



Meet Elijah!

Elijah is nine years old. He lives with his older brother, Angel, and his grandmother Alfreda. Elijah loves reading and is an avid World Wrestling Entertainment fan. You can often find him playing with WWE action figures and games.



Elijah and Angel moved in with their grandmother ten years ago after their mother passed away. Since then, Alfreda has been their sole caregiver. Elijah still asks many questions about his mother. "I believe they both know how very much they are loved," says Alfreda.

Alfreda began noticing some differences in Elijah in the first grade. "He would be upset when he got home

from school because his friends would not answer him," she says. He was struggling with depression, anxiety, and anger. She soon realized that Elijah was speaking much quieter than his peers. She says, "It was difficult to see Elijah get frustrated when he could not be heard." Alfreda sought help from a speech pathologist.

Elijah has been working with Jo, a Speech Language Pathologist, for a year to improve the way he says his words as well as the volume of his voice. "Elijah faces a lot of challenges," Jo says. Although he has been working diligently towards his goals, Elijah has made minimal

"The amplifier has opened up daily communication with people in his community, especially his family."

progress to improve the intelligibility of his speech. Even in a quiet environment, Elijah has a hard time being heard by his classmates, teachers, and his family. His grandmother would often need to lean in to hear Elijah speak.

Jo recommended that Elijah use a device to amplify his speech. A simple headset microphone with a speaker would allow Elijah to communicate more effectively. However, such a device would not be covered by his Medicaid plan.

Alfreda was working as a housekeeper. When the pandemic hit, she lost all six of her clients. She has not been able to procure more houses since. Alfreda was concerned that she would not be able to provide the device that Elijah needed. The speech pathologist referred the family to Gill Children's Services.

Gill Children's Services provided Elijah with a Chattervox voice amplification system. "Elijah thinks the device is really cool," says Jo. "The amplifier has opened up daily communication with people in his community, especially his family." Jo has been especially excited to see how Elijah's humor and kindness are

now showing through. Since using the system, Alfreda has also noticed a great improvement. "Elijah is much more outgoing! It's so much easier for him to communicate."

Because of you, Elijah has a voice. Thank you for being his safety net!

Elijah's special device costs \$239.

You can sponsor a child like Elijah by making a monthly gift of **\$20**.

State of Gill

The need for financial assistance has rebounded after a brief stagnation during the pandemic. Already this year we have approved funding for 17% more critical services than last year. While overall need has grown, demand for three services has increased as a direct result of the pandemic.

Dental Treatment

Gill Children's Services routinely assists with the cost of dental treatment when a child is uninsured or underinsured. Recently, we have seen children needing more invasive treatment which requires anesthesia at the hospital. Local dentists attribute the increase in decay to children skipping their cleaning appointments during the pandemic and unhealthy snacking. With the recent climb in COVID-19 cases among children, Cook Children's has paused non-emergency surgeries. Unfortunately, this may exacerbate existing tooth decay. Until the operating room resumes normal activity, Gill Children's Services is poised to offset the cost of in-office sedation. Approvals for dental treatment have increased by 55% since last fall.

Psychological Evaluations

For children experiencing behavioral challenges, a psychological evaluation can open the door to treatment. Children can seek classroom modifications, therapies, and medications with a diagnosis that a psychological evaluation often provides. Some evaluations can be performed by the public school, while others require more specialized diagnostics at a private agency. When schools closed in 2020, children no longer had access to public testing and referrals to private clinics increased. Insurance plans often only cover a portion of the testing units needed to diagnose

a child with autism, ADHD, severe anxiety, depression, or other mental health challenges. Gill approved 171% more funding for psychological evaluations in the summer of 2020 than the previous summer.

Summer School Tuition

Tuition for summer school education is a persistent gap in the community's resource network. Some Tarrant County school districts charge their students to recover course credits over the summer. With record failure rates among students last academic year, more students needed to enroll in summer school. Unfortunately, the cost to recover one half credit was between \$20 and \$200, depending on the high school student's school district. Gill approved 945% more funding for summer school tuition in the summer of 2021 than the previous year.

The fallout from the pandemic has already begun. Gill Children's Services is committed to providing responsive, individualized care to children. With your help, we will be equipped to provide financial assistance for children, whatever the future brings.



