





High Hopes

Annual Report

September 2025 - August 2026

Message from our Executive Director

Dear High Hopes families, friends, and supporters,

It is with gratitude and excitement that I share the 2025–2026 Annual Report with you. This was our first full year together as an organization united behind *Reaching Higher*, our 2030 strategic plan, and I could not be prouder of what we built.

For over forty years, High Hopes has been a place where inclusion is modeled daily, where education and therapy are woven together with intention, and where every child is recognized for their unique gifts and boundless potential. This year, we had the extraordinary opportunity to breathe new life into that legacy and the results were remarkable.

School enrollment and clinic visits are on the rise, meaning we're able to impact more children and families across Middle TN than ever before. Teacher retention surged from 55% to 81% and fundraising grew by approximately 45%. Behind every one of those numbers is a story of people choosing High Hopes: families who trust us with their children, donors who deepened their investment in our mission, and a team working together to prove what's possible.

We are also becoming something new. The groundwork we laid this year for our Therapeutic Preschool Model—by embedding therapists directly into daily classroom instruction across all age levels—positions us to offer something no other center in our region can. We are not simply growing. We are reaching higher.

None of this happens without you. Your generosity, advocacy, and partnership are the engine of everything we do. Thank you for believing in High Hopes and in the children and families we serve.



In partnership,



Neily Boyd, Executive Director

Our Mission is to equip children, youth, and their families with the skills necessary to succeed through education, therapeutic services, and loving support.

Our Vision is to create a community where hope and inclusion are cultivated, embraced, and shared.



"Places like High Hopes just don't exist. I know that Walker is safe, cared for, and loved. They just get it. All you want is for your child to be included. It is the greatest gift to have a place like this."

"For so long, Darby Rose was labeled failure to thrive. Now she goes at her own pace, learns as she wants to, and just gets to be her. High Hopes removed the stress from all of us and made us a better, more confident family."

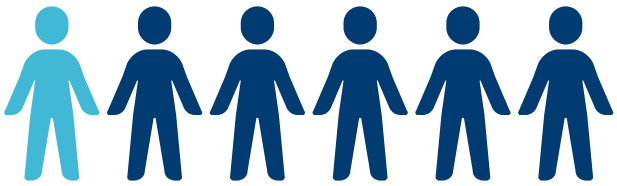




"Hutch learned to walk, something we didn't know he would achieve. Now he walks across a room all by himself. High Hopes gave us hope that this is a place that can be home, where he's safe to try new things."

Executive Summary

WHY.



1 in 6 children in the U.S. have a developmental disability or delay.

HOW.

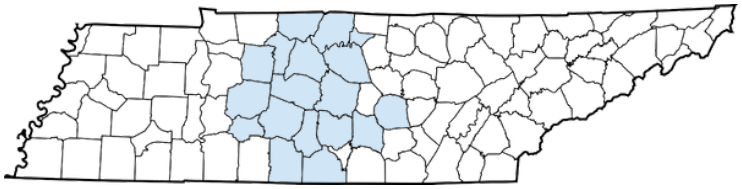
Inclusive Preschool
Small class sizes, low teacher-to-student ratios, and a child-centered curriculum create a welcoming space where children of all abilities learn, grow, and thrive.

Therapy Services
Exceptional pediatric therapy, individualized treatment plans, and collaboration with teachers and families ensure children get the support they need right where they are.

Family Support
We walk alongside parents and caregivers, offering resources, guidance, and hope so families never feel alone on their journey.

IMPACT.

This year, High Hopes served **1,090 children and their families** from **18 counties** in Middle Tennessee.



In our therapy program, **978 children** received **36,437 therapy sessions**, supporting growth in functional skills, mobility, communication, and self-regulation as they achieved important developmental milestones.

In our inclusive preschool, **112 students** experienced over **123,200 hours** of play-based learning where every child belongs, learns, and shines.

Guided by a dedicated team of **25 teachers** and **36 therapists**, we worked together each day to build brighter futures—one child, one milestone, one moment at a time.

Because of your generosity, families are able to find the education and therapy support they need at High Hopes.

