



ERIN'S HOUSE CONNECTIONS

First Edition 2026

2025 Mission Results

MEET: Cortney, Alivia, and Ella

Why We Give: The Lancias

Introducing:
New Board Members

In Loving Memory
of Madi Wurster



Aaliyah, Jessica, & Miracle
Erin's House Family

Erin's House provides support services for children, teens,
and their families who have experienced a death.

www.ErinsHouse.org • 260.423.2466

f i n d

2025 MISSION RESULTS

YOU made all this possible!

Support through referrals, monetary gifts, in-kind donations, and volunteering helped Erin's House to thrive this past year.



2,751
INDIVIDUALS HELPED
through our free services



10,157
TOTAL HOURS
of Service Provided



456
NEW DONORS

200
VOLUNTEERS
Facilitators, House Parents,
and Babysitters



537
PHONE CALLS
from caregivers seeking
guidance for supporting
children and teens grieving



164
NEW FAMILIES
who joined
Erin's House



104
CAMP PARTICIPANTS
Teen Retreat, Camp Good Grief,
and Family Camp

12 COUNTIES
REACHED



Throughout Northeast and
Central Indiana: Adams, Allen, Defiance,
DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, Kosciusko,
LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wells, and Whitley

FAMILIES BY PERSON WHO DIED



FAMILIES BY CAUSE OF DEATH



FAMILIES BY ETHNICITY



29

SCHOOLS ASSISTED
by utilizing Classroom Companions
in-school programs



635

STUDENTS SUPPORTED
through School & Community
Outreach programs



612

EDUCATORS AND OTHERS
learned grief education through Erin's
House workshops and presentations



31

GRIEF BACKPACKS
provided to Schools

In Loving Memory of Madi Wurster

Former School Program Coordinator at Erin's House

The Erin's House staff is learning their new normal in the office as we grieve the death of our co-worker and dear friend, Madi Wurster.

Madi was 25 years old and the "little sister" in our office. She started as an Erin's House intern in 2022 and quickly stood out with her bubbly personality, infectious laugh, and heartfelt dedication to her work. She was hired part time in 2023 while she finished school, then officially became part of the full-time staff in 2024 after she graduated from PFW. She was a bright light on our school team, known for the way she led groups with warmth and skill, creating safe

spaces where students felt comfortable sharing their grief. Madi raved about her role at Erin's House to friends and family saying it was the "perfect fit." We will forever believe and share that Madi was our perfect fit.

With Madi no longer with us, we are still reminded by her that joy and laughter can exist alongside grief. Her influence continues to guide how we show up for our families, the schools we serve, and one another. Her legacy lives on in the spaces she shaped, the students she supported, and the hearts of all who knew her.



Leigh Ann Palmer Golf Outing Fundraiser - August 2025



Teen Retreat - April 2024



Disney Institute in Orlando, FL - March 2024



Common Bond - May 2024



Judi's House Visit in Denver, CO - November 2025



Holiday Party - December 2024



Classroom Companion School Group - November 2024



The Wing Groundbreaking - May 2024



Tributes from the Heart

We are touched by the donations we receive to further the mission of Erin's House that are made in memory, celebration, or honor of family and friends. We are pleased to share these special tributes made throughout 2025.

IN MEMORY OF:

Faith Judith Austin	Matthew Coffey	Courtland Griebel	Willard Meyer	Taylor Schnebelt
Charles Bair	Tony Cole	Nicholas Hackman	Mike & Judi	Karra Shafer
John Batchelder	Chris Crooks	Bonnie Hefflefinger	Bryan James Miller	Sherry Lee Smith
David Batchelder	Darci & Emma	Rob Hentz	Gregory P. Miller	Samuel James Snyder
Nancy L. Batchelder	Patricia Davis	Lucy Ann Hilger	Pamela Munk	Gilbert Steele
Gary Batchelder	Andria Deck	Tim Hodgins	Beverly & Harry Nesbitt	Phil, Pat, and Marcia Steigerwald
Karen Baumert	Brandon DeJonge	Matt Holt	Patti O'Desky	Lonnie Stout
John Bellio	Francis Dilag	Tara Humphrey	Lizzie O'Donnell	Matthew Thomas
Thomas Berdine	Matthew Distelrath	Jamison	Connie Ousley	Rob Thompson
Linda Bernhart	David Dumser	Jerry & Sarah	LeighAnn Marie Palmer	Brian Thornson
Nancy Bicknese	Robert Erexson	Lois Jozwiak	Susie Platt	Christine Till
Shea DeVoe Billingsley	Mary Estep	Karl	Susan Pollock Estate	Gary Vanderbilt
Levi Blake	David Farragh	Emily Koehl	Vivian Priddy	Jane VanGilder
Melody Ann Boesch	Erin Renee Farragh	Kyle - Tony Farragh's friend	Terri Raider	Bre (Maxson) Vire
Al Bohnstedt	Michael Farragh	Olga & Richard Larimer	Brittany Raymond-Arnold	Nick Wells
Ron Bonar	Alan Faulkner	Ruth Lengacher	Robert Reyes	Rodney Werling
Ruth Anne Bonnau/Grandmama	Marclyn Filler	Gloria June Lighty	Elizabeth Richardville	Paula M. Whitmore
Steve Brody	Martha Flanigan	Lindsay Dalton Mallery	Chase Richmond	Jane Wilks
Shannon Cahalan	Carter Fleck	Tom & Andrew Martin	Randy Rolf	Bob Winkeljohn
Karl Carpenter	Lynn Gebhart	Denise Meincke	Elizabeth Schilling	Madi Wurster
Cynthia Ann Centlivre	Carolyn Gilliam	Wilma Meyer		
	Joe & Nettie Green			

