

Children's Home of Easton

Chief Executive Officer

Ideal Candidate Profile

CCMS Executive Search Partners — April 2026 — Confidential

1. About The Children's Home of Easton

The Children's Home of Easton (CHE) is a private, nonprofit organization established in 1885 that provides comprehensive care through professional staff who guide, support, and encourage children to believe in their own self-worth and reach their full potential.

We serve adjudicated dependents who, due to circumstances beyond their control, are unable to remain at home and/or with their family of origin. We work with both the children and their families to achieve permanency and independence, preparing each child to cope effectively with the realities of life and to become a productive member of society.

Operating from its campus at 2000 S. 25th Street in Easton, Pennsylvania, CHE offers a continuum of care spanning emergency shelter, residential campus cottages, foster care, transitional and independent living, supervised visitation, and behavioral health services through its Firmstone Family Services division.

CHE is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) and is a member of the Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth and Family Services (PCCYFS) and Social Current, reflecting its commitment to excellence, transparency, and best practices in child and family services.

Our four pillars: Compassion — Respect — Integrity — Perseverance

2. Organizational Context & Strategic Priorities

The Children's Home of Easton is at an inflection point. After 40 years of leadership under one Executive Director, the organization carries deep institutional strength — loyal staff, meaningful community relationships, and a reputation built over 140 years of service — alongside real questions about its positioning for the decade ahead. The next Chief Executive Officer will inherit both that legacy and the responsibility to shape what comes next.

Key strategic priorities identified are:

- Diversifying services beyond residential care to ensure long-term programmatic and financial sustainability.
- Strengthening fundraising capacity and engaging a new generation of donors
- Navigating the transition from 3800 to 3900 state regulations and evolving child welfare policy
- Addressing staff recruitment, retention, and workforce well-being in a competitive labor market
- Repositioning CHE's community identity and expanding its public presence in the Lehigh Valley

- Improving board engagement, governance effectiveness, and strategic follow-through
- Managing the cultural transition that follows four decades of the same executive leadership.

3. Position Overview

The Chief Executive Officer of the Children's Home of Easton is responsible for providing visionary leadership and strategic direction to fulfill the organization's mission of creating family solutions for vulnerable children and youth across Pennsylvania. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO oversees all aspects of the organization's operations, programs, financial management, and community engagement.

4. Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Vision

- Develop and drive a multi-year strategic plan that positions CHE for long-term programmatic and financial sustainability.
- Lead diversification of services beyond residential care — including community-based mental health, foster care, family-centered programs, and aging-out/transition services.
- Monitor sector-wide trends (residential utilization, behavioral health acuity, mergers, regulatory changes) and position CHE ahead of them.
- Evaluate and potentially pursue partnerships, affiliations, or collaborative arrangements that enhance mission delivery.

Fundraising & Financial Stewardship

Strengthening CHE's independent fundraising capacity is a priority. This is not a delegable function — the CEO must be personally engaged.

- Serve as the primary organizational fundraiser and donor relationship steward.
- Expand and diversify the philanthropic base — with particular attention to engaging younger donors and new funding sources.
- Maintain executive-level oversight of the annual budget (~25–30% of which is privately funded), ensuring fiscal sustainability.
- Explore and develop supplemental revenue through insurance-funded and private-pay service models.
- Oversee grant strategy and pursue opportunities aligned with CHE's expanding service portfolio.

External Relations & Advocacy

- Represent CHE before county officials, state agencies, and legislative bodies — actively shaping, not simply responding to, policy.
- Strengthening CHE's reputation and visibility in the Lehigh Valley community, including repositioning the organization beyond its historical image.
- Build and maintain productive relationships with county purchasing agents and referral networks.
- Engage with statewide and national child welfare networks (e.g., Social Current, PCCYFS) to stay at the forefront of best practice.

Organizational & People Leadership

- Lead an organizational assessment in the first year — reviewing structure, roles, and accountabilities across departments.
- Address staff recruitment and retention challenges, including compensation strategy, career pathways, and workforce well-being initiatives.
- Foster a trauma-informed, inclusive organizational culture that bridges generational differences and values diverse perspectives.
- Provide consistent, transparent communication to staff, board, and stakeholders throughout the transition and beyond.

Board Partnership & Governance

- Build a strong, productive working relationship with the board — engaging members meaningfully in strategy, oversight, and mission advancement.
- Support the board’s evolution: encourage fuller engagement, clearer accountability, and appropriate term-limit governance structures.
- Provide the board with accurate, timely information on organizational performance, risk, and strategic direction.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries between executive management and board governance.

