



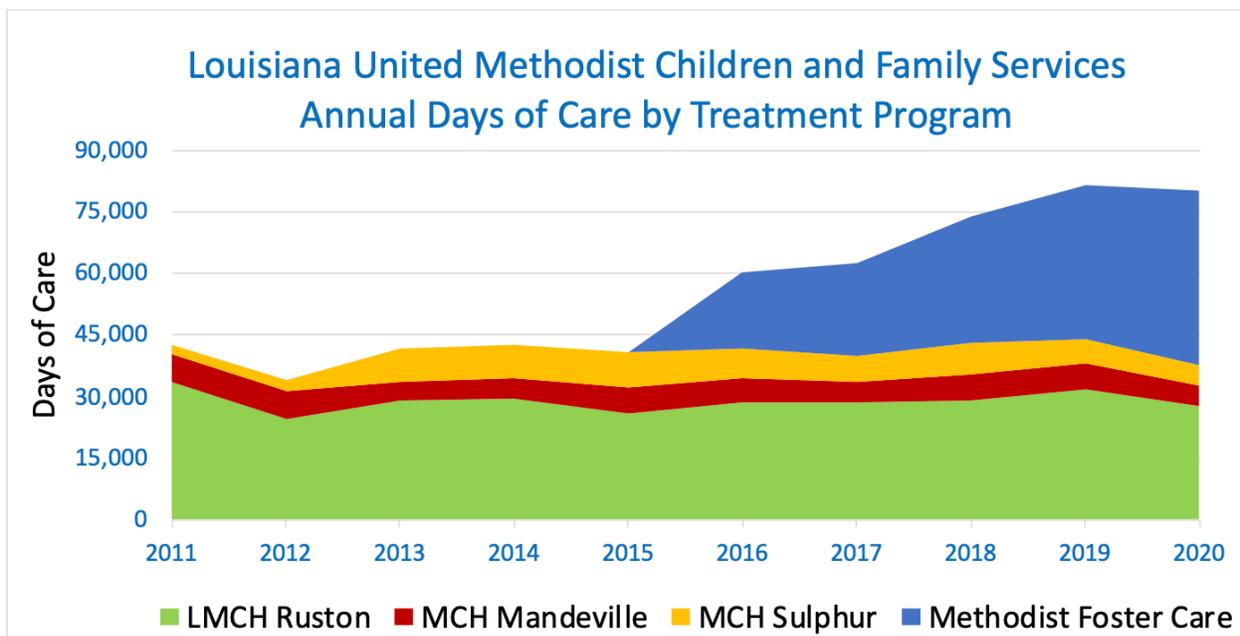
LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES STATISTICAL REPORT OF SERVICES PROVIDED DURING 2020

We Serve Louisiana’s Children and Families

During 2020 Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services focused on one thing: The Mission that drives us. **We guide children and families home to experience God’s love by following the teachings of Christ.**

In an effective and painstaking response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the devastation in Louisiana from hurricanes, Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services (LUMCFS) intentionally prioritized three essential efforts. We continued the intentional pursuit of the organization’s Mission, we focused on our Vision for Louisiana’s children and families, and we maintained our commitments to Louisiana’s children, families, and stakeholders.

Before reading further, readers will benefit from the perspective offered by the chart below. Despite the difficulties of 2020, only in 2019 did LUMCFS provide more days of intensive out-of-home care and family support to Louisiana’s children and families.



About 2020

During 2020 LUMCFS proactively implemented new procedures and protocols to slow the spread of the COVID-19 infections among our staff, among residents of our Methodist Children’s Homes, among children in Methodist Foster Care homes and their caregivers, and among members of the public receiving community-based services. Compounding the complexities of responding effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season was the most active on record. Hurricane Laura, which made landfall in southwest Louisiana on August 27, moved across Louisiana damaging the western half of Louisiana before entering Arkansas. Hurricane Laura interfered significantly with our organization’s operations in half of Louisiana.



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LUMCFS Strategy Against COVID-19: "Slow the Spread"

LUMCFS administrative and nursing staff met for the first time to discuss the potential impact of COVID-19 on January 20, when the reported infections in China reached 2,500. On February 8, all LUMCFS staff members were notified by email of the potential coronavirus spread, reminded of proper infection control techniques, and were encouraged to prepare their personal lives. On March 2, LUMCFS shared the organization's COVID-19 strategy, "Slow the Spread", with officials at Louisiana's Department of Health, Department of Children and Family Services, and Office of Juvenile Justice. On March 9, the first presumptive case of COVID-19 was reported in Louisiana. On March 10, LUMCFS implemented a Work From Home (WFH) program for higher risk employees and encouraged staff to request accommodations.

LUMCFS reduced the population at Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston to allow all residents single room occupancy by placing a temporary moratorium on admissions into all three campuses. As children in care completed treatment the admissions moratorium reduced the census without impacting the care of children currently in care. Louisiana Methodist Children's Home then lifted the moratorium and implemented a 14-day admissions quarantine, admitting children in cohorts to contain and slow the spread of COVID-19. In addition to implementing admissions quarantines, while school was out, Howard School at Louisiana Methodist Children's Home served temporarily as the COVID-19 Infirmary. At the same time, the Family Counseling Center building on the Ruston campus was reworked to become the campus Infirmary.