IN HONOR OF:

Evie & Cooper Bergstrom	E. Mark Deister	Trisha Hade	Mike & Brenda Norwood	Bre Stone
Karri Blackwell	Irwin F. Deister Jr.	Caitlin Hicks	Mike Nutter	Amber Szajna
Lori Boyer	Amy Donovan	Linda & Scott Jackson	Kaitlin Olivia	Danielle Talarico
Pamela Brooks	Gail Farragh	Jacob Kreager and the friends he has lost	Ryan Powell	Jennifer Westropp & Richard Poinsette's marriage
Kaylee Buhr	Megan Farragh	The Linker Family	Nancy Rhee	Eleanor Wilkening
Sylvia Christian	Tony Farragh	Randy May	Jamie Rice	
Melissa DeArmond	Chris Gomez	Marissa McGinnis Snyder	Tony Shepherd	
	JaNia Guy			

Please accept our apologies if we've missed your tribute. If you should find an error, contact us and we'll include it in our next tribute list.

MEET

Cortney, Alivia, and Ella ERIN'S HOUSE FAMILY

My daughters and I heard about Erin's House back in 2018 when our neighbor died in a car accident. Her son was the same age as my youngest, Ella, and we wanted him to have a familiar face when he joined the program. We made sure to volunteer every night he was there by signing up as House Parents and serving pizza. A few years later, my eldest, Alivia, lost a friend to suicide and she knew exactly what to do and where to go. **Erin's House was her idea.**

When Ella, 12, and Alivia, 16, joined Erin's House programs, I immediately saw the difference it made in how they processed their grief. As I watched them grow through the experience, I could see that Erin's House gave my daughters the tools and language to understand their grief in a healthy way. **Through activities, group discussions, and gentle guidance from the facilitators, they learned that grief isn't something to "get over," it's something to grow through. The program helped them see that healing doesn't mean forgetting.**

For Alivia, connecting with teens her own age has also been one of the most meaningful parts of her healing journey.

There's something incredibly powerful about realizing you're not alone and that other teens understand what it feels like to lose someone you love. **The peer connections helped her open up in ways even family conversations couldn't help. It gave her a safe space to laugh, cry, and simply be with others who "get it."**

Over the years, I've seen the impact Erin's House has had on my daughters in ways that resonate deeply with our whole family. As my daughters grow older and encounter new milestones like graduation, college, and a future career there will be moments when grief resurfaces. The tools we learned from our time at Erin's House gives me comfort knowing they will be able to communicate and connect with others. **Those small lessons have turned our grief into gratitude, reminding us our love doesn't end just because someone is no longer physically here.**



"Learning that Erin's House now offers young adult services at The Wing is exciting for our family and a wonderful expansion for the community. It's comforting to know there will be continued support as they transition into adulthood. We've learned that grief doesn't go away, it changes, and having a place to continue to connect with peers as young adults will be invaluable."



INTRODUCING

New Board Members

Erin's House board members guide strategies, make key decisions, and contribute expertise to ensure effective mission execution.



JOSH AMBROSE | Custer Inc, Regional Director of Sales and Operations

ENGAGING, PASSIONATE, ORGANIZED

I am honored to serve an organization I deeply respect by bringing fresh perspective and ideas to help expand the reach and impact of Erin's House. I first learned about Erin's House through a friend and reached out for a tour. I started getting involved, supporting events, and quickly felt connected to the mission. Losing my mother to lung cancer at age 10 shaped my life, and supporting children and families facing similar losses is very close to my heart.



NIELE IVEY | University of Notre Dame, Women's Basketball Head Coach

PASSIONATE, LOVING, KIND

The mission of Erin's House inspired me immensely to want to be part of this team. After experiencing personal loss in my own family and needing support during my grieving process, it is truly an honor to now serve in this capacity! I hope to bring inspiration and wisdom to Erin's House through my experiences as a student athlete, assistant coach, and now head coach.



