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175+ YEARS OF CARING
 **Beech Acres**
parenting center

INSIDERS'
SCOOP

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BOLD MOVES, BRIGHTER TOMORROWS

As a new year begins, Beech Acres Parenting Center reflects with gratitude on the progress our community made possible in 2025.

Meaningful strides were taken to reach children and families facing the greatest barriers to well-being, and the impact can be felt across schools, homes, and neighborhoods throughout Greater Cincinnati.

Thanks to Beyond the Classroom™ and The Character Effect™, students across the region walked into school feeling emotionally safe, supported, and ready to learn. More than 22,000 children and educators discovered their strengths, transforming classrooms into spaces where confidence and connection grow. Your support also brought school-based behavioral health services to students who needed help beyond academics, ensuring they could stay present and engaged in learning.

Parents found hope and reassurance during some of life's toughest moments. Our Parent Connex® team introduced new resources, including the *What I Wish I Knew About Parenting* podcast, delivering expert tools and practical guidance anytime, anywhere. Programs designed to help families navigate

divorce also offered stability and peace of mind when it mattered most.

Children in foster care experienced something every child deserves: love and security. Many reunited with their families, others were welcomed into caring homes, and some were adopted into forever families. Thanks to these stable, nurturing environments, 100% of youth in our foster program graduated or advanced to the next grade level last school year.

Looking ahead, a generous \$350,000 grant from an anonymous funder will help Beech Acres dream even bigger, fueling our next three-year strategic plan and expanding access to support so every family has the tools to thrive.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Brighter futures are being built—one child, one family, one bold step at a time.

Warm regards,

Laura Mitchell

President & Chief Executive Officer

LOVE GROWS HERE

EXPANDING OUR CIRCLE OF LOVE



Beech Acres' 2nd Annual Love Grows Here Breakfast was an incredible success! Hundreds of donors and partners gathered to celebrate our mission, raising over \$192,000 to support programs where families live, work, and learn.

We are deeply grateful to welcome 15 new members to our Circle of Love Giving Society—each making a five-year pledge to provide the lasting stability Beech Acres needs to serve more children and families.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in making love grow stronger in our community!



Laura Mitchell, Beech Acres President & CEO and John Webster, Beech Acres Board Chair

FROM **ROCKY ROADS** TO **SOLID GROUND**: **CASSANDRA & NICO'S** JOURNEY



For years, Cassandra and her son Nico lived in uncertainty—homelessness, nights spent in cars, and the constant stress of not knowing where they would sleep or eat. *“Everything I’ve been through, my son went through it with me,”* Cassandra recalls.

Determined to rebuild her life, Cassandra searched for a school where Nico could start fresh. When she learned that Dater Montessori offered on-site support through Beech Acres’ Beyond the Classroom™ program, she saw a real opportunity for change.

For Principal Dr. Mark Gumm, the partnership is essential. *“Beech Acres is significant to the work we do at Dater Montessori. They provide in-house therapy for students while engaging parents to strengthen that connection within the school.”*

At first, Nico struggled to manage his emotions. At seven years old, he sometimes acted out in ways that reflected the trauma he had endured. Cassandra remembers, *“He cursed and threw things. He was seven, but acting like a two-year-old.”*

Early in the year, Nico reached a crisis point—a situation that nearly led to in-school suspension. Before finalizing the paperwork, Dr. Gumm radioed the Beech Acres team. *“They not only helped Nico in the situation but also helped me find ways to de-escalate. The collaboration and trust from Beech Acres helps students understand they can be their authentic selves, but they can also do the right thing.”*

Beyond the Classroom™ program specialist Latisha Eversmann and therapist Courtney Chambers worked closely with Nico to uncover the root of his behavior and teach him healthy coping strategies. Courtney shared, *“There’s always a root to the behavior. If we can figure out the cause and how to help them, it’s almost night and day when they go back into the classroom.”*

Day by day, Nico began to thrive. He spent less time in the office and began advocating for his needs in positive ways. At home, Cassandra noticed the change too. She remembers answering a call from Dr. Gumm’s personal cell phone, bracing for bad news—but instead, hearing an update about Nico taking accountability for his actions. *“It was a proud mom moment.”*

The support didn’t stop with Nico. Cassandra found guidance for her own challenges as well. *“Beech Acres has helped tremendously beyond my son. They are the support system I didn’t know I needed.”*

Reflecting on their journey, Cassandra tearfully shared, *“He’s done a complete 180. That’s my baby.”*

Your support makes stories like Cassandra and Nico’s possible. Thank you for helping thousands of children and caregivers across Greater Cincinnati schools build happier, healthier futures.



Dr. Mark Gumm and Cassandra with Beech Acres support team Latisha Eversman and Courtney Chambers

Scan the QR code to watch Cassandra’s story of hope and transformation.



A LOVE THAT GREW LIKE OAK TREES



From their first days together to raising seven children, Jim and Lorraine Bresler have shared a lifetime of love. Married in 1953,

their family continues to grow with 11 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren—often joking that there are too many to fit into one picture.

Lorraine remembers those early days fondly. “He was my first real boyfriend,” she said. Their love deepened through joyful times, like New Year’s Eve parties so lively “the floors shook,” and through hardships, when Jim worked odd jobs just to keep food on the table.

To honor the legacy of love that held them together, the Bresler family sponsored a pair of oak trees through Beech Acres’ Plant a Beech-Family Tree program, launched in partnership with Taking Root.

The trees, planted at Cardinal Land Conservancy in Loveland, will stand for generations as a living tribute to their love story.

Lauren Enda, Lorraine’s daughter, explained the family’s choice to collaborate with Beech Acres and Taking Root. “These organizations mirror the generational impact our parents had—sustaining life, growth and connection well beyond their immediate circle. The two oaks we planted will stand tall for centuries, nourishing and sheltering life long after those who knew our parents are gone.”

“The partnership between Beech Acres and Taking Root is a celebration of the connectedness between strong trees and strong families,” added Lauren, who also serves on the Taking Root board.

“Taking Root protects and plants trees for future generations, while Beech Acres nurtures and supports strong families through guidance and resources. That’s why my family chose to honor our parents’ legacy in this way.”

Celebrate your family’s roots and create a legacy that lasts. Scan the QR code to learn more about the Plant a Beech-Family Tree program.



WHAT'S SPROUTING AT BEECH ACRES



Leading the Way Year After Year

Three years strong! Beech Acres’ Foster Care program has once again earned Cincy Magazine’s Nonprofit of the Year Award for Foster Home Placement. And for the first year, Beech Acres’ Parent Connex[®] and Empowerment teams are proud to be recognized in the Family Engagement Category.

New Partnership Sparks Creativity and Well-Being

Beech Acres is excited to announce a new partnership with Refresh Collective, empowering their team to bring strengths-based practices into creative programs that support youth and adults.

Celebrating Local Leadership

We proudly congratulate Beech Acres’ own COO and CFO, Brittany Speed, on being named to the Cincinnati Business Courier’s 40 Under 40 list, honoring the region’s top young professionals for their leadership and impact!



Honoring Foster Parent Heroes

Our Annual Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner shines a spotlight on the incredible foster parents who transform children’s lives. We invite you to stand alongside generous sponsors like the Jeff Ruby Foundation and BSI Engineering to help make this year’s celebration unforgettable. Scan the QR code to learn more about how you can get involved.



Spreading Holiday Joy Through Inspire-A-Family

We are incredibly grateful to all who helped bring joy and warmth to families over the holidays through our Inspire-A-Family campaign! A special thank you to our partners, Young Professionals Choral Collective and Queen City Book Bank, for their generous donations and proceeds.