The Family Counseling Center relocated in leased space in the community and continues providing telehealth and in-person services. We closed the OWL Center to the public and OWL Center staff transferred to the Recreation Department of Louisiana Methodist Children's Home to enhance services to children whose daily activities must occur in smaller groups, requiring more staff. The OWL Center and OWL Equine Center reopened for children in care. We opened the OWL's Family Lodge for staff who worked in the COVID-19 Infirmary and wished to avoid exposing their families. Following Hurricane Laura, both the Family Lodge and the Bunkhouse were used to house evacuee staff from Methodist Children's Home of Southwest Louisiana.

Staff of Methodist Foster Care programs (Therapeutic Foster Care, Kinship Navigator, and Louisiana Foster Care Support Organization) modified procedures and put social distancing limitations in place to slow the spread of COVID-19 among foster caregivers, applicant homes, and staff. Despite these restrictions and the impact of Hurricane Laura, Methodist Foster Care provided more days of care during 2020 than in any previous year.

In addition to reorganizing internally to prepare for the community spread of the pandemic virus, LUMCFS assisted other child welfare and behavioral health organizations in acquiring PPE, creating forms for documentation, shared policy and procedure samples, and offered support information for families and caregivers.

Responding to Hurricane Laura

On Wednesday morning, August 26, the day before Hurricane Laura made landfall, Methodist Children's Home of Southwest Louisiana (MSCHSWLA) evacuated safely. Staff transported the children from Sulphur, Louisiana, to the organization's Outdoor Wilderness Learning (OWL) Center near Ruston. Radar



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images show the eye of Hurricane Laura passing over the children's home campus in the hours after midnight.

The facility survived the storm virtually unscathed. However, the community was shredded by Laura's powerful winds. Providing residential care requires many partnerships with local community resources including with first responders, food and fuel suppliers, and medical services. These local heroes were engaged in meeting the immediate needs of the broader community. Also, although the children's home was undamaged, water and electricity were interrupted.

Unable to reoccupy the facility in Sulphur for residential care, all children in the care of MCHSWLA were admitted into Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston, Louisiana. Staff from the Sulphur facility were transferred into positions on the Ruston campus. The OWL Center hosted staff and families whose homes were destroyed or damaged.

Health to deactivate the PRTF license for MCHSWLA, to free the facility for use in disaster recovery work. On Thursday morning, September 3, 2020, LDH/Health Standards moved quickly, granted our request, and issued an Inactive PRTF license for MCHSWLA effective 9/2/2020. LUMCFS immediately entered a partnership agreement with the Disaster Relief Ministry of the United Methodist Church in Louisiana, making the facility available as a staging area and living quarters for recovery volunteers.

contact with these families and with the Department of Children and Family Services. While children and family members were safe during the storm, some therapeutic foster homes were damaged as far north as in central Louisiana, but most extensively in southwest Louisiana. United Methodist Disaster Relief Ministry volunteers assisted these families and our staff with initial recovery work by placing tarps, removing limbs, and securing homes.

Just Shy of Delivering More Services Than Ever Before

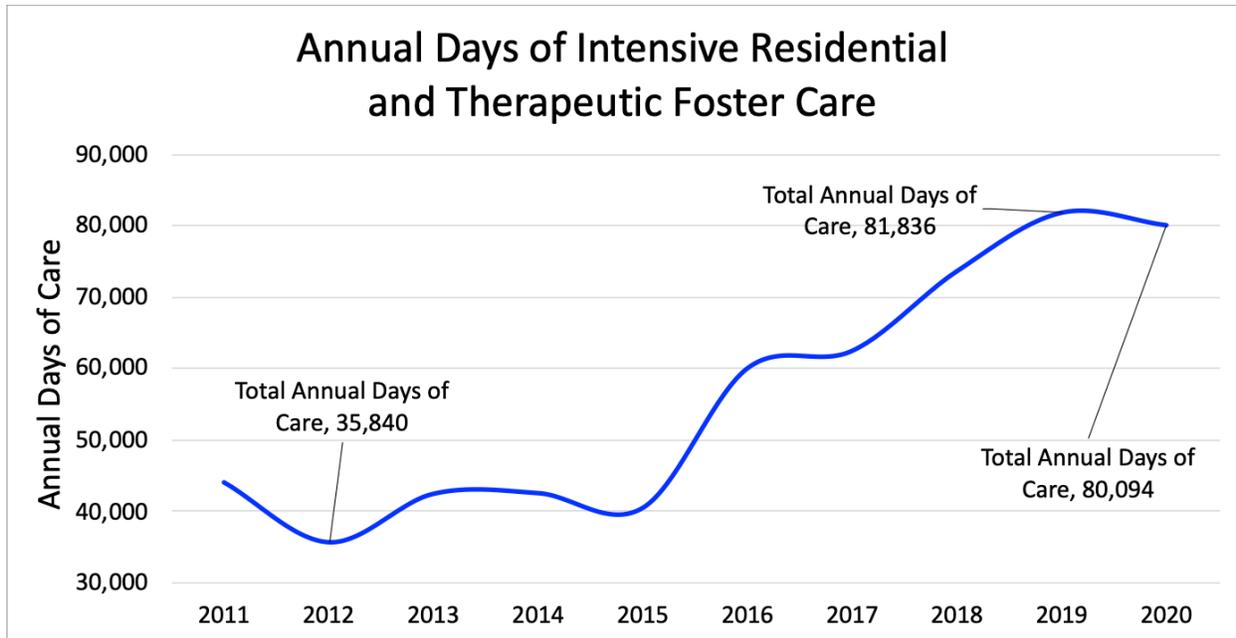
Methodist Foster Care's continued growth compensated for the reduction in residential care days due to the pandemic response by Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston, Methodist Children's Home of Southwest Louisiana in Sulphur, and Methodist Children's Home of Greater New Orleans in Mandeville.

