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# GEER II

## IMPACT REPORT SPOTLIGHT

### 2021 – 2023

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# OVERVIEW

The Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund, established in the CARES Act, provided states with emergency assistance as a result of the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

In partnership with the Governor's office, the Cabinet for Health and Family Service's Division of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (DFRYSC) received applications from local Family Resource and/or Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs) to provide 150 centers the ability to coordinate specific services and assistance related to the student and family needs associated with this emergency.

FRYSCs from across the state provided services to students and their families to support the "on-going functionality" of centers in response to the COVID-19 emergency in the following areas:

1. **Early childhood education-** FRYSCs provided an integrated approach to home visits, education, and monitoring of child development for new and expectant parents.
  - o Example activities: Conducted educational home visits; Facilitated parenting knowledge and parent networking by providing caregiver, or caregiver-child groups.
2. **Childcare:** Full time preschool childcare for children two (2) and three (3) years of age. FRYSCs identified, coordinated, and/or developed resources and support for childcare.
  - o Example activities: Provided access to developmental, vision, and hearing screenings; Connected families with childcare and early childhood learning opportunities during critical early years of development.
3. **Family Crisis and Mental Health Counseling:** FRYSCs increased self-management and coping strategies by assisting students and families with mental health needs and/or other crises through the identification and coordination of services for various challenges (e.g., grief, illness, bullying, incarceration, dating/domestic violence, loss of income, trauma, isolation, anxiety).
  - o Example activities: Coordination of Youth Mental Health First Aid training for staff; Connected students with necessary mental health services by contracting with mental health providers, developed Sources of Strength peer lead suicide and violence prevention programs.

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

## Mercer County Elementary Family Resource Center

### Mercer County

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Extending our bi-monthly Cradle School to a weekly program was a huge success. We had a sign up of 10-12 students/families per morning and evening class. Students and families engaged weekly with literacy, hands on math, science, social emotional activities, and fine motor/gross motor activities. Families were excited to participate each week and student growth was outstanding.

- 100% of students grew in all standard development areas at least 25% on family surveys.
- 100% of families would continue the program if offered in the future.
- 90% of families used the family engagement activities given to them at home.
- 92% of students made eye contact with adults and were social with other students by the end of the sessions.

This grant has taken our Cradle School to new heights. We have been noticed by our district SPED department and have been asked if they could join forces with FRC to make this a collaborative program. Using our data as a Child Find program for SPED and PK.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Liberty Elementary Family Resource Center

#### Fayette County

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In order to better prepare students for kindergarten academically and socially, the Family Resource Center Coordinator was able to use funding from the GEER II Grant to hire two early education staff and provide participants with educational games and books. The staff provided one on one or small group instruction to four- and five-year-old participants. The participants were not enrolled in kindergarten at the time of this program. The Developmental Assessment of Young Children – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition screener was used before and after the implementation of the program to evaluate the effectiveness.

All activities listed in the grant were implemented. After one on one and small group implementation, all 16 students increased their knowledge in identifying letters, numbers, shapes and colors. The results of Year 2's findings are as follows:

- Students who started with a 20-27% on the DAYC-2, increased to an average of 46%
- Students who started with a 38-46% on the DAYC-2, increased to an average of 73%
- Students who started with a 47-51% on the DAYC-2, increased to an average of 81%
- Students who started with a 52-57% on the DAYC-2, increased to an average of 83%

All of the participants were provided with educational games and books to take home and practice skills with their parents as they wait for their time to enroll in kindergarten.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Picadome Elementary Family Resource Center

#### Fayette County

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According to 2021 Brigance scores, 61% of incoming kindergarten students are not kindergarten ready. The three most lacking skills for incoming kindergartners are:

1. Cognitive general knowledge
2. Social emotional skills
3. Self-help skills such as buttoning, cutting and zipping.

Utilizing GEER Grant funds, a FIT Coordinator was hired. Her roles included:

- Meeting individually with parents to educate them about early childhood development, and assist them in identifying developmental concerns using the CDC milestones app.
- Disseminating information about preschool programs and other enrichment opportunities
- Facilitating four days of pop-up preschool quarterly at Westminster Village, removing the barrier of transportation for many families, and one Saturday pop-up preschool quarterly at Picadome.
- Collaborating with community agencies (HANDS, Musikgarten, etc.) to provide enrichment programs at Westminster Village.
- Conducting weekly home visits with twelve children, modeling age-appropriate activities that help children meet developmental milestones for parents to incorporate into their daily routines.

According to pre and post CDC Milestone Tracker data, the percentage of age-appropriate milestones reached by these twelve children improved by an average of 16.58%. Two of the twelve children are now kindergartners at Picadome. One teacher commented of her student, "she started with a greater understanding of how to 'do school' and has shown more readiness as far as catching on faster as we introduce new concepts and skills. Her ability to follow directions, listen attentively in class, and interact with peers, does show that she's had some earlier experiences compared to some of her peers who are coming from similar backgrounds. She started K showing some level of earlier supports." Another teacher commented of her student, "Behaviorally, she began the year knowing how to 'do' school. She is a hard worker and eager to learn." One of the twelve participants is now in preschool at Picadome. Her teacher reports, "excellent fine motor, counting and number recognition skills." She believes that her mother continued the activities that the FIT Coordinator modelled over the summer to further solidify school readiness.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Rangeland Elementary Family Resource Center

#### Jefferson County

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In 2021, only 21% of Rangeland's Kindergartners were prepared for kindergarten. The Rangeland's Family Resource Center used the following resources and programs to aid in enhancing the number of students ready for Kindergarten at Rangeland.

Rangeland FRC collaborated with George Unseld Early Childhood Center, Little Testimonies Child Development Center and Ohio Valley Educational Corporation (Head Start and Early Childhood) to increase the importance of Kindergarten Readiness and family engagement. The outreach programming included disseminating workbooks, pamphlets, school supplies, check-ins and programming at George Unseld. Rangeland FRC would also offer 3 touches before school, via letter, phone call (assessment); Kindergarten Camp and home.

Home visits were made to the families who did not respond to the letters or phone calls or that contact information was not current.

Kindergarten Readiness Activities included:

- Ready For K workbooks, (outlining the kindergarten readiness criteria, free websites, letter, numbers and colors, and months of the year flip books\_
- Lakeshore and Prepping for K Kindergarten Readiness kits to enhance fine motor skills; math skills; reading skills, gross motor skills.
- Mobile Petting zoo- with Farmer Steve offering animal education, care, and awareness
- Tom Foolery-Magic show

Several community Partnership were invited to the following events: *Louisville Metro Police; Louisville Free Public Library; Louisville Water Company; Rutherford Kids Zone Events: [2023 Kid's Expo](#)*

- Kindergarten Camp - Kindergarten Camp included stations.
- All students received books, workbooks, increase literacy and fine motor skills, and social and emotional skills.
- Growth- numbers moved from 21% to 54% of our students being ready for kindergarten.
- George Unseld's Kids Day offered fun - and educational opportunities for 55 in October 2022 to August 2023- 75
- Kindergarten Camp at Rangeland 2022 (18) and 25 for 2023.
- Kindergarten Readiness were given to 4 kindergarten classes and 1 Emotional Behavior Classroom- with total 88 student which increased enrollment 67 to 88 (3 classes to 4)
- Kids zone was a partnership with several Early Childhood schools in April 2023- 550 registered participants and 10% resources were provided to Early Childhood students transitioning to kindergarten.

Overall Early Childhood Components with using Geer Funding allow Rangeland to increase efforts in outreach through communication with parents, community partners, and school collaboration- that aided our school in receiving more students in numbers and who were ready for kindergarten.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Shelby County Family Resource and Youth Service Centers

#### Shelby County

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#### ***“Baby Eagle” / “Baby Colt” Program with Kindergarten Readiness Night***

These complementing programs targeted preschool students about to enter kindergarten at Heritage and Clear Creek Elementary. The district wide Brigance scores for incoming kindergarten students in the 2021 reflected only 47% of incoming kindergarten students were Ready or were Ready with enrichments.

Baby Eagle and Baby Colt Program Impact: The parents/guardians and student participating in the Baby Eagles – Baby Colt programs received weekly information, resources, and strategies to help children acquire kindergarten readiness skills. They also receive free children’s books. Upon signing up for the program, the parents agreed to read with their future kindergartener several times each week. Parents/guardians of 23 students entering kindergarten in the 2022 school year signed up for the Baby Eagles program, 32 signed up for the Baby Colt program.

- Impact: 100% of the Heritage Elementary parents and 91% of the Clear Creek Elementary parents responding to the post program survey indicated the activities and resources helped prepare their child for kindergarten. The surveys also reflected 91% of the parents felt their children improved their listening, reading, self-help, fine motor and gross motor skills.
- K-Readiness Night Impact: The parents/guardians and students who participated in the Kindergarten Readiness Night received educational information, resources, books, and strategies to help student acquire kindergarten readiness skills. 40 future kindergarten students and 46 parents/guardians participated in the Kindergarten Readiness Night.
- Impact 100% of the parents responding to the post program survey indicated the activity helped prepare their child for kindergarten.
- The Brigance scores from Clear Creek Elementary reflect that an 18% increase in the number of students designated as Ready or Ready with Enrichments, 42% in 2022 to 60% in 2023.
- The SCPS District wide Brigance scores for Ready and Ready with Enrichments increase from 2022-23 by

#### ***Dolly Parton Library***

The Northside Preschool in Shelby County serves a population that is 100% high risk, low income. This population of student/families typically has little access to reading material in their homes.

1985 Northside preschooler’s children and their sibling signed up to receive free children’s books each month to promote early learning and kindergarten readiness. Over the course of the 2-year Geer grant, those 1985 children received a free book monthly. 17,426 books were distributed.

- Impact 100% of the parents who responded to the post survey indicated they believe this program helped their child learn to enjoy reading and be better prepared for kindergarten.



## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

### **HOPE FRYSC, Helping Hands FRYSC, Pathways FRYSC**

#### **Hart County**

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##### **Tiny & Little Raider Academy**

The GEER II grant was a crucial partner in re-introducing our early childhood programming after the pandemic caused its lapse. Our 5 FRYSC school-based centers worked as one with the Hart County Public Library to provide monthly programming for preschool children and their caregivers. Using the GEER funds, we expanded the previous program designed for children aged 3-5 to include children ages birth to 3. We rebranded the program as The Tiny and Little Raider Academy. Our program includes monthly thematic events held at the public library. By the end of the school year 2023-24, we had conducted 14 of these events. At the events, children in Little Raiders (ages 3-5) and their caregivers enjoy a story connected to the theme, enjoy knowledge-building thematic learning games (focused on math and reading), create craft/art projects, and take home a snack and a book.

We also used GEER II funds to provide parents with some learning toys. The learning toys encourage learning in early phonics, counting, or social and emotional learning. Each toy included instructions for family involvement. Each toy encouraged early learning.

Since we used funds to purchase equipment for the learning games, we will be able to sustain this program with very little funding needed going forward (books and snacks) by repeating themes. We just kicked off year 3 in September.

##### **Expectant and New Parents Program**

GEER II funded our community baby shower and parenting classes. Each expectant or new parent received quality supplies to encourage a healthy early start for their baby and promote safety. Each family received a car seat or booster seat. They received a diaper bag filled with diaper cream, soaps, blankets, towels, thermometers, a nose suction kit, and a book. During the event, guest speakers spoke on various safety topics: car seat safety, choking, water safety, and safe sleep habits. A certified CPR trainer modeled infant CPR; parents were able to participate. The school district, the public library, and several community agencies staffed booths and provided parents with information, baby care items, books, and baby/toddler learning toys.

We held 2 of these events during the grant period, serving approximately 60 new/expectant families. We plan to continue this event annually; however, we will scale it down in the number of participants and giveaway items.

##### **Dolly Parton Imagination Library Enrollment**

According to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library website, Hart County has 1318 children under five. Funding just 65% of this population for five years in the DPIL program costs \$20,341 (according to the DPIL Cost Estimator). To assist the United Way of Southern Kentucky with funding, we re-distributed some GEER II funds to DPIL for Hart County children.

Our centers partnered with the Hart County Public Library to provide DPIL enrollment information

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

to our expectant and new parents. Activities included a booth at the Dolly Parton Imagination FunFest (a DPIL fundraising effort initiated by our Chamber of Commerce and the United Way of Southern Kentucky). We passed out enrollment forms at each Tiny and Little Raider Academy event. We also distributed enrollment forms to new/expectant families at our new and expectant parent events.

### **Enrollment data from the United Way of Southern Kentucky: 2022**

- 234 new enrollees
- 598 total participants

### **January 1-September 30, 2023**

- 145 new enrollees
- 591 total participants (173 children aged out so far this year)

### **Read and Rise Program (Artful Reading on the Go)**

The Read and Rise Program encourages family reading time at home. This program evolved into an extension of the Artful Reading program since its creators published take-home Artful Reading kits. Each kit includes a book to read with children and an art activity to engage children in extension activities. For example, one AR to Go kit called “Roar” includes a book about dinosaurs, a washable paint pad and dinosaur stamp, a toy dinosaur, and a guide to help families “do” the activities. The kits covered two different age levels--birth to age two and ages 3 to 5. Providing them the tools to do so is the first step in ensuring academic success for all students. The Read and Rise program has provided families with hands-on strategies for building literacy at home, reinforced that parents are their child’s first and most important teacher, and created text-rich environments with take-home books and extension activities. GEER II funds allowed us to purchase enough kits to share with our Early Childhood partners (Head Start and Little Lambs) and give to families participating in year 3 of the Tiny and Little Raider Academies.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

### **Gutermuth Family Resource Center**

#### **Jefferson County**

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The demonstrated need before the intervention/service/activity was to track the progress of twelve incoming kindergarten students with no prior Early Childhood schooling. The participants consisted of students from very diverse backgrounds. The students spoke English, Spanish, and Arabic. The participants were given a Pre-Fall Brigance Screening in May 2022 and in August 2022 after receiving a “Kindergarten Reading Kit, alphabet Flash Cards, and a Kindergarten Readiness Workbook” to work on over the course of the summer prior to the start of school. The Kindergarten Reading Kits and Alphabet Flash Cards were purchased through GEER II funds. The participants baseline data Brigance scores averaged 61.4 in May 2022.

The FRC Coordinator partnered with the Academic Instructional Coach to track the progress of twelve incoming kindergarten students with no prior schooling. This Kindergarten Focus Group was created to promote Family Literacy as it relates to school readiness. The students Fall Brigance Scores, Fall, Winter and Spring MAP scores, and attendance was tracked during this focus group.

The students average Brigance score in August 2022 was 64.6. A 3.2 gain from May. The Family Resource Center provided academic resources for parents/guardians to work with their students twice a year through GEER II funds. In January the students received “Word Families and Picture Words” flash cards and their parent/guardian received a progress report on each individual student. In May the students received “Sight Words and Phonics Made Easy” flash cards to sustain their growth and development during the summer months. The parents also received a final progress report which indicated the following: End of Year Reading Level, Attendance Data, Growth for student on their MAP test Scores (Winter/Spring”, and individual Growth Overall.

Eight out of the twelve students mastered their end of year reading goal of a “C” or higher. Eight out of twelve students missed an average of less than 10% of their school year. The growth points overall for the 2022-2023 Kindergarten Focus Group was 232 points. The 2022-2023 Kindergarten Focus Group was a success, and its intended outcome was met.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Early Learning Village FRC

#### Jessamine County

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**The Need:** Jessamine County HANDS and First Steps programs reported that their enrollment was down after Covid which meant the children in the County were not getting early interventions. Furthermore, the Village has seen an increase of students with significant developmental delays with no prior interventions at the age of 3 and 4. The lack of interventions was also seen in the Kindergarten Readiness scores. In 2022, 59.7% of children were not kindergarten ready. Compared to the overall Kentucky score of 53.8% not kindergarten ready.

**The Goal:** The focus of our grant was on covid recovery for children birth to 5 years of age. The grant allowed us to have a paid position dedicated to locating families within this age range and then providing education, workshops, screenings and referrals to appropriate agencies. Emily Warford and Lori Barkley served in the capacity of the Early Childhood Covid Recovery Project Manager (ECCR Project Manager) over the 2021/2023 grant years.

**The Impact:** Below you will see multiple ways that the ECCR Project Manager was used through home visits, screenings, referrals, community partnerships, family trainings and more. Also, I have included examples of social media posts and resource flyers that will continue to be used for several more years. Even though the grant has now ended and the ECCR Project Manager is no longer in place, the Early Learning Village FRC, with the financial support of the Jessamine County Ready to Learn Committee, will continue many of these initiatives started during this grant.

#### Family Education Initiatives

**Try It Out Tuesday Videos:** Created by ECCR Project Manager - A total of 22 informational Facebook posts about early childhood topics were put up on the Jessamine Early Learning Village Facebook Page which has a total following of 3,000 people.

- The Importance of Early Childhood Education **127 Views**
- Gross Motor Movement **115 Views**
- Building Fine Motor Skills **140 Views**
- Helping Your Child with His/Her Emotions **157 Views**
- Big Problems vs. Small Problems **103 Views**
- Consequences vs. Punishment **169 Views**
- Screen Time **125 Views**
- Unwanted Behaviors **150 Views**
- Giving Choices **267 Views**
- Bedtime **236 Views**
- Interacting with Picture Books **356 Views**
- Wait Time in Conversation **414 Views**

View one of these videos by clicking on one of the links below.

- [Bedtime Routine.MOV](#)
- [Big problems vs. small problems](#)

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

**Sustainability:** The Try It Out Tuesday videos will continue to be posted on Facebook by the FRC Coordinator each year.

**Ready, Set, Kindergarten Event:** By FRC Coordinator and JELV Administration May 2023

- Total number of incoming kindergarten students in attendance = 238
- Stations included: Move Together, Talk Together, Connect Together, Read Together, and Count Together. We also had a school bus that students could explore and talk to a bus driver. SRO Billy King provided free popsicles through the Copsicle Truck.
- Ten students enrolled at the event, and several registered the following Monday.

### **Family Survey**

- 51 responded
- 100% stated that their child enjoyed the event.
- 49 out of 51 (96%) stated that they would use the materials given to them at the event with their child.
- 50 out of 51 (98%) stated that they thought the materials received were engaging and helpful.

**Sustainability:** The Ready, Set, Kindergarten event will continue each year with financial support through the Jessamine County Ready to Learn Committee, and will be planned by the FRC Coordinator and JELV Administration.

**Building Strong Families Workshop:** By FRC Coordinator and JELV Administration March 20, 2023

- Topic: Following Directions and Independence
- Total number of families in attendance = 23
- Total number of children in target age in attendance = 27
- Provided dinner catered from Fazolis.

### **All families completed a survey:**

- Did you learn one new thing about helping your child learn more about following directions? 100% Yes
- Did you learn at least one new thing about helping your child be more independent? 100 % Yes
- Will you apply what you learn tonight at home with your child? 100% Yes

**Building Strong Families Workshop:** By FRC Coordinator and JELV Administration May 24, 2023

### **Topic: Developmentally appropriate learning in enjoyable ways over the summer**

- Total number of families: 18
- Total number of children in target age: 23
- Provided dinner catered from Gourmet Goodies.

**16 of the 18 families turned in a survey:**



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Did you learn at least one new way to help your child learn in fun and age-appropriate ways this summer? 100% Yes
- Do you think the materials you received will be used at home? 100 % Yes
- Will you apply what you learned tonight at home with your child? 100% Yes

Pictures from Building Strong Families Events



**Sustainability:** Currently the Ready to Learn Committee is exploring partnerships to continue to provide these workshops.

**Kindergarten Readiness Video:** By ECCR Manager and FRC Coordinator

Created a new Kindergarten Readiness video. Video sent out to 389 families through the Kindergarten Readiness Summer Program. View video by clicking on the link. [Kindergarten Readiness.MOV](#)

**Sustainability:** This video will continue to be used by the FRC Coordinator to promote kindergarten readiness each year.

**Teach My Baby/Teach My Toddler Trainings:** By ECCR Project Managers

- 48 visits with families to train and give Teach My Baby and/or Teach My Toddler Kits.
- Provided information about free early childhood resources in the community to all families.
- View flier by clicking on the link. [Early Childhood Flyer.pdf](#)

**Sustainability:** Teach my Baby and Teach My Toddler training will continue through the FRC with financial support through the Ready to Learn committee.

**Kindergarten Readiness Handout:** By ECCR Project Manager and FRC Coordinator

- Created a new Kindergarten readiness handout for parents/caregivers.
- Handouts were given by the FRC Coordinator to 211 families that registered for kindergarten in 2023 at the Early Learning Village.
- View flier by clicking on the link. [Kindergarten Readiness Flyer.pdf](#)

**Sustainability:** Providing families with this flyer will continue during registration by the FRC Coordinator. The FRC will take the lead to keep the flyer updated.