*Peyton Salavarría Lehrer,
Executive Director*

Become a Do Gooder!

Gill Do Gooders make a serious impact with their donations. A monthly gift of just \$10 will allow five children to receive a birth certificate to access affordable housing, healthcare, or enroll in school.

Extended through May 31st, sign up to make a monthly gift and have your donation matched by the Amon G. Carter Foundation! Sign up for a recurring gift at gillchildrens.org/donate.

Meet some Do Gooders:



Lou Ann Blaylock

Lou Ann has been a champion of our children for years. She served as President of the Board of Directors in 2005. She remembers working with Gill's co-founders fondly. "I can't resist thinking of how happy both Martine and Ginny would be with the program," she

says. Lou Ann banks online, and it was easy for her to set up her monthly gift. She says, "What makes Gill important is the boundless freedom it has to provide services dedicated to the needs of children that other charities do not provide."



The Boschinis

For newlyweds Teddy and Sofi, giving back is very important. "We give to Gill to help ensure that the basic needs of children in our community are met," Teddy says. He first learned of Gill Children's Services mission through his mother, Megan, who has served on the

Board of Directors for many years. Teddy says, "By making a monthly donation, we hope to help Gill continue to fulfill its mission of providing last resort funding to the growing Tarrant County community."



A message from our Board President...

One child at a time. It is really that easy, and yet that hard. The last 18 months has showed me how Gill's individualized care for children is so important.

Our case managers are working with children whose health and wellbeing took a backseat during the pandemic.

Tooth decay has especially become more severe as dental treatment was delayed last year. Just last month our Service Committee helped a 3-year-old child who needed five extractions and seven stainless steel crowns. Another 4-year-old needed four crowns and 10 fillings. Unfortunately, much of the decay would have been preventable had we not been isolated in 2020. The affordable treatment that could have been completed in a routine dental visit now requires hospitalization and sedation.

As board members we monitor the metrics: Number of services approved, number of referrals made, percentage discount given by our service providers, trends in unmet needs, and more. Beyond our analysis, care and diligence are also required of us. When I hear the story of a child who is in so much pain that they cannot eat, I understand what a graph could not capture. Our case managers approach their work in the same way. They analyze the need, research the community network, and leverage partnerships, never forgetting their tenderness and compassion for each child.

The Board of Directors and staff are committed to fulfilling Gill's promise: That a financial safety net is provided for every Tarrant County child in need — one child at a time.



Tod Miller

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Welcome Kim!

Gill Children's Services is thrilled to announce its newest member of the Board of Directors, Judge Kimberly K. Brown. Judge Brown is an Associate Judge in the Child Protection Court. Previously she was an Associate Judge and Referee for the 323rd District Court for 10 years. She has been appointed as Co-Chair of the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children and Families Higher Education Committee, member of the Notice and Family Involvement Roundtable Committee, and the Chair of the State Bar of Texas Child Abuse and Neglect Committee. Judge Brown is a member of the Tarrant County Bar Association. She earned a Doctor of Jurisprudence from Texas Tech School of Law and a Bachelor of Music degree from Texas Tech University. **Please join us in welcoming Judge Brown!**

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1916-2012
Virginia H. Richards
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Text to Give!

Text the word "Gill"
to **50155** to donate.



Our Mission

Gill Children's Services is a funding source of last resort that provides a safety net for Tarrant County Children whose medical, dental, physical, social, psychological and educational needs have not been met by other community resources.

Provider Discounts Saved over \$900,000

We could not do it without our wonderful providers! Gill works with a network of over 700 providers to offer critical services to children. Some providers offer a generous discount, allowing Gill's resources to reach more children. Gill Children's Services saved \$924,719 last year in discounts, which provided a \$2.19 impact for every \$1.00 donated. Our providers go above and beyond to serve our children.

Thank you to our **top ten** providers who offered the most discounts last year:



Children's Dental Services of Texas, PLLC	Dr. John Paul Stella
Cook Children's Medical Center	Fort Worth Pediatric Dentistry
Cook Children's Physician Network	Hometown Dental Yucca
Cranial Technologies	Kreating Smiles Dental Group
Dr. John Kelley	Radiology Associates of North Texas