Given the continued presence and spread of the SARS-Cov-2 virus, we do not anticipate much opportunity to increase days of care in LUMCFS' three children's homes during 2021. However, LUMCFS continues increasing Methodist Foster Care services by intentional recruitment and adding new foster care-related services to support Louisiana's foster caregivers. We anticipate the continued growth of Methodist Foster Care's therapeutic foster care services will offset any continued reduction in intensive residential care provided by the three Methodist Children's Homes.

The following chart shows the previous 10-year history of the annual number of days of intensive residential care provided by LUMCFS's three Methodist Children's Home and in therapeutic foster care.



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LUMCFS's Three United Methodist Children's Homes

Our organization's three United Methodist children's homes are located in the bootstrap, heel and toe of Louisiana's boot-shaped state. These strategic locations provide intensive residential care convenient to the geographic regions of our state. In addition to the residential care we provide at Louisiana Methodist Children's Home, Methodist Children's Home of Greater New Orleans, and Methodist Children's Home of Southwest Louisiana, from these three children's homes, we also reach into communities across Louisiana with services for families and children.

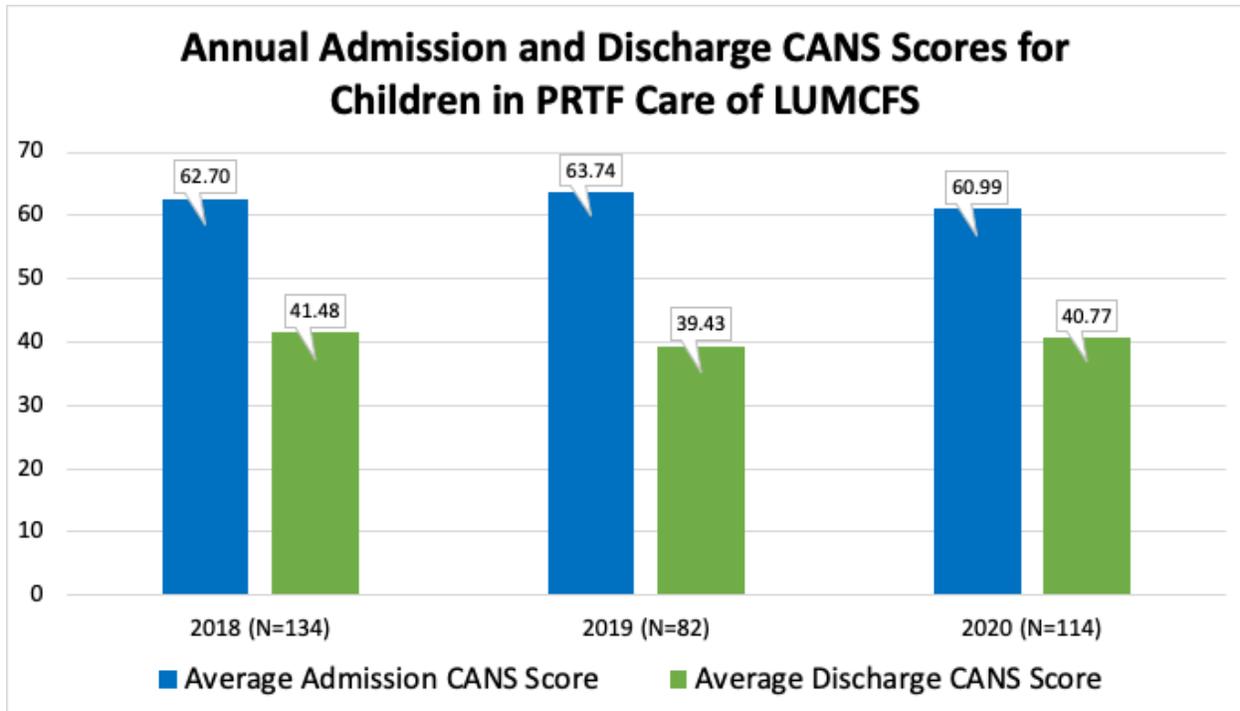
Children in Our Care Have Good Outcomes

Objective assessment instruments are used to evaluate the effectiveness of treatment. Treatment outcomes of residents are individually assessed through the use of the *Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)* assessment, a widely-used comprehensive trauma-informed behavioral health evaluation and communication tool.

An individual child's series of *CANS* assessments provides perspective for clinical decision-making and service planning for the child. Aggregated *CANS* assessment scores from children participating in a treatment program are useful for facilitating quality improvement activities and they allow for outcomes monitoring and comparisons of the treatment program's relative intensity of care and the effectiveness of treatment in general.



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Comparative studies allow one to put the LUMCFS CANS results into a broader context. An assessment of CANS data collected from Indiana’s Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs) between 2008 and 2012 was reported at the 31st Annual *Research & Policy Conference*, held in Tampa, Florida during 2018 in a presentation titled “National CANS Analysis of Wraparound”. This broad presentation provides relevant benchmarks because the presenters also reported on an analysis of aggregated CANS data from the Louisiana Coordinated System of Care’s (CSOC) Wraparound Agencies which was collected between 2013 and 2016. In addition to reporting on Louisiana’s CSOC study of CANS assessments, the presenters covered CANS reports from Indiana, the Seneca agencies in California, a Texas-based provider, and a collection of agencies participating in a national community mental health waiver.

