



intermountain
Residential

Hope + Healing for Children + Families





OUR VISION
Relational and emotional health through transformative, integrated care

OUR MISSION
Healing through healthy relationships



OUR STORY:

Intermountain, a non-profit organization, was founded in 1909 as the Montana Deaconess School. By 1914, there were 72 children, ages 5-14, being served as boarding or day students. From 1909 to 1971, then known as the Montana Deaconess School, we underwent changes to our name and location, coming to settle in the current location and were renamed Intermountain Children's Home. In 1982, Intermountain adopted the current Developmental Relational Model, based on a new understanding of what children with challenges really needed to heal and grow.

OUR CAMPUS:

Located on 40 acres in a residential area of the Capital City of Helena, our campus consists of 3 houses, each with 8 children ages 4-13 on admission. Each house has both boys and girls and an intentional mix of ages. Each child has their own bedroom – No roommates. Each house has a team of 12 staff including direct care counselors, night counselors, mental health support staff, case manager, cottage supervisor, and therapist. Each house has their own therapist, whose office is in the house.

OUR APPROACH:

Intermountain treats children and families, not diagnoses. We believe children long to feel understood, connected, and loved, but may go about expressing their needs in maladaptive ways that are confusing and distancing to others. At Intermountain, our Developmental Relational Approach is our unifying approach to treatment. We use a developmental lens to view both the problem and solution to a child's behavioral challenges and intentionally connected relationships to help children and families heal.

We view challenging behaviors as a child's maladaptive way of expressing their needs. Our direct care staff form intentional relationships with children to help understand their needs and pattern of relationships within the family system. We work to improve a child's understanding of themselves and encourage them to appropriately express their feelings rather than resorting to behaviors. Our approach emphasizes family system work to maximize sustainable change.

OUR ACADEMICS:

In addition to an intensive therapeutic environment at our Helena Campus, we provide comprehensive and individualized academic services that are designed to help improve your child's academic self-esteem and to get them back on-track to be successful at home and in school.

At Intermountain, we believe learning should be fun, and a child must be in a safe emotional place in order to learn. For many children who come to Intermountain, school has not been a rewarding experience, socially or academically. Intermountain School offers students a comfortable, fun and stimulating environment in which to learn.

Each classroom is staffed by a certified teacher experienced in dealing with students with emotional difficulties, and two trained education mental health support staff.

OUR STUDENTS:

Intermountain excels at changing the lives of children, ages 4-13 on admission. Candidates for success in our program are children whose challenges may include:

- attachment and relationship disruptions
- developmental trauma
- grief and loss
- family conflict
- poor social skills and/or lack of friendships
- low self-esteem or poor self-confidence
- emotional dysregulation
- mild aggression
- inappropriate boundaries
- symptoms of ADHD
- depression
- anxiety
- academic difficulties
- up to date on vaccinations
- and an IQ > 85.

ADMISSIONS CONTACT

Jill Richards

Admissions & Outreach Director

406-457-4778

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OUR TEAM



Meegan Bryce, M.S.W.

Executive Director of Residential Services

Meegan began her work at Intermountain with children and families as a Direct Care Counselor. She has since been a Cottage Supervisor, Child and Family Therapist, the Residential Manager and now serves as the Residential Director. Meegan is a Montana native and enjoys all the outdoor activities that Montana has to offer, especially river rafting. Intermountain employee since 2004.



ML Rutherford, M.Ed.

Director of Education Services

ML began working at Intermountain in the school and quickly moved into a direct care role. She has held many roles at Intermountain including educator, counselor, supervisor, trainer, admissions, operations, and principal. She also worked as a school district behavior specialist, training educators and administrators in effective behavior management interventions and response to intervention. ML returned to Intermountain in 2014 as a trainer, and then Admissions. She then moved into Operations and, after 5 years in that role, she is now the Director of Education Services. ML is a Montana native who enjoys the myriad of activities Montana's playground offers. Intermountain employee since 1996.



Jill Richards, B.A.

Admissions and Outreach Director

Jill began working at Intermountain as a Direct Care staff. After nearly 5 years in direct care, she moved into the role of Case Manager, coordinating care with families and treatment teams. Jill spent over 5 years as a Case Manager before moving into the Admissions Manager role. Jill now serves in a leadership position as the Admissions and Outreach Director for the Residential Program after spending over 5 years as the Admissions Manager. Intermountain employee since 2006.



Ashley Browne, L.C.S.W.

Clinical Director

Ashley began her work at Intermountain with children and families as a direct care counselor. She received a B.S. in Sociology from Montana State University, and an M.S.W. from Syracuse University, New York. Certified in Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI), she has worked as a therapist, trainer, leader, and in her current role as Clinical Supervisor. Ashley is married with three children. In her spare time, she runs half-marathons and is an outdoor enthusiast. Intermountain employee since 2005.



Melissa Hammond, B.A.

Operations Manager

Melissa comes to Intermountain with a wealth of knowledge and experience from over 30 years of working with children and families. She has working in a variety of early childhood settings, and most recently served in leadership in a nonprofit focused on early intervention for infants and toddlers. She came to Intermountain to continue her passion of helping children and families. She loves exploring Montana and the abundance of outdoor adventures that Montana provides, especially hiking and downhill skiing. Intermountain employee since 2021.