**IELV Summer Family Education Program:** By ECCR Project Manager

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Researched and spoke on Emotions for families participating in the summer school program at the JELV.
- Researched and spoke on Independence for families participating in the summer school program at the JELV.

### Kindergarten Education Initiative

#### Dramatic Play Sets for Kindergarten Students: FRC Coordinator and JELV Administration

The Village has observed a decrease in kindergarten students' ability to play collaboratively after Covid. Based on this observation, the Administration is asking all classrooms to incorporate at least 20 minutes of play-based learning into the daily schedule. In order to support teachers in this endeavor, the following items were purchased for all 25 kindergarten classrooms impacting approximately 600 students: 25 dramatic play sets with vet, dental, market, and pizza kits, train track with trains, doll house, and magnetic building tiles.



### Screenings and Referrals

#### Ages & Stages Screening and Referrals: By ECCR Project Managers

- Trained in ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE
- Scored 3 ASQ-3
- Scored 1 ASQ-SE
- Referrals to Jessamine County Library to receive the Ages and Stages Screening = 7

**Sustainability:** Referrals to JCPL for screenings will continue during FRC home and office visits.

### Family Connections, Ongoing Programs, and Resources

#### Laugh & Learn Program

- Attended by ECCR Project Manager
- Attended monthly Laugh & Learn Program through the Extension Office to connect with families of children under five.
- Made home visits with 2 families from connections made at the Laugh & Learn Program.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Delivered 5 Kindergarten Readiness Kits to families at the Laugh & Learn Program.

### **Digital Resources for Families:** By ECCR Project Manager

- Created YouTube page for JELV
- Uploaded all Try It Out Tuesdays and new Kindergarten Readiness video to YouTube.
- Click the link to view. <https://www.youtube.com/@jessamineearlylearningvill4333/videos>
- Created Pinterest page for JELV
- Pinned 87 activities for parents and caregivers to reference.
- Click the link below to view. <https://www.pinterest.com/jessamineearlylearningvillage/>

### **Dolly Parton Imagination Library:** By ECCR Project Manager and GEER grant funding

- 7 new families enrolled while giving the Teach My Toddler and Teach My Baby kits.
- Provided \$12,000 through the GEERs grant toward this community initiative. This amount will pay for 90 children to go through the program beginning at birth.
- Total active enrollment as of September 2023 for Jessamine County is 1,432 children. Each of these participants gets a free book each month mailed to their home address.

**Sustainability:** DPIL will receive continued financial support through the Ready to Learn Committee in Jessamine County. The JELV FRC will continue to make referrals to this program through family visits.

## Community Connections

### **Day Care Partnership:** By ECCR Project Manager

- Delivered gifts to all Jessamine County daycares to promote a healthy partnership for early childhood education moving forward.
- Delivered flyers and spoke with directors to promote upcoming early childhood training that would benefit families in our county and increase KY STAR Rating.
- Delivered flyers for upcoming Early Learning Workshops.
- Delivered updated preschool and kindergarten registration packets.

### **Community Bookshelves:** By ECCR Project Manager

- Delivered 3 bookshelves with early childhood resources on the sides to local businesses.
- \*Sode Zo Church off of Ashgrove
- \*Caroline Memorial YMCA
- \*Prestige Auto Care off of Main St.

### **Preschool Registration Promotion to Community Partners:** By ECCR Project Manager

Delivered updated preschool registration packets to all local daycares and Jessamine County Public Library. Posted video on JELV Facebook page to remind families about preschool registration

**Community Partner Connections:** Documentation by ECCR Project Manager:

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Met with Paul at the Food Pantry to introduce myself and talk about my job.
- Met with Rebecca at the HANDS Program to introduce myself.
- Met with First Steps to introduce myself and talk about how my job can serve them best.
- Met with FRC coordinators from our county to stay up to date on events and share anything I'm currently working on
- Met with local CARE Council twice to get better connected with how to serve the black community and other communities of color in our county.
- Met with Sarah Underwood at JCPL to introduce myself and talk about early childhood partnerships.
- Met monthly with the Ready to Learn committee to stay connected with community partners involved in early childhood and give updates on my work.

### **Informational Tools for the Community:** By ECCR Project Manager

- Created Early Childhood Resource Flyer and delivered to all local community partners to put on display.
- Created Early Childhood Resource Posters to put onto bookshelves to be given out to local businesses.
- Created Social-Emotional Handout for school psychologists and teachers to use when meeting with families.
- Created QR Code strip to show families how to use Kindergarten Kit and attached to all Kindergarten Kits at JELV
- Created and ordered Read Talk Play stickers to be put onto all picture books that are given out to families.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Ockerman Elem FRC, Collins Elem FRC, Florence Elem FRC

#### Boone County

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GEER Grant funds have had huge impacts on the preschool population at Collins, Florence, and Ockerman Elementary Schools. Students that attended the Preschool Achievement Center (Preschool for Collins, Ockerman and Florence ES) were from the three most impoverished school in the district. One hundred thirty Preschool students were brought together into an off-site facility to have their preschool experience. These schools are economically disadvantaged. They are on average 65% free and reduced. These schools also have a very high English Learner population. They house students from about 30 different nationalities. The teachers were able to plan together, work on the work together, but were not provided an FRC until the GEERS grant provided one. The Preschool classrooms were 100 percent students with disabilities and low income in all of the classes. The impact of having a Social Worker was monumental in the achievement of all students from the Preschool Achievement Center. (Per Boone County Preschool Director, Michael Shores) These funds have benefited children and families in several areas including improving literacy skills, providing basic needs, providing health care, parent engagement, and improved social/emotional support for these students.

One of the biggest benefits of the GEER Grant funds was being able to provide a Social Worker in the facility where these students were housed. The preschool students from Collins, Florence, and Ockerman Elementary Schools were displaced from their home school and was housed in a building with no Family Resource Center or Social Worker previous to us receiving this grant. As a result of the displacement, these students were not receiving all the services that were needed to help them succeed. With a dedicated social worker, the students received individualized support.

The social worker collaborated with community organizations and resources to provide additional support to families in need. They ensured that basic needs, such as food and housing, were met, ultimately creating a more stable environment for the children. Assisting with basic needs ensured that the students had their essential requirements met, such as nutritious meals, proper clothing, and access to hygiene products. These impacted their ability to come to school ready to learn.

The social worker was able to enhance the physical and mental well-being of the preschoolers. They provided information regarding free health care services in the area. They provided an in school dental program. On average, 50 students were seen at each of the four visits. They provided referrals to receive free vision exams and free glasses. All these activities helped promote healthy habits, and necessary medical resources needed to keep the students healthy and able to be present in school.

The social worker worked closely with parents and caregivers, encouraging their active involvement in their child's education and development. Monthly family activities were sent home for families to complete together. Monthly parenting tips and resources were provided to the parents. This investment in parent education about the importance of involvement in their child's education and providing them with developmental guidelines empowered parents to actively



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

support their child's growth. Social Worker used Kinolved, a communication system to communicate with families as often as possible as it allowed communication any many languages.

These grant funds allowed for the purchase of take-home learning manipulatives and workbooks. One hundred and twenty preschoolers and families were provided with summer learning supplies to help them continue to work on kindergarten readiness skills. A pre-summer event was held to discuss the importance of continued summer learning and the importance of parents helping to teach children at home. The take home learning manipulatives and workbooks were provided. A post summer event was held to come back together to discuss with families. Of the families that returned, all expressed gratitude for the learning material and expressed seeing growth in their child.

These funds also allowed for a 6 session Born Learning Program to be held for preschool students across Boone County in both the 21/22 and 22/23 school years. Parents reported the following:

- 1) Improved knowledge of skills needed to ensure their child is ready for kindergarten.
- 2) Parents comfort level increased coming to school events.
- 3) Parents witnessed improvements in their child's socialization skills.
- 4) Parents witnessed improvements in their child following a routine in a structured environment.

These funds allowed for a Preschool Resource Fair in both the 21/22 and 22/23 school year. This connected parents and caregivers with valuable community resources that can support their children's education and well-being. We were able to provide families across Boone County with learning materials for preschool students, information about skills needed to be kindergarten ready, and community resources. On average 75 families attended these events.

District wide, the Brigance data has shown that there has been a gap between typical students entering Kindergarten and students receiving Preschool services. Over several years, student in public Preschool have scored about 20-25 percentage point below their peers in ready for kindergarten. The district average for ready for kindergarten was 53%, students coming from public Preschool was 39% ready for kindergarten. That is a gap of 14% on average across the district. For the students coming from the Preschool Achievement Center (3 most impoverished schools), Collins students were 1 percent away from their peers, Ockerman students were even with their peers, and Florence Preschool students outperformed their peers by 4 percentage points of ready for kindergarten. These scores are a direct reflection of the support provided by the FRC that was provided at the Preschool Achievement Center. When student's needs are meet and families are supported, students with low income and disabilities will perform at or better than their peers. (Per Boone County Schools Preschool Director, Michael Shires). Brigance data shows an increase in self-help skills, social emotional skills, and physical development from school year 2020/2021 to 2021/2022.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Overall, the impact of the GEER GRANT funds were wide-ranging. This investment will have long-term benefits, not only for the individual students and families but also for the community as a whole.

### SEE DATA BELOW

School Name	Enrollment	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Not Ready (Ready with Interventions)	Kindergarten Ready	Variance Ready (All vs Preschool)
North Pointe Elementary School	79	79	100	19%	81%	19%
Preschool K-Readiness	13	13	100	38%	62%	
Charles H. Kelly Elementary School	47	47	100	26%	74%	N/A
Preschool K-Readiness	Data included with Burlington					
Shirley Mann Elementary School	105	104	99	30%	70%	25%
Preschool K-Readiness	21	20	95.2	55%	45%	
Longbranch Elementary School	127	127	100	34%	66%	35%
Preschool K-Readiness	13	13	100	69%	31%	
Erpenbeck Elementary School	104	104	100	37%	63%	4%

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Preschool K-Readiness	17	17	100	41%	59%	
<b>Stephens Elementary School</b>	79	75	94.9	37%	63%	7%
Preschool K-Readiness	19	18	94.7	44%	56%	
<b>New Haven Elementary School</b>	101	101	100	38%	62%	16%
Preschool K-Readiness	13	13	100	54%	46%	
<b>Thornwilde Elementary School</b>	89	88	98.9	42%	58%	11%
Preschool K-Readiness	15	15	100	53%	47%	
<b>Burlington Elementary School</b>	102	101	99	50%	50%	24%
Preschool K-Readiness	23	23	100	74%	26%	
<b>A M Yealey Elementary School</b>	105	104	99	57%	43%	16%
Preschool K-Readiness	27	26	96.3	73%	27%	
<b>Steeplechase Elementary School</b>	73	72	98.6	58%	42%	N/A

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Preschool K-Readiness	No Data for 2022					
<b>Goodridge Elementary School</b>	105	99	94.3	61%	39%	4%
Preschool K-Readiness	28	23	82.1	65%	35%	
<b>Florence Elementary School</b>	96	95	99	64%	36%	-4%
Preschool K-Readiness PAC	30	30	100	60%	40%	
<b>Ockerman Elementary School</b>	128	128	100	69%	31%	0%
Preschool K-Readiness PAC	26	26	100	69%	31%	
<b>Collins Elementary School</b>	72	72	100	72%	28%	1%
Preschool K-Readiness PAC	30	30	100	73%	27%	

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Cecilia Valley FRC, Creekside Elem FRC, North Park FRC, Lakewood FRC

Hardin County

# GEER#65 IMPACT REPORT



*Kindergarten readiness and Brigance scores increased in all schools served by the Geer Grant. More specifically Creekside's Brigance scores went from 34% of children ready for kindergarten in 2019-20 school year to 53% in 2022-2023. Lakewood's Brigance data indicated that 56% of incoming kindergarteners were ready in 2019-2020 while 61% were ready in 2022-2023. Cecilia Valley showed a 21% increase in kindergarten readiness skills from the year 2019-2020 to 2022-2023!*



First Connections was a pre-existing program in Southern Hardin County. This program previously served the South end of the county for 8 weeks out of each year. Due to Geer Grant funding, we were able to hire a full-time Parent Educator to provide early intervention including

kindergarten readiness skills, socialization and concrete learning tools. Hiring a full time parent educator allowed for us to increase services from 8 weeks out of the year to over 44 weeks each year. This allowed for over 400 opportunities for families to engage in activities, classes, field trips, etc. with their children 0-5 years old.



216

*children 0-5 participated in at least 1 program or event*

50

*kids are now attending Cradle School each week therefore obtaining valuable skills for kindergarten readiness*



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



160

Caregivers attended classes

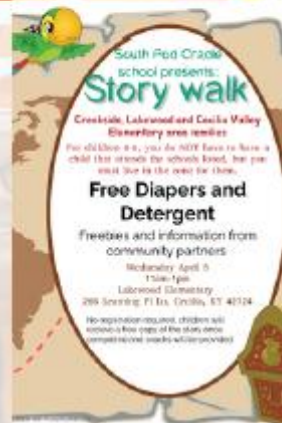


120

Transition to school kits provided to children



The 4 Child Find Events allowed us to identify an additional 28 children 0-5 years of age who could benefit from the parent-child education provided by Cradle School, virtual packets, community partners and other aspects of the program. Each family who participated in the Story Walk events were provided a pack of diapers, wipes and detergent. Community partners in attendance also educated the families about services that may benefit the children and families.



Get Ready! Camp

Get Ready! Camp was sponsored for 2 summers by the Geer Grant in the Southern part of the county. This was the first time this program has been offered to families in this area.



97

monthly at-home activity bags were given out the first two weeks after implementing the program.

Teachers were specifically asked about students who regularly participated in Cradle School classes who transitioned into Kindergarten. Teachers report that 00% of these students were academically, socially and cognitively more advanced than their peers.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to serve our families and children in southern Hardin County in such a meaningful and impactful way.

Check us out on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/hcscradlesouthpod>





### Parent Success Letter

"Cradle School is something I knew existed, but had no idea what it was. Last year, I went to Laugh & Learn at the Hardin County Extension Office because a friend invited me. It was there that I really learned from Stephanie what Cradle School is. Unfortunately, my son was getting ready to have surgery and I was going to have a baby right after, so going to a school setting just wasn't possible.

The virtual packets were absolutely amazing! We picked them up each week from Cecilia Valley. My son and the kids I babysit had a great time doing all the different activities! They were easy enough that the youngest one could participate, but as my son's 2 year old vocabulary grew, he was able to talk more and more as we did them. His favorites were anything with stickers and anything using the dot markers!

Having the virtual packets at home allowed us to work on the skills that I sometimes just don't want to deal with, such as cutting, gluing, and painting. It allowed for less mess because I knew all the materials I needed were right there! The supply boxes we got at the beginning of the year keep it all organized and help me know that he is getting exposure to so many skills!

This year, we have begun attending in person Cradle School. To say I was impressed is an understatement. I absolutely adore going to Cradle School. Stephanie is so organized, encouraging, and helpful! She truly has thought of everything! My son loves the center activities. He's in the phase of pointing out toys we have at home, but at Cradle School he quickly moves on to playing with new things. There are so many options and they encourage his pretend play. He especially loves the tool bench and anything with balls!

He loves songs and books, so circle time is a great organized activity for him! The songs we do are ones he sings all week! The activities are always prepared so that it is easy for me to work with him at his level. He loves to cut and glue right now, so he enjoys all of those kinds of activities we do. I love that almost every week we do something with paint because it gives him the experience without the mess at home! Also, I was surprised that we have a snack while there, but he loves that! I love it because it allows us to get home for lunch without any fuss! My son loves reading, but I know it can be hard for most kids to sit quietly. Doing read alouds during snack time is such a great idea and is a great way to wrap up the day.

I tell everyone about Cradle School! Last year, I raved about the virtual packet option and how great it was. Now, I keep talking about how great both options are! I very much appreciate the flexibility that Stephanie offers. We are foster parents, so we have to be flexible with what we do a lot of the time. The way she allows us to pick whatever day works best that week to attend in person or sign up for virtual packets the week prior is exactly what my family needs. This is a great resource for the community!"

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Operation Care Family Resource Center – Olive Hill Elementary

#### Carter County

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The Operation Care Family Resource Center at Olive Hill Elementary School serves children and families in the town of Olive Hill in Carter County, Kentucky. Over the past few years, our country and its communities have been devastated by the novel coronavirus. COVID 19 has also depleted kindergarten readiness, social emotional readiness in children, and parent and family connection and education.

In response to the growing requests from our contacts that 3-4 aged children were unprepared for pre-school because of lack of socialization due to the COVID-19 crisis the FRC created the Mini School program. The program was initially planned for August 2020 but began in the spring of 2021 due to health and safety regulations from the Kentucky Department of Health and our local health department. The program curriculum was designed by the FRC Coordinator, and its implementation relied upon volunteers. The Mini School pilot program began in the spring of 2021, and we held Mini School for the remaining eight weeks of the school year. The twelve children sat in the floor of the FRC for an hour of Mini School two days a week. We used items we had on hand and other items the FRC director paid for personally for our Mini School class. Our program had a waiting list and we did not have the capacity to allow more than 12 students at a time. The pilot program of our Mini School maximized a child's early educational experiences before preschool or kindergarten. The learning objectives of the curriculum are aligned with Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards and include child-directed activities that address language & literacy, math, science, social-emotional, and physical development.

We applied for and was awarded the GEER II grant for Early Childhood Education in 2021. Our Early Childhood Education program included an expansion of our pilot Mini School program, aimed at getting children Pre-School/Kindergarten ready and the development of a Family Education Program which includes Kindermusik. This allows our FRC to boost the efficiency, quality, and coordination of our early childhood education system as well as offer educational resources for the families in our community. This funding allowed us to purchase hands on early childhood classroom materials from Lakeshore and hire part time employees. The FRC director worked closely with the Early Childhood coordinator to expand our curriculum. We were able to purchase tables and chairs and host in a classroom separate from the FRC. We had two separate sessions of Mini School for 1 ½ hours each time with 10-12 students in each session, therefore reaching up to 24 students. (These numbers constitute almost one future preschool classroom size). We met on Tuesday and Thursday of each week.

To make the program more appealing and further enhance the early childhood components, we offered a unique opportunity for parents to bond with their children through Kindermusik – a program for parents and children to spend time together with music and movement! We offered Kindermusik from birth to 4 years of age, and birth up to 3 years of age is a joint session with parents and children. We held sessions for our students in Mini School each week as well as both preschool classes and two local

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

daycare/early learning centers. Kindermusik “develops the essential listening, early literacy, and social-emotional skills students need to succeed in school – either boosting these skills beyond grade-level in typically developing children or remediating them in children who are at-risk learners or who have developmental or language delays. Further, “Early, positive, age-appropriate experiences with music—like Kindermusik®—can have a remarkable and research-proven impact on children’s learning, including language and literacy skills (e.g., vocabulary, comprehension, listening, and expression); social and emotional development; mathematics and pattern-recognition skills; and even the ability to plan, guide, and self-regulate behavior.” Our Early Childhood Coordinator led the sessions along with the childhood assistants following the official Kindermusik curriculum and all of our staff was trained by Kindermusik.

The Mini School program was a great success and highly complimented by the parents. We had morning carpet time with chart for letter of the day, weather, month and day of the week (just like in Preschool and Kindergarten), counting, Kindermusik, and superhero characters from Lakeshore to talk about manners. We used our Lakeshore hands on classroom materials to enforce our teaching each time. Our Mini School curriculum goes beyond the classroom materials. For example, we have studied the life cycle of chickens and hatched out chicks in an incubator in the classroom, life cycle of butterflies with the kit in the room and insects from the County Extension office, volcano experiments, Smokey the Bear, police and fire departments, etc. Our Family and Consumer Science agent spoke with the students about healthy eating and trying new foods. Our school nurse talked with them about germs and the equipment she uses to examine students. A local karate instructor spoke with the students about taking care of their bodies with exercise and karate. A 5<sup>th</sup> grade student was in his classes, and he showed different techniques to our Mini School students. Our Mini School students told their parents that evening that they had Ninjas in their class that day. We had guest readers come to read to the students. Books were purchased to go along with our topic of teaching and special occasions so they could build their own home library. We worked closely with community partners and agencies to bring their expertise to our Mini School classroom. This exposed the children to many different fields of study.

The preschool teacher recommended a parent to contact me about Mini School. Their child was struggling emotionally to stay at preschool on his days and usually went home early crying. He enrolled in Mini School and after a short tenure, he eagerly started running to our door for class. He still attended preschool in conjunction with our Mini School sessions which gave him additional educational experiences. His sister cried to attend Mini School and started at the age of 2. Before entering preschool, in addition to academics, the Mini School children are familiar with our school, hallway procedures, socialization and interaction with their peers. The children and parents are involved in our after-school events sponsored by the Family Resource Center.

