



**Huckleberry**  
HOUSE

# 2022 IMPACT REPORT



At Huckleberry House, we know there is hope in every story because we begin helping young people rewrite their narrative the moment they walk through our doors.

We see daily how important it is that our doors remain open for all youth who are seeking a safe place. When there is nowhere else to find the shelter, support and guidance they need, young people need to know that Huck House will always be here for them so they don't have to spend a night outside.

Even one night on the streets puts youth at risk. Every night that a young person is unhoused results in a 2% increase in the likelihood of returning to homelessness after securing stable housing. Spending 25 days without a home results in a young person being 50% more likely to become homeless again in the future.

That's where Huckleberry House comes in. We are a beacon of hope and a safe haven for youth when they don't know where else to turn. We provide shelter, support, and guidance to young people facing difficult situations. We prevent homelessness before it happens. We do so by ensuring our doors are always open to anyone who needs us. When a teen walks through our doors — any time, day or night — they are warmly welcomed with a sense of relief, belonging, and home.

Behind our doors is a safe space with people who are ready and willing to listen and help, no matter the circumstance. We provide a continuum of services for youth ages 12-24 including a teen crisis shelter, a range of housing programs, counseling, and an outreach team to help connect youth to resources.

I hope you will consider making a meaningful donation to help us keep opening doors for youth.



– Sonya Thesing | Executive Director

[HuckHouse.org/Donate](https://HuckHouse.org/Donate)

Huckleberry House Financials

Consolidated statements of activities and change in net assets for the year ended June 30, 2022

REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Programs and Grants	\$ 2,741,211	Transitional Living Program	\$ 1,337,502
United Way	\$ 90,000	Kenmore Housing	\$ 630,356
Medicaid—Title XIX	\$ 531,839	Crisis Shelter	\$ 1,161,944
Contributions	\$ 361,828	Permanent Supportive Housing	\$ 214,886
Rental and Utilities Income	\$ 393,535	Youth Outreach	\$ 366,058
Purchase of Services and Discretionary Funding	\$ 160,871	Family Support	\$ 352,105
Interest and Dividend Income	\$ 58,128	Scholarships	\$ -
Special Events	\$ 92,002	Fundraising	\$ 55,262
Net (Loss) Gain on Marketable Securities	\$ (172,671)	Administration	\$ 462,768
Paycheck Protection Program	\$ 513,452	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 4,580,881</b>
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$ -	Change in Net Assets	\$ 189,314
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 4,770,195</b>	<b>NET ASSETS</b>	
		<b>Beginning of Year</b>	<b>\$ 3,371,821</b>
		<b>End of Year</b>	<b>\$ 3,561,135</b>

Join the Sleep Out Movement



On April 21, 2023, concerned citizens will sleep outside in solidarity with the 3,000 youth who experience homelessness in our city each year. Registration will open in February. Scan the QR code to learn more about Sleep Out! Columbus and sign up for registration alerts. Since 2018, the Sleep Out has generated over \$500,000 to support Huckleberry House's proven programs.



# The Spirit Of HH *by Richard Duarte Brown*

Suddenly life gets out of control.

and families face the unplanned  
and unthinkable dilemma  
of no one or nowhere to Go!

As a trusting child or a displaced teen  
needing space  
Needing a place

needing space  
Needing a place

needing space  
Needing a place

Needing that heartfelt smile on your face

Let me scream  
Let me think  
Let me be strong.

and then Let me cry

Until...  
I trust you to wipe my tears away  
as I began to trust you to give me space  
a place to lay my head.

As I grew, I never forgot your kindness.

When I was hopeless  
You were hope.

