

# HEALTHY LEARNERS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



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## Going Further For Children

### A Note From Our Executive Director

If I've said it once, I've said it 1,000 times..."There is not a county in South Carolina that does not need Healthy Learners!" With that mission in mind, I am personally committing to leading Healthy Learners in sustainable growth to serve more children across our state.

Armed with a revised strategic plan to provide our services exceptionally well (EXCEL), in collaboration with the community (ENGAGE) and increasing our service footprint (EXPAND), we are ready to touch thousands of lives with renewed health and bright futures. With you, we will go further than ever before!

- Amy Splittgerber

# Going Further For Melody\*

***“I’m feeling sad, lonely, and scared” Melody confided to her teacher, Ms. Smith. “I’ve felt this way since elementary school.”***

Melody is a shy, observant, and straight A sixth grader in Georgetown County. While very smart and talented, under the surface, she was suffering. She struggled with confidence, making friends and disliked going to school. She could never seem to shake the anxiety she felt following her throughout the day.

Ms. Smith knew Melody’s challenges had to be addressed for her to thrive both in school and life. She contacted her mother, the school guidance counselor, and school nurse to discuss. Melody’s mom was greatly concerned, but had very limited ability to take her to the regular counseling appointments she knew she needed due to an inflexible job they relied on. The school nurse knew where to turn – Healthy Learners.

Melody is not alone in her challenges. The National Institute of Mental Health reported in 2019 that 1 in 5 children in the United States had a diagnosable mental health disorder. Mental health impacts a child’s education in a variety of ways, including attention and concentration, memory, social ability, behavior and school attendance.



Healthy Learners quickly scheduled Melody an appointment with Riverside Behavioral Learning Center. Once a week for the last few months Healthy Learners has been transporting Melody to her counseling appointments, giving her the opportunity to process her anxiety and develop tools to heal and overcome.

Today, Melody’s mom notes that her self-confidence has improved, she has friends, speaks more and even enjoys going to school. We are proud of her progress, and humbled that we can be a part of her journey towards a thriving life.

Whether it’s a single appointment, or ongoing services, Healthy Learners is dedicated to going further for children like Melody, removing health barriers to learning so that every child can thrive.

\*Name changed for privacy.

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*“I am thankful for Healthy Learners. They make it possible for the kids to get the necessities they need and the parents don’t have to miss work. They are absolutely AWESOME!!!!”*

**Parent, Pee Dee**

*“Your services helped my daughter feel better, fixed her toothaches, eat well and have a good smile.”*

**Parent, Midlands**



## Remembering Al Pollard: A Pioneer for Children

This spring, we remember William “Al” Pollard, one of the founding members of Healthy Learners, and a lifetime advocate for supporting at risk children’s health in South Carolina. In 1993, with a personal gift of \$250 to help make a struggling child see, he and John Heydel began what is now the ministry of Healthy Learners.

Al tirelessly advocated for the work of Healthy Learners, rallying allies around the need, and ultimately playing a key role in Healthy Learners’ adoption and formation as a ministry of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine.

Al passed away on February 2, 2022. He and his family remain in our hearts as we celebrate his life and legacy of compassion and love to those in need.

*“It was a privilege to work with Al Pollard who had the idea to provide eye tests, and glasses to children whose parents couldn’t afford them. He presented the idea to develop a formal program which we called Seeing is Achieving. I was the incoming President, so we approached Sister Mary Jacob CSA, who was President of Providence Hospital, with the idea. She didn’t hesitate to support the idea with the development of a department to head up what is now Healthy Learners.”*

**- John Heydel,  
Healthy Learners Co-Founder**



Sometimes when you hear a large number of children served, the individual child's journey is lost in a sea of statistics. We wanted to share with you a quick snapshot of a few children you're supporting. They represent thousands of other similar stories – stories that are better because of your generosity.



### Meet Emanuel

Midlands - 6 years old

Emanuel was referred to Healthy Learners for dental and vision needs in 2021.

Emanuel's first language is Spanish, he is being raised by his single mom and has no health insurance.

Healthy Learners took him to his very first dental appointment in September of 2021 and 14 cavities were found. He has had 12 pulpotomies to address extensively infected primary teeth and 2 fillings (totaling \$2,096.90 for Emanuel's dental care).

In November 2021 he received new glasses following an eye exam coordinated by Healthy Learners.

**Going forward:** Emanuel will need continued dental care to resolve his poor oral health and dental education (for both him and his mom) on proper dental hygiene. He will need annual dental cleanings and x-rays and an annual vision exam.



### Meet DaZayria

LowCountry - 9 years old

DaZyria was referred for to Healthy Learners for dental, vision, ADHD & behavioral needs in school in 2020.

Healthy Learners helped DaZayria get her very first pair of glasses and coordinated care with a local dental provider to have several cavities filled. This helped relieve DaZayria from immense tooth pain.

Healthy Learners has since transported her to the doctor for treatment when she had an upper respiratory infection and delivered refills for her medication.

Healthy Learners now helps keep DaZayria on track by transporting her to her weekly counseling sessions.

**Going forward:** DaZayria will need weekly counseling sessions as treatment for her behavioral needs (and to refill her ADHD meds), annual vision exams to keep her vision prescription current, and yearly cleanings for her dental health.



### Meet JaNorre

PeeDee - 14 years old

JaNorre was referred to Healthy Learners in 2017 for ADHD & behavioral needs.

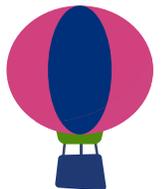
Since his initial referral, he has also been seen for dental & vision needs.

Healthy Learners has coordinated 14 dental fillings, 1 tooth extraction and 4 cleanings for JaNorre and transported him to the eye doctor for an annual vision exam and new glasses.

For the last six years, Healthy Learners has consistently delivered ADHD medication to the school nurse for him.

JaNorre lives in a multiple adult household with his 2 siblings (also being seen by Healthy Learners).

**Going forward:** JaNorre will need regular counseling sessions for ADHD, annual vision exams and dental cleanings.



## Healthy Learners x BNI

We were so excited to receive an amazing gift of Usborne books collected by Jennifer Brown and her friends at BNI! Jennifer and her generous network collected 20 bags of books for our children to read and enjoy while being transported to and from appointments. They were even thoughtful enough to include books in both English and Spanish!

If you would be interested in hosting a book drive for our Healthy Learners students, please contact Christian Markle, Director of Development, at [cmarkle@healthylearners.com](mailto:cmarkle@healthylearners.com) or 803-530-0002.



# Spring Events

## Palmetto Giving Day

For our Georgetown family, get pumped for Palmetto Giving Day! This 36 hour giving challenge on May 2-3 gives you the chance to join your community in supporting the amazing charities that specifically serve the community of Georgetown County. Help us support the hundreds of children that need Healthy Learners in Georgetown! Visit [palmettogivingday.org/organizations/healthylearners](http://palmettogivingday.org/organizations/healthylearners) to learn more and give!



## Midlands Gives



sponsored by:  
**Humana**®

For our Midlands family, mark your calendars for May 2 to support Healthy Learners during Midlands Gives! Thanks to our friends at Humana, you can **double your impact for children in need!** Make a donation between April 15-May 2 to Healthy Learners for Midlands Gives, and Humana will match your gift up to \$5,000! Visit [www.midlandsgives.org/HealthyLearners](http://www.midlandsgives.org/HealthyLearners) to get inspired and support our children!

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**HEALTHY LEARNERS**  
*A Ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System*