I could go on and on about our Early Childhood program. I am so proud of the impact we have made on the children at an early age. I was blessed to hire employees that are as passionate about our programming as I am and that love working with children helping them to be prepared for a successful transition to school. I see former Mini School students

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

in the hallway and can see a big difference between them and non-Mini School students (no tears, confident in where they are going, etc.) We have had repeated phone calls wanting to know if we will be having Mini School and Kindermusik. Our Early Childhood programming has evolved into something extremely special to meet a great need for our children preparing them for school. So thankful for the GEER grant to allow us this great opportunity! We have been seeking funding to continue our wonderful programming. Our district was recently notified that we were one of the twenty districts awarded the Prichard Committee Community Schools Initiative grant. Olive Hill Elementary was included in the five-year grant as one of the two schools in the district to benefit from the grant. As more details are announced, we are hopefully that it will include our Early Childhood programming.

We used the Brigance Screening to monitor the progress of our students.

Student	3 yr old		4 yr old	4 yr old
	-1st	2nd		
Year 21-22				
LC	83	96	87.5	
AG	83	93	70	73
TB	89	97	59	88.5
WF	83	96	93.5	
MT	83	96	82.5	85.5
BW	81	95	82.5	82
AR	83	96	80.5	84.51
BS	81	84	69.5	83.5
BH	86		52.5, 65.5	94
Year 22-23				
MB	50	90		
S.Ba	93	100	87.5	
WS	74	90		
OP	92		56.5	86.5
S. Bu (she is 2)	85	100		
JH			60.5	78
NW			70.5	80.5
PS				
SV				
HB (she is 2)				
CK				



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### **I wanted to share some comments from our Mini School exit surveys on their graduation day:**

- Warren loved Mini school! It has really helped with his social skills. He also improved with colors, letters and behavior.
- Sadie has really enjoyed Mini School so much! Our child has had great progress. We feel that she is ready for preschool.
- Mini School has been amazing for my child. She loved it and learned so much! She will miss it so much.
- Jasper was very shy and took a long time before opening up and making friends. Now, he befriends other kids in no time.
- Wonderful program! This has been so beneficial for our child in his social and academic skills and has made him excited for preschool.
- Great program with great adults leading it! Highly recommend. Mini School is something our daughter looks forward to. She has learned a lot and really looks forward to going to school.
- Wonderful program! It is a need for our community and a huge benefit to the child's growth both academically and socially as they prepare for the transition to preschool.
- Wish the program was longer. Madden has grown so much in Mini School. The program helped him in so many aspects. Thank you all for everything.
- Would like a longer class. He had a lot of fun and grew a lot as a child.
- We love Mini School! This has been amazing for our daughter.
- This program has awakened an excitement for learning in my grandson! He has become more comfortable with his interaction with other children. I truly feel because of this program he is socially prepared for preschool.
- Mini School helped our shy sweet boy come out of his shell so much. We love Mini School as it helped to develop our child's social skills and learn so much at a young age. We give this program 100%.
- Please continue Mini School for the future. My child has had the chance to attend Mini School since its inception and we love it. He has grown so much with his social and academic skills. He looked forward to going to his school.
- Our child now looks forward to learning new things and has gained a lot of social skills.
- Mini School was a great experience for Caroline. She loved everything about it. This program will help my child tremendously in the years to come. I hope this is offered to every child.
- Some comments mentioned wanting the program to be longer on the meeting days. We can only work our part time employees 19 hours a week, otherwise anything over 19 and we have to pay benefits which would have used up most of our budget.

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION





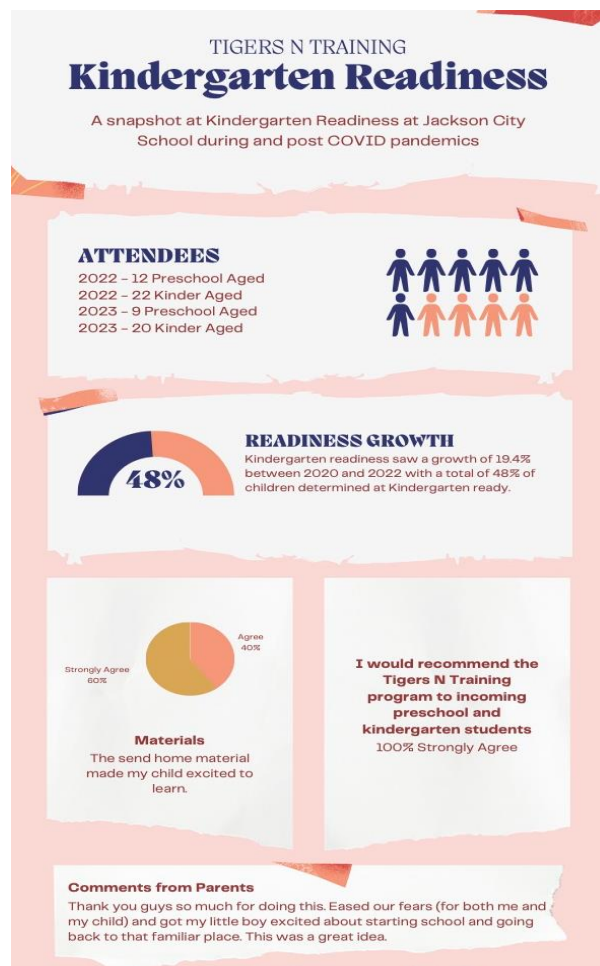
## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### Jackson City FRYSC

### Jackson Independent

#### Tigers N Training

Tigers N Training (TNT) - Summer Enrichment targets children aged two to four that are noted as at-risk of not being Kindergarten Ready. In June of 2022, children and their parents will come to camp together, where they will learn skills, discover strengths, share resources, and celebrate successes. Preschool and Kindergarten certified staff will implement the camp in a way that mimics a regular school day for the children. Staff will use evidence-based curriculum and will evaluate all aspects of the event through parent surveys, participation logs and skill/knowledge data analysis. This three-day camp will coincide with other summer enrichment happenings at the school, for families to have childcare while they participate at the end of the day. Select student leaders will serve as on-site babysitters for families with infants and young toddlers, to free up parents/caregivers to meet with instructors and receive “homework” that addresses the areas of need identified.



# CHILD CARE

## Center of Engagement FRYSC, Center of Empowerment FRYSC

### Nelson County

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As a direct result of GEER II funding, The Nelson County School District was able to accomplish many of its goals to offer, expand, and improve access to early intervention, high quality, full-day preschool within our local Nelson County communities. Prior to GEER II funding, we operated a half-day preschool for eligible 3-year-olds. The preschool was centralized in Bardstown. This centralized preschool (NC ELC) served all of the communities in Nelson County, including Boston, Bloomfield, and New Haven which are 20-30 minutes away from the location of the NC ELC. This resulted in requiring preschool aged children to ride a bus more than 30 minutes one way. The centralized preschool model also negatively impacted family engagement as families struggled to commute to the NC ELC for school events. We were able to serve approximately 187 students in this model.

As a direct result of GEER II funding, though, The Nelson County School district was able to not only offer full-day for 3-year-old children and 2-year-old children who meet low-income or disability/developmental delay thresholds matching KDE state-funded preschool requirements but decentralize our preschool by opening preschool classrooms in our 3 outlying communities. The changes that we made to our preschool model has had a number of positive implications. First, in the full-day preschool program we are able to offer wraparound childcare options. Not only does this aid working families by providing an affordable childcare option, but it also provides them with childcare to better align with their work schedules. Secondly, GEER II funds have enabled us to increase the capacity of the program to serve more children in Nelson County. With more preschool classrooms across the district, not only are there expanded opportunities and access to high quality, full day preschooling, but those students are also able to stay in their local communities to engage with their preschool. We are currently able to serve approximately 260 students in this decentralized model. By expanding capacity, we have been able to significantly increase the number of students who are kindergarten ready. Prior to GEER II funding our Kindergarten readiness was at 46% (Brigance data, 19-20 school year). For the 21-22 school year, Kindergarten readiness for students increased to 51% (Brigance data, 21-22 school year). This increase is reflective of our ability to recruit and serve more preschool aged students. Lastly, owing to the fact that our preschools are now embedded in local communities, we are seeing a significant increase in family engagement. By shortening the commute necessary to attend school events, we were able to support families by increasing access and opportunity to family engagement and parent skill building events. During the 2022-2023 school year, we had 97% of our preschool families attend our community table

## CHILDCARE

meetings! We have seen improved family/school communication and cooperation due to this change.

Other Relevant Data:

2022-2023 School Year

Competency	Domain Alignment	% of Students demonstrating mastery
Creator	Aligns with Cognitive Skills Domain	73%
Collaborator	Aligns with Social Skills Domain	90%
Connector	Aligns with Motor Skills Domain	91%
Caretaker	Aligns with Adaptive Skills Domain	94%
Communicator	Aligns with Communication Skills Domain	86%

## CHILDCARE

### Evaluation of Goals:

Indicator and Corresponding Project Activity	Baseline Data*	Target Outcome	Timeline for Measurement	Responsible Party	END OF PROJECT DATA SEPTEMBER 2023
<i>Non-academic enrollment comparison of the total number of enrolled two- and three-year olds enrolled in full day preschool (Project Activity 1)</i>	No students enrolled for a full-day	54 students enrolled for a full-day	September 1, 2023	District Preschool Director	108 students enrolled for a full-day
<i>Interventions resulting in change in personal/ family situation - available hours of daily formal preschool instruction (Project Activity 1)</i>	3 hours/day	6 hours/day	September 1, 2021	DPP	6 hours/day
<i>Enrollment comparison of the percentage of students entering Kindergarten from the district's preschool program (Project Activity 1)</i>	52.5% (May 2020 data)	57.50%	September 1, 2023	DPP	58% (May 2022 data)
<i>Academic comparison of the percentage of K ready students based on Brigance data (Project Activity 1)</i>	0% at BES 10.7% at FHES 6.5% at Cox's Creek (May 2020 data)	10% increase in K-readiness	September 1, 2023	DAC	41% at BES 36% at FHES 50% at Cox's Creek (May 2022 data)
<i>Enrollment comparison of the number of low income or disabled 2 or 3-year-old children utilizing the wrap-around childcare option (Project Activity 2)</i>	No option is currently available	20 students annually	May 2023	District Childcare Director	60 students
<i>Interventions resulting in change in parent confidence levels on a survey of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors following participation parent education activities (Project Activity 3)</i>	Baseline survey administered to participant families by September 1 of each project year	50% increase in parent self-efficacy ratings aligned to the protective factors	Annual assessment administered in April 2022 and 2023	FRYSC	91%



# CHILDCARE

<p><i>Post-survey data of satisfaction of individual family involvement activities and project components upon completion of individual sessions. (Project Activity 3)</i></p>	<p>Satisfaction with each family event or activity will be measured with participants rating specific criteria aligned to the targeted protective factors</p>	<p>Average satisfaction rating of 3 or above using a 4-point rating scale on participant surveys</p>	<p>Administered at the conclusion of each event or session</p>	<p>FRYSC</p>	<p>93%</p>
<p><i>Creation of a new school or community resource through Partner Activities (Project Activity 4)</i></p>	<p>To be determined from FRYSC annual data entered in Infinite Campus data as of June 2021</p>	<p>20% increase in baseline number/rate</p>	<p>May 2023</p>	<p>FRYSC</p>	<p>increased by 4 partnerships</p>
<p><i>Intervention resulting in change in family participation types of and participation in recruitment activities (Project Activity 5)</i></p>	<p>Current methods limited to newspaper, Child Find, word-of mouth</p>	<p>3 new recruitment strategies + 100 families attend in-person events</p>	<p>August 2023</p>	<p>FRYSC/Preschool Principal</p>	<p>Social media, you tube videos, open house, universal screening partnership with headstart, and community events--WHAS Bunny Bash Fundraiser 199 families</p>
<p><i>Non-academic comparison of the percentage of families participating in five individual family meetings annually to complete progress monitoring and a family needs assessment (Project Activity 6)</i></p>	<p>Baseline data will be taken from FRYSC-documented attendance and participation records in</p>	<p>The parents of 85% of participating children will participate in five</p>	<p>Annual Data collection in May 2022 and May 2023</p>	<p>Preschool Principal</p>	<p>The parents of 97% of participating children participated in five or more individual family meetings per</p>
	<p>September of each academic year</p>	<p>or more individual family meetings per year</p>			<p>year.</p>

## CHILDCARE

### Fairview Family Resource and Youth Service Center

#### Fairview Independent

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#### Excelling Eagles Program – After School Childcare

The assessment we used for early childhood, children ages three to five, is the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment. This is an authentic, on-going, observation-based assessment system that focuses on early childhood developmental skills, including pre-literacy skills. When looking at performance data for the three-year-old population, there is an increase from 76% to 85% proficiency in literacy in the fall of 2019 to the winter of 2020. Additionally, there is an increase from 57% to 74% proficiency in literacy from the fall of 2019 to the winter of 2020. While these numbers were a great improvement, they are representative of a very small population. Of the 386 children under the age of 5 living in the Westwood community, our preschool currently serves 50 students. The data confirmed that there is certainly a need in our school district for a program of this caliber that can bridge the gap for our students and parents in childcare, academic support, enrichment activities, and mental health services. Though they were previously present, as some of these surveys from 2018 show, COVID19 has magnified each of them. The need has grown while the available resources have decreased due to necessary restrictions on capacity and availability. We hope to provide the answer through the funds acquired from the GEER II Funding. With Westwood's poverty level being at more than 20% of the population, outside financial support must occur for this program to thrive. Without the funding from the GEER II, the vast majority of our students will continue to fall further behind, never making the academic or social advancements of same-age peers in surrounding areas. In looking at growth for the 20-21 school year on iReady, all grade levels scored at 50% proficiency or below in reading with the exception of kindergarten students in math. When examining district data, it was evident that there had not been any true growth in our students' proficiency.

After intervention, iReady DATA shows an increase at 59% Proficient in reading and 55% proficient in Math.

# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Future Stars Family Resource Center

Henderson County

## Program Outline

The GEERS program has become an integral part of our school program and successes. While we are sad that our grant has ended, we are very pleased with the progress we were able to make in the short time the grant was awarded. Future Stars Family Resource center utilized these grant funds to hire a Program Assistant II to assist in administration of the programs and initiatives that we needed to implement to help students grow. With the COVID-19 pandemic, we were seeing decline in social emotional skills in students starting preschool and knew we needed a program to guide students on the right track. The following is a list of programs and initiatives that were implemented because of the GEERS II grant:

Program	Description
Mindful Minutes	Daily announcements were made to all classrooms that included a mindfulness activity. These activities could include deep breathing, yoga poses, affirmations or activities to dedicate time to mindfulness.
Mindful Meetings	Social Emotional small groups of students that were identified through teacher referral, E-DECA “pre” scores, teaching strategies gold, ASQ or other means of referral. Students were pulled for small groups up to three times per week for additional supports and lesson on social emotional skills.
Check and Connect	FRC staff would meet individually with students who were identified as needing additional support or were not functioning within the Mindful Meeting group. These students were provided one-on-one instruction to help the student build strong social emotional skills.
SEL Library	A SEL library of material for parents and teachers to utilize was created. Some items available in the library include: flexible seating, visuals, daily schedules, sand timers, time timers, fidgets, and calming space items.
Trauma Sensitive Environment	The Trauma Informed care team meets regularly to make sure our center is a school that focuses on being trauma sensitive. We implemented covering on windows, softer lighting in some areas and expanded our sensory rooms and spaces.
Professional Development Training	Professional Development training was provided to FRC staff and extended to teachers and other certified and classified staff in our center. These training include Darkness to Light, Child fatality training, national conferences, state conferences and Conscious Discipline training.
Curriculum	MindUP curriculum and resources were provided to all teachers. Some teachers also were trained on the AI’s Pals curriculum that has been implemented into some classrooms. Teachers were also provided with

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

	some Conscious Discipline materials and curriculum pieces to help assist with de-escalation.
Family Events/Parent Engagement	While our center has always provided family events, these grant funds allowed us to extend our offerings. Parents and students were provided with many Family and Parent engagement opportunities throughout the course of this grant. All family events at our center incorporated a social emotional activity into the event.

### Program Impact Data

#### School-wide Initiatives

School-wide initiatives including mindful minutes, Trauma Sensitive Environment, Curriculum, access to quality family events and PBIS awards serviced a total of 934 students.

(Year 1: 452 and Year 2: 482)

#### Mindful Meetings

Total of 59 Students were serviced.

(Year 1: 28 students, Year 2: 31 students)

Students were evaluated using the e-DECA assessment and Teaching Strategies GOLD data. The ASQ was also utilized, but due to the large volume of data, the teachers utilized the ASQ to make referrals to the program and it wasn't factored into overall data. The number of overall behavior incidents was also monitored.

#### Year 1: e-DECA (5 area assessment)

29 students were assessed.

*The number presented below is the number of students that showed growth and ended the year in the typical/strength range in each area.*

**Initiative:** 93% or 27 students

**Self-Regulation:** 97% or 28 students

**Relationships:** 97% or 28 students

**Total Protective Factors:** 97% or 28 students

**Behavior Concern:** 93% or 27 students

#### Year 2: e-DECA (5 area assessment)

31 students were assessed, 1 student moved and did not have post scores to be evaluated.

*The number presented below is the number of students that showed growth and ended the year in the typical/strength range in each area.*

**Initiative:** 94% or 29 students

**Self-Regulation:** 90% or 28 students

**Relationships:** 94% or 29 students

**Total Protective Factors:** 90% or 28 students

**Behavior Concern:** 94% or 29 students

# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

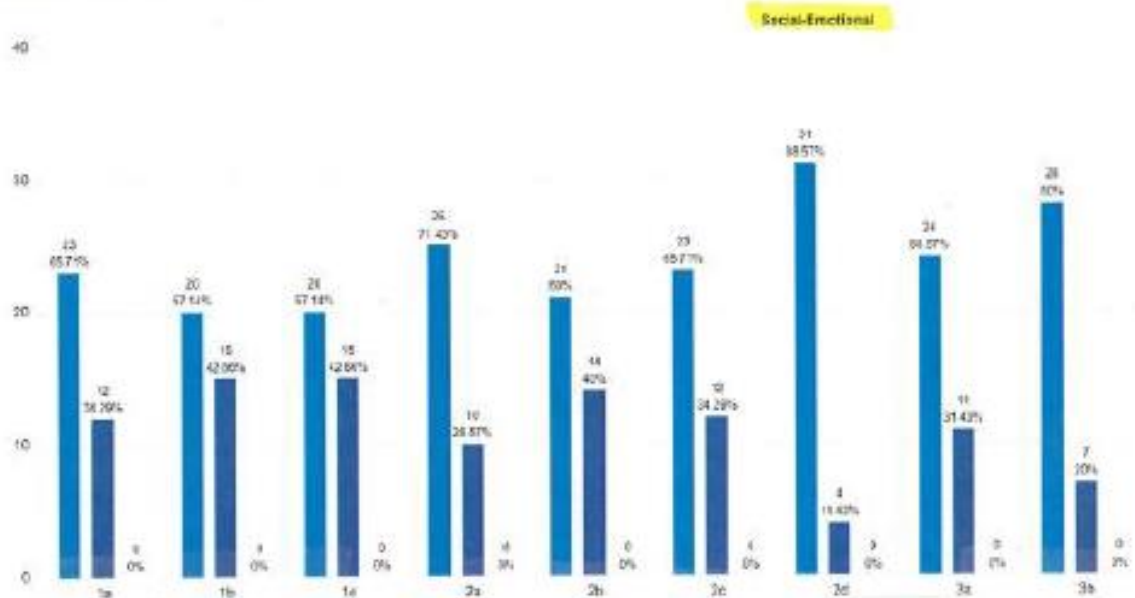
## Year 2: Teaching Strategies Gold Data

During the Fall of 2022, only 3% of students were meeting or exceeding the social/emotional benchmarks. In the spring of 2023, 93.9% of students were meeting or exceeding the social/emotional benchmark.