The average admission CANS score for participants in Louisiana’s CSOC was 34.5, the average 6-month CANS score was 32.0, and the average discharge CANS score was 25.7. CANS scores improved from 34.5 to 25.7, an improvement of 8.8 points or 25.5%, for participants in Louisiana’s Wraparound services.

The average baseline admission CANS score reported for the Indiana study was 45.0, the average 6-month CANS score was 43.8, and the average discharge CANS score was 41.3. Children participating in the Indiana PRTF study improved from 45.0 to 41.3, an improvement of 3.7 points or 8.2% improvement.

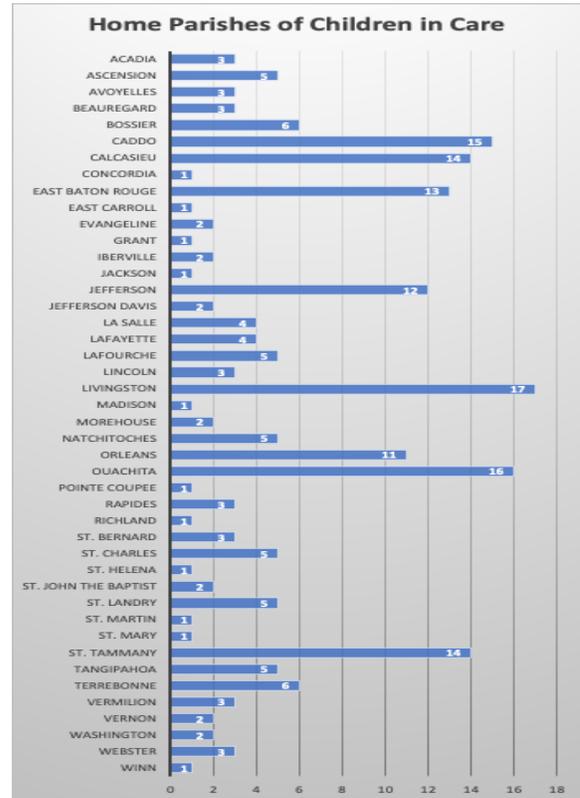
The average baseline admissions CANS score for LUMCFS PRTF services during 2020 was 60.99 and the average discharge CANS was 40.77. This reflects aggregated data from 142 initial CANS and 114 discharge CANS. Children receiving care in LUMCFS PRTFs improved from 60.99 to 40.77, an improvement of 20.22 points or 33.1% improvement.



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Several important facts become obvious when comparing LUMCFS *CANS* assessments to the Indiana PRTF assessments and the Louisiana CSOC *CANS* assessments. First, LUMCFS *CANS* assessments show children make significantly more improvement in care versus the findings reported by the Indiana PRTF study.

Second, LUMCFS is treating children in PRTF services who enter care at a significantly higher acuity level than those receiving services from Louisiana’s Wraparound Agencies. This indicates a proper use of Louisiana’s most intensive residential care. However, there is an a gap between the average discharge *CANS* from PRTF care (40.77) and the average admission *CANS* (34.5) into CSOC services. This gap is a difference that may be significant and indicative of a service intensity gap in Louisiana’s array of mental health services for children. This needs gap between PRTF and community-based services may be addressed by continued successful treatment in PRTF prior to managed care’s denial of continued coverage or by an intensifying of community-based mental health services designed to receive these children back into their communities.



Third, children entering LUMCFS PRTF care are also entering as a significantly higher level of acuity than children entering Indiana’s PRTF. Children are completing intensive treatment and are discharging from care with an average *CANS* score of 40.77. Children whose care is authorized or discontinued by *Healthy Louisiana*, our state’s managed care system for behavioral health, are discharging after treatment at nearly the same average *CANS* scores as children entering Indiana’s PRTFs, 45.0. In Louisiana, PRTFs are meeting the needs of children who were formerly cared for in the state’s adolescent psychiatric hospitals.

Comprehensive Residential Care for Children

LUMCFS provides the most intensive, comprehensive, holistic residential care available for Louisiana’s children and adolescents. Our organization’s three intensive residential care facilities in Ruston, Sulphur, and Mandeville are licensed by the Louisiana Department of Health as Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities. We receive requests for care from throughout Louisiana from parents; from other treatment facilities; from Medicaid management companies; from custodial state agencies including the Department of Children and Family Services, the Office of Juvenile Justice, and the Louisiana Department of Health; from clergy and from healthcare professionals.

