



“Liam doesn’t talk.”

Nights were loud at Liam’s house. Raised voices, raised tempers, and raised fists filled the room. **Liam watched his dad use words and hands to hurt his mom.** All Liam wanted was quiet and calm.

When Liam’s mom, Jill, fled with him to Doorways’ safehouse, four-year-old Liam didn’t talk as much as other kids his age. As his mom, she wondered if something was wrong. But Liam’s dad blamed Jill, saying that Liam was “just being a baby” and not using his words because of her. Once they were safe at last in Doorways’ shelter, Jill and Liam could finally access the support they needed.

At the safehouse, the family began working with Doorways’ Child and Family Case Managers right away. They helped Liam and Jill adjust to community living. He made friends with the other kids at the Safehouse, and then, something wonderful happened: Liam began to mimic the other children’s speech, using words and phrases he never used before. **Safe at Doorways, Liam began to find his voice.**

With the help of their Doorways team, Jill enrolled Liam in preschool. There, he had access to speech and occupational therapy and a safe environment where he could learn and play. The continuous support, structure, and routine provided stability.

In just a few months, Liam was talking in three-to-five-word phrases, and singing his favorite tunes. Like most four-year-olds, he has a lot to say!

Now, Jill and Liam are living in a home of their own through our HomeStart Supportive Housing Program, where they continue to receive Doorways’ wraparound services. In his new home, Liam is thriving. And Jill is the mom she so wanted to be.



When you donate to Doorways, you give the gift of hope against harm.

Especially for little ones like Liam, safety and stability is critical, not only to their wellbeing today, but for the rest of their lives. From birth to age three, children’s brains develop and grow to 80% of their adult size, and to 90% by age five. Doorways’ Children’s Services are essential to helping children heal, grow, and thrive.

When you give the gift of hope against harm to survivors like Liam and Jill, the difference you make lasts a lifetime. **Your support helps provide positive experiences which foster growth – like feeling safe and making friends in shelter, having needs met by a parent, and getting one-on-one support from professionals like Doorways’ staff.**

Safe harbor helped Liam find his voice. You can help Doorways do even more.

In recent years, **the number of survivors we sheltered in safehousing has more than doubled**, from 32 adults and 26 children in 2018 to 64 adults and 71 children last year. That means that **more than half of the clients who found safe harbor in Doorways’ safehousing were children.** And in just the past few months, half of the children we served were infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

When I first joined Doorways in 2009, as Doorways’ first Child Mental Health Specialist, I worked one-on-one with children in our shelter. I met many children like Liam: children who are more resilient than any child should have to be, and like all kids, also curious, smart, playful, and looking for connection. **With your support, Doorways gives kids like Liam a safe place to live, play, and grow.**

Please, help us continue this important work. Scan the QR code in this mailer to give online at www.doorwaysva.org/hope, or donate by mail using the card and return envelope included here. **To help Doorways keep pace with increasing needs, our generous donors, Judy and Kevin Moak, will match your gift, \$1 for \$1, up to \$35,000. Donate now to double the hope, safe harbor, and healing you give!**

This year and beyond, thank you for all you give.

Many thanks, muchas gracias,
Diana Ortiz, M.Ed., LPC, President and CEO