

Teens in Our
Region are
Counting on
All of Us

Discover How You Can
Make a Real Difference

ProDeoYouthCenter.org



proDeo

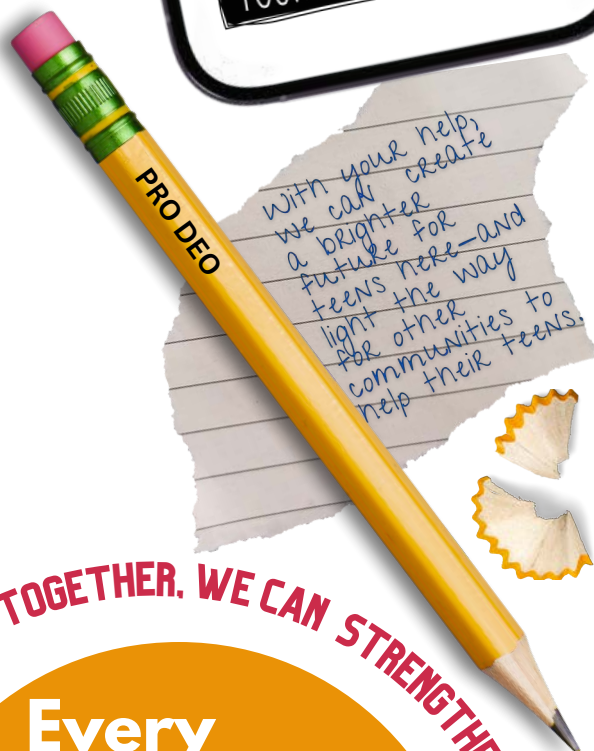
YOUTH CENTER

@the
Wesley
PLACE



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Changes Lives for Teens in Lee's Summit, Jackson County, and Across Missouri



Every
teen loved,
valued and
equipped
for change.

TOGETHER, WE CAN STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY.

Dear Friends,

In 2018, when I joined this incredible organization, the Board set a bold goal: Pro Deo Youth Center would redefine what a nonprofit could do by providing teens in Eastern Jackson County with free counseling and tutoring services.

Today, we know that Pro Deo's bold goal has saved lives.

Meet John. Like many teens, he arrived at Pro Deo burdened by isolation and battling depression. He'd been cruelly teased and bullied for such a long time that he was about to give up on himself and everyone around him. It took over a month for John to begin to trust the genuine kindness and acceptance he found at Pro Deo. Eighteen months later, John enjoys playing pool with volunteers and he shares fun activities with other teens, who he now counts as close friends. He is actively charting his own path to a brighter future. His life changed when he discovered that Pro Deo is a place where he's welcome, no matter what kind of day he's having. Pro Deo is where trust is nurtured, and support is readily available, including access to a dedicated youth mental health coordinator when life's burdens are too heavy to bear alone. John is just one example of the many teens Pro Deo has had the privilege to help.

Because our help changes lives, Pro Deo Youth Center is now being recognized as a transformational program by the state of Missouri and the City of Lee's Summit for our role in building resilience among underserved teens. As a direct result of this recognition, our teen center is now poised to be the model for after-school programs in communities across the country. With that kind of momentum in a world where teens desperately need support, we believe it's time for Pro Deo to set another bold goal. We are planning to move into our own building. This new space will be thoughtfully designed to help teens spend their after-school hours in ways that empower their well-being and growth.

We cannot achieve this vision alone. Pro Deo has a time-sensitive and very important need for a special kind of assistance that your generosity and partnership can provide. Our teens and their families face unique challenges – from family instability to food insecurity, from developmental differences to mental health struggles. We need your partnership to ensure equitable access to services for this vulnerable population. We need your support as our organization enters its own teen years with a deep passion to help our community's teens as they grow.

I warmly invite you to continue this important journey with us. With immense gratitude and anticipation for the road ahead,

Elaine Metcalf
Dr. Elaine Metcalf

Executive Director, Pro Deo Youth Center



Pro Deo teens go fun places!