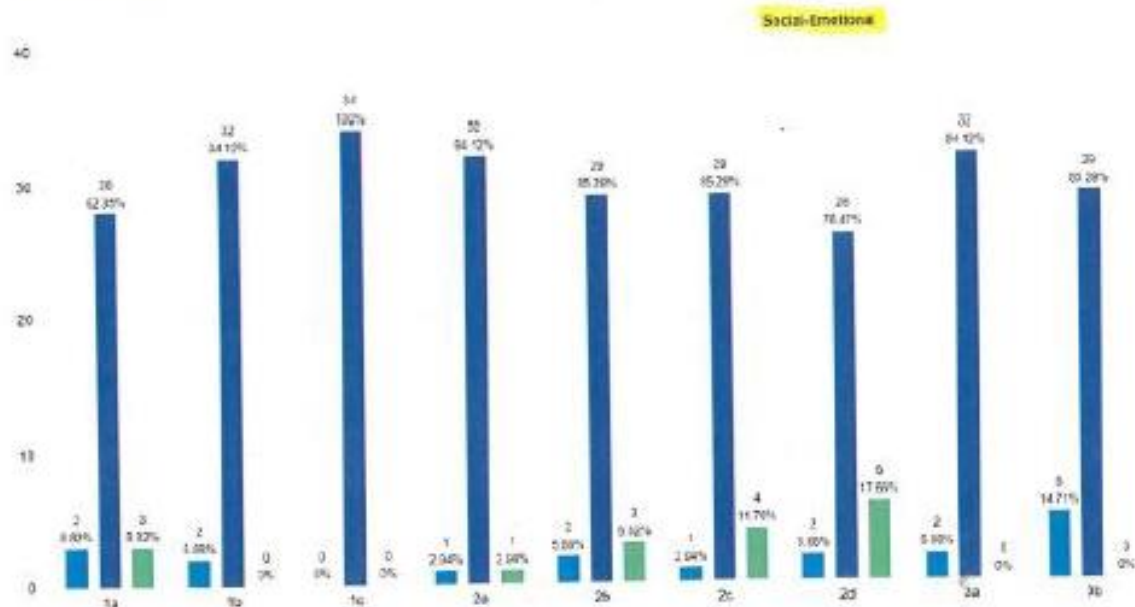


Kentucky Department of Education - Thelma B Johnson Early Learning Center

Fall 2022/2023 - Widely Held Expectations



Spring 2023/2024 - Widely Held Expectations



(Teaching Strategies GOLD Social-emotional data broken down by objective)



# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

## Teacher Resources

Teacher Resources such as SEL Library, Professional Development Training and access to curriculum has helped a total of 52 teachers. (Year 1: 25 and Year 2: 27)

## Access to Childcare

A total of 21 students were serviced.  
(Year1: 10 and Year 2: 11)

Students who were identified to participate in Mindful Meetings, were also given the opportunity to meet with FRC staff to access if additional childcare/preschool services were needed. Students that were identified as needing additional care were provided with opportunities to apply for Audubon Area HeadStart, enroll in our Little Stars Childcare or participate in our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning program. All of these programs provide an additional 2 days per week of preschool or childcare instruction.

## Check and Connect

A total of 14 students were serviced.  
(Year 1: 5 and Year 2: 9)

Pictures from the 2021-2022 School Year:



Delivering Kindness boxes on World Kindness Day!



Playing cooperative board games!

Pictures from the 2022-2023 School Year:



Koda practicing Mindfulness!!



Friday Play and Learn that incorporates social-emotional learning for students' birth to age 5.



Practicing teamwork during Mindful Meetings.



Example of a safe place that was incorporated in classrooms.



A student practicing Empathy during Mindful Meetings.



Ms. Emily reading to a group during Mindful Meetings.



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Holmes Middle School Youth Service Center

Henderson Independent

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### Survive and Thrive Summer Camp 2023

#### Final Report

#### Program Overview

The 2023 Survive and Thrive summer program served 27 children ages 5-17. The children were from various counties in the Northern Kentucky area (Boone, Kenton, Campbell, and Pendleton). The majority of the children reportedly reside in homes considered to be of “lower socioeconomic status” (for example over half of the families participating in the 2023 camp were self-reported as households with a total income of less than forty thousand dollars and with multiple family members to care for). All children served by the 2023 camp were identified by family members, school personnel or mental health service providers as “needing a more intensive summer program in order to meet their higher level of emotional and behavioral needs”. A majority of the camp attendees had been diagnosed with some form of mental health issue (ADHD, Mood Disorder, Anxiety, Depression, etc.), while others were struggling with adjustment to some life and/or family transition and/or trauma (death of a parent, sexual abuse, legal testimony, parental divorce, parental incarceration, living under guardianship of grandparents or foster parents, etc.).

**Program Location:** Holy Trinity School in Newport, Kentucky has served as the location for the Survive and Thrive summer program since 2014. The school building presents a good location for easy transportation for all residents of northern Kentucky. The building structure provides adequate space for physical activities (indoor and outdoor), large group structured events, learning opportunities in group-friendly classrooms, privacy areas for small group and individual counseling, a fully functional kitchen for lunch / snack, and multiple settings to accommodate guest speakers.

#### Therapeutic Components

##### Daily Point System:

A detailed point system was implemented daily in order to motivate and reward the children for positive behaviors. Each team of campers recorded points earned on an hourly basis and rewards were given at the end of each day to all of those who reached their daily point goal. A weekly reward (gift card) was awarded to the camper with the most points for the week. This system allows for individual and team goals and rewards are awarded accordingly. This has been an effective way to guide the children toward recognizing that consequences (both positive and negative) are within their control through their behavior and choices. The second week of camp allows for development of more individualized camper goals to meet the specific needs of each child. For example, we had a few children that struggled significantly with impulsive behaviors (exhibiting a severe lack of volume control with their voice, walking ahead of their team, not honoring boundaries both physical and personal, etc.) throughout the first week of camp attendance, so their point system was altered during the second and third weeks of camp to incorporate these behaviors in addition to the baseline of camp-wide expected

## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

behaviors. At the end of camp these particular youngsters were reported by the staff to be some of the most improved campers of the program. They were able to accept redirections more appropriately, they became more aware of their behaviors and how they affected others, and showed a significant increase in honoring boundaries.

### **Group Counseling:**

All children attended age-appropriate, psycho-educational groups at least two times per week with various topics focusing on issues such as bullying, relationships, family dynamics, career aspirations, identity, emotional regulation, responsibility, social skills / manners, drug and alcohol education (where appropriate), boundaries, and stranger / internet safety. Personal responsibility as well as the importance of working positively with others, were themes threaded through all group counseling activities.

### **Individual Counseling:**

Individual goals were established for each child early in the camp process based on information provided in referral reports contained in the pre-camp referral packets for campers. Information was gathered via written reports provided by camper parents/guardians as well as provided by counseling agencies and schools working with individual children. Counseling was available within the camp schedule to all children in several ways: (a) regular daily progress checks when necessary, (b) weekly reviews of individual progress towards established goals, (c) crisis intervention when needed; and (d) family intervention and follow-up throughout camp.

Several campers were identified as needing more intensive counseling. Their respective therapist(s) from MEBS Counseling came in 1-2 times per week to provide this service.

### **Camp / Program Themes:**

Program administrators have built this program with specific directions and objectives in mind for individual children. The camp experience contains an overall element of “fun” and coordinators have continuously woven this into the curriculum while primarily addressing personal improvement. This personal improvement is attained through the camp structure which emphasizes the personal qualities of: showing respect to others, being responsible for themselves, helping others, building positive relationships with others, working together with others, and making healthy decisions. All camp staff are trained on methods to infuse these qualities into the variety of camp activities that take place during the course of the program. All camp activities are built on the ideas of teaching responsibility, respect, good choices, and having fun. On a daily basis an observer would frequently hear activities ending with prompts from staff such as “Tell me what you learned from that activity?”, “Why do you think we had that activity on the schedule?”, or “What skills are we working on with this activity?”. There is also an



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

effort to “connect” lessons from camp activities to other aspects of the youngsters’ lives (such as family issues, social relationships with friends, activities at school, etc.).

### Activities and Events

Each day of program begins with “team time” where each team meets with their assigned staff member(s) to review the daily schedule as well as the point system plan. It is important to maintain structure and organized activities for the children served. These early morning camp activities are used to highlight a specific theme / skill which will then serve as the focal point for learning activities throughout the remainder of that camp day. Some of the activities included daily fitness work (organized games, baking, stretching, nutritional education, etc.), structured group games, directed arts / crafts activities, reading / research projects, etc.

This is followed by a structured facilitated group exercise session. This allows the children to get physical exercise while participating in a structured, socialized activity. The importance of physical fitness is discussed throughout the course of the Survive and Thrive camp as well as lessons connecting one’s physical fitness to their ongoing mental development / functioning.

### Guest Speakers:

Each year Survive and Thrive invites guests to come and interact with the children as well as offer career insight. This year we had the following guests attend:

- A. 2 local, current musicians visited, interacted and sang with the kids for over 2 hours. They enjoyed hearing their stories, listening to the music and getting the chance to come up and sing along.
- B. A local police officer came and talked to the kids about his role as a police officer. Several of the children we serve (at least half, based on the statistics we review at the programs onset) have had some first-hand experience with a police officer (typically a family member experiencing a domestic violence or substance use issue) or have had a run in with the legal system or are very close with someone who has. This experience was helpful for the children to understand the role of a police officer in the community and how they are here to serve and protect individuals within the community. There were two children who have had negative experiences with the police and were somewhat fearful of the police officer at first. Luckily, he was able to connect with those children and they ended up having a positive interaction with him and gained a better understanding of his role.

## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **Team Led Activities:**

The program also places emphasis on young people developing leadership skills. Each camp group is given responsibility for working together with their teammates to create, organize, and eventually lead an activity period involving ALL CAMPERS during the camp process. Sample activities organized by the 2023 Summer Camp groups included making “slime”, a cookie decoration contest, and working together to paint a team picture with everyone contributing.

Individual and team goals were established for each activity and rewards were provided to all cooperative participants. These camp-wide games/activities contributed to the development of cooperation and logical problem-solving skills in all campers and seemed to promote a sense of self-confidence and an increased ability to encourage and support others in many individual campers when placed in positions of leadership.

### **Community Outings:**

It is important to note that a significant part of the summer program includes involvement and interaction with the surrounding community. In addition to daily camp activities many of the learning activities emphasize the importance of learning communication and behavioral skills to be applied outside of the camp environment. Special activities were scheduled within the community including: (a) a day spent at Sugar Ridge farm; (b) three afternoons of whole-camp swimming at a community pool, (c) an entire camp day outing to Kincaid Lake State Park which consisted of structured educational nature hikes and an organized “scavenger hunt” designed to improve social awareness and nature knowledge; and (d) a camp-wide outing to the Cincinnati Zoo as a culmination of the program.

### **Service Learning / Gratitude / Personal Responsibility:**

As a part of the emphasis on personal improvement and responsibility, there was focus placed on developing a sense of “community service”. This included a landscaping activity completed by all campers to benefit the exterior beautification of the church / school grounds where the program was housed. The campers learned not only the importance of taking care of their environment by not littering but the many positive purposes they serve to the landscape along with developing a general sense of “giving to others” as a form of gratitude.

Other areas encouraging personal responsibility were elicited by each team taking a turn prepping before and cleaning up after lunch, ongoing expectations to clean up after themselves, and a detailed conversation related to personal hygiene (each camper was also given a bag of hygiene products including toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.).

### **Philanthropic / “Giving Back” Component:**

Another area of emphasis for Survive and Thrive has been the concept of reaching out to help others as people have helped you! We encourage this concept with many of our



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

campers as well as other children within the community. Every year since 2005, we have been assisted in some way from a volunteer or volunteers within the program. Once again, we were very fortunate to receive time spanning the entire length of the program from college students who were seeking to simply “help others” and offer their time! They were an integral part of the program sharing their experiences with overcoming challenges and interacting within the teams to provide support and directives.

Additionally, one of our campers who has participated in the program for several years led an activity to help the other campers make their own “stress bottle”. When this young man first came to Survive & Thrive, he did not speak and became tearful multiple times a day, especially when his anxiety became too intense. He has progressed more than we could have ever imagined and will be going away to college next year. He asked if he could do a video interview to tell others how this camp has “changed his life”. It was nothing short of amazing to hear his words. This video is currently being edited, and will be posted to our Facebook page upon completion.

### *Pre-and Post-Testing Measures*

In order to collect clinical data along with demographics on the children, caregivers and children were asked to complete two measures of child emotional functioning (pre-camp and post-camp). Valid and reliable data was collected across 23 campers including structured feedback from parents / guardians of all 23 campers (4 either completed pre-camp measures or post-camp measures, but not both). Data was collected through completion of a 24-item non-normed, non-standardized questionnaire created specifically to match the content of the curriculum utilized by camp staff. The 24-items from the scale were designed to measure functioning across six broad behavioral domains: happiness / depression, self-control / self-awareness, self-esteem / confidence, friendship / relationship skills, anger recognition / emotional control, and cooperation / accepting directions. The questions / statements on the scale utilize a five-point Likert rating system for scoring. For purposes of data collection specific to the impact of the Survive & Thrive Camp the focus will be on the general impact of the camp experience as measured by the overall scores for each camper as well as across the scores for each of the six domains. Raw data is available for review, and below is a sample of the collected data at the end of the 2023 camp program.

### Items from the child / adolescent questionnaires:

- OVERALL - 66 % reported positive change
- Happiness/Depression – 63% reported positive change
- Self-Control/Awareness – 74% reported positive change
- Self-Concept/Confidence – 70% reported positive change
- Friendship/Relationships – 82% reported positive change
- Anger Recognition/Control – 74% reported positive change
- Cooperation/Accepting Direction – 63% reported positive change

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

### Items from the caregiver questionnaires:

- OVERALL – 81% reported positive change
- Happiness/Depression – 81% reported positive change
- Self-Control/Awareness – 74% reported positive change
- Self-Concept/Confidence – 74% reported positive change
- Friendship/Relationships – 85% reported positive change
- Anger Recognition/Control – 67% reported positive change
- Cooperation/Accepting Direction – 74% reported positive change

To summarize, there is solid data showing positive effects of the program overall from the perspective of the majority of campers as well as from the report of many parents / guardians. It is challenging to show statistically significant data related to a short-term intervention (3 weeks), however, there were several scales that did show strong trends of improvement in most areas, which would be considered “clinically significant”, and the scales from the caregiver questionnaire reflected a statistically significant improvement.

### *Child and Caregiver Testimonials*

Anecdotal reports taken from the general survey completed by all 23 campers near the conclusion of the 2023 Survive & Thrive Summer Program provided some interesting and very positive evidence of the impact of the camp experience. See examples below:

“My favorite thing was learning to cooperate with other people and making a new best friend.”

Karlee

“My favorite thing was hanging out with team leaders.”

Jaaziah

“I liked the field trips to Kincaid, the Zoo, and when we went swimming.”

Devin

“What I like about camp is that friends and my team leaders could be helpful.”

Jocelyn

“I learned at least one thing at camp – how to make chocolate pie. I liked when we went swimming. I liked when had make-up day with our leaders.”

Jaydalynn

“I love the Kincaid Lake, Sugar Ridge Farm, and the Zoo. I like the lunches. I want to have more gym time, and make pies, and I love to go swimming.”

Ahmaad



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

“I liked the group activities and I don’t think there is anything (about camp) that I disliked.”

Andrew

“I liked helping with the younger kids and team leaders.”

Madison

“I liked having a chance to make friends and go on all the outings.”

Zoe

“I like doing groups and fixing other people’s hair. I like the bathing suit they gave me because I didn’t have one.”

Maria

Anecdotal reports taken from the general survey completed by all 23 parent / guardians near the conclusion of the 2023 Survive & Thrive Summer Program provided some interesting and very positive evidence of the impact of the camp experience from the parent perspective.

“My son came home on the first day so excited! He had to tell me in order everything he did. He was positive about things. J doesn’t usually show much positivity, but since attending the camp he has been improving at home with his behavior and limited yelling. The other day after J and I had a disagreement he came to me trying to resolve it and I could tell he was using methods learned at camp.”

Survive & Thrive creates a positive environment teaching my child how to interact with others. It was very helpful for him as his social skills needs much work. This year he made another new friend and how excited he is when speaking about his new friend. Attending Survive & Thrive helps give him the tools to overcome or how to deal with issues when they may arise.”

“Great with children when they have made bad choices, also when they haven’t. Privileged to have had this opportunity with such great people running the program. My kid greatly needed it.”

“My child loves camp! She looks forward to it every year. She loves all the activities and the camp counselors. They help the children so much and have fun while doing it!”

“My grandson absolutely loved this program. I have never seen him more positive about wanting to get up every day and look forward to a day of fun and enjoyment. The entire staff and program was awesome.”

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

"I think this is a terrific program and I think A. enjoyed and learned from this program. Hope he can attend next year."

"This was my son's first year and time attending any type of camp and by far the best experience he had. When I picked him up we would talk on our way home and his face lit up with what went on for that day. I told him that I was going to hang on to the information about the program so he could attend next year."

"I have noticed a dramatic change in his behavior since the beginning of the summer. He has been acting a lot more respectful and helping out a lot more. He really enjoyed having other children to play with. Everyone was so nice from the moment we first came to orientation, until the very last day of camp. He said the counselors were very friendly and he considers them his best friends. He really looks up to them.

"My grandson enjoyed all of the activities with the Zoo being a bonus. He enjoyed being able to cook and make crafts (painting and slime). He speaks highly of his counselors and is already asking if he can go back next year."

### Conclusion

Survive and Thrive has positively affected hundreds of children and families since the onset of the program in 2005, as shown in all previous program reports. We offer a more structured, therapeutic and recreational program than other traditional summer camps in order to meet the higher level of need in the identified children. Our program also provides one of the most highly trained professional staffs of any summer camp available. We work throughout the year to follow up on the children and schedule seasonal group outings to maintain connections with families. We believe this is a very special program and hope to continue this movement for many years to come.

# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

## Sandersville/Meadowthorpe Family Resource Center

### Fayette County

#### Small Groups—BEST grief school groups

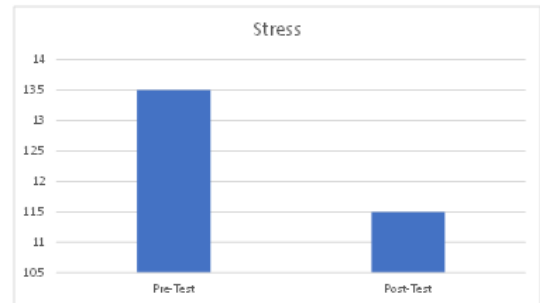
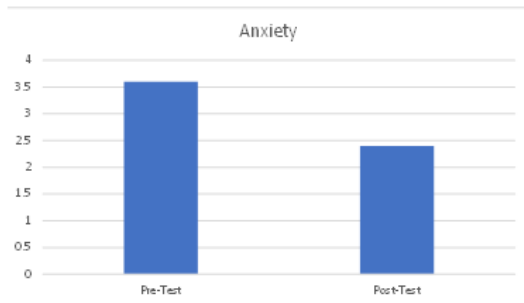
The FRC partnered with the KY Center for Grieving Children and Families to provide a variety of grief support services to families and students utilizing the GEER II grant. Two elementary schools, Sandersville and Meadowthorpe, identified students that had a significant death loss of an important person. During the 2022-2023 school year, 42 students each participated in a 10-week small grief support group facilitated by the KCGCF and utilizing the BEST curriculum, Being Each Other's Support Team. 25% of students lost parents or siblings and 75% lost family members. Illness, overdose, and gun violence are the top reasons for the death. Students connected with other children that have also had a loss, learned what feelings are common for those who have experienced loss and discussed how to express emotions in healthy ways. The groups promoted healing and hope and enabled better overall social-emotional health.

Two assessments (Perceived Stress Scale and the Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders-SCARED) given before the program show that the students had clinically significant levels of anxiety and stress.

At the end of the groups, the same two assessments (Perceived Stress Scale and SCARED) showed a significant decrease in stress (13.5 to 11.5) and anxiety (3.6 to 2.4).

Anxiety	Total
Pre-Test	3.6
Post-Test	2.4

Stress	Total
Pre-Test	13.5
Post-Test	11.5





## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **Summer Programming**

Students that had participated in small grief school groups took a summer field trip to Life Adventure Center for therapeutic activities focusing on grief support.



### **Family Fun Nights**

We partnered with the KCGCF to host seven Family Fun Nights during the two-year GEER II grant period inviting all grief school group families. The focus was on having families focus on positive ways to cope with grief and mental health and included a range of activities such as cardio-drumming, art therapy, music therapy, chair yoga and mindful breathing.



**\*Note: I have featured the program highlights for the two elementary schools. The school groups, trip to Life Adventure Center, and Family Nights were also implemented at Leestown Middle School per our project.**

## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **Morton Middle School Youth Service Center**

#### **Fayette County**

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#### **Morton Men of Integrity/Morton Women of Integrity**

Our grant was designed to focus on relationship building, mentoring, and tutoring for young students facilitated after school. The targeted population for this group was African American and Hispanic free and reduced lunch students with a combination of disciplinary referrals, failing grades, and a rise in mental health visits.

Morton had already established the Morton Men of Integrity (MMI) group, so the criteria for that group was duplicate and Morton Women of Integrity (MWI) was created. Each group consisted of 30 participants, coordinator and facilitators met with the group once a week to have dinner, tutoring, and mentoring. The group also met at least one Saturday a month to complete community service projects. The Youth Service Center (YSC) Coordinator assisted with coordinating meetings, providing meals, and collecting data.