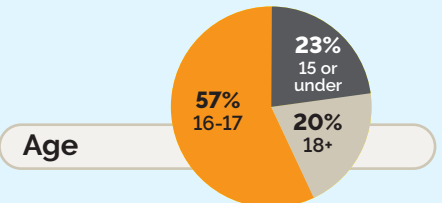
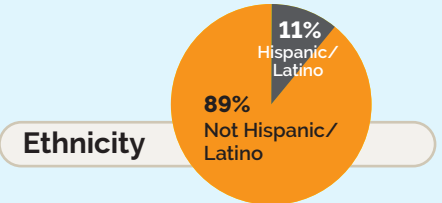
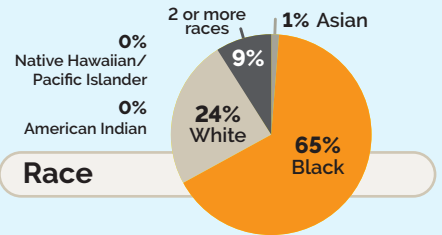
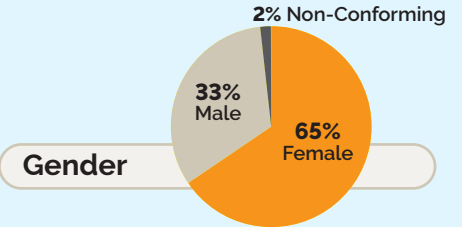
when I needed it most.

Huck House...  
you softened my heart!



*The Spirit of HH* was commissioned to celebrate Huckleberry House's 50th anniversary and to thank special friends who have helped Huck House along the way. Artist Richard Duarte Brown named it *The Spirit of HH* because nicknames are used when we feel close to someone, something, or someplace. People who know HH feel an immediate connection and closeness to the people and spirit of our organization.

## Huck House Youth Demographics



# BEHIND OUR DOORS...

*our youth learn and grow in the warmth and safety of a home*

A total of **1,293 YOUTH** entered Huck House programs.

**1 HOUSE** with counseling rooms for youth and families containing **6,500 SQUARE FEET** of space for teens navigating challenges.

In our teen shelter and *all of our housing programs*, Huck House provided **35,933 NIGHTS OF SHELTER**.

**73 DEDICATED** staff members

In our teen shelter, **5,265 MEALS** were served in FY22.

A total of **10,874 HOURS** of mental health interventions, life skills training, and parent and wellness mentoring were provided in FY22.

## Guitars, harmonicas, and life skills

Dean "DAC" Collins is a Columbus Police Department officer. But the youth get to know him as the music instructor who teaches guitar lessons at the shelter each week. "I'm here every Wednesday, no matter what. Even if the kids don't want to do class, I'll still be here working on making it better for next week." DAC brings five guitars and a jar full of new harmonicas each week. The class consists of learning how to tune a guitar, a few beginner chords, and some beginner tunes on harmonica. During class, DAC gives includes motivational messages and stories to inspire teens to become the best version of themselves. The young people staying in the shelter always look forward to Wednesday and DAC's classes.



## Mid-Ohio Food Collective Market Days

Mid-Ohio Markets comes to Marsh Brook Place and Kenmore Square every month. Teja Perasa, a case manager at Marsh Brook Place, said, "Youth have loved the services and it has eliminated a lot of food insecurity as their SNAP benefits are always going on and off." It's also a great community activity as youth come to shop together and have a great time.

When MOFC delivery person Tim saw the number of young children living at Marsh Brook Place, he added some Lunchables to the monthly delivery. Youth were taking a lot of dairy products and eggs, so case manager Michaela Dempsey started sharing recipes and teaching youth how to cook vegetables – and now youth are choosing more fresh produce each month.

## Monthly Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) program dinners

What might look like a monthly get together of young adults is actually a very purposeful activity for youth who have survived violence. Huckleberry House's crime victim services (CVS) team hosts the monthly dinners to encourage socialization, build a sense of community, and create interaction with staff in a group setting. The young adults and their children get to enjoy themed healthy meals.

Speakers often give presentations at the monthly dinners. A recent speaker conducted an exercise in self-love and confidence. The activity created an opportunity for staff to connect with a young person who had been slow to accept support from the CVS team.

"The dinners afford young people the opportunity to have say in the construction of their own village and foundational support, even upon graduating from our housing programs," explains Dynell Macklin, CVS Coordinator. "Our young people begin to trust and support the staff and each other – even accompanying one another to court hearings."