Program Quality & Regulatory Compliance

- Ensure CHE’s programs meet or exceed licensing standards, accreditation requirements (COA), and state regulatory expectations.
- Lead the organization’s transition from 3800 to 3900 regulatory standards in partnership with program leadership.
- Maintain and advance the trauma-informed care culture throughout all programs and services.
- Oversee crisis preparedness and incident response at the executive level.

5. Required Qualifications

Required Qualifications	
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor’s degree required in social work, human services, public administration, business, or a related field. • Master’s degree (MSW, MPA, nonprofit management, or equivalent)
Leadership Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial senior leadership experience in child welfare, residential services, behavioral health, or a closely related human services field. • Experience operating or overseeing 24/7 residential, foster care, or similarly regulated programs. • Experience managing a multi-program organization with layered public and private funding streams. • Experience reporting to and partnering with a volunteer Board of Directors, with familiarity with nonprofit governance, fiduciary responsibility, and strategic planning

Financial Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated experience with budget preparation, fiscal oversight, and organizational financial management. • Ability to maintain executive-level command of CHE’s finances while appropriately leveraging CFO and finance staff. • Understanding of nonprofit financial sustainability, diversified revenue strategies, and the relationship between program model and financial viability
Fundraising & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated experience in nonprofit fundraising, donor cultivation, and/or grant writing. • Ability to make a compelling case for CHE to individual donors, foundations, and corporate partners. • Comfort with and commitment to being a visible, public-facing advocate for the organization
Strongly Preferred	
Sector Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working knowledge of Pennsylvania child welfare regulations (3800/3900), licensing standards, and incident reporting • Familiarity with public funding streams: Title IV-E, Title IV-B, Medicaid, Act 148, and county matching requirements • Experience with or understanding trauma-informed care practices and organizational culture. • Experience with crisis management at the executive level in a residential or foster care environment
Community & Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with the Lehigh Valley and its network of community organizations, county systems, and funders (valuable but not required — the right candidate will build these relationships)
Experience Profiles We’re Open To	
Candidate Profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced Deputy Director / COO ready to step into a CEO role for the first time. • Sitting CEO of a comparably sized or smaller organization seeking a more impactful platform • Senior program or operations leader with demonstrated readiness for the top executive role

6. Ideal Candidate Competencies

We are seeking a dynamic, mission-driven leader with the competencies outlined below. This role calls for a compassionate, strategic executive who is committed to advancing the well-being of vulnerable children and families throughout Pennsylvania.

Competency	What We Are Looking For
Mission & Values Alignment	Deep, personal commitment to serving adjudicated dependents, traumatized youth, and families in crisis; genuine belief in CHE’s four pillars — compassion, respect, integrity, and perseverance. Not a title-seeker, but someone drawn to the mission itself.

Strategic Vision & Entrepreneurial Mindset	Balances present stability with forward-looking transformation; entrepreneurial in developing new services and revenue streams; thinks beyond residential care. Willing to ask hard questions about CHE’s long-term viability, service mix, and organizational form.
Strategic Change Leadership	Capacity to function as a thoughtful change agent following long-tenured leadership — balancing stability with transformation, engaging board, and staff in change without triggering destabilizing resistance and introducing a clear strategic vision without dismissing what has been built.
Executive Leadership & Team Development	Strong team-building capabilities with proven ability to inspire and achieve results through others. Invests in staff development reduces turnover, and creates a stable, values-driven organizational culture. Assertive decision-maker who models accountability. Non-micromanager who trusts experienced staff.
Regulatory & Compliance Expertise	Working knowledge of child welfare regulations, licensing standards (3800/3900), staffing requirements, and incident reporting. Engages credibly with state regulators, county agencies, and policymakers.
Crisis Management Leadership	Proven ability to lead through high-risk incidents in residential and foster care settings, managing the regulatory, reputational, and legislative dimensions of a crisis without escalating public or governmental backlash. A top-tier competency across the child welfare field.
Financial & Funding Acumen	Executive-level command of complex public funding streams (Title IV-E, IV-B, Medicaid, Act 148, county matching), budget oversight, and diversified funding strategies. Maintains executive level understanding while leveraging finance staff. Identifies sustainability risks proactively.
Trauma-Informed Practice Leadership	Ability to lead and embed trauma-informed, trauma-responsive practices across organizational culture and service delivery. Youth entering CHE’s care present with increasing behavioral health acuity; the next leader must drive cultural and practice transformation.
Program Diversification & Service Innovation	Ability to reposition CHE beyond residential care as its primary revenue base — developing community-based services, aging-out and transition programs, family-focused interventions, and exploring private-pay and insurance-funded supplemental revenue models.
Fundraising & Development	Experience building fundraising capacity, cultivating donor relationships, and pursuing diverse revenue streams. Able to make a compelling public case for CHE’s mission and value to the Lehigh Valley community. Sees development as a core executive responsibility, not a delegated function.
Board Partnership & Governance	Skilled at building a productive, accountable relationship with the Board of Directors — developing a shared strategic vision, improving governance effectiveness, and building a culture of meaningful board participation and follow-through, without ceding executive authority.
Community & Stakeholder Engagement	Skilled relationship-builder with youth and families served, staff, board members, community partners, county agencies, and elected officials. Excellent communicator effective at public speaking, advocacy, and repositioning CHE’s public identity in the Lehigh Valley.
Culturally Responsive Leadership	Personal credibility and demonstrated experience building culturally responsive organizations. Positioned to help CHE close the gap between the diversity of the community it serves and the composition of its board and leadership.