Pro Deo builds relationships to empower teens in a safe and inclusive environment

Teen-focused programs are created using five “Pillars of Learning” that include:

- Creative Arts
- Personal and Social Skills
- Sports, Health, Wellness
- College, Career, and Job Skills
- Academic, STEM, and Service Learning

LET'S
GO



Providing Social, Emotional and Academic Support for Teens

Pro Deo helps teens find their “place” by creating an environment where they feel valued for who they are, regardless of challenges they may be experiencing. For some, Pro Deo is a friend group. For others, Pro Deo represents family.

Pro Deo provides fun activities after school and on Friday nights that help build friendships while supporting talents, encouraging curiosity, providing pre-career skills, and building character. Through after-school tutoring programs, teens are supported in their academic efforts. By encouraging them to dream while providing the supports to make their dreams achievable, Pro Deo is changing lives.

Trained to Help Teens Thrive

- 
- Loneliness
 - Isolation
 - Depression
 - Difficulty Navigating the Issues at School
 - Social Pressure
 - Understanding where you currently fit in the world
 - Tutoring for Academic Success
 - Anxiety and Fear
 - Grief
 - Hunger
 - Homelessness
 - Mapping out the Future

FUN

Teens from
Lee's Summit and
Eastern Jackson County

Fun Activities
Five Days a
Week, Free
Tutoring, and
Counseling





While the teens ate hotdogs, they talked about their lives. The stories they told were often heartbreaking.

Teens were hungry, depressed, suicidal, feeling isolated, struggling in school, abused, homeless, or had experienced traumatic events in their lives.

OUR HISTORY: How Pro Deo Got Its Start

In 2009, Andy Ewing was a 25-year-old police officer with the Lee's Summit Police Department. Andy was routinely sent out to a local park to check up on teens who "looked like trouble." He soon discovered that some teenagers were practically living at the park, staying on the playground from the time school got out until the park closed...and not just in the Fall or Spring, pretty much all year long, even when it was raining or snowing. As Andy got to know the park regulars, he began to suspect a painful truth.

Right in plain sight, an extraordinary tragedy was unfolding. For some teens, the outdoor playground routinely provided more safety and shelter than their own homes.

Andy shared his growing worries with his wife. Twenty-five year-old Kylie not only had a heart to help abused and neglected children, she also had professional training as an elementary school teacher and youth pastor. Together, the young couple—not much older than the teens in the park—decided to do something simple to help. Kylie began serving 21 packages of hotdogs to teens one night a week. Soon, hotdogs in the park morphed to 50 kids coming to the Ewing's home for dinner every Thursday. Compelled to help teenagers in need, they turned to the local library and researched how to create a 501(c)3 nonprofit.

With herculean effort and unrelenting willpower, Pro Deo was launched in 2010 and keeps growing.

Pro Deo became the place teens could call home...a safe, loving, welcoming, and nurturing environment for youth who were struggling at home, school, or in life. This nonprofit has strong partnerships with the school district, local churches, and other businesses and organizations across the community.