Case Study: High Hopes' Therapeutic Preschool

Reaching Higher: Breaking New Ground in Early Intervention

High Hopes is pioneering a model that no other center in Middle Tennessee offers: a fully integrated Therapeutic Preschool where pediatric therapists specializing in speech, occupational, behavioral, feeding, and physical therapy work alongside early childhood educators inside the classroom, every day. High Hopes embeds therapeutic support, both individual and whole class, into the natural rhythms of learning, play, and peer connection during the years when intervention yields its greatest and most lasting impact.

What Makes It Different

This is not a preschool that happens to offer therapy on the side. It is a unified model where every classroom has therapeutic goals woven into daily instruction and every teacher and therapist functions as one team for each child's full development. This model allows us to more intentionally meet the needs of the full range of abilities in each classroom, from interventions for children with developmental delays to acceleration for children ready to learn skills beyond their age level.

Validated by Research

A major Columbia University longitudinal study published in February 2026 found that those who received early intervention services before age three scored significantly higher on standardized assessments and were more likely to reach grade-level benchmarks by third grade. High Hopes is now partnering with Middle Tennessee State University to document outcomes, refine best practices, and develop a replicable framework for early childhood providers across Tennessee.



FY 2025–2026: A Year of Purposeful Planning

FY 2025–26 served as the formal planning and pilot year for the Therapeutic Preschool Model. A cross-functional team made of teachers, therapists, a school nurse, and administrators met weekly to design the model, align roles, and prepare for full implementation.



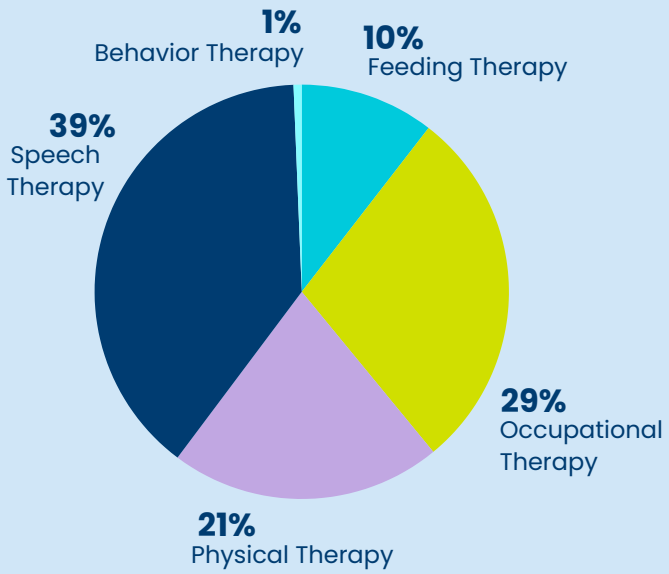
Looking Ahead

Full implementation is now underway in the 2026-27 school year with over 100 students enrolled across 10 classrooms. High Hopes is also laying groundwork for an MTSU research partnership and national accreditation to validate this model and position High Hopes as a leader in early childhood innovation for generations to come. When High Hopes soars, our whole community rises with it.

Therapy Program Highlights

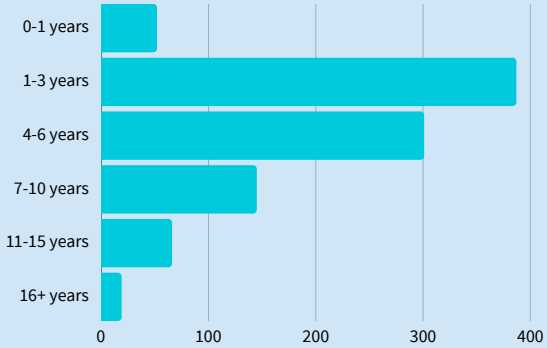
36,437 Therapy Visits Provided

among the highest volume of any nonprofit therapy provider in our region.



100% of parents surveyed agree or strongly agree that High Hopes therapy services have made a difference in their child's life and their ability to care for/support their needs.