<p>Political Literacy & Policy Advocacy</p>	<p>Skill in navigating government relationships and engaging with elected officials and funders to secure adequate operational funding. Proactively participates in shaping legislation and regulation — does not merely react to it. Actively engages Harrisburg and federal stakeholders.</p>
<p>Lehigh Valley Presence</p>	<p>Familiarity with the Lehigh Valley community, its funders, political landscape, and referral sources is a meaningful asset, though not an absolute requirement. The right candidate will build these relationships.</p>

7. Leadership Qualities & Personal Characteristics

Beyond formal qualifications, the ideal Executive Director brings a set of personal qualities and leadership dispositions that will determine whether they can succeed in this particular organization at this particular moment:

- A straightforward, honest communicator — able to deliver difficult messages to staff, the board, and funders without hedging or deflecting, and to have hard conversations while maintaining mutual respect.
- Vulnerable and self-aware — willing to say, “I don’t know” and build from there, rather than projecting false confidence; proactive about building a strong senior team around them.
- Genuinely mission-connected — drawn to the work of serving vulnerable children and families, not to the prestige of a CEO title; able to keep the core mission visible in every decision
- Adaptable and culturally sensitive — able to read CHE’s organizational culture carefully, earn trust before driving change, and bring the board and staff along through transition.
- An entrepreneurial sustainability-thinker — willing to ask hard questions about CHE’s long-term viability, service mix, and strategic direction, and to act on the answers.
- Politically literate — skilled at navigating government relationships, engaging elected officials, and advocating effectively for CHE and the broader child welfare field.
- A genuine board partner — committed to developing a shared strategic vision with the board, improving governance effectiveness, and engaging board members meaningfully without ceding executive authority.
- A visible community presence — someone who builds CHE’s profile through authentic relationships across the Lehigh Valley, not just formal networking.
- Supportive of staff — invests in team development, creates a stable and value-driven organizational culture, and understands that staff retention and morale are mission-critical.

8. Organizational Strengths

The incoming CEO joins an organization with real and significant assets:

- 140-year history of service with extraordinary community recognition and loyalty in the Lehigh Valley
- Strong balance sheet
- Highly engaged donor base and alumni association providing both financial and emotional support.
- Deep-rooted relationships with county, state, and community partners
- Committed, experienced senior leadership team invested in the mission.

- Competitive executive compensation package including availability of housing, vehicle, and benefits.
- Thriving location: the Lehigh Valley is a desirable, growing region with strong quality of life.
- Recent COA re-accreditation (2024) and an active strategic planning process underway

9. Compensation & How to Apply

Compensation & Benefits

The Children's Home of Easton offers a competitive compensation package commensurate with experience and qualifications. The current compensation structure has historically included a base salary with provisions for housing and use of a vehicle. The annual salary range for the position is between \$225,000 to \$250,000. Full details will be provided to qualified candidates upon request.

How to Apply

The Children's Home of Easton has engaged CCMS Executive Search Partners to conduct this national search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to:

Joe Costa and Jim McGuirk

Joe Costa, joe@ccmspartner.com

Jim McGuirk, jim@ccmspartners.com

The Children's Home of Easton is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to building a diverse leadership team that reflects the communities we serve.

Together, we can continue to build on The Children's Home of Easton's 140-year legacy of excellence in child and family services — giving hope, changing lives, and creating family solutions for those who need it most.