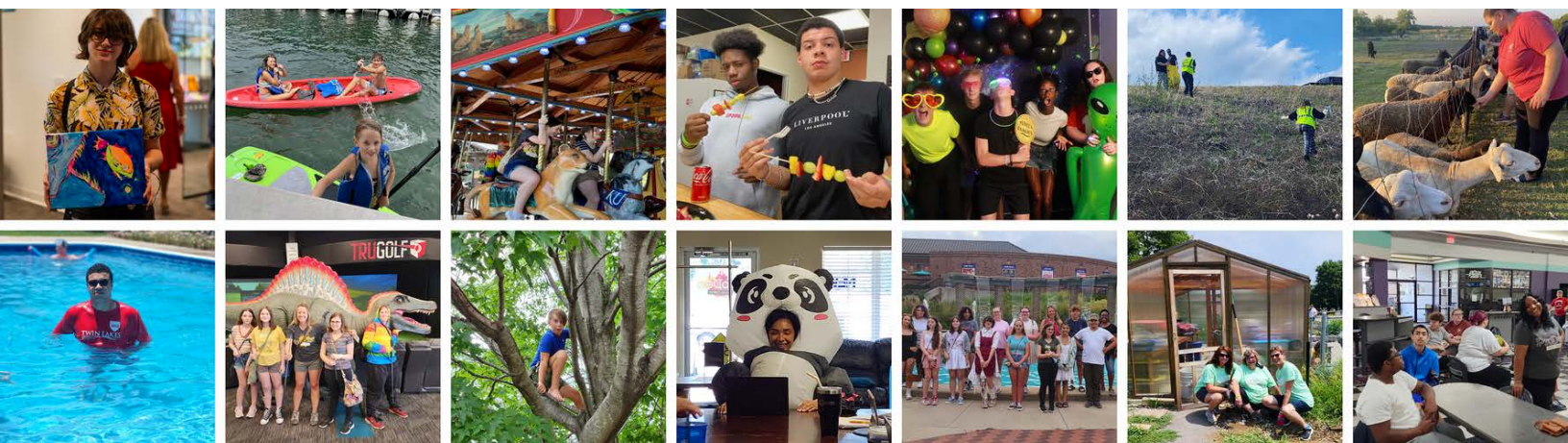
TODAY: Our Core Values Remain Strong

1. We believe teens have a voice which needs to be heard and valued in the community.
2. We believe every teen deserves to have someone in their corner.
3. We believe goals and dreams are admirable and to be encouraged.
4. We believe young people need to have character development encouraged, taught, and lived out by example.
5. We believe there should be a safe, fun, empowering environment for teens to grow and develop.
6. We believe the basic needs of teens need to be met if we expect them to function in the community in a healthy manner.
7. We believe teenagers deserve to be surrounded by their community, their family, and caring adults.
8. We believe it takes a village to raise a family. Therefore, Pro Deo is not only here for teens but for parents and the community.

"I needed people to talk to. I have that at Pro Deo. It's like a family."

– Pro Deo Teen





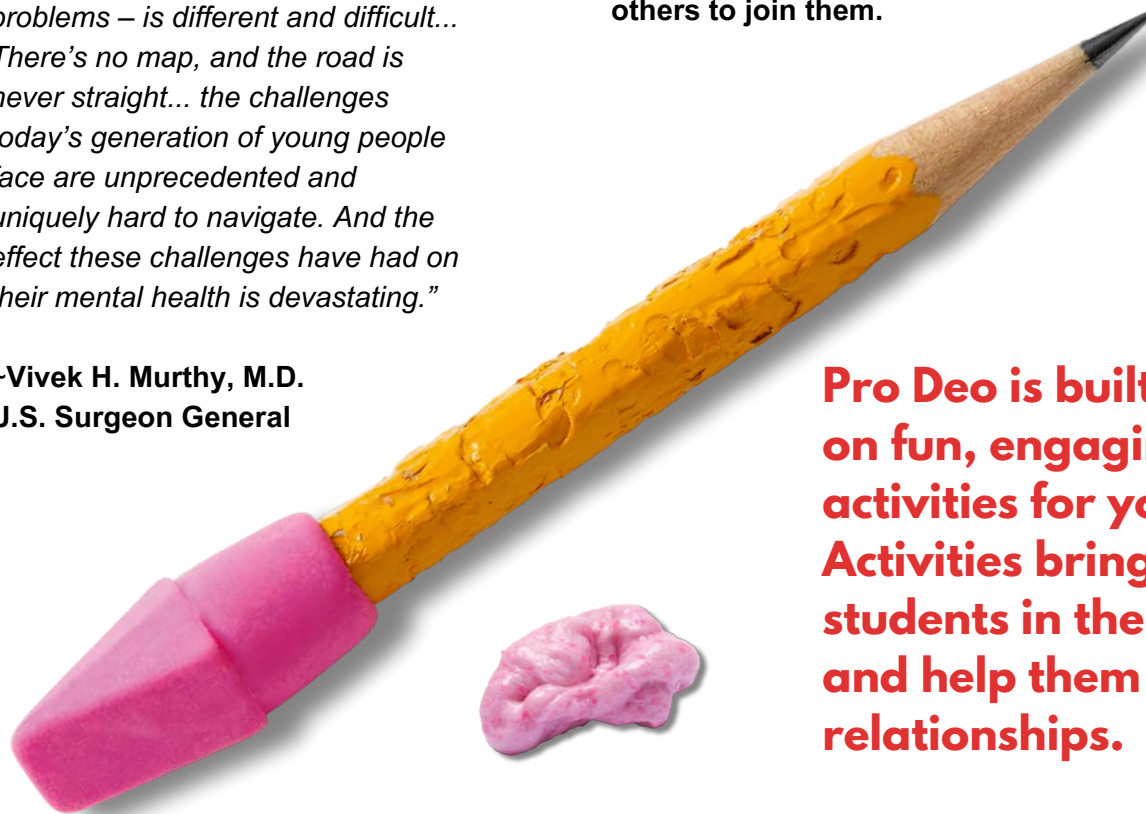
Pro Deo is poised to expand programs, serve more youth, and create a model that can be duplicated in other communities.