Ages Served



41% of children served in our therapy program participate in more than one type of therapy, highlighting our comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to meeting each child's individual needs.





Therapy Program Visits by Location

84% Our Clinic

14% Our Preschool

2% Home & Community



"Both our boys, River and Ryder, have already graduated from multiple therapies, conquering milestones that once felt overwhelming. High Hopes is the place that feels like home, where our boys are loved like family."

44% of therapy patients were supported by government programs, which reimburse below the actual cost of providing these vital services. *

*TennCare/Medicaid, Tennessee Early Intervention Services (TEIS)/Department of Disability and Aging (DDA), Franklin Special District (FSD)

Preschool Program Highlights

42% of students in the preschool received services through our therapy program.

45% of our students ages 3 and up qualify for free pre-K in their home district, yet their families choose High Hopes for our inclusive classrooms and therapy support.



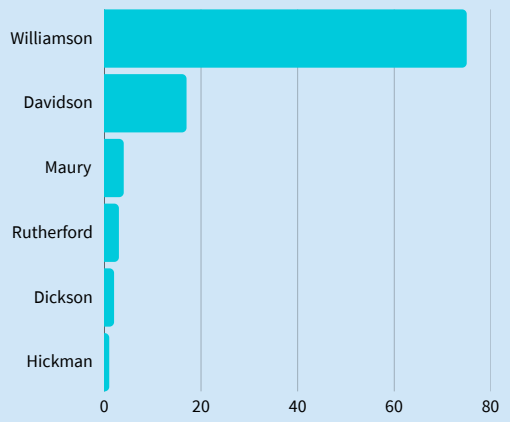


Teacher retention increased from 55% to 81%, at a time when more than one-third of early childhood centers nationally reported increasing difficulty retaining staff (NAEYC 2026 workforce survey).

123,200 Hours of Educational Instruction

In our preschool, **59% of students** play a vital role as peer models. Peer models are essential to creating an environment that supports ALL children's social, emotional, and academic success. In addition, this inclusive approach fosters acceptance and empathy while embracing and celebrating what makes everyone unique.

Counties Served



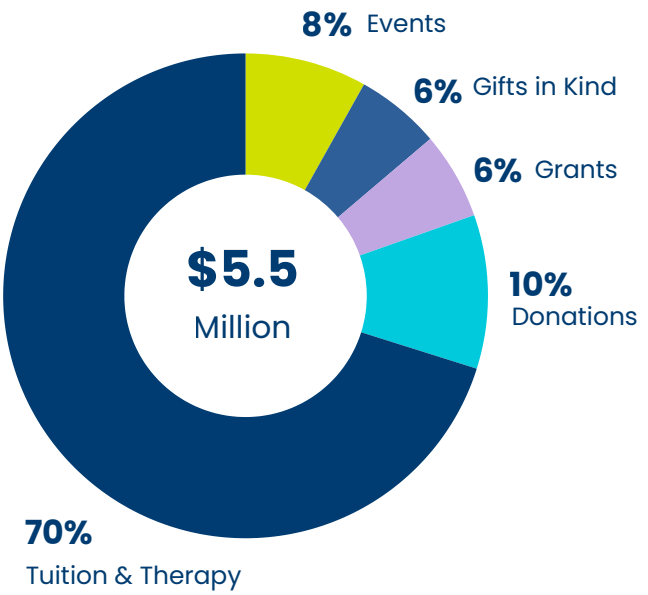
Increased implementation fidelity of the **Pyramid Model**, a national framework for social-emotional learning, from **73% to 84%**, significantly outperforming the national norms of 40-60%.





Financial Report

Operating Revenues









Did you know High Hopes is a nonprofit organization?

That means we are here for one purpose: to help children thrive. We don't have shareholders. We don't operate for profit. Every dollar we receive is reinvested into what matters most: our families, children, staff, education, therapy, and facilities.

As a nonprofit, we measure success not in margins but in milestones: a child's first word, first steps, first breakthrough. We couldn't do it without the support of the donors and partners who make it all possible.