**IN 116 KITCHENS ACROSS CENTRAL OHIO**, youth learned about cooking and had access to healthy food.



**113 APARTMENTS** for homeless young adults at three apartment communities.



# BEYOND OUR DOORS...

*there is a world our youth are ready to conquer.*



**TYRAE'S  
STORY**

**"THEY  
HELPED  
ME GET A  
HOME..."**

17-year old "Tyrae" had lived a difficult seven years before coming to the Huck House teen crisis shelter in October. Her father went to prison when she was 10-years old. Her life was turned upside down. By age 14, she dropped out of school and fell in to human trafficking, drugs and prostitution. She went to juvenile detention for six months. Those six months convinced Tyrae that she wanted a different life.

She re-enrolled in school and graduated early. She is now a student at Columbus State and works two jobs. Even with these great strides, Tyrae and her mom had a strained relationship and Tyrae found herself on her own, back on the streets and scared.

[Read more online...](#)



**SHAY'S  
STORY**

**"I AM  
MORE  
HOPEFUL  
NOW..."**

Shay found the teen crisis shelter when she was 17. A tumultuous relationship with family, many of whom live out of state, caused her to be on her own for quite some time. "I didn't want to go to the adult shelter, so I found the Huck House crisis program." While at the shelter, Shay learned about the Transitional Living Program. On her 18th birthday, Shay moved to Huck House's apartments at Jefferson Avenue.

Shay remembers that first day at her own apartment. "I was nervous, very nervous. But another young person and Teja, the staff member, were very welcoming." Shay quickly became Jefferson Avenue's unofficial Welcome Wagon, developing friendships with all the other residents.

[Read more online...](#)

## WELLNESS DAY AT Highbanks METRO PARK



For youth who think that staying healthy requires grueling workouts, visiting Highbanks Metro Park this summer with members of their Huck House team was a breath of fresh air. Literally. According to wellness mentor Juanita

Brown, it is important to show youth different ways to get and stay healthy, both physically and mentally, while exploring and learning something new.

Young people and their children were able to explore the nature center, walk park trails, splash in the creek and play at Kids Park. It was a perfect day for youth to get out of their normal environment and experience nature. "I love it here, it's so peaceful," said one young person. "I never knew this existed!"

All of the youth who attended received their own Metro Park passports and have visited Big Darby too.

**90% OF  
TRANSITIONAL LIVING  
YOUTH** move in to their  
own apartments after  
program completion

***"They helped me  
learn stability..."***

Read Tyrae and Shay's full stories and the digital version of the impact report at:  
[HuckHouse.org/Annual-Report](https://huckhouse.org/Annual-Report)



**59% OF YOUTH** who visit the Youth Outreach Program YOP Shop are linked to community resources

## Counseling for the Community

At the start of the pandemic, renovation was completed at the Counseling Center at Huckleberry House, on the Hamlet Street campus, and in 2022 we were finally able to start using it fully. By creating additional space, our talented therapists have been able to offer services to a broader audience, including OSU students.

Therapist Daniel Smithberger has been working with a first generation college student who was referred to the counseling program due to severe depression. The depression was impacting the student's academic performance and nearly led to academic probation. Since being linked with counseling, the student has improved their academic performance, selected a major, and moved into their own apartment.

Daniel says it has been a true honor to see this young person grow in self-confidence and overcome various limitations. "Our young adults have struggled in all facets of life throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Seeing young people progress through therapy and find strength within themselves truly inspires me as their therapist."

**91% OF CRISIS  
PROGRAM TEENS** return  
to safe and appropriate  
housing



**2022-23  
Huckleberry House  
Board of Directors**  
(November, 2022)

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**Pete Shuler**

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*Members serve  
without compensation.*



**Huckleberry House, Inc.**  
1421 Hamlet Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43201

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Administration: (614) 294-8097  
Fax: (614) 294-6109

**24-Hour Crisis Hotline: (614) 294-5553**

# HuckHouse.org

Huckleberry House is accredited by the Council on Accreditation and is licensed by the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services. Funding agencies include ADAMH, City of Columbus, Franklin County Children Services, United Way of Central Ohio, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, U.S. Department of HUD, Community Shelter Board, Ohio Department of Justice.