Residential Occupancy

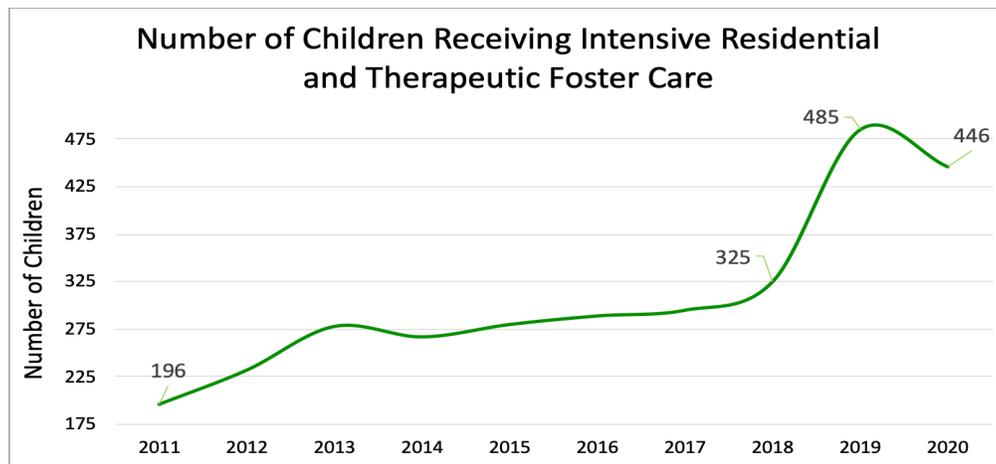
In 2020, in preparation for the arrival of COVID-19 in Louisiana, LUMCFS reduced the population at Louisiana Methodist Children’s Home in Ruston to allow for single-occupancy rooms, placed a temporary moratorium on admissions into all three campuses, and implemented a 14-day admissions quarantine.



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Also, LUMCFS temporarily closed Methodist Children’s Home of Southwest Louisiana for 90 days following Hurricane Laura. These factors had a significant impact upon the percentage of capacity during 2020.

Residential Treatment Facility	Potential Days of Care	Actual Days of Care	Percentage of Capacity
Louisiana Methodist Children’s Home	30,660	27,705	90.36%
Methodist Children’s Home of Greater New Orleans	6,560	5,226	79.54%
Methodist Children’s Home of Southwest Louisiana	8,790	4,716	53.65%
TOTAL	46,010	37,647	81.80%



Howard School

Background and enrollment

The Lorraine Howard Educational Center, or “Howard School” as it is recognized by the Louisiana Department of Education, is located on the Ruston campus of Louisiana Methodist Children’s Home. Licensed by Louisiana’s Department of Education as an alternative school, Howard School provided educational services to 252 youth during the 2020 calendar year. Of these students, 248 were residents of the Louisiana Methodist Children’s Home and 4 were off-campus youth from the local school district. The average daily student count for educational services on any given day prior to COVID-19 restrictions and related issues was 83.

Instruction

2020 was a challenging year for students and teachers at Howard School and our John Allen Vocational Center due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the support of the Clinical Services Department and Mental Health Specialists, youth attended classes at the school for a full day of instruction through March 13, 2020. Unexpectedly and at that time, Governor John Bel Edwards, by Executive Order, imposed a Stay-at-Home Order due to the alarming rise in cases and hospitalizations of COVID-19 individuals; this event marked the closure of schools across the State of Louisiana through the end of May 2020. As per instructions from the Louisiana Department of Education, instructional lessons were prepared for students and sent to the houses and buildings on campus, allowing for some measure of on-going learning



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and skills maintenance; however, classwork was not graded but used by staff to keep students constructively engaged in educational programming.

School re-opened in the fall on August 14, 2020. Again, a significant challenge during the first semester of 2020 was providing on-going face-to-face instruction due to COVID-19 cases among youth and/or staff, resulting in frequent and often on-going isolations. When resident students could not attend face-to-face, the faculty and staff of Howard School and our John Allen Vocational Center prepared assignments that were delivered to the houses and buildings and picked up daily by assigned school staff. The school designated a coordinator for this distance learning platform utilizing hard copy materials since the high-tech Chromebooks were on backorder for the entire semester of 2020.

Howard School moved from a seven-period day to an eight-period day to allow for a communication period whereby teachers could contact youth and staff at the houses and buildings to assess where learning needs or questions existed. This blended or hybrid instruction method worked reasonably well throughout the remainder of 2020, allowing for student progression in their classes and legitimate grades to be given.

Students participated in face-to-face instruction when they were not on isolation or restriction; however, due to students, teachers, and staff's safety, alternating instructional face-to-face days were created and utilized through the end of the 2020 calendar year. Through the hybrid fall semester of 2020, face-to-face classroom instruction averaged 47 students compared to 83 before the closure in March through May.

Louisiana standards-based instruction was utilized in the middle school grades of 5-8 as well as the high school grades of 9-12. This was driven by the school's Professional Development Plan incorporated in the grant funding applications and required of "Comprehensive Instruction-Required" (CIR) schools across the State of Louisiana. School improvement focused on curriculum alignment with the Louisiana standards and linked teacher staff development with the approved and adopted Tier 1 Curriculum.

Only three students were classified as seniors and were enrolled before discharge. The majority of students were clustered in seventh, eighth, or ninth grade.

The primary classes of instruction throughout the year were the typical middle school subjects of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and physical education; however, a middle school elective as well as a language arts and mathematics remediation classes were provided for all middle school youth during the day's schedule.

High school classes included core subject classes as well as elective classes and individualized class schedules were developed for each study following a review of student records and transcripts. Youth met individually with the school counselor or the principal to discuss the schedule that matched their graduation pathway.

The Jump Start TOPS Tech Career Diploma, TOPS University Diploma, or the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) pathways were the three options for high school students. Twenty high students opted for the HiSET diploma pathway due to their age and lack of Carnegie Credits, while the other high school youth were somewhat evenly split between the Jump Start and TOPS University pathways to graduation.