Over the course of the two-year grant, the collected data resulted in the following: 31% increase in GPA for all students in the program. 65% decrease in office discipline referrals during the 2022-2023 school year. All participants completed over 115 hours of before and after school homework/study time. The students completed over 54 hours of “book club” reading time before and after school. Both programs completed over 62 hours of volunteering and outreach in the community project. A participant of MMI had the following to say about being a member:

“I am an 8th grade member of MMI. This is my first year in the group. I wanted to explain today how MMI has changed my life. Last year I had a GPA of 1.375. So far this year with being in MMI I have maintained a GPA of 3.0 and on track this semester to earn a 3.375. Last year I also had 10 behavior referrals. This year I only have 1 – AND I even tried to prevent it. My mentors in MMI have pushed me to step up and complete assignments on time and learn different study and life skills to help me succeed. Going on different service trips this year has taught me to be grateful for everything I have and not take everything for granted.”



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Eubank Elementary FRC, Shopville Elementary FRC, Northern Elementary FRC,  
Pulaski Elementary FRC

### Pulaski County

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## SUMMER READING/FEEDING BUS

### 1. Project Background and Description

*Prior to COVID-19 Pulaski County Schools provided a rigorous education for students at all levels and were consistently a high achieving district with all northern elementary schools scoring in the top 35% of the State. However, once the pandemic hit our students experienced a year of inconsistent educational instruction, heightened mental and physical health concerns, trauma, food-insecurity, and reduced socialization. From Winter of 2019 to Winter of 2021 there was an average decrease in reading scores of 19.75%. Pulaski FRC's are strongly rooted in community and have been a link between students/families and community support agencies working to meet the needs of families. Through funds from GEER II the FRC's worked to develop a Summer Reading/Feeding Bus route to provide meals and books to children in high poverty regions of our county.*

### 2. Project Need

*According to the Pulaski County School District's Report Card, the district has an overall 69% economically disadvantaged student population with Elementary students scoring on average 53% on reading scores. The Pulaski County FRC's worked to develop and create a Reading/Feeding Bus in the summer months to distribute books and food bags to regions within our county that experience high poverty rates.*

### 3. Implementation Plan

*The Transportation department at the Pulaski County Board of Education donated a school bus for the FRYSC's summer program. The removed all of the seats allowing FRC Coordinators to hang shelves on the bus walls for books. GEER II funds were used to pay for the cost of books as well as the cost of the transportation (driver, benefits, and mileage). The FRC's partnered with our Parents As Teachers Educator who was also able to provide books, allowing children to choose more than one book to keep. A partnership with organizations within the community (Oak Hill Baptist Church and Victory Christian Fellowship) provided free food bags to families as well. The bus went to different areas within the community and the FRCs collaborated with other community agencies delivering food to ensure that families were receiving additional food bags on alternate days that the Reading/Feeding Bus was off.*

### 4. Impact/Outcome of Project

*The GEER II grant was a two year grant.*

*The first summer in 2022, 627 families participated.*

*The second summer in 2023, 1,352 families participated. That is an increase of 46% from year 1 to year 2.*

# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

## 5. Continuation Plan

*The FRYSC's are working together to continue this service with the donated bus for our Transportation department and the donated books from our PAT Educator along with free food bags from community organizations. We are working closely with our district grant writer looking for additional funding to continue our efforts.*

## 6. A Look Into Our Summer Reading/Feeding Bus



Several of our FRYSC Coordinators



Student reading a book to a few of our Coordinators



Coordinators along with driver and books they passed out



Inside of our Reading/Feeding Bus



Coordinators on the bus

## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **Beaumont Middle School YSC and Paul Laurence Dunbar High School YSC**

#### **Fayette County**

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Beaumont Middle School and Paul Laurence Dunbar High School identified a need for grief support and partnered with the Kentucky Center for Grieving Children and Families to begin a two-year long peer support group led by a licensed therapist.

#### **Year ONE**

Through information gathered from parent surveys and school referrals 7 students were identified as having a need for services. Four of these students have lost a parent and three had lost a grandparent to a variety of causes including accidental death, cancer, and alcohol abuse. A survey was conducted prior to group sessions. The perceived stress scale showed a score of over 20 (showing clinically significant stress), the depression scale score was at almost 10 indicating moderate depression, and the anxiety score was at 9.5 indicating mild and almost moderate anxiety. \*Data was not collected by the coordinator at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School

Beaumont Middle partnered with the Kentucky Center for Grieving Children and Families to provide two peer support sessions at school for students. We served 7 students over the course of two 10-week sessions. Each session met for one hour. Students were also invited with their families to attend a variety of family nights throughout the year including art therapy night and music/fitness therapy. Families could also attend Zoom sessions for just adults that were offered in the evening.

Data collected at the end of the program indicated clinically significant change. The perceived stress scale score dropped from 20 to 16.5 (much closer to the 0-13 range for minimal stress than previously), the depression scale score dropped from 10 to 8 going from moderate to mild depression, and the anxiety score dropped one point from 9.5 to 8.5. \*Data was not collected by the coordinator at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School

#### **Year TWO**

Through information gathered from parent surveys and school referrals for year two of our grant, 13 students were identified as having a need for services.

Data collected for Beaumont Middle School indicated four of these students have lost a parent and three had lost a grandparent to a variety of causes including accidental death, cancer, and alcohol abuse. A survey was conducted prior to group sessions. The perceived stress scale showed a score of 15 (indicating moderate stress) and the anxiety score was at

## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

9.5 indicating mild and almost moderate anxiety. \*Data was not collected by the coordinator at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School

Beaumont Middle and Paul Laurence Dunbar High School partnered with the Kentucky Center for Grieving Children and Families to provide two peer support sessions at school for students during each of the two years of the grant. We served 13 students over the course of two 10-week sessions each year. Each session met for one hour. Students were also invited with their families to attend a variety of family nights throughout the year including art therapy night and music/fitness therapy. Families could also attend Zoom sessions for just adults that were offered in the evening.

Students also participated in a day-long culminating event at a local outdoor adventure center focused on helping those who have had trauma in their lives use the outdoor challenges and natural environment to help individuals unlock their potential, build confidence, and overcome cognitive, behavioral, and social challenges. This program was held at the end of year two, but we also included students who participated in the first year of the program as well.

Data collected from BMS students at the end of the program indicated clinically significant change. The perceived stress scale score dropped from 15 to 12.5 (falling within the 0-13 range for minimal stress) and the anxiety score dropped one point from 9.5 to 8. \*Data was not collected by the coordinator at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School

Throughout the course of the year students learned to support each other, gained social skills, and were overwhelmingly positive about the group.



## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **Campbell County High School Youth Service Center**

#### **Campbell County**

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At Campbell County High School, we believe the most impactful GEER Grant activity was our small groups for students facilitated by our GEER FRYSC. These groups focused on anxiety/social anxiety. The students who participated in the anxiety small groups were referred to the GEER Grant FRYSC by guidance counselors and teachers. In Year 1, 25 students participated and were broken into 4 groups. We met twice per month. The first monthly meetings consisted of working through anxiety workbook activities which were then discussed as a group. The second monthly meetings consisted of crafting activities that prompted students to reflect about themselves (e.g., positive characteristics) and the people who cared for them.

During Year 2, many students from Year 1 asked if they could continue in the groups. Some students continued for a second year, along with new students referred by counselors and teachers, for a total of 33 students broken into 7 groups. After reviewing student feedback from Year 1, it was decided to meet weekly during Year 2. This new format allowed us to connect more often with students. We completed workbook and crafting activities (e.g., vision boards with personal goals) and used those activities to prompt anxiety-based discussions and conversations.

Students completed exit surveys upon leaving each group session (i.e., a self-assessment of anxiety levels). The data indicated that 85% of the time, students rated their anxiety level as having decreased after the group session. The data indicated that 15% of the time, students rated their anxiety level as about the same after the group session. Finally, no students (0%) rated their anxiety level as having increased after the group session.

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

### Johnson County Middle School Youth Service Center

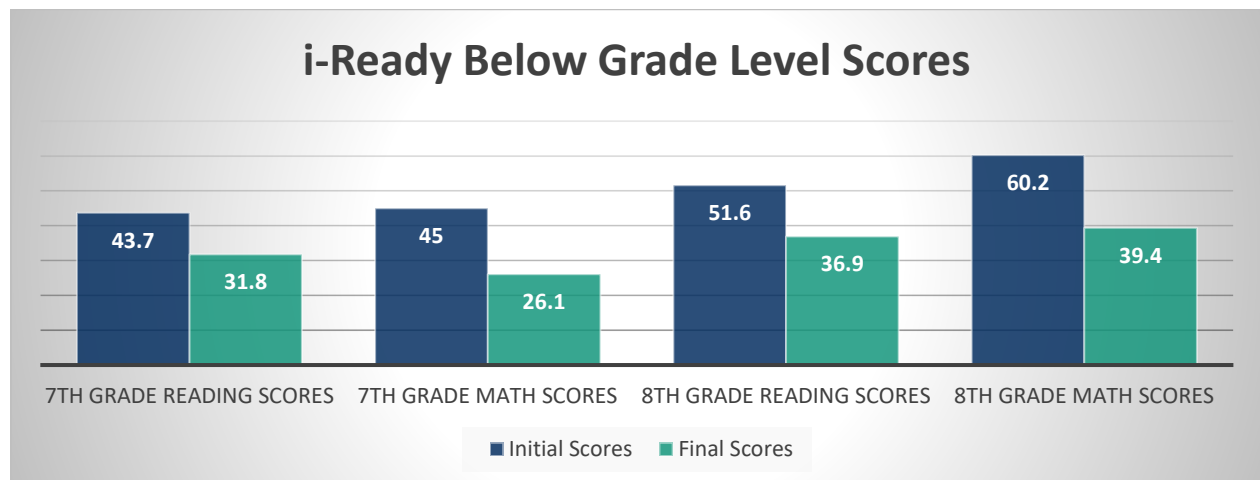
#### Johnson County

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While the Covid-19 pandemic created many social and emotional challenges for students, it additionally caused academic concerns as well. According to a 2021 Youth Services Center Survey, 49.5% of Johnson County Middle School students reported they felt less motivated to complete assignments and homework than they did prior to the pandemic. Based on 2021-2022 i-Ready Reading Diagnostic scores, 43.7% of 7th grade students were below grade level in reading, while 51.6% of 8th grade students were below grade level in reading. Additionally, 45% of 7th grade students were below grade level in math, while 60.2% of 8th graders tested below grade level in math. JCMS teachers further reported that students exhibited a concerning lack of motivation to complete i-Ready reading and math assignments, which help improve comprehension in those subject areas.

After meeting with the Leadership team, the Johnson County Middle School Youth Services Center purchased the LiveSchool program, to help motivate students through rewards and build team spirit through competition. In collaboration with the amazing JCMS staff, students earned points for meeting daily expectations, completing, and passing i-Ready lessons, non-traditional instruction assignments, etc. Seventh grade below level reading scores improved by 11.9%, while eighth grade scores improved by 14.7%. Additionally, seventh grade below level math scores decreased by 18.9% and eighth grade below level math scores decreased by 20.8%!

Through the Liveschool program, students earned 127,000 points for passing both reading and math i-Ready diagnostic tests and earned 67,160 points for passing (2) additional reading lessons and (4) additional math lessons. As a result of i-Ready weekly usage and LiveSchool points and rewards, large decreases in below grade level math and reading comprehension occurred. Teachers reported a huge increase in motivation to complete assignments, which has led to improved academic performance. The Johnson County Board of Education has purchased the LiveSchool program for every school in Johnson County for the 23-24 school year!



## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **Holmes High School Youth Service Center**

#### **Covington Independent**

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The funds from the GEER grant were used to bring more mental health services to students on campus. We looked at data that showed 27% of our students who were suspended were meeting with a therapist off campus. We also conducted a survey with parents that showed that 36% of students were seeing someone off campus for mental health therapy. The idea was that if we could increase the number of providers on campus, we could decrease the number of suspensions due to behavior referrals. The hope was also in increasing the number of providers on campus that we could build more trust and rapport with our families. The therapy services would also provide a person to work with students transitioning from our alternative school. They could meet with the young person during this transition so they would have something consistent in their life.

We were able to provide services to 112 students over the course of the grant. This was a huge undertaking in getting all the appropriate connections made and the resources to conduct therapy in an appropriate way within a high school. But the number of students suspended that sought mental health services off campus fell to 11%. This was because having someone in the school allowed the students a better opportunity to deescalate before a situation got to suspension level. The therapist could meet with parents/teachers/students to help formulate better plans to ensure they could calm down and stay in school. We also conducted another survey with parents and only 24% were seeing a mental health provider out of school. This helped us again be more in sync with the parent/student to ensure they were better suited to get assistance at the school.

## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **Barren County Youth Service Center**

#### **Barren County**

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#### **“The Resilience Factor” Bi-Monthly Family Strengthening and Resiliency Support Group**

There are no additional after-school supports in place for our most at-risk students is identified in student, parent, and staff surveys and IC data (academic performance, attendance and behavior).

YSC staff applied for GEER funding to create a program to provide additional supports for our most at-risk students and families. Student/families were selected based on the following criteria: Attendance, Academics and Behavior. Five families were selected to attend bi-monthly meetings included mealtime, resiliency, and protective factors educational activities, effective communication, and work ethics. Of these five families we had six high school students and one middle school student. Our lowest GPA prior to the 21-22 FY was a .5 by the end of the 22-23 FY this student's GPA was a 2.5. 100% of GPA's were raised. OF the group, the highest number of unexcused absences prior to the 21-22 FY was 17.5. By the end of the 22-23 FY this student's unexcused absences were 2. 100% of this group saw a decrease in the number of unexcused absences. Of this group the highest number of behavior incidents prior to the 21-22 FY was 7. By the end of the 22-23 FY this student's number of behavior incidents dropped to zero. 100% if this group saw a decrease in the number of behavior incidents.



# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

## Horizon Youth Service Center

### Trigg County Public Schools

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#### WILDCATS AT THE WAY AFTER SCHOOL WORKSHOPS (YEAR 1)

- 133 students participated in 6-week long workshops with 73 completers (attended 5 out of 6 sessions)
  - 23 different workshops (some offered multiple times):

Guitar	Trade Skills	Spartacat Fitness
Advanced Guitar	Personal Finance	Line Dancing
Singing	Personal Finance Advanced	Work Ready Job Skills
Cooking	Making a Movie	Reducing Stress & Anxiety
Advanced Cooking	Medical Technology	Dealing with Grief
Sewing	CPR / First Aid	Coping Skills
Arts & Crafts	Law Enforcement	Building Self Confidence
Recreation	Self Defense	
  - Student Survey Results:
    - 80.6% indicated they had learned new information or skills
    - 49.3% indicated they discovered new activities they liked
    - 43.3% indicated they learned new skills they “will” use in a future career, 49.3% indicated they learned new skill they “might” use in future career
    - 52.2% indicated they made new friends
    - 53.7% indicated they connected with at least one positive adult
    - 98.5% indicated they would recommend Wildcats at The Way to a friend
  - Parent Survey Results:
    - 76.1% indicated child learned new knowledge and skills
    - 61.9% indicated child was interested in areas they never considered before
    - 85.7% indicated child made new friendships
    - 71.4% indicated child made positive connections with at least one adult
    - 100% of parents were satisfied with the program. No suggestions for improvement.
- 

#### WILDCATS AT THE WAY AFTER SCHOOL WORKSHOPS (YEAR 2)

- 117 students participated in 6-week long workshops with 65 completers (attended 5 out of 6 sessions)
- 21 different workshops (some offered multiple times):

Guitar	Carpentry	Spartacat Fitness
Advanced Guitar	Fire / First Responders	Self Defense
Singing	Work Ready Job Skills	Keyboard
Cooking	Leadership Skills	Puppetry
Archery	Medical Technology	Making Positive Choices

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Sewing  
Arts & Crafts

Life Skills  
Law Enforcement

Improving Mental Health  
Reducing Stress & Anxiety

- Student Survey Results:
  - 83.9% indicated they had learned new information or skills
  - 69.6% indicated they discovered new activities they liked
  - 52.6% indicated they learned new skills they “will” use in a future career, 47.4% indicated they learned new skill they “might” use in future career
  - 57.1% indicated they made new friends
  - 64.3% indicated they connected with at least one positive adult
  - 96.4% indicated they would recommend Wildcats at The Way to a friend
- Parent Survey Results:
  - 87.5% indicated child learned new knowledge and skills
  - 87.5% indicated child was interested in areas they never considered before
  - 75.0% indicated child made new friendships
  - 100% indicated child made positive connections with at least one adult
  - 100% of parents were satisfied with the program. No suggestions for improvement.

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### THE BARN TEEN CLOTHING CLOSET

- Opened October 1, 2022
- More than 200 students received clothing during 2022-2023 school year

**CONTINUATION** – Although continuation was not a stipulation for the GEER Grant, The Way Youth Center has plans to continue both Wildcats at The Way workshops and The Barn Teen Clothing Closet now that the grant has ended. With grant funds, we were able to purchase items such as guitars, keyboards, sewing machines, etc., that can continue to be used for years to come. The Way is currently offering eight different 6-week classes this fall, and almost 200 students have received clothing through the teen clothes closet in the first two months of school. We are proud of what we have accomplished with the GEER grant and so thankful for the funding. It truly has been a blessing for our students and community!



**Carpentry Workshop**



**Fire / First Responders Workshop**



**Cooking Workshop**



**Puppetry Workshop**



# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING



**Guitar Workshop**



**Keyboard Workshop**



**Arts and Crafts Workshop**



**Medical Technology Workshop**



**Sewing Workshop**



**Self Defense Workshop**



# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING



Law Enforcement Workshop (Flying Drones)



Law Enforcement Workshop (K9 Unit)



Life Skills Workshop (vehicle maintenance)



The Barn Teen Clothing Closet

## Clothing closet serving local youth

Open house introduces new facility to community

BY TONYA S. GRACE  
COURT REPORTER

Lacey Litchfield's passion for missions has landed her at The Barn, a new teen clothing closet that has a heart for its young clients.

"I find this is a way to be able to serve," said Litchfield, a sophomore at Trigg County High School who works at the store two days a week.

Her fellow volunteer is Riley Miller, a TCHS junior who can recall The Barn when it was exactly that, a tobacco barn that had for many years been used for storing FFA students' tobacco crops.

"I've kind of been through the whole process," Miller noted last week while attending an open house and ribbon cutting for the newly-renovated barn that is now a clothing closet for local middle and high school students.

Miller observed that helping at the

SEE CLOSET/PAGE A2

Facilities Manager Marc Frye of The Way Christian Youth Center speaks last week about The Barn Teen Clothing Closet during an open house for the facility.

Tonya S. Grace/Cadiz Record

## CLOSET

that this will continue long after the project is over.

"I've been excited 21 years later that this is what this would be," said the architect, who said the project was too big for her to do on her own.

"I like being able to help the other students and just, like, see the racks on their faces, they said, 'It's just something that I don't want to lose.'"

The store house took place last fall. At the opening, of The Way Christian Youth Center, with numerous supporters attending Youth Services Center Case Manager Lacey Litchfield said the crowd gathered in front of the facility that is already making a difference.

When approached about the renovation and possible name, Litchfield suggested a clothing closet for youth to give people a place to go for their clothes. The facility will also provide storage space for The Way's youth programs, some of which are in the process of being renovated.

"That means something to me," Litchfield said.

She also shared the story of a young girl who brought in five boxes of clothing to trade in for new clothes and was accompanied by two friends.

"She showed her two friends the new house and they said, 'That's not for me,' she said. 'But she said, 'I'm going to go to the store and buy some more clothes.'"

The Barn is being funded through a partnership with Trigg County Public Schools to cover the more than \$1 million in construction costs. The clothing closet is being used for girls and boys.

Additionally, a portion of the facility will be utilized in partnership with Trigg County Public Schools to cover the more than \$1 million in construction costs. The clothing closet has been used for about a month.

