense for a boy his age. He and his sister, Corbin, would bicker and argue until Stephanie and Nick could not handle it anymore. Finally hitting a breaking point, the family reached out to Eagle Ranch.

“We felt insufficient as parents not being there to support Wesley,” said Stephanie. “Every time we dropped him off in those first few months, we cried. We wanted to go pick him up and take him home. But we knew we needed this for him and our family.”

Eagle Ranch became a place of constant support for the family as soon as Wesley entered the program. Wesley learned much about what triggered him to become angry and how to repurpose that energy in a healthier way. Nick and Stephanie learned how to communicate with one another and had the time and space to work on their marriage through the counseling provided by the program.

“The counseling, the educational materials, the Parent Insight Nights and the parent groups, were all helpful to us,” said Nick. “We learned so much about our marriage, how to parent and do things in a different way. Eagle Ranch is a wonderful place for families that need help when things aren’t working cohesively at home.”

Looking toward graduation, the family is excited to have Wesley home again permanently. Taking all that they have learned through the program, Stephanie and Nick look forward to a harmonious home for the first time in years.

“The Ranch changed our lives. We are a much stronger family unit, and we do things in love now. Everything is different and the word ‘hopeless’ will never again be in our vocabulary,” said Stephanie.
2021 IN Review

We Served 224 Children, Siblings & Family Members
51 children took part in our residential program. 76 of their siblings & 97 of their parents/guardians were served.

75+ hours of professional training was provided to each of our program staff.

100% of family members received services including counseling, parent support groups, educational events and family activities.

100% of our students saw growth in all standardized test subject areas.

150+ devotions, small group studies and guided activities provided a Christ-centered perspective for our children and their families.

52% was the average reduction in emotional distress levels. Cutting these levels by over half enables children to return home in a healthier emotional state.

88% of students reading below grade level are now reading on grade level or above.

The children we served in 2021 are being raised by:
25% Adoptive Families • 24% Natural Parents • 27% Single Parents
14% Blended Families • 4% Grandparents • 6% Guardianship

92% of families reported that parent groups provided education & support to help improve family relationships.

95% of families believe that the Ranch program is helping them make progress toward their child’s return home.

75+ hours of professional training was provided to each of our program staff.

We received 396 calls during the year from families seeking help for their children.

12 was the average age of children entering our program.

of families

said that sibling visitation is critical to the healing process of their children.

of families

believe that adoption is a viable option.

of families

reported that their children are using the new coping skills learned in the program.

of families

believe that the Ranch program is helping them make progress toward their child’s return home.
to your support, 224 children, siblings and family members received services and support that helped reunite their families, strengthen their relationships and provide tools to navigate future struggles. Changing the life of a child and family has a long-term impact on future generations.

“Eagle Ranch has earned our sixth consecutive 4-star rating. This is our highest possible rating and indicates that your organization executes its mission in a financially efficient way. Only 14% of the charities we evaluate have received at least 6 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating Eagle Ranch outperforms most other charities in America.”

Michael Thatcher
President and CEO, Charity Navigator

In 2021, 82% of Eagle Ranch’s operating expenses went toward programs directly benefiting children, families and our community.

Donations to General Operations

- 2,113 Individuals
- 125 Businesses
- 66 Foundations
- 21 Churches
- 17 Civic Clubs
- 1 Estate

100% Privately Funded

Sources of Revenue

- 71% General Contributions
- 12% Endowment
- 10% Honor and Memorial Gifts
- 4% Special Events and Other
- 3% Program Services

Eagle Ranch’s 2021 Operating Budget was $4.8 million.
The Wings Center continues to build its team and services. The new community-focused center provides outpatient counseling and retreats that lead to restoration and renewal in the lives of individuals, children and families. In addition, our skilled staff offers educational opportunities and organizational consulting to further impact communities. Located next door to Eagle Ranch, The Wings Center shares a Christ-centered mission and a focus on excellence in service. The beautiful lakeside location provides a peaceful, welcoming setting.

**COUNSELING**

The Wings Center offers excellence and accessibility in outpatient counseling for the community. Our experienced, professional team provides a broad spectrum of counseling services addressing trauma, depression, ADHD, addiction, spiritual issues, marital distress, and other challenges for individuals and families. Primary services include:

- Individual counseling
- Marriage and family counseling
- Group counseling
- Evaluations, testing and assessments

**RETREATS**

The Wings Center offers on-site retreat experiences and specialized programming for individuals, couples, and small groups. We offer a variety of retreat formats including:

- Private individual retreats
- Guided or undirected retreats for individuals and small groups
- Instructor-led retreats
- Specialized programming for spiritual leaders
- Educational programming and experiences

**TRAINING & CONSULTING**

The Wings Consulting program offers organizational consulting and mentoring to other children’s programs and nonprofits who are getting started or retooling their programs. From sharing best practices to strategic planning, a wide range of support is provided. Additionally, The Wings Center offers educational opportunities for the community and trainings for therapeutic professionals.