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Teachers and Instructional Support Staff

The school staff, inclusive of the vocational center, consisted of fourteen well-trained and certified professionals along with five support staff who worked to provide educational services to resident and non-resident youth. Of these employees, three teachers were Lincoln Parish School Board employees along with two others who served as teacher aides and one was a behavioral interventionist. Other support staff employed by LUMCFS included a school secretary, a computer lab manager, a youth behavior coordinator/interventionist, and a time sheet substitute teacher/librarian.

Howard School students benefited from a part-time physical education teacher and guidance counselor until March 13, 2020. At this critical juncture, the Recreation Department took over all physical activities of our youth and eventually handled the entire physical education program through the fall of 2020 due to the physical education teacher being on leave and to assure the safety of youth in our care. The Recreation Department continued to handle the physical education classes until the end of the calendar year 2020.

Upon the school counselor's return in early October, her role returned to review transcripts and develop student schedules and thereby matched schedules to students' graduation plans, monitored student progress, and handled the State of Louisiana assessment components serving as the District and School Test Coordinator. The State waived student testing due to the pandemic, but this remained a critical aspect of the school counselor's job to keep up with individual student assessments and schedule testing for all youth using the on-line testing platform.

Student Achievement

End-of-course testing at the high school in 2020 was waived due to the pandemic; therefore, passing rates using our Louisiana assessments were not available. Based on passing rates using the number of Carnegie Credits earned to determine the student's level of advancement to the next high school grade, 61% of the high school students passed to the next level while 39% were retained in the high school grade level they were enrolled.

As with our high school students, middle school students in grades 5 through 8 did not participate in Louisiana Assessments due to the pandemic waiver; again, there was no Louisiana assessment data to use for the purpose of this report. Based on passing rates using student grades at the end of the year, 81% of middle grade students passed while 19% were retained.

Instruction via On-line Learning

In the high school computer lab, the web-based credit recovery program allowed for students to take courses for Carnegie Credit hours toward a high school diploma during the 3rd nine weeks or first quarter of 2020 and once again in the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2020. Youth earned course credit in classes that they may have previously failed and/or earned credit in classes that would not have otherwise been available through on-campus instructors. In 2020 eight credits were earned by youth enrolled in computer-based credit courses; this was a decrease over the previous year due primarily to the pandemic isolations and discharges.



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Summary

The Lorraine Howard Educational Center as well as the John Allen Vocational Center offered quality educational experiences for all youth at the Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in 2020 despite the ongoing pandemic. Teaching and learning moved forward in 2020 by navigating, adapting, and embracing unique instructional methods during the extraordinarily challenging days that were experienced. The Education Department of LUMCFS accomplished its stated mission by which all educators and support staff continued to embrace helping every child to achieve his or her fullest academic potential while providing the essential supports of safety, care, and guidance.

The OWL Center

The OWL Center remained open to MCH youth and staff throughout the year of 2020, although LUMCFS placed a moratorium on hosting outside groups from the community due to the COVID-19 pandemic from March-November. The OWL Center served over 3,000 individuals in 2020 through a variety of therapeutic, recreational, and educational programs. The OWL Center also hosted the youth and staff who evacuated from the Methodist Children's Home of Southwest Louisiana for Hurricane Laura and continued in the OWL's care from August through the end of November.

The staff and youth from Louisiana Methodist Children's Home continued to use the Challenge Course and had the opportunity to participate in high and low ropes challenges. These elements provide youth with a chance to get out of their comfort zones, and to develop problem solving and communication skills. It also builds the bond between youth and staff.

The OWL Center was able to host several volunteer groups that helped as we cleared trails, constructed fence, worked in the orchard, painted and cleaned buildings, and other various construction projects. Under the supervision of OWL staff, volunteers made the majority of OWL Salsa and jelly produced in 2020.

Summer program for our Ruston MCH youth included participating in the high and low ropes course, maze activities, canoeing, swimming, mountain biking, horseback riding, and much more! Responding wisely to the COVID-19 pandemic created many challenges, but the OWL Center staff was successful in maintaining a safe environment. Individuals were able to enjoy the OWL Center throughout the year. Each new skill taught during summer programs helped children in residential care gain confidence and demonstrate success in challenging situations.

A core group of volunteers assisted with various lessons and groups at the OWL Equine Center throughout the year.

The therapeutic horsemanship program served over 1,200 individuals in 2020. Youth are taught to safely handle, care for, and ride horses, with each week's lesson focused on a life skills-related theme, such as responsibility, setting goals, following directions, and respect. These classes are a wonderful opportunity for our youth to practice communication, compassion and patience. We were also able to continue offering therapeutic horsemanship classes.



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2020 was a different year for the OWL Center, as it was for everyone, but we look forward to returning to normal operations soon. We will continue our mission to the best of our ability in 2021!

Family Counseling Center was greatly impacted by COVID-19, resulting in the temporary halt of services then movement into Tele-mental health. A reduction in staff also impacted the services and number of

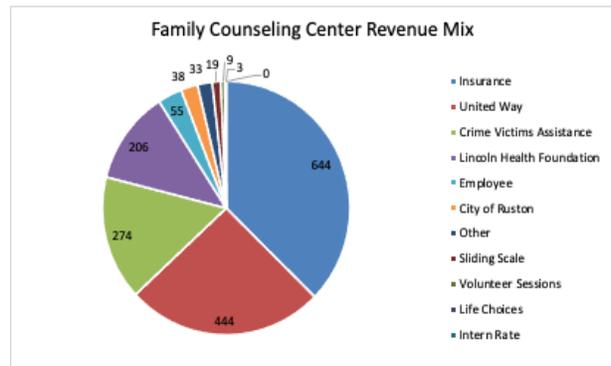
113	229,107	2,101

The table above details the services provided to the community by the Family Counseling Center, the organization’s outpatient counseling program, located in Ruston, Louisiana. The Family Counseling Center served individuals and families through in-office sessions, Tele-mental Health, groups and community education. The individuals/families reside in 16 parishes/counties providing mental health counseling and educational services to over 228,000 individuals.