"We're using grant funds to set up the facility and a member of the youth center's board of directors,

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# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

## Field Elementary Family Resource Center

### Jefferson County

## Theatre Club Spring 2022

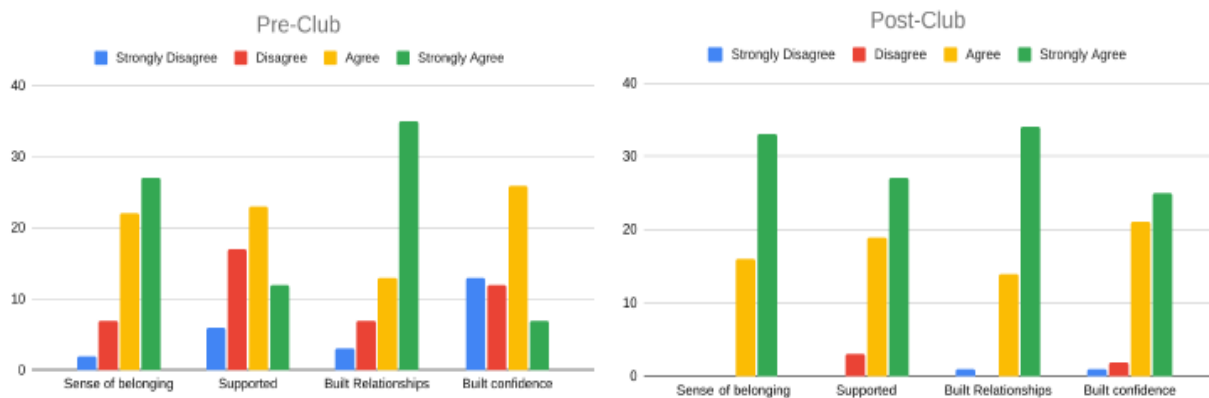
2nd grade - 5th grade

58 students total

Students took a pre-club assessment and a post-club assessment. These were exactly the same questions. Below is an example of the assessment given.

1. I feel like I am included and can do any activities in Musical Theatre. (I have a sense of belonging here)	STRONGLY agree	Agree	Disagree	STRONGLY disagree
2. I feel like I have grown as an actor. (I have had support to be successful)	STRONGLY agree	Agree	Disagree	STRONGLY disagree
3. I feel like I have friends in Musical Theatre. (I have built relationships)	STRONGLY agree	Agree	Disagree	STRONGLY disagree
4. I feel like I am an INCREDIBLE performer. (I have become more confident)	STRONGLY agree	Agree	Disagree	STRONGLY disagree

Next, you can see what students were feeling before club and after. This shows significant growth in all areas. Especially growth in building confidence and feeling supported.



## Theatre Club Spring 2022

Kinder & First Grade

35 students

Students took a pre-club assessment and a post-club assessment. These were exactly the same questions. Below is an example of the assessment given.

1. I feel included in Musical Theatre activities?

2. I REALLY enjoy acting!

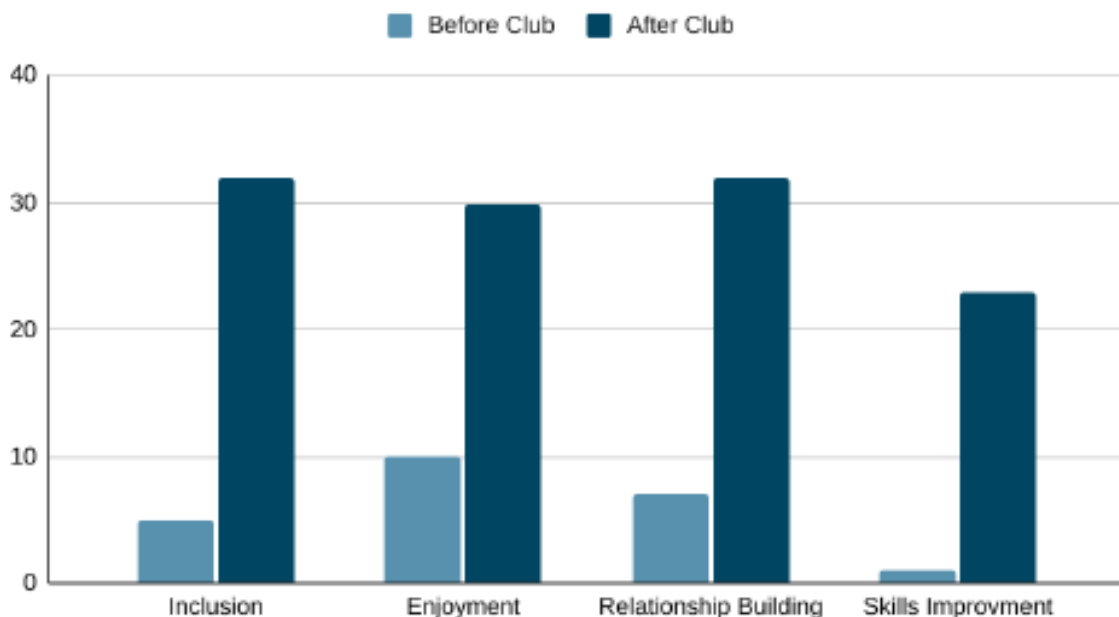
3. I feel like I have friends in Musical Theatre?

4. I feel like I am an INCREDIBLE performer?



Next, in one chart you can see a comparison of the biggest smiles before the club and after the club. This shows significant growth in all areas. In particular, I am glad to see almost all kiddos feeling the biggest smile after club on all the questions.

Theatre Club Spring 2022 Growth in Top Smile (Kinder & 1st)



# FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

## Theatre Club Fall 2022

Second graders- Fifth graders

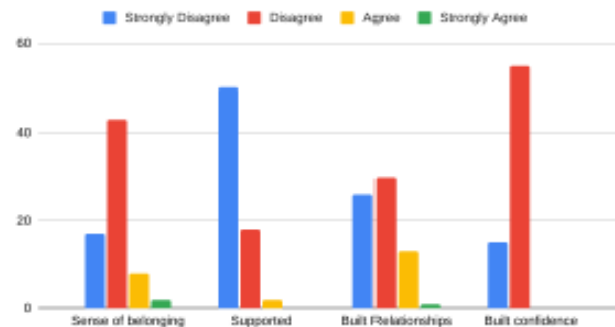
70 students

Due to the larger number of interested students, we opened up a second day where students could participate in the Theatre club. Below is the pre and post club assessment students took to help us see what they felt they grew in due to the theatre club.

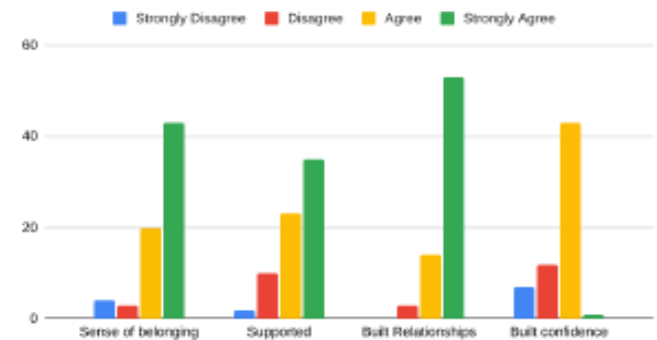
1. I feel like I am included and can do any activities in Musical Theatre. (I have a sense of belonging here)	STRONGLY agree	Agree	Disagree	STRONGLY disagree
2. I feel like I have grown as an actor. (I have had support to be successful)	STRONGLY agree	Agree	Disagree	STRONGLY disagree
3. I feel like I have friends in Musical Theatre. (I have built relationships)	STRONGLY agree	Agree	Disagree	STRONGLY disagree
4. I feel like I am an INCREDIBLE performer. (I have become more confident)	STRONGLY agree	Agree	Disagree	STRONGLY disagree

The bar graphs below show the areas of growth from before to after participating in the club. Notice how many more students “agree” and “strongly agree” with all of the questions after club!

Before Club



After Club



## Theatre Club Fall 2022

Kinder & First Grade

60 students

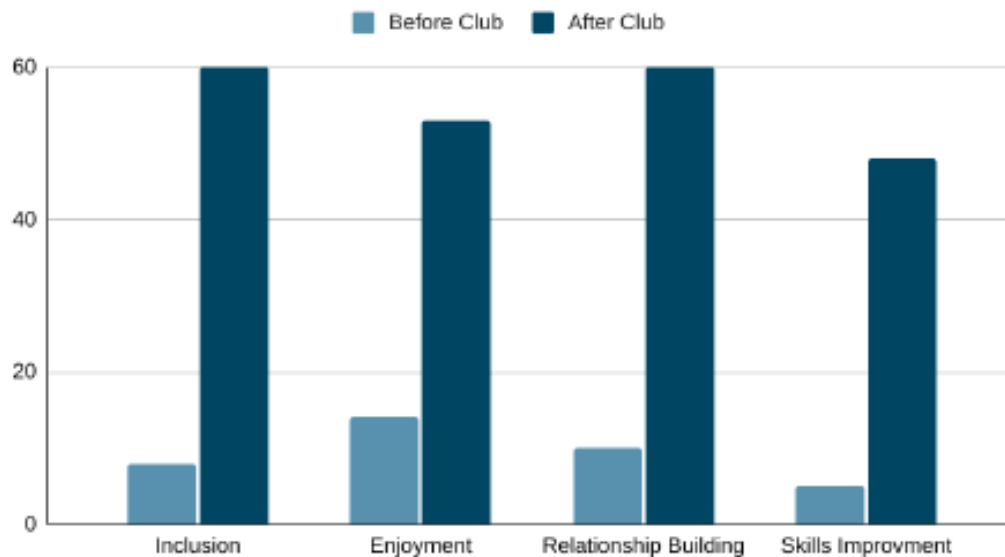
The club was so popular that we had to extend it for two days instead of just one day to accommodate all the students. Students took a pre-club assessment and a post-club assessment. These were exactly the same questions. Below is an example of the assessment given. Some students who were first graders had seen this same assessment the previous year if they were in club as kindergarteners. That is why I think some kiddos felt they started with the top/biggest smile on the assessment before the club.

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING



The next graph shows the growth in the biggest smiley on the assessment from before club to after club for these kindergarteners. I was so proud and blown away that 100% of kiddos felt included and felt they'd built relationships after participating in the club.

Theatre Club Fall 2022 Growth in Top Smile (Kinder & 1st)



### Field Social Skills Groups 3rd grade - 5th grade

40 students participated in social skill groups.

Students identified students that struggled with social skills.

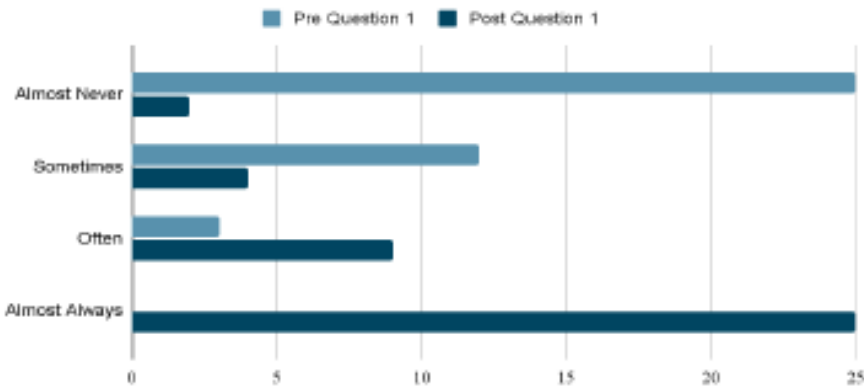
Permission slips were signed by parent/guardian.

Students were given a 7 question pre and post test.

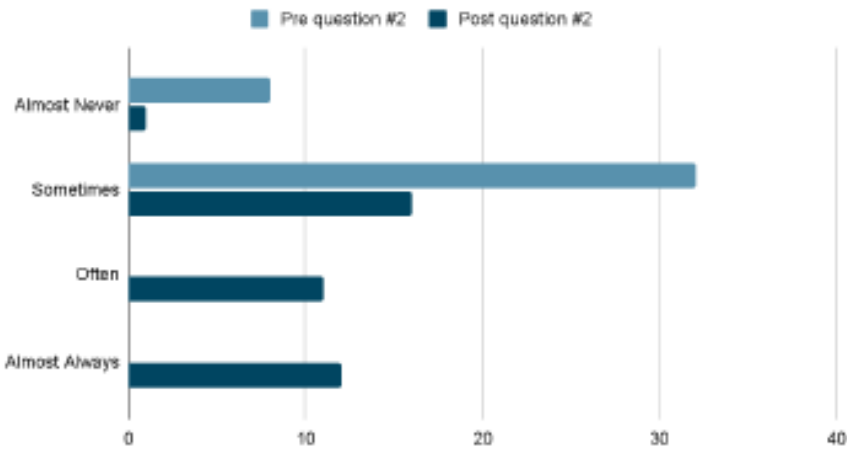


## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

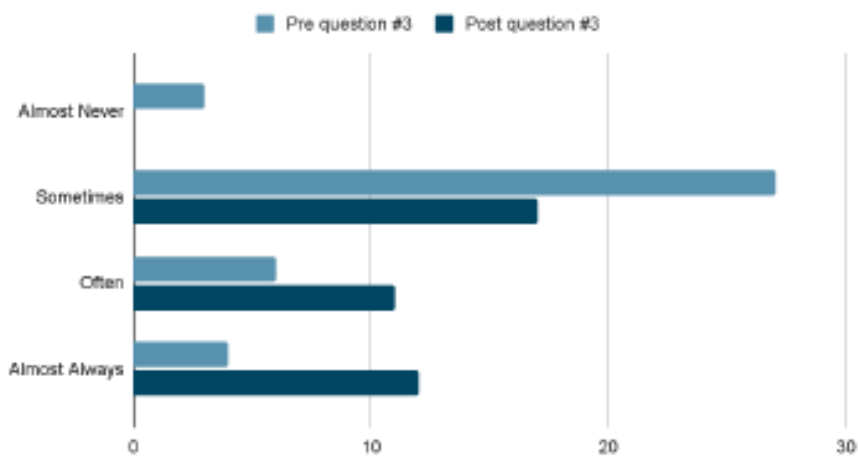
Do you pay attention to someone who is talking and make an effort to understand what they said?



Do you talk to others about your ideas or things of interest?

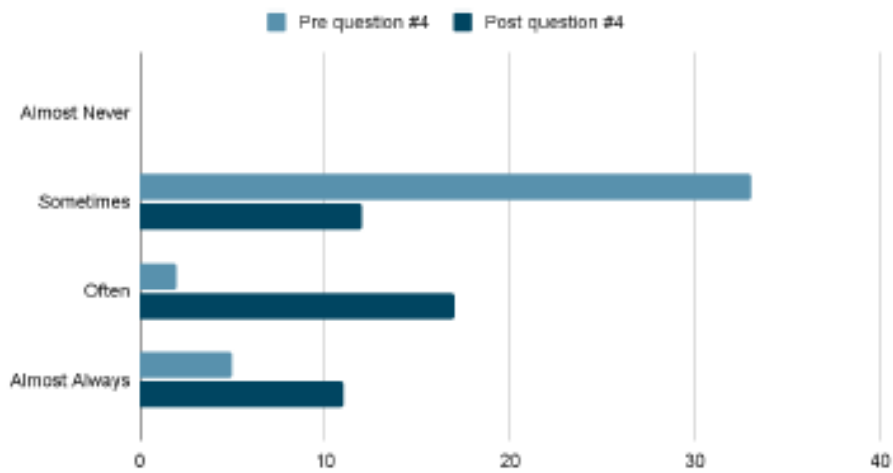


Do you ask the right person for information?

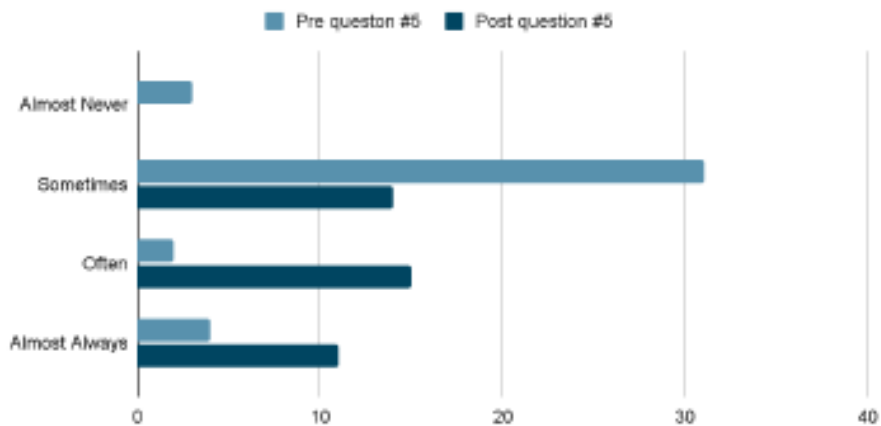


## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

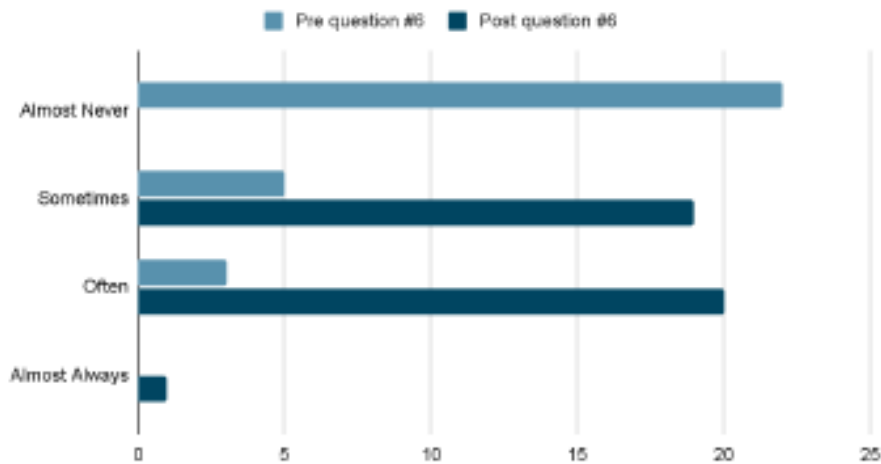
Do you say "Thank you" to let others know you are grateful?



Do you tell others that you are sorry after doing something wrong?

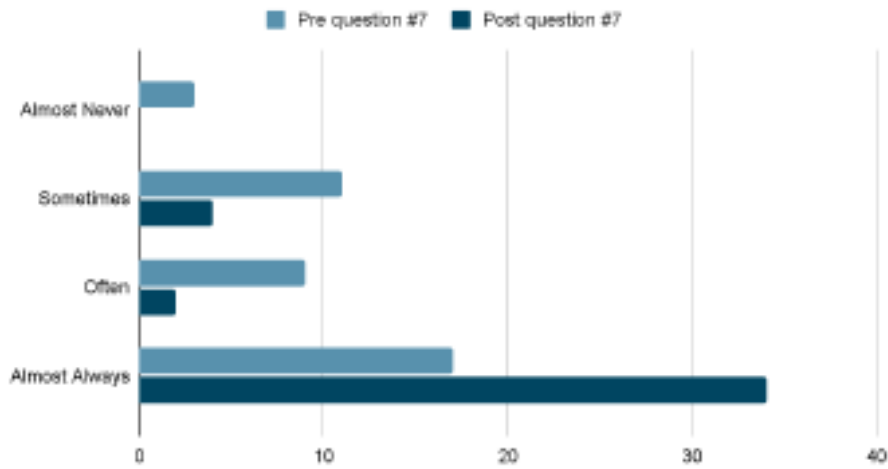


Do you try to let others know which emotions you are feeling?



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Do you give assistance to others who might need help?



### Field Tech Club/3d printing k-5th grade

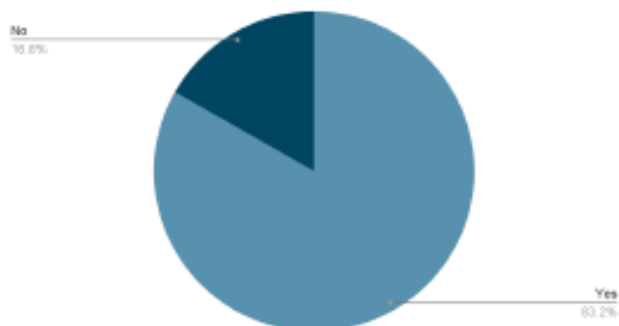
370 students participated

Students were given a task. Working in groups of 4, students built robots or created a 3d print to complete the task.

Following questions were answered with a yes or no.

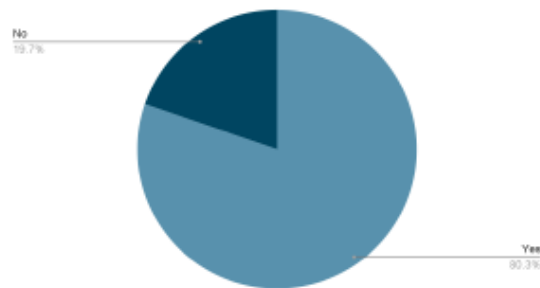
1. My group followed directions?
2. My group stayed on task?
3. I was able to learn in my group?
4. My group completed a task?
5. I would like to do this again?

My group followed Directions?

