



Harmony Hill School has been a member of the Gloucester community since 1962 and has been a private non-profit agency since 1976. We employ 130 people, 30% of which reside in the immediate Gloucester area. HHS is one of the largest employers of this town.

The youth that are serviced at HHS have some of the most serious trauma issues in this state. Our primary mission is to assist and heal our youth from their traumatic experiences and return them to their family/community as soon as possible. In the distant past, a great deal of our clients had behavioral issues that created problems within their home communities and sometimes the law. In the last several years, HHS has changed its clientele from a heavy caseload of juvenile justice youth to a step down from psychiatric hospitalization or a diversion from hospitalization. We were never a detention center then and are further from that today. Our dormitories have various levels of security systems in place. All have at least sensor alarms when interior/exterior doors are opened. Our higher levels of care have plexi-glassed windows and exit doors with delays on them. This is the most secure our campus can be within the regulations we have to follow.

We have a psychiatrist and psychologist on staff. Our clinical team consists of licensed social workers. Our teachers are special education certified. We provide education at our on campus school throughout the year and we are licensed to provide high school diplomas. We have five Gloucester residents/business owners on our Board of Directors.

Our dedication to the local community includes monthly fundraising for various Gloucester community needs such as the Gloucester Food Pantry, the Gloucester Animal shelter, the Vietnam Veterans moving wall, Hands that Heal (Scituate organization assisting pet owners), Gloucester Police Toys for Tots, Gloucester Lions Club, as well as more broad statewide fundraising including, the Tomorrow Fund, Autism Speaks, American Cancer Society and Build a Banner of Love. We have a dedicated staff that work with some of the most traumatized youth in this state and also stretch their concern and passion beyond the parameters of our property line.

Unfortunately, at times, our youth make poor choices and it can hurt this community. Our staff are trained to provide safety and security for our youth to insure the safety of all including our neighbors and community. This past month we had two separate runaway situations in which our youth stole property from our neighbors. The youth involved have been discharged and will not return to the community. Runaways are not a normal occurrence, as we have had six incidents within the last 24 months; two of which happened this month. HHS remains committed to evaluate these incidents and to implement policy and procedures if and when necessary to insure the safety and security for our youth and our community.

As the past president of the Gloucester Little League and a current member of the Gloucester Lions, I am also a member of this Gloucester community and understand how upsetting these incidents can be.

Eric A. James
President /CEO
Harmony Hill School, Inc.