“Every child’s path to adulthood – reaching developmental and emotional milestones, learning healthy social skills, and dealing with problems – is different and difficult... There’s no map, and the road is never straight... the challenges today’s generation of young people face are unprecedented and uniquely hard to navigate. And the effect these challenges have had on their mental health is devastating.”

~Vivek H. Murthy, M.D.
U.S. Surgeon General

Through a generous gift from Jane and Bob Rutherford, and additional funding from the City of Lee’s Summit, Pro Deo began to dream of a future where services could be expanded to middle school students and more teens could be served.

Through a purpose-built space, Pro Deo can expand its offerings to include pre-vocational programs and programs to serve individuals having special needs. Pro Deo will be able to serve teens in a space they feel was made specifically to meet their needs, encouraging others to join them.



Pro Deo is built on fun, engaging activities for youth. Activities bring students in the door and help them build relationships.

**“At Pro Deo,
I don’t feel left out.”
– Pro Deo Teen**



At Pro Deo Youth Center, we welcome all students through our doors and lift them on their darkest days and celebrate with them on their brightest days.

52% of Pro Deo teens have self disclosed mental health concerns.

The teens Pro Deo serve and their families also self-disclosed:

- **22% of the teens we serve suffer from anxiety,**
- **15% depression,**
- **7% autism,**
- **34% ADHD**
- **19% have listed other mental health disorders, including but not limited to ODD, sensory processing, bipolar and RAD.**

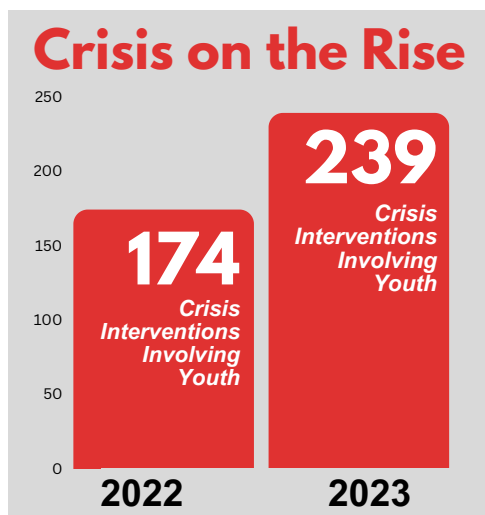
The mental health crisis in young adults is real and continues to grow.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and Children's Hospital Association have joined together to declare a National State of Emergency in Children's Mental Health. In a joint statement they mentioned in part, "As health professionals dedicated to the care of children and adolescents, we have witnessed soaring rates of mental health challenges among children, adolescents, and their families over the course of the COVID -19 pandemic, exacerbating the situation that existed prior to the pandemic." These organizations believe the mental and behavioral health of students is now a necessary focus of education. Research suggests that each day, many students go to school with mental health concerns that threaten their well-being and educational performance. School-connected mental health services can improve access to care, allow for early identification and treatment of mental health concerns, and are linked to improved mental health outcomes, which may reduce absenteeism.

Through devoted counseling space in The Wesley Place and strong partnerships with ReDiscover and others, Pro Deo is providing the mental health supports necessary for teens.

Hand in hand with counseling, Pro Deo provides social networks, adult supervision, and life skills to support good mental health in teens.

Data from Lee's Summit Police Department



**"I came to Pro Deo to connect and grow.
It's been a safe place to come out of my shell. "
– Pro Deo Teen**

What will the new building accomplish?



We will triple our capacity to serve 120 teens at the Wesley Place on a regular basis.

Increased capacity: Pro Deo's current space can serve 40 teens with adult supervision at once. The new space has the capacity to serve 120 participants with adult supervision.