ALICIA O'NEAL | Sweetwater Sound, Manager of Employee Wellbeing & Recognition Programs

CREATIVE, COMPASSIONATE, PURPOSE-DRIVEN

After volunteering with the organization for over nine years, I have a deep appreciation for its mission, values, and the care it provides. Once I experienced the profound loss of my brother, I came to understand in a deeply personal way how life altering grief can be and how vital support is during times of loss. I look forward to adding value through thoughtful collaboration, advocacy, and stewardship while working alongside fellow board members and staff to help ensure Erin's House remains a place of comfort, hope, and healing for our community.



SARAH SCHREIBER | Barrett McNagny LLP, Partner

DETERMINED, GENUINE, PERSUASIVE

I am thrilled to join Erin's House as a board member and hope to bring fresh insight, passion and thoughtful perspectives to an already exceptional group. I was inspired to join the Board in large part because of a tragic death I experienced as a teenager that I really did not know how to process at that time. Unfortunately, I remember firsthand the way that tragedy affected my family and me. I still feel its impact, which is why I believe so firmly in the mission of this organization.



CAREY SIPE | QuikCut LLC, President

FAITHFUL, AUTHENTIC, LEADER

The importance of having an organization like Erin's House to meet the ever-growing needs of our community cannot be understated. Having experienced the loss of my father when I was nine years old, I truly believe the healing process would have been improved greatly if I had a resource like Erin's House. With a background in Accounting and Finance, my goal is to ensure the financial stability of the organization so it can continue indefinitely.

Why We Give

The Lancias

Supporters and Donors since 2018

Floyd and Betty Lou Lancia have a way of showing up with open hearts and a generosity that brings hope to others. Since first giving to Erin's House eight years ago, they have been faithful supporters, cheering on Erin's House, believing deeply in our mission, and investing in the lives of grieving children and teens year after year.

Giving back has always been second nature to Floyd and Betty Lou. As lifelong educators, mentors, and community leaders, they have spent decades caring for their community, encouraging growth, and making sure others feel seen and supported. That same compassion is what drew them to Erin's House and continues to inspire their ongoing support.

Their generosity through a recently set up endowment for Erin's House will provide meaningful resources and support through our programs offering grief support at no cost to families.

We are so grateful for Floyd and Betty Lou and the lasting impact their kindness has on the Erin's House community!

"We have both experienced the loss of our parents, an experience that forever changes you. When a child or young person faces that same heartbreak, the need for care and understanding is even greater. Erin's House provides that compassion in wonderful ways."



Special thanks to the foundations who partnered with us in 2025

1st Source Foundation

Adams County Community Foundation

Arby's Foundation

Howard P. Arnold Foundation

Eric & Mary Baade Charitable Trust

Carlson Family Foundation

Chaffee Family Foundation

Community Foundation DeKalb County

Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne

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Steuben County Community Foundation

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The Ternet Family Foundation

Charlie Tippmann Foundation Charitable Trust

Walmart Foundation

Wells County Foundation

Edward M. & Mary McCrea Wilson Foundation

The Donald F. Wood and Darlene M. Richardson Foundation

Zollner Foundation



Save the Dates

Healing Heart Hustle 5K

Sunday, August 30, 2026

Lace up for the 2nd annual Healing Heart Hustle 5K, a meaningful run/walk honoring loved ones. Enjoy kid-friendly activities, snow cones, the outdoors, and family fun while supporting Erin's House. Mark your calendar for an afternoon of movement and remembrance! All ages are welcome.



Wine for the Spirit

Friday, October 2, 2026

Indulge in an unforgettable evening at Wine for the Spirit! Experience the thrill of our live and silent auctions, complemented by exceptional wine and tantalizing bites curated by top local chefs. Join the fun, partake in the community spirit, and be a part of purposeful giving.



Erin's House provides support services for children, teens, and their families who have experienced a death.

2026 Board of Directors

Luke Squires – *President*
 Nick Talarico – *President Elect*
 Brian Ternet – *VP Governance*
 Josey Seabolt, CPA – *Secretary*
 Sarah Schenkel, CPA – *Treasurer*
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 Dr. Matt Runyan
 Sarah Schreiber
 David Shadburne

Carey Sipe
 Mike Ziembo

Honorary Board Members:
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 Tom Trent

Staff

Debbie Meyer – Executive Director
 Leslie Augustyniak – Director of Development
 Tammy Else – Lead Child Grief Specialist
 Anna Freels – Marketing Specialist
 Jen Hartman – Director of Volunteers
 Celestia Mai – Child Grief Specialist
 Cindy Maldonado-Schaefer – Director of Operations

Emily Mock – Director of Family Services
 Erick T. Baker – Director of Community Outreach, P/T
 Ashley Kipfer – Donor Relations Coordinator, P/T
 McKenzie Leffel – Community Outreach Coordinator, P/T
 Kristen Burdine – Child Grief Specialist, P/T
 Russ Eggeman – Building Maintenance, P/T



www.ErinsHouse.org



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Administrative Office Hours:
 Monday – Friday 9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Please let us know if you would like to be removed from our mailing list. Call 260.423.2466.