**FOR MORE ABOUT** The Wings Center’s services and to see additional pictures, visit EagleRanch.org/TWC or call 770.967.7170.
Prayer has benefited the Eagle Ranch program from its founding days to today. We value your prayers for our children, their families and our staff.

Events

Public events include our summer Run the Ranch and a fall golf tournament. Twice annually, Eagle Ranch also hosts continuing education events for therapeutic professionals in our community.

Volunteers

There are many ways to volunteer, from joining an Eagle Ranch volunteer group in your neighborhood (many cook meals and help in other ways) to participating in one of the Ranch’s Serve Saturdays to help with on-campus projects. We can help identify the best way for you to volunteer based on your time, talents and interests.

Tours & Speakers

Eagle Ranch offers tours of our campus to groups. We also have staff available to speak for community groups interested in learning more about the mission or topics related to children and families.

TOGETHER, We Help Futures Soar

Eagle Ranch has many ways to get connected and involved with our mission.

GET INVOLVED

Whether you have time or a skill to share or want to help in other ways, call 770.967.8500 to learn more or visit us online: EagleRanch.org/GetInvolved.

“Mental health challenges in children, adolescents, and young adults are real and widespread. Even before the pandemic, an alarming number of young people struggled with feelings of helplessness, depression, and thoughts of suicide — and rates have increased over the past decade. The COVID-19 pandemic further altered their experiences at home, school, and in the community, and the effect on their mental health has been devastating. The future well-being of our country depends on how we support and invest in the next generation.”

Vice Admiral Vivek H. Murthy, U. S. Surgeon General

Your Gifts Matter

Eagle Ranch receives no state or government funding and has been debt-free since our inception. We are 100% privately funded, relying on donations from our community. Your gifts enable us to meet our daily operational expenses and be prepared for the future. Here are a few ways donations move our mission forward:

General Gifts – A general gift given online or in the mail goes toward areas of greatest need.

Honor & Memorial – Gifts given in honor or memory of a loved one help fund our daily operations.

Specific Needs – Eagle Ranch has a specific needs list that allows donors to fund needed items that match their areas of interest.

Endowment Giving – Gifts to the Soaring Futures Endowment Fund provide a reliable foundation for annual funding and secures the financial future of our program.

Estate Gifts – Leaving Eagle Ranch in your will or estate plan helps us meet both immediate and long-term needs.

FIND OUT MORE about ways to give and current needs by contacting Kelly Brewer at kbrewer@eagleranch.org or 770.967.8500.
A MESSAGE FROM EAGLE RANCH Executive Director John Shackelford

As I reflect on the previous year, I am struck by God’s generosity to further advance the mission He has entrusted to Eagle Ranch. As you’ve seen in this report, the challenges for children and families continue to intensify. Thankfully, this is not the end of the story.

My family and I responded to God’s calling just over a year ago to lead the Eagle Ranch team. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of this community and the talent of the team called to do this work. At the same time, we have been burdened by the heaviness of the stories we’ve encountered of children and families in crisis – many of which seem too painful to believe. However, even in only a short time here, I’ve seen God at work in miraculous ways as He reunites and restores children and families.

The Lord continues to call us forth into new things. Eddie Staub is leading the successful launch of The Wings Center, which offers outpatient counseling, retreats and nonprofit consulting. We are honored to continue and expand upon the work the Lord has called us to at Eagle Ranch.

It is an honor and joy to serve in this role. Thank you for responding to the Lord’s call to stand alongside us in this mission. I look forward to watching together all that the Lord has yet to accomplish through the work of Eagle Ranch!

Faithfully,

John Shackelford
Eagle Ranch Executive Director

“Succession planning is always challenging, particularly when replacing the founder of a thriving organization. Eddie Staub and the Eagle Ranch Board did an outstanding job planning the transition to a new Executive Director. The handoff was carefully planned and orchestrated – John Shackelford is a superb next leader for Eagle Ranch. Case studies will be written about Eddie’s handoff to John as the way to position a ministry for continued greatness!”

Dr. Tim Irwin, New York Times Best-Selling Author

IN JULY 2021, John Shackelford joined Eagle Ranch as Executive Director. Eagle Ranch Founder Eddie Staub previously held the role since the Ranch opened its doors in 1985. Eddie continues to have a leadership role as Founder of Eagle Ranch and is leading the establishment of The Wings Center, including mentoring other nonprofits through the Wings Consulting program.
They will SOAR on wings like EAGLES

Isaiah 40:31

Our Why

Eagle Ranch exists to be a tangible expression of God’s goodness and power in the world, and to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those who struggle.