Expanded services: Pro Deo is planning to serve teens in new ways in the new space including job training and entrepreneurial programs, socialization events for individuals having special needs, Saturday morning workshops, summer camps, alumni events, and more.

Extended programs: Time in the current space is limited by the needs of the church that hosts the space. The Wesley Place will allow Pro Deo to provide services more hours each week, serving more teens. Additionally, Pro Deo will be able to offer expanded summer programs.

Economy of scale: While serving more students, Pro Deo will be able to include more trained volunteer adult supervision in the new building to support current staff and to create an economy of scale. Pro Deo also plans to participate in the Americorps VISTA program in order to increase the organization's capacity in a cost effective manner.





Increased partnerships: The new building will allow Pro Deo to build upon its amazing partnerships in the community including increased mental health services in partnership with ReDiscover, internship opportunities with the supervision of a licensed therapist with partners, workforce development in connection with local businesses, work with local Crisis Intervention Teams and first responders to support teens in crisis, and partnership opportunities with the school district and nonprofits serving individuals having special needs.

Pro Deo has a very strong partnership with Lee's Summit School District and receives regular referrals from teachers and staff.

Increased community cost savings: It is hard to pinpoint the hidden community cost savings realized through the services of Pro Deo but the school district and first responders partner with Pro Deo because these hidden cost savings exist. Teens who have a support network are less likely to have continued interactions with the justice system and perform better in school leading to fewer corrective interactions.

Pro Deo youth sit on the City of Lee's Summit Youth Court, a diversion program based on the idea of positive peer pressure. The hidden cost savings of supporting individuals as youth who are able to address mental health concerns and trauma, along with being supported in academics and life goal planning, cannot be understated.

According to the Afterschool Alliance:

- Out-of-school-time programs provide a significant return-on-investment, with every \$1 invested saving at least \$3 through increasing youth's earning potential, improving their performance at school, and reducing crime and juvenile delinquency.



Groundbreaking Begins when the \$4.9 Million Goal is Reached



Ways to Give:

- **Honor Someone Special.** Donations can be given in honor or in memory of someone who would have benefited from the services Pro Deo provides or who would support Pro Deo's impact. Honorary and memorial gifts will be commemorated on Pro Deo's virtual giving wall on the Wesley Place website and can be viewed by supporters across the United States and around the world.
- **Naming Opportunities.** The Wesley Place holds many special places such as counseling and tutoring rooms, Maker Space, Entertainment Zone, outdoor recreation area, podcast studio, patio/garden/meditation space, event space, kitchen/dining areas, study pods and Upper Hangout and Lower Hangout spaces – all of which have naming opportunities attached to them. Please contact Pro Deo to discuss your interest in naming opportunities.
- **In-kind Support.** Opportunities to provide products or services that will help us reach completion of our goal is important to the campaign. In-kind opportunities include landscaping and irrigation, basketball court, picnic tables, benches and outdoor seating, outdoor and indoor signage, parking lot paving and striping, storage equipment, fire extinguishers, audio/visual equipment, HVAC, bathroom fixtures, 3D printers, small and large appliances, podcast equipment, flooring, furniture, gaming equipment, and more! Please reach out with products or services you may have to offer!
- **Stock.** Pro Deo encourages donors to consider making this project the beneficiary of your gift of stock or your Required Minimum Distribution. Please consult with your investment professional.
- **Participate in your employee gift-matching program.** Some employers offer gift-matching programs, which means they'll match the amount of your donation up to a certain amount. This can effectively double your contribution. Check with your HR department.

The Wesley Place provides many opportunities for the community to support the efforts of Pro Deo.





Board of Directors

John Beaudoin

Sara Taylor

Mikel Isaacs

Jan Nelson

Fred Lane

Kent Ruehter

Christina Davis

Amy Schield

Jody Springer

Andy Campbell

Kanna Jo Zimmerman

Jennifer Craig

Sara Winkle

Lem Coleman

Pro Deo Contact Info:

Dr. Elaine Metcalf

Executive Director

elaine@prodeoyouthcenter.org

816-226-6806 ext. 101

Melissa Ward

Administrative Director

elaine@prodeoyouthcenter.org

816-226-6806 ext. 102

Pro Deo Youth Center
214 NE Chipman Rd.
Lee's Summit, MO 64086