Fundraising Events

2025 - 2026 Event Sponsors

Heroes for Hope ($10,000+)

Alison Pagliara
AP Live
Brett Boyer Foundation
FirstBank
Nissan of Cool Springs
Sonia and Butch Hoover, III
The Kingston Group
Tractor Supply Company

Allies for Advocacy ($5,000+)

Allied World Assurance Company
American Constructors
Brasfield & Gorrie
Middle Tennessee Electric
Old National Bank
Pinnacle Financial Partners
Regions Bank
Uncle's Classic Barbershop
Westerlund Shotcrete

Friends for the Future ($2,500+)

5by5
AmWins
Andrews Transportation Group
Barlow Builders
Barton Drury Insurance
BNA
City Wide Facility Solutions
Coco and Brandon Smith
Equitable Trust
Five Points Roofing
Ford Lincoln of Franklin
Ghost Vision
Hotlzman Vogel
JE Dunn
Jordan Properties, Inc.
Katie Sharpton Design
Recreational Concepts
Rev. Monna and Doug Mayhall
Richards and Southern
Scott Insurance
Team Elliott
The Snedeker Foundation
Voss Water
WH Property Management

Supporters for Success ($1,000+)

Apex Social Group
Austermiller Roofers
Barnsley Resort
Boxwood Insurance Group
Courtney and Carlin Hess
Darrell Waltrip GMC
Debbie and Roger Guimond, Jr.
Ferguson Home
Gephart Electric Company
Katherine and Ryan Stark
Lori and Ricky Scott
Martin & Zerfoss Insurance
Meredith and Chad Duke
Nedrow & Associates
Nixon Power Services
Parman Energy
Red Dog Dumpsters
Symphony Advice
Title Partners
Tennessee Fertility Institute
Twice Pediatric Dentistry

HATS OFF to High Hopes



Runway of HOPE



GIVING on the GREEN



Strings & Stories



Community, Volunteers, and Students

Corporate and Foundation Partners

Each year, High Hopes partners with foundations, corporations, and community organizations who share our commitment to children and families.

ATMOS energy
Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
Ellen C. Lawson Foundation
Hays Foundation
HCA Healthcare Foundation
ImageQuest
Junior League Nashville
Louie M. and Betty M. Phillips Foundation
Rotary Club of Brentwood
Rotary Franklin Noon
Rotary Franklin at Breakfast
Schneider Electric Foundation
Scott Cares
sharing change
Speer Foundation
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
The Carolyn Smith Foundation
the charley foundation
The James M. Cox Foundation
United Way of Greater Nashville

1,075 Volunteer Hours

Volunteers keep High Hopes running. From one-time events to ongoing roles, their time and talents directly serve children and families. These 1,075 hours represent nearly **$30,000 of in-kind service** to our mission.







3 Education Students

Through a new collaboration with Lipscomb University's early childhood apprenticeship program, three education students joined our preschool classrooms this year, gaining hands-on experience in an inclusive setting.

7 Clinical Students, 6 Universities

Students from UMMC, Belmont, LSU HSC, TSU, ETSU, and Auburn completed clinical rotations with our therapy team, learning evidence-based, family-centered care. Every student who trains here multiplies our impact far beyond our walls.



Boards and Councils

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Vanderbilt Heart & Vascular Institute

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Founder and CEO
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Hillary Stalker, Secretary & Treasurer
Partner, Wealth Advisor
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Chad Duke
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SCOTT Insurance

MK Bartholomew Geismar
Early Childhood Educator

John Harlin
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Boyle Investment Company

James Koss
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HCA

Andy Lee
Pediatric Physician
Brentwood Children's Clinic

Nicole Logan
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Tractor Supply Company

Josh Miller
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Bailey Pratt
Vice President, System Finance
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Emily Sandwith
Early Childhood Educator

Katie Sharpton
Founder and Principal Designer
Katie Sharpton Design

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Coco Pannell Smith
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YouTube

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FirstBank

Steven Webber
Retired Chief of Pediatrics
Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital

Neily Boyd
Executive Director
High Hopes

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Katie Sharpton
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High Hopes

Embracing uniqueness. Expanding possibilities.

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