

Entrepreneur starts out at The Salvation Army

April Hickman runs her handmade clothing business from a transitional living center in Louisville, Ky.

By Erica Rucker –

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During her stay at The Salvation Army transitional housing center in Louisville, Ky., April Hickman launched her own business: [Wonderfulee Marlee](#), an Etsy shop for children's clothing.



"I made [my daughter] a skirt and decided to make her a headband and go all out," Hickman said. "I'd never sewn before so it took me all day. I loved it and had so much fun."

Inspired by her 2-year-old daughter, Marlee, and second chances, Hickman worked to develop her skills and formed a relationship with a local sewing shop, the Smocking Shoppe, with help from her case manager, Katie Ramser.

"April mentioned to me that she enjoyed sewing and found that it was therapeutic for her to sew," Ramser said. "She had the idea of starting her own business and sought employment at a fabric store. I encouraged her to pursue this as she has such a natural talent and creates such beautiful items."

Hickman raised money for supplies through crowdfunding platform Kiva.

"It's not just about selling clothes," she said. "It's about creating something that I love, sticking true to the vision and why it started."

Hickman, her husband Michael and two daughters remain with The Salvation Army, her husband in a separate housing facility for men.

"I want to be able to go to our own home," Hickman said. "I want so much better for [my family], and I appreciate all the help."

Until then, Hickman is building a business from the living room of The Salvation Army, inspired, she said, by Psalm 139:14 and knowing that we *are fearfully and wonderfully made*.