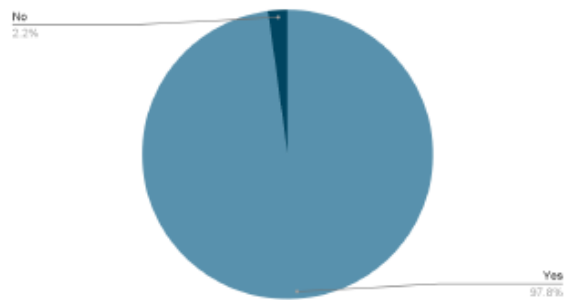


## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

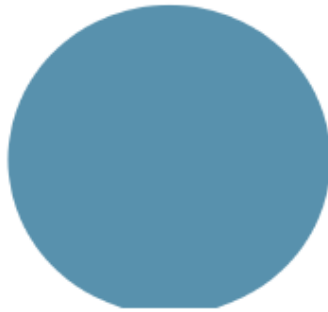
My group stayed on task?



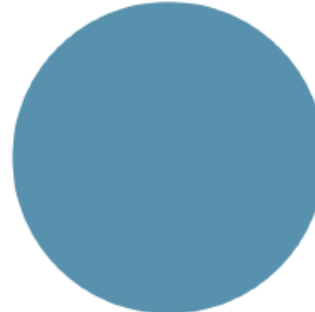
I was able to learn in my group?



My group completed a task?



Would you like to do this activity again?



### Field Elementary Virtual Reality program.

S.O.A.R.ing with VR (Safety, Ownership, Achievement, and Respect)

370 Students participated in the program.

Students created a social skills game using virtual reality and the software CenarioVR.

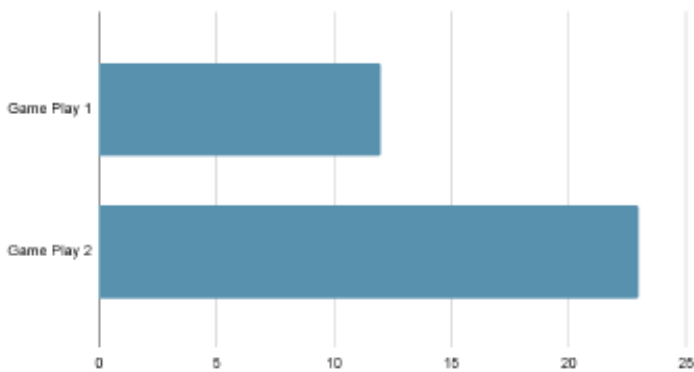
Each classroom was able to create a scenario for their classroom, hallway, special area, or bus. The scenario focused on making a decision based on S.O.A.R. The person must make a decision whether the student's scenario was positive or negative. If the proper response was negative, then a positive scenario would play out. The student would then choose; Safety, Ownership, Achievement, or Respect, depending on what they thought was the correct action. Students received one point for each correct answer, and played the game for 3 minutes at a time. The students were allowed to play the game twice and we compared the scores. A rise in score shows a better understanding of S.O.A.Ring at Field Elementary.

The game contains 16 scenarios, 8 positive and 8 negative. All scenarios were written, filmed, and edited by our students. The VR game was awarded a Top 10 award in the STLP state competition.



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

S.O.A.R.ing with VR



### Field Elementary Transportation

Buses enabled 45 students to attend after school events. These students would not be able to attend these events without the buses.

Events included: cross country, student technology leadership program, basketball, and drama Club.

### Field Elementary Mentoring Program.

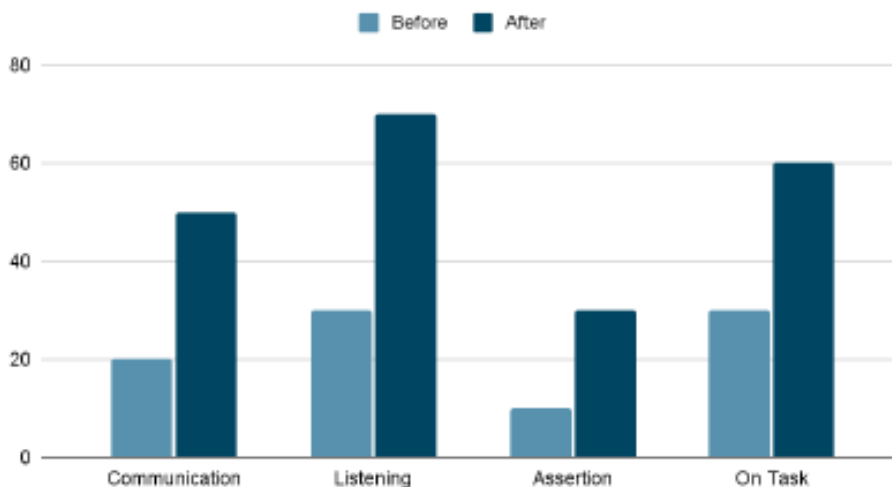
We were only able to secure two Mentors. Due to Covid 19 our pool of mentors have become very limited.

Mentors worked with first graders to improve social skills.

10 students were able to participate in the program.

Teachers filled out a pre and post chart on students. Scale 0 being the lowest and 100 being the highest.

Social Skills Chart

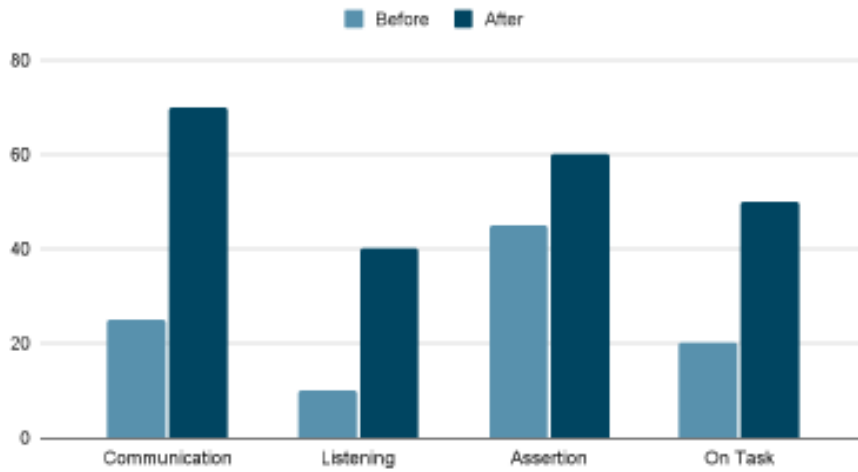


## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Field Elementary referrals to Center Stone/7 counties

33 students were referred and received services. Due to confidentiality we used the social skills chart to show growth. This was filled out by teachers K-5th grade. Scale 0 being the lowest and 100 being the highest.

7 Counties/Center Stone



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

### Lloyd Memorial High School Youth Service Center

#### Erlanger – Elsmere Schools

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##### Original Proposal Overview (Final)

The proposed multi-tiered programming will address every level of a multi-tiered system of support for each of the 610 enrolled students, grades 9-12. All students will be taught a Social and Emotional Strengthening Curriculum, and students with more need will participate in small group resilience and leadership programming, with specialized support on an individualized basis.

During the Covid pandemic the students at Lloyd Memorial High School have experienced obstacles which have made their academic success difficult and have been a major strain on their mental health. Throughout the changes that required virtual learning, an estimated 55% of students were often unable to access classes due to lack of technology, lack of internet/wifi, and lack of understanding of how the main technology (Google Suite) operated.

In addition to virtual learning complications, too many of our students were forced into adult-like roles. During virtual or in-person school changes, and during summer break, students and families had to make accommodations to maintain the basic needs of the entire family. These accommodations often placed unusual burdens on these older students, but they were needed for survival due to the Covid circumstances. For example, in addition to suddenly being required to manage their own learning, since parents either were not around or did not understand how to help their teenage students, an estimated 25% of our students were tasked with providing child care for younger siblings or family members; daycare options were limited. An estimated 30% of students began working excess hours to help provide food and other basic needs of the family due to parent loss of income. Once in-person school began for the 2020-2021 school year, these survival systems were still needed; with not much change for parent employment, students continued to be needed at home; in these families there was not much time for school. The whereabouts of an estimated 35% of students were unknown for periods of time.

Obviously, all these challenges led to attendance issues and lack of school work being completed. In addition, without in-person access to the YSC and Counseling Department (Student Services), and without access to the personal relationships that are formed during the in-person school year, students have struggled through the chaotic events of the past 14 months. Their mental health has clearly been impacted, and many have turned to negative coping skills.

The intended project will be multi-tiered and will partner with other school resources and strengths to ensure that the programming will achieve its goals and continue post-grant. The base level of the program will be an evidence-based Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum. Teachers will be trained using a “teach the teacher” approach so that the entire faculty is trained and able to implement SEL using specific modalities as well as a trauma-informed approach. The program will educate the entire school population regarding basic social and emotional skills, as well as soft skills to help students as they enter the college and career stage. The school day will be revised to add a section of the day for this curriculum to be taught. The intended purpose is that students will normalize self-care and addressing mental health needs. In addition,

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

students will be able to set goals and become more aware of personal challenges and coping skills that can serve them into adulthood. The premise of the programming is to reduce barriers and build strengths related to mental health, resulting in stronger coping skills.

The next level of the program will implement mental health support services, based on the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support, for groups of identified students who do not have access to services outside of school or who are not interested in participating in other therapeutic services. The groups will be psychoeducational, again focusing on self-care and healthy coping skills. This population will build and strengthen soft skills including leadership, communication, etiquette, active listening, and interpersonal skills while strengthening positive coping skills to increase capacity to overcome challenges and be resilient.

Through partnerships and contracts with mental health providers, the top level of programming will provide professional individual therapeutic services and referrals for students in need and who are under/non-insured.

All programming will measure how mental health supports lower drop-out risk, increase passing grades, increase attendance, decrease negative behaviors, and decrease substance abuse issues, while giving the opportunity to increase resiliency and increase the skills needed to function and lead in arenas post-high school. This will be measured through peer interaction and implementation of a peer-based resilience program as well as internship programming and the ability to take higher level college courses or certifications while in high school.

This programming will increase resilience and increase coping skills as well as normalize mental strength and community support, partnership and participation. It will also make the topic of mental health and self-care more of a normalized culture, stressing the availability of help and support to strengthen post-Covid lives.

### Impact Report

After reviewing information and talking with Lloyd staff members who were key to the success of the GEER II Grant, I believe the purpose and the goals of the grant were completed well.

Lloyd Memorial High School needed additional supports for students and families due to the COVID pandemic. The grant provided the school with resources and opportunities to provide students with additional support through social and emotional education during the school day from school staff.

#### *What was implemented?*

- SEL coaches were selected and assigned teachers to collaborate with. There were eight SEL coaches overall that were paid through the grant. Now that the GEER II grant funds are gone, the school will be pulling from another grant to pay a stipend to one SEL coaches who will continue on the work in partnership with the school's administration,

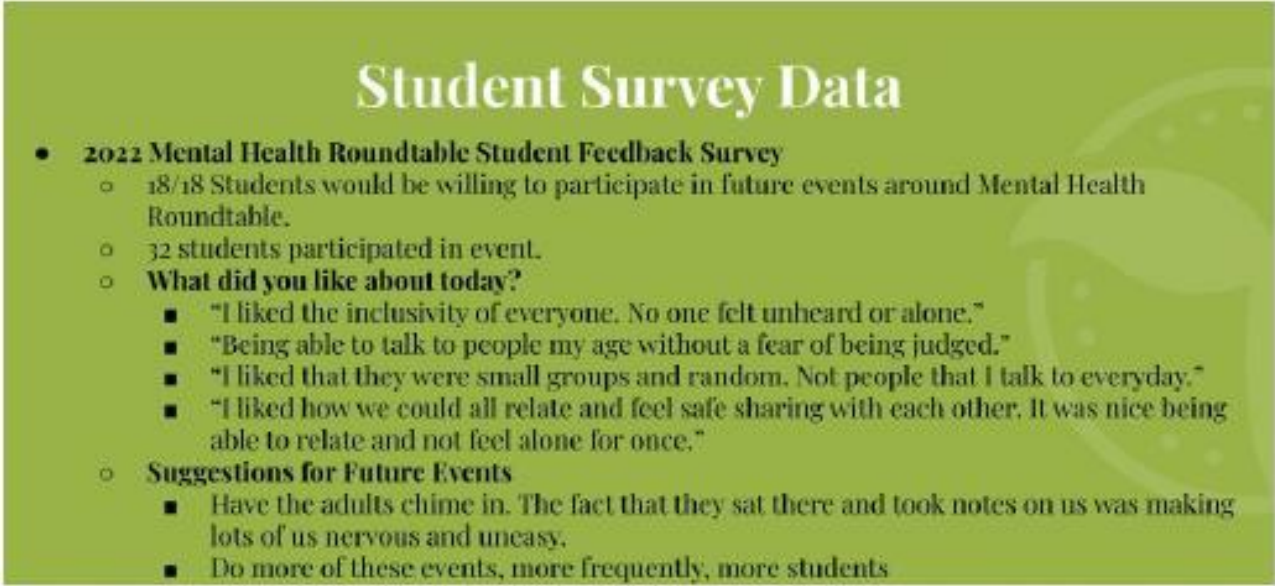


## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

the school's counselors, and the school's YSC coordinator. This SEL coach is doing a great job and is keeping things well organized and communicated out to the school staff during the 2023-2024 school year.

- SEL curriculum was picked. The SEL curriculum, which was selected and used as the base for the current program moving forward after the grant, is Positive Action.
- Mental Health Round Tables were created due to the funding of the GEER II grant. During these round table sessions, students were invited to come and discuss specific SEL topics going on in the school, providing the SEL coaches and school administration with helpful information about how to better support the students in the school. Each time a roundtable session took place, the number of students increased from 32 to 44, with the hopes to increase the numbers even more during the current school year. Round tables were effective and helpful. (Please see the three images below for more information regarding the roundtable sessions.)

**Image 1 - Roundtable Data of 2022**



### Student Survey Data

- **2022 Mental Health Roundtable Student Feedback Survey**
  - 18/18 Students would be willing to participate in future events around Mental Health Roundtable.
  - 32 students participated in event.
  - **What did you like about today?**
    - "I liked the inclusivity of everyone. No one felt unheard or alone."
    - "Being able to talk to people my age without a fear of being judged."
    - "I liked that they were small groups and random. Not people that I talk to everyday."
    - "I liked how we could all relate and feel safe sharing with each other. It was nice being able to relate and not feel alone for once."
  - **Suggestions for Future Events**
    - Have the adults chime in. The fact that they sat there and took notes on us was making lots of us nervous and uneasy.
    - Do more of these events, more frequently, more students

Image 2 - Roundtable Data of 2023

## Survey Data Continued...

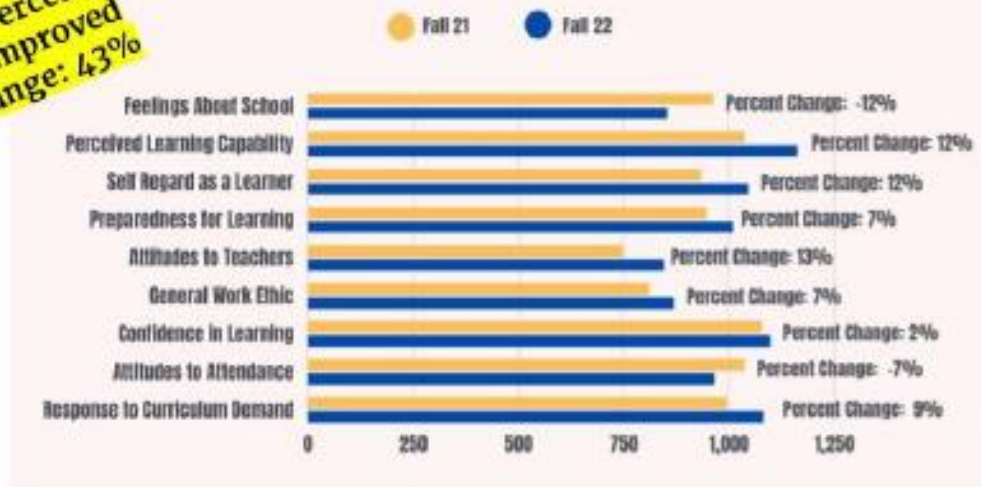
- **2023 Mental Health Roundtable Student Feedback Survey**
  - 24/25 students would be willing to participate in future events around Mental Health Roundtable
  - 44 students participated in the event
  - What did you like about today?
    - "I liked being able to interact with others about mental health. It made me feel less alone."
    - "Getting to meet/hear stories from people I've not necessarily talked to or known before."
    - "Everyone felt safe enough to share."
    - "Having an open discussion with other students was awesome."
    - "I really enjoyed the teacher at my table, she made it very easy to talk to her and was even emotional and allowed us to know she was there for us."
- Suggestions for future events.
  - More activities to start up the conversations
  - Longer time to talk
  - Smaller Groups
  - More speakers
  - "I would do it the exact same. I loved it!"

Image 3 - Overall Insight from 15 students

## LMHS SEL Survey Data

**Total Percentage of Improved Change: 43%**

### Fall 21 to Fall of 22 (15 students)



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

- The 23-24 school schedule was changed to allow time for SEL education to be taught well during the school year. This has made a positive impact and is a work in progress.
- Multiple SEL Family events were organized for outside of school hours with the purpose of not only educating the students in SEL but also involving families in the process. At each event, information was provided to guardians on several SEL topics. The SEL topics were directed at the guardians on how they could help their students with social emotional topics in their home. Also, we gave suggestions for the whole family in regards to SEL. One of the event themes was "family game night". Several games were handed out that were designed to help the family come together which would encourage communication between the family members.

Overall, the GEER II grant was used wisely and effectively to impact the school, the staff, the students, and the families for the long haul. The work that was completed over the past two school years (2021-2022 & 2022-2023) was done well. It was thought out and has made an impact. Now, the work of grant continues through the support of other funding to keep supporting the students not just in SEL education, but in college and career development and educational intervention.



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

### Robert D. Campbell Jr. High Youth Service Center

#### Clark County

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**BEFORE:** Based on the responses to Parent Surveys and Student Surveys, Robert D. Campbell Junior High Youth Services Center identified the need for more after school activities for students. In a survey conducted in the fall of 2021, 54.7% of students indicated they do not participate in any activities outside of school. Based on social emotional surveys conducted in coordination with school counselors, students identified feeling isolated and lacking social connections coming out of the pandemic.

**AFTER:** With guidance from students groups including Sources of Strength and the Leeds Youth Board, as well as input from Cooperative Extension, the Rowland Arts Center, and the Winchester Design Studio, the Youth Services Center engaged in community collaborations and created numerous school offerings, ultimately concentrating on after-school, on-site club offerings for students at Robert D Campbell Junior High. Among the clubs created were Art Club, Guitar Club, Ingenuity (STEM) Club, Book Club, Master Chef Cooking Club, Sewing Club, Pokemon Club, and Girls on The Run. At the end of the school year in 2023, a follow up survey was conducted. 66.9% of students agreed that there were sufficient after-school offerings for students their age. Among the club participants, 95.3% reported they had a good experience participating in GEER II after-school sponsored clubs. 67.4% made new friends, and 62.1% reported participating in club activities was a boost to their mental health. 97.7% would recommend the club they participated in to others. Following the 2022-23 school year, the YSC received a donation from the Lykins Foundation to help sustain these clubs for the next school year. Below are some images from both community collaborations and on-site club activities.



Community Drum Circle, ongoing (Legacy Grove Park)



Legacy Grove Community Mural (Leeds Teen Board)



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING



Terrarium building at Legacy Grove Art Club (Initially at the Design studio, transitioned to RDC)



Guitar Club (Initially at the Design studio downtown, transitioned to on-site at RDC)



Master Chef Cooking Club



Ingenuity Club



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING



Ingenuity Club



Girls On The Run



Craft Activity following "Creating Through Grief" group, Design Studio



Pokemon Club



Sewing Club



## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **HOPE FRYSC, Helping Hands FRYSC, Pathways FRYSC**

#### **Hart County**

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##### **Nathan Harmon and Suicide Prevention**

Based on a previous program in which our district has participated, we contracted with Nathan Harmon to provide middle and high school children with a session dealing with mental health threats. “Your Life Speaks” was born from Nathan’s desire to help every person recognize their potential, cultivate real change, and live a life of meaningful purpose. Nathan shared his mental health battles. His communication style locks in his audience in ways that create real moments where people find the courage to confront themselves. He spoke to Hart County’s 6th-12th grade students in March 2022. We also contracted with him to present at an after-school event for parents. We did not have a massive turnout for this event, but the session was informative.

##### **Guys with Ties and Girls with Pearls**

According to our 2022 student and faculty needs survey, anxiety, healthy relationships, and self-image were among the highest concerns.