During the first quarter, counseling sessions were provided at FCC, Grace UMC, Headstart, LPECC, and Cypress Springs Elementary school. In September 2020, Lincoln Parish Schools reopened and the Family Counseling Center transferred school counseling services to Hillcrest Elementary.

Funding: The Family Counseling Center is supported by fee for service revenue, grants and the charitable support received from donors whose contributions allow FCC to continue operations.

Total number of sessions: FCC provided 1,725 counseling sessions during 2020. An additional 288 sessions were cancelled sessions and additional 182 No-Shows by the client. FCC staff led 12 individual and group sessions at Headstart and LPECC; 153 at Cypress Springs Elementary School; 171 Classroom guidance/Life Skills groups, 6 individual sessions and 6 small groups at Hillcrest Elementary.



Partnerships: In 2020 FCC continued a healthy partnership with Lincoln Parish School Board, navigating the need for services through COVID19. Additional partnerships were unable to be established due to the world pandemic and departmental changes.



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LIFE SKILLS TRAINING CENTER

INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS TRAINING AND CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

During 2020, the Life Skills Training Centers completed a move from classroom-oriented life skills groups toward practical and individualized instruction. The new services provided include: Independent Living Skills Preparation with ages 14-15; In-home Support Services to youth ages 16-17; Case Management Services to young adults ages 18-23; Social Learning and Youth Engagement Activities; summer and Holiday Classes; and NYTD surveys and youth support. We have been able to convert our services to virtual learning during the current pandemic.

Monroe Region

The Monroe Region held 21 summer/ holiday classes and social activities and 232 in-home support sessions. The total number of youths served was 127. The total number of youth ages 14-15 served was 58. The total number of youth ages 16-17 served was 53. The number of youths included 115 DCFS youth, 12 OJJ youth. Total male youth served was 54, and female youth 73. There were 20 youth to complete the program with a pre-assessment score average of 51% and an average post assessment score of 63%. Case management services were provided to 16 young adults ages 18-23 that were 6 males and 10 females.

Covington Region

In addition to 255 in-home support sessions, the Covington Region held 20 summer and holiday classes and social activities for 196 participating youth. The total number of youth ages 14-15 served was 35. The total number of youth ages 16-17 served was 95. 66 young adults served between 18 and 23 years of age participated in engagement activities, in-home support services, and NYTD services. All youth served were in the custody of the Department of Children and Family Services. Total male youth served was 93, and female youth was 103. 16 youth completed the program with a pre-score of 74% and a post-score of 90%. There were no case management services provided to young adults ages 18-23.

Lafayette Region

The Lafayette Region held 13 summer/ holiday classes and social activities and 141 in-home support sessions. The total number of youths served was 53. The total number of youth ages 14-15 served was 15. The total number of youth ages 16-17 served was 36. The number of DCFS youth served was 52 and 1 being OJJ. Total male youth served was 24, and female youth was 29. The number of youths completing the program was 2 with a pre-assessment score of 67% and a post-assessment of 93%. Case management services were provided to 2 female young adults ages 18-23.

Lake Charles Region

The Lake Charles Region held 7 summer/ holiday classes and social activities and 58 in-home support sessions. The total number of youths served was 24. The total number of youth ages 14-15 served was 3. The total number of youth ages 16-17 served was 19. All youth served were DCFS youth. Total male youth served was 10, and female youth was 14. There were no youth to complete the program. Case management services were provided to 2 young adults 1 female and 1 male aged 18-23.



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Summary of Life Skills Training Center Activities for all 4 Regions

The total number of summer/holiday classes, social and youth engagement activities among all four regions was 61. The total number of youths served was 400. The total number of in-home support sessions was 686. The total number of youths served ages 14-15 was 111; ages 16-17 was 203; ages 18-23 was 86. The total number of DCFS youth served was 387; OJJ youth 13.

The total number of male youths served was 181 and female 219. The total number of youths completing the program was 38 with the average pre-assessment score of 64%; average post-assessment 82%.

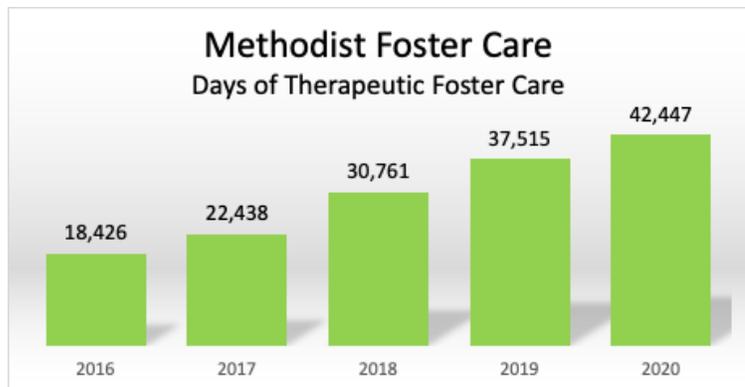
METHODIST FOSTER CARE

LUMCFS created Methodist Foster Care in December 2015 to provide Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) services to children in the custody of the Department of Children and Family Services. In 2019, Methodist Foster Care created two new support services for individuals who provide care to children in foster care. Our Kinship Navigator program assists DCFS in certifying Louisiana’s relative caregivers. Methodist Foster Care created the Louisiana Foster Care Support Organization, a statewide support service for all of Louisiana’s foster and kinship caregivers.

