



To Our Forge Family and Friends,

The Forge School, An Embark Behavioral Health program and a division of Calo programs, who has for 13 years prided themselves on leading the way in developing the industry's highest quality of care and safety standards in specialized care for students struggling with the impacts of attachment needs, developmental trauma and emotional dysregulation. Their core mission, values and vision drive how they serve families each day including how they are responding to the ever-evolving coronavirus situation. We at The Forge School are taking our lead from them, and implementing the same protocols, procedures, and precautions that Calo, and The Embark family of programs has initiated.

During the first week of March 2020, Embark proactively created an Embark Coronavirus Taskforce – comprised of a cross-section of doctors and nurses, clinicians, and program operators - which has been meeting and communicating regularly with programs. We are closely tracking the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health and licensing agencies for the latest developments and best practices related to COVID-19. We have taken additional steps necessary to ensure the safety of our students and staff, with additional screening procedures, cleaning and disinfecting of The Forge, set forth by the Center for Disease Control and the Tennessee Department of Health regarding COVID-19.

The Forge School's Vision and Mission Statement: Cast in Commitment, Molded with Purpose.

We provide empathetic therapeutic care supported by rigorous and individualized academics, along with daily functional fitness and routine adventure experiential events.

As we face the difficult challenge of responding to COVID-19, we find ourselves facing an opportunity to root ourselves, even more, in the Core Mission. Despite the unsettling Coronavirus situation, our team is committed and purposeful in maintaining normalcy for our students. Our program will be havens of safety: contained, full of loving and trained staff, and away from the anxiety of media. Residential Care offers the unique ability to control most if not all the variables of your son's day to day life, which is impossible to replicate in the home environment.

- First, thank you for entrusting your son's care in our hands. We are honored and do not carry that trust lightly. We are committed, always, to being the safest place – emotionally, mentally, and physically – for your child. We want to personally assure you that safety is the primary focus in all we do and it remains of utmost importance to us now. **What we do know is the work we do here cannot be done virtually. This therapy and supporting programs require contact and closeness. This is foundational to the results we are working towards with your son and for your family.**

After consulting with health experts in our field, doctors, nurses and other programs, The Forge implemented the following incremental measures to provide the safest environment for your child:

- All student travel, including home, local area visits will be postponed whenever we have active cases on campus, and we respectfully ask you to reschedule these to a later date to reduce the chances of spreading the virus in our communities.
- All student community outings in high-traffic, social environments (such as restaurants, theaters and so forth), will be postponed. We will replace these normal activities with other fun indoor and outdoor activities and games around the Forge, while practicing responsible social distancing.
- The Forge staff is encouraged to wear masks when out in the community.
- All staff and students are wearing masks in all school and other crossover areas on campus.
- If we have any active cases on campus all staff and students are wearing masks.
- We are limiting guests to campus, to include service professionals.
- We are limiting non-essential off-campus visits to local medical providers.
- Students and staff are assessed daily. All staff arriving for their shift are assessed to be free of symptoms. If they have symptoms, they will be prevented from entering the program and working with our students and fellow employees.
- Any students newly enrolling must go through a thorough medical evaluation to screen for symptoms of the virus, to include a rapid screening by our Health Services Team.

We are confident in the precautionary measures we are taking. Should any student at The Forge demonstrates symptoms of being ill, we have protocols to enact a supportive quarantine of that student. We know that practicing social distancing will help us decrease the likelihood of a quarantine.

Despite evidence showing coronavirus is not particularly harmful to the population we serve, as accredited and licensed facilities, infection control is part of our everyday operations. We also want to do our part in “flattening the curve.” We are taking this very seriously. We are monitoring the COVID-19 situation around the clock. We have precautions in place to ensure our employees, families and students are safe.

We sincerely thank you for your trust in us during this complex time. We appreciate your understanding and your support of the measures we are taking to ensure your child, and all other residents at The Forge continue to be and feel safe-emotionally, mentally, and physically. Please rest assured we have experienced, caring and skilled staff taking care of your child.

Joe Barnard

Executive Director

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