



Contact: J Stuart Hoffman
Phone: 816-591-1766
Email: stuarthoffman@charlieshouse.org
Website: charlieshouse.org

For Immediate Release

Nation's First Safety Demonstration House Opens in Kansas City, MO

A new endeavor from Charlie's House aims to save lives, prevent injuries to children.

KANSAS CITY, Mo, April 5, 2021 — A local family's tragedy more than a decade ago continues to fuel efforts to educate families throughout the metro – and across the country.

May 6, 2021, would have been Charlie Horn's 16th birthday, but he didn't even make it to his third. Charlie lost his life in 2007 doing what many toddlers are drawn to do: he climbed up the front of his dresser, and it fell on him. To mark Charlie's birth anniversary, Charlie's House will celebrate the grand opening of Kansas City's Safety Demonstration House, the nation's first such structure.

Charlie's parents, Brett and Jenny Horn have long championed this walk-through safety simulation home as one more way to turn their tragedy into a nationwide mission. They hope the May 6 opening will be the start of a national grassroots movement to ensure all children's household safety.

"The Safety Demonstration House was designed as a community resource to help parents and caregivers identify risks in their own homes," Brett Horn said. "While it is in memory of *our* Charlie, the project is intended to help protect *your* Charlie – be it your child, grandchild, neighbor... We want to educate all adults on actions they can take to make their homes safe."

Child Safety Trends

"Thousands of children are injured each year in household accidents, and hundreds, tragically, will die," said J. Stuart Hoffman, executive director of Charlie's House. "It can happen to anyone, anywhere and, in a matter of seconds, both inside and around the house." Our new Safety Demonstration House's objective is to help change that through increased awareness, public education, and safety device distribution.

Harvey Grossman, MD, knows firsthand the importance of this new resource. A local pediatrician with Pediatric Care Specialists, Grossman was Charlie's pediatrician and is a founding member of the Charlie's House board of directors.

"No parent should ever have to experience what the Horn family faced," Grossman said. "I refer parents to Charlie's House and encourage them to tour the Safety Demonstration House, knowing they will receive the information they need to keep their children safe at home."

The Value of Prevention

Charlie's House has made a difference since its founding in 2007, and affected families often share their stories of success with the non-profit.

"I'm so thankful for what you do," one mother wrote. "We went to a community event and picked up information and furniture straps, which my husband installed that day. Two days later, my son was climbing on furniture with a TV on it. Without the furniture tip-over strap, there is no doubt in my mind that he would have been seriously injured or killed."

This testimony is precisely the impact that Brett and Jenny Horn envisioned: "If our Safety Demonstration House saves just one child's life, then the journey to bring this community resource together was worth the time of all the volunteers and donors who made it possible."

Free Tours & Safety Devices

The Safety Demonstration House resembles a typical residential home. It includes a nursery, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, family area, and laundry room. Interactive displays provide room-by-room illustrations of potential dangers to children and recommend preventive measures to mitigate those risks.

A garage area makes meeting space available for community partners to use for educational workshops, parenting classes, infant CPR instruction, babysitting courses, safety fairs, and more.

With the Safety Demonstration House now complete, its benefactors hope to see Kansas City families filling tour spots. There is no charge for a tour or the safety information and devices available in the house's Safety Resource Center. Available devices include furniture and TV tip-over straps, blind cord winds, electrical outlet covers, and cabinet locks.

"We're grateful for the organizations who make Charlie's House's programs possible," Hoffman said. "Thanks to the generosity of Children's Mercy Hospital of Kansas City, the BMA Foundation, Honeywell, Farmers Insurance, Dreiseszun Family Foundation, and private donors, Charlie's House can fulfill its mission and positively impact lives."

Charlie's House leaders plan to record a virtual tour of the new Safety Demonstration House so families far beyond Kansas City can learn ways to optimize safety in their own homes.

EXCLUSIVE MEDIA PREVIEW

What: Grand Opening of the Nation's First Safety Demonstration House
Exclusive access offered to media outlets

Where: 2425 Campbell St., Kansas City, Mo.
Located on Hospital Hill, across from Children's Mercy Hospital and one block from the Ronald McDonald House

When: Thursday, May 6, beginning at 9 a.m.

Key Information: There will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 9:00 a.m. on May 6.

After the media opening day, the Safety Demonstration House will be open to the public for tours from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday, and by appointment on evenings and weekends.

Interested parties may schedule a tour date and time at www.charlieshouse.org/events-and-programs. Charlie's House staff and volunteers lead the guided tours and answer questions.

ABOUT CHARLIE'S HOUSE

Charlie's House is a non-profit organization founded in 2007 after the tragic death of Charlie Horn. Its mission, to prevent accidents and injuries to children in and around the home, is fulfilled through educating parents and caregivers on home, fire, water, vehicle, and seasonal safety. Today Charlie's House targets households where children, birth to eighteen, reside, offering safety education materials and devices. The Organization's primary resource is its Safety Demonstration House, located on Hospital Hill in Kansas City. This simulation home provides room-by-room tours of how to make a house safe for children.

Photo of Safety Demonstration House



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If you would like more information about Charlie's House or would like to schedule a media interview, contact J Stuart Hoffman at 913-375-7123 or stuarthoffman@charlieshouse.org.