Methodist Foster Care holds Child Placing Agency licenses in the Monroe, Lafayette, Rapides, and Covington regions and from these regions reaches into surrounding areas to provide three foster care services throughout Louisiana: Therapeutic Foster Care, Kinship Navigator services, and the Louisiana Foster Care Support Organization.

Therapeutic Foster Care

During 2020, Methodist Foster Care continued a five-year growth trend by recruiting, training, and certifying additional Therapeutic Foster Homes throughout Louisiana. During 2020, Methodist Foster Care’s Therapeutic Foster Homes cared for 217 children and averaged 121 children in care each day of the year. During 2020, LUMCFS provided more days of care to children



in Methodist Foster Care (42,447) than in the three Methodist Children’s Homes combined (37,647 days of care). This is due to two factors: the impact of COVID-19 upon campus occupancy, and the continued growth of Methodist Foster Care.

This trend will continue into the future. While our three psychiatric treatment facilities are limited to their licensed capacities by physical features – increasing capacity would require building additional buildings – therapeutic foster care services are restricted only by the contract with DCFS which stipulates the number of children who will be placed and the results of our organization’s work to recruit, certify and support additional families who are located throughout our state.



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Recruitment

Methodist Foster Care launched a recruitment website at <http://www.RecruitFosterCare.com>. From April 1, 2020, when the website was launched to December 31, 2020, 229 individuals completed the online form inquiring about becoming a therapeutic foster caregiver.

Of these 229, AAA became certified as TFC caregivers, BBB were in process of certification at year end, CCC were referred to DCFS Home Development because they were more interested in regular foster care, and DDD were ineligible to become TFC caregivers.

Kinship Navigator

Kinship Care is the full-time care of children by individuals who have a kinship bond with a child and whose parent is not living in the home. Children receiving appropriate care from relatives benefit by receiving care and affection from someone known to them and by having important attachments, family ties, and relationships preserved. Additionally, when parents are unable to do so, kinship caregivers are often able to provide the safe care needed, eliminating the need for formal child welfare intervention. However, should children have to enter foster care, relatives may be best able to provide care as certified kinship caregivers within the Department of Children and Family Services.

Methodist Foster Care's Kinship Navigator program helps DCFS certify Kinship homes for children. In 2020, DCFS referred 157 homes to our Kinship Navigator program. Of these 157 homes, we completed 106 full home studies and of these, DCFS certified 94. At year end, four were waiting on a certification date, six were not recommended for certification, and two homes were not certified because the child had returned to their parents. At year end, 24 of the referred homes were still in the certification process and 23 elected out of the certification procedure. Four home studies carried over into the next contract and are still in process.

In addition to walking relative caregivers through the certification process, our Kinship Navigator staff make support calls at 30, 60, and 90-day intervals. Chief supports requested by kinship caregivers during these support calls include requests that we assist by following up with DCFS on board payments owed to Kinship families, and connecting Kinship families to community resources for clothing, food, furniture, diapers, and support groups. We also connect families with Early Intervention (Early Steps) and school system resources. We assist kinship families with submitting reimbursement forms for school supplies and school uniforms to DCFS case workers. Our Kinship Specialists worked at building relationships with DCFS Foster Care Workers in order to further assist Kinship families. By phone and in person, our staff provided crisis intervention using TBRI principles in order to stabilize placement until family/child could be linked to counseling services.

Foster Care Support Organization

Methodist Foster Care's Louisiana Foster Care Support Organization played a critical role in providing information and supporting Louisiana's foster caregivers through the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic and during evacuations and recovery from hurricanes, especially Hurricane Laura.

In addition, other statewide activities of the Foster Care Support Organization during 2020 included:

- The creation of informational Foster Care Support Hubs in all 9 regional DCFS offices and also in all of the parish offices within those regions. These Foster Care Support Hubs are filled with



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our quarterly newsletters and other information for foster parents. We refresh each of these Hubs quarterly.

- We conducted surveys of 2,640 current foster caregivers, 1,736 previous foster caregivers, and 29 of DCFS's foster care partner organizations. After aggregating and analyzing the responses, we published reports and provided these to DCFS.
- We designed and implemented the Listening Post model to assist DCFS with their grievance processes. We piloted the first Listening Post in the Alexandria at the request of DCFS to assist in resolving foster caregiver concerns.
- We created the Louisiana Foster Caregiver Mentor Program and have begun implementing a mentor program to strengthen Louisiana's foster care.
- We maintain a support website at www.LouisianaFosterCare.com and a FaceBook page to ensure foster caregivers receive support.
- We provided supportive services to foster caregivers and support organizations during the Covid-19 pandemic and 2 major Hurricanes.
- We established a baseline for the number of active support organizations in the state and from there further defined/identified which groups were resource organizations and/or support organizations.
- We helped organize new foster care support groups in Monroe, Lake Charles, Houma, and New Orleans.
- Our staff participated as presenters in the state-wide Louisiana Fosters' virtual conference.
- We are providing resources, referral, and consultation to foster parents related to TBRI, an evidence-based program for foster caregivers.