For students in grades 6-8:

- Anxiety 51.2%
- Everyday stresses 46.4%
- Healthy Relationships 35.6%
- Self-image 38.1%

The centers collaborated with each school’s guidance counselor to create a mentoring group for boys and girls in grade 6. We met weekly for six weeks to discuss self-care, self-worth, social and emotional development, manners, healthy relationships, mental health, and life skills. Community and school leaders provided their expertise at the sessions. Some of our partners included the Superintendent, a mental health coach, a principal, a cosmetologist, and the extension agents.

The students received a trip to a local restaurant to demonstrate some skills learned and celebrate the completion of the course.

A follow-up report was completed in 2023 via Google Forms to see if the program made an impact. The results revealed that 99% of the participants reported that their self-image had improved, they were comfortable in friendships and dealing with drama, they felt confident with strategies to handle stress, and they gained confidence.

##### **Growth Mindset**

Bluegrass Professional Counseling created a growth mindset curriculum for Hart County’s 6th-8th graders. Students participated in the program weekly. Topics included the “downstairs” and “upstairs” brain, how it is important to know your emotions and identify them, how to stop thinking in your downstairs brain, and how to approach fellow students when there is a problem. Students took a post survey.

## **FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

### **Shelby County Family Resource and Youth Service Centers**

#### **Shelby County**

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#### **Ascension 5-Day Substance Abuse Intervention Program, and Community Substance Abuse Awareness Events (i.e. Hiding in Plain Sight Drug Awareness Workshop, Steered Straight Student Drug Education Program, Straight Talk for Parents Drug Education Program, and SUDS – Substance Abuse Disorder Info event).**

*CDC data from 2021 reflects that 16.8% of adults and 25% of teens in Shelby County have mental health issues. The CDS also notes that people with mental health issues are at greater risk of developing a substance abuse problem. Drug use among SCPS middle and high schoolers has been trending upwards in the past several years, along with the percentage of students with mental health issues.*

*SCPS Developed two programs to address the substance abuse issue:*

- *Ascension 5 Day Intervention: The target population included high school and middle school students in the SCPS district who were caught on school property with drugs or alcohol during the 21-22 and 22-23 school years.*
- *Community and School Workshops on Drug and Alcohol Abuse targeted parents/guardians, students, and school staff members. Abuse Disorder Awareness) and targeted students, staff, and parents.*

*Ascension 5 Day Intervention program: participants received daily education on the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Family sessions were held to complete a chemical dependency assessment. Students completed a harm reduction checklist before returning to their middle or high school.*

- *Impact: Of 80- student referred to the program, 96% successfully completed the school year without additional drug/alcohol offenses, 100% successfully completed the Harm Reduction Checklist. Only 3 of the 80 students returned to the program due to a second offense.*

*Community and School Workshops on Drug and Alcohol Abuse offered parents/guardians, students, and school staff members information, resources, prevention strategies, and opportunities for discussion on drug and alcohol abuse prevention.*

- *Impact: 920 students, 167 parents, and 43 school staff members participated in the variety of workshops and community events offered. Post survey results show that 94% of participants increased their knowledge about substance abuse and the connection to mental health.*

#### **Small Group Anxiety and Life Skill Interventions, Anxiety/Anger Management Workshops, Mindfulness Yoga, Parent Ed Workshops on Anxiety, and De-escalation /Calm Down Programs**

- *Small Group Anxiety Life Skills Strategies Program targeted middle and high school students whose SSR-IS screenings indicated high levels of anxiety and emotional distress.*



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

- *Anxiety/Anger Management Workshops for students targeted middle and high school students who self-reported that anxiety or anger has interfered with their daily lives or has caused them to have behavior violations at school.*
- *The Peace for Parents workshops and Red Orchard Community Walk targeted parents/guardians of SCPS who were interested in learning how to help their child cope with anxiety.*
- *The Mindful Yoga Program targeted middle school girls with anxiety and a lack of self-esteem.*
- *De-Escalation/Calm Down Room Programs were initiated in several elementary schools.*

*127 students participated in small group Anxiety intervention, students complete worry and anxiety self-assessments. Pre assessment data reflected that 100% indicated felt worried/anxious on a daily basis. 100% reported a lack of knowledge about how their brain functions when anxious. The students engaged in 6-8 weeks of activities and exercises to learn anxiety triggers, brain function, and strategies to lower anxiety.*

- *Impact: In post survey results, 86% of the participants indicated they no longer felt worried every day. 100% indicated they understood the brain science about anxiety and know strategies to reduce anxiety.*

*78 students participated in Anxiety Anger Mgt. Workshops increasing their knowledge of anxiety causes, anger triggers and strategies they can use to reduce control both.*

- *Impact: in post workshop surveys, 92% of the participants stated they now have several strategies they can use to reduce their anxiety and anger.*

*252 parents received anxiety resources, information, and tools at a community Ready Fest event.*

- *Impact: 90% who participated in the post survey indicated they received information valuable to help them and their families better deal with anxiety.*

*50 students and 30 parents, 10 staff participated Community events, Peace for Parents Seminar and The Red Orchard Story Walk, both of which provided information and strategies to help families address mental health concerns.*

- *100% of participants reported learning helpful strategies for their family's mental health in the post survey interviews.*

*47 middle school girls participating in the Mindful Yoga program attending 6 weekly sessions. Participants and the teachers and parents of the participants were surveyed before and after program.*

- *Impact:*
- *Teachers reported improvements in classroom performance in 97% of the participants.*
- *Parent reported better communication and behavior in 91% of the participants.*
- *100% of participating students reported an improvement in their self-own esteem, communication skills, and coping skills.*

*2971 students at the district elementary schools benefited.*

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Bowling Green Jr. High School Youth Service Center

Bowling Green Independent



**Gambia Flemister, Jessica Stunson & Dana Beasley-Brown**



**Black Male Scholars  
Coordinator**

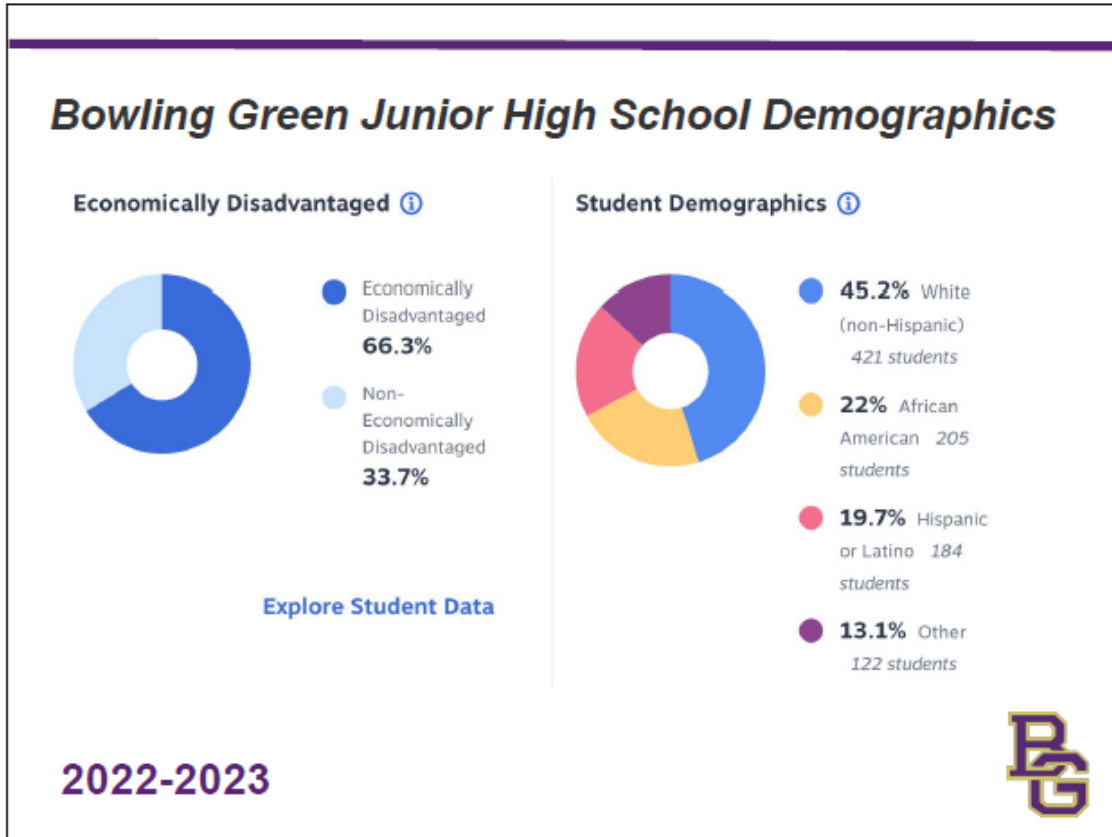


**Family Thrive  
Coordinator**



**Youth Services Center  
Coordinator**

Hi, my name is Gambia Flemister. I am a teacher at Bowling Green Junior High. I also serve as the Coordinator of the Black Male Scholars Program. I'm Jessica Stunson. I am a licensed clinical social worker providing mental health services in the community. I'm also the Black Male Scholars Family Thrive Coordinator. I'm Dana Beasley-Brown the Youth Services Center Coordinator here at BGJHS. We are excited to share the story of the Black Male Scholars program and the positive impact of the GEER grant has had on our Black Male Scholars and families.



Before talk about the Black Male Scholars Family Thrive Program, let’s take a few minutes to look at why we created this program. Bowling Green Junior High School (BGJHS) is a public 6th-8th grade school in the Bowling Green Independent School District (BGISD) which is located in Bowling Green (Warren County), Kentucky. BGJHS is the second most ethnically diverse middle school in the state of Kentucky. Ultimately our goal is success for every student.

In light of the Bowling Green Junior High School Report Card, it’s evident that African American male students are encountering significant disparities in their educational experiences, particularly in the areas of reading and math.

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

KPREP and iready data reveal some concerning statistics: 90% of black male students are facing academic challenges, falling at least a grade behind in either reading or math. Additionally, 23% are English Learners (EL), and 72% qualify for free or reduced lunch, emphasizing the disparities in resources and support available to them. The pandemic further exacerbated these disparities by disrupting education, especially for students without consistent internet access. Furthermore, the school is situated in an area characterized by low-income households, high unemployment rates, and limited access to higher education, making it crucial to address these educational disparities.

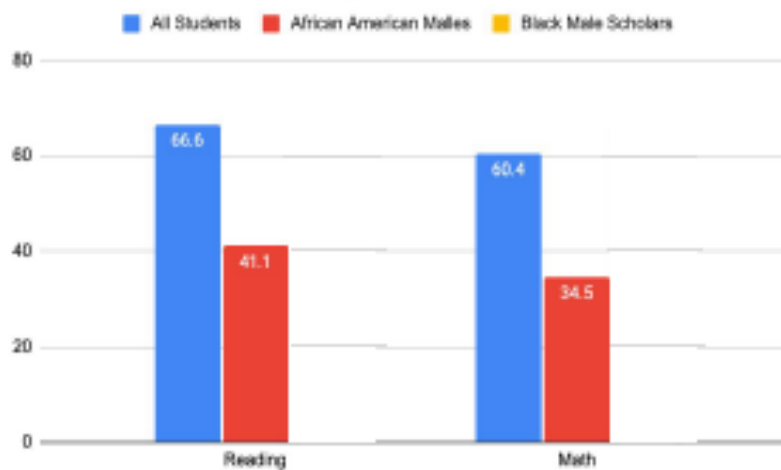
As educators committed to the principles of educational equity, we recognized that the traditional one-size-fits-all approach was ineffective in addressing the challenges that African American male students face. Therefore, we sought a fresh, evidence-based approach designed with a keen focus on giving each student what they need to succeed.

*Students enter schools with different experiences and access to learning opportunities.*

**Equality** is treating each student the same, regardless of need.

**Equity** is ensuring each individual student receives what he or she needs.

BGJHS 6th Grade: Kentucky State Assessment 2022





***The BLACK MALE SCHOLARS PROGRAM will engage, educate, and eliminate barriers to achieve excellence that lies within every Black male.***



To address this educational disparity, the Black Male Scholars Program was established in the Fall of 2021. The mission of the Black Male Scholars Program is threefold: to engage, educate, and eliminate barriers to achieve excellence that lies within every Black male.

We achieve this by infusing the curriculum with the rich history and culture of African Americans, providing comprehensive social and emotional support, and nurturing a deep sense of belonging through mentorship and active family engagement.

In the fall of 2021, we enrolled an inaugural cohort of 25 incoming 6th graders. Each subsequent year we have added a new 6th grade cohort. We have sustained the support for each cohort as they have progressed to the next grade level. We now have a cohort in each grade at the middle school (6th - 8th) and we hope to continue the support through high school.

## Supporting African American Families through an Equity Lens

**Building Resilience:** Putting the conditions in place in your community to (1) heal from past trauma, including racial trauma; & (2) be protected from the impact of future racial trauma.

**Community Resilience:** The ability of a community to recover from and/or thrive despite the prevalence of adverse conditions.



<https://www.preventioninstitute.org/publications/adverse-community-experiences-and-resilience-framework-addressing-and-preventing-1>

In line with our commitment to enhancing the success of our scholars, the BGJHS Youth Services Center applied for a GEER grant with a mental health focus to create a support program for students and families in the Black Male Scholars Program. Mental health and stress at home can significantly impact a student's academic performance. Stress, anxiety, and unresolved trauma can impede a student's ability to focus, engage, and perform well in school. Recognizing this critical connection, the collaboration and engagement plan addressed these factors comprehensively. With the GEER grant, we were able to hire Jessica, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with deep understanding of the African American experience, to facilitate the implementation of the comprehensive wraparound support program known as the Black Male Scholars Family Thrive Program.

This program was created with an understanding of the pivotal role families play in our scholars' success. Using the Strengthening Families Framework as a guide, this program has been thoughtfully designed to cultivate resilience within families by providing opportunities for healing from past trauma, particularly racial trauma, and developing protective factors to shield them from the impacts of future challenges.

At the core of this model is the recognition of the importance of representation and community connection in addressing mental health, building resilience and strengthening protective factors in our African-American families.

## Using the Standards to Bridge the Achievement Gap

### The Standards

#### Family Centeredness

Working with a family-centered approach that values families and recognizes them as integral to the Program.

#### Family Strengthening

Utilizing a family strengthening approach to support families to be strong, healthy, and safe, thereby promoting their success and optimal development.

#### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Valuing, respecting, and embracing families' diversity, and advancing equity and inclusion.

#### Community Strengthening

Developing a strong and healthy community by working collaboratively with various stakeholders and supporting families' civic engagement, leadership development, and ability to effect systems change.



As we share the outcomes of this program with you, we will be highlighting the Strengthening Families Framework Standards as the roadmap to our success.

## Black Male Scholars Family Thrive Program

The standards are the foundation of the Black Male Scholars Family Thrive program:

- The Induction Ceremony - Embeds the "Family Centeredness" standard by using a family-centered approach that values and recognizes families as integral to the student's success and the broader school community.





## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

At the beginning of each school year we start with an induction ceremony where scholars and families make commitments to one another. The induction ceremony embeds the **"Family Centeredness"** standard by using family-centered approach that values and recognizes families as integral to the student's success and the broader school community. The families are invited to a dinner held at Western Kentucky University. After dinner, the Scholars stand before their family and commit to accomplishing goals, being accountable for their actions and behaviors, being kind and respectful to themselves, their families, their school and their community. Families join their Scholar on the stage, pin them, commit to supporting and encouraging them, and trusting them to make good choices. Families recite the following vow, "We will lead by example, model responsible characteristics, and continue to grow their relationships no matter the obstacles they may face, in order to overcome negative statistics."

### Black Male Scholars Family Thrive Program

The standards are the foundation of the Black Male Scholars Family Thrive program:

- Social Services - Embed **"Family Strengthening"** Standards by supporting families to be strong, healthy, and safe, thereby promoting their optimal development.
- For example, meet with each family to assess the risk and protective factors present and create a unique plan to strengthen their family unit.



Mental health and stress at home can significantly impact a student's academic performance. Stress, anxiety, and unresolved trauma can impede a student's ability to focus, engage, and perform well in school. Recognizing this critical connection, we have embedded the **"Family Strengthening"** standard into the collaboration and engagement plan to comprehensively address these factors.



### Protective Factors Survey:

Within the first 2 weeks of school, the Family Thrive Coordinator met with each family to assess the risk and protective factors present and create a unique plan to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors in their family unit. We achieve this by utilizing the Protective Factors Survey created by the Friends National Resource Center. The survey measures protective factors in five areas: family functioning/resiliency, social support, concrete support, nurturing and attachment, and knowledge of parenting/child development.

For example, a family's survey indicated a lack of social support and knowledge of parenting/child development as areas of concern. The Family Thrive Coordinator used this information to connect the family with relevant resources, improving the protective factors in those areas by positively impacting the student's mental well-being and academic performance.

### Ongoing Therapeutic Services and Case Management:

When needed, families receive ongoing therapeutic services to address the mental health and stress-related challenges within their households. The Family Thrive Coordinator facilitates these services and ensures they are tailored to meet the needs of each family. Here are a few examples of the impact of this intervention:

Example 1: A family was experiencing high levels of stress due to co-parenting issues, leading to reduced focus on academics. The Family Thrive Coordinator provided therapeutic interventions that transformed the family dynamic from non-communication and high conflict to successful co-parenting, visitation, and child support arrangements without court involvement. As the stress at home reduced, the student's academic performance improved significantly.

Example 2: A mother in the program was struggling with anxiety and stress related to her older child being placed in a group home. This stress was affecting her ability to support her younger children academically. With therapeutic intervention, she was able to refocus her attention and reduce stress, resulting in improved academic outcomes for her younger children.

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Example 3: A family, previously experiencing constant financial stress, transitioned from unemployment to full employment. With improved financial stability, they were able to provide better support to their student, leading to academic progress.

Example 4: Several families worked on credit repair, moving closer to home ownership and financial independence. As they developed financial stability, their students thrived academically, free from the stress of economic insecurity.

Example 5: A family facing domestic violence received support from the local domestic violence shelter which allowed them to address the stress at home, making it a safer and more conducive environment for their student to focus on academics.

Example 6: Families experiencing housing instability were connected to resources and transitional housing services. Stable housing reduced stress and created a more supportive home environment for students.

### Black Male Scholars Family Thrive Program

The standards are the foundation of Black Male Scholars Family Thrive program:

- Parent Cafes embed the “Community Building” standards by empowering families to contribute to building a strong and healthy community by facilitating families’ social connections and developing their leadership skills.



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Parents and guardians in the Black Male Scholars program regularly participate in our monthly Parent Cafes. These gatherings focus on fostering a sense of community through shared meals and meaningful, personal conversations, with the ultimate aim of promoting transformation and healing.

Overall, our Parent Cafes have successfully met the objectives we set for them:

- Strengthening protective factors for participants.
- Creating safe spaces for self-reflection and shared learning.
- Enhancing participants' sense of connection to each other.

The positive outcomes observed include:

- A noticeable reduction in stress and an overall improvement in well-being among participants.
- Greater comfort among parents in disclosing their needs and accessing essential services and support.
- An emerging sense of leadership within families and communities, resulting in active roles assumed both within and beyond our program.

When selecting the curriculum for the Parent Cafes, we intentionally tailored it to address the specific needs of Black Male Scholars families. We utilize Parent Cafe cards published by Be Strong Families, which cover topics such as racial trauma, parenting adolescents, and the impact of the pandemic on mental health.

During our monthly Parent Cafes, families engage in discussions centered on various aspects of raising adolescents, with a particular focus on the experiences of Black males in America. These sessions provide parents with an opportunity to address shared challenges, learn from one another, and build a supportive community. The shared meals provided at each Cafe foster a sense of togetherness among families, reinforcing the notion that they are not alone in their struggles.



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Additionally, the Parent Cafes have facilitated valuable cross-cultural exchanges among families. For example, several White moms shared they valued gaining a deeper understanding of the daily microaggressions that their partners or sons experience. Black parents valued talking about the daily stress and worries they face raising a black son. These conversations have fostered understanding, bonding, and learning about how to raise Black males. These exchanges addressed common concerns of raising teens such as how to guide them in making smart decisions when they are gaining independence. This has been instrumental in building bridges and promoting open dialogue within the community.

As a result of these Cafes, families have organically created a support network that extends beyond our program. They now share resources such as; babysitting and playdates, helping each other with transportation for sports and other after-school activities. Parents no longer feel the need to keep their challenges a secret and are comfortable asking for help, as they realize many others face similar issues. The sense of shame surrounding seeking support has been lifted.

### Black Male Scholars Family Thrive Program

The standards are the foundation of Black Male Scholars Family Thrive program:

- Discovering Your Roots Program (and all BMS Family Thrive Programming) - Embed **"Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion"** standards by acknowledging and respecting families' diversity, supporting their participation in a diverse society, as well as engaging in ongoing learning and adaptation to diversity.






## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Another remarkable aspect of our family enrichment programs is the "Discover