



About 18 months ago, Sarah's grandmother came to Lee's Place to arrange for counseling for Sarah. Sarah (9 years old) had recently moved from Atlanta to live with her grandparents after she had been severely beaten by her father and stepmother. Sarah was stealing food, eating out of the garbage, talking to herself, hearing voices and having outbursts of anger. Sarah also had difficulty interacting with peers.

Sarah has a wonderful demeanor and despite her extensive abuse, enjoys meeting people and telling them about her recent grades, field trips or video game. She loves to come to therapy so she can check to see if the picture she made Miss Brenda is still hung up in her office, if Miss Tara is around to visit with and of course, to grab a bag of cookies. Sarah even talks of coming back to Lee's Place "after I get a job and my own car."

Over the past year and a half, Sarah has learned to control her "stealing feelings" and has developed many ways to feed the hunger inside which contributed to her eating behaviors. Sarah often repeats words and can "get stuck" on a topic. She is learning how to change the subject when prompted and to recognize when she is repeating herself. Sarah now has friends and looks forward to school. Sarah's anger has almost disappeared as she has settled into the safety of her grandparents' home.

With individual and family therapy, Sarah has come a long, long way. She sees a future for herself and no longer appears haunted by the abuse she experienced. Sarah will most likely need special education until she is out of middle school but then will probably be integrated into high school.

Lee's Place
216 Lake Ella Dr.
Tallahassee, FL 32303
850.841-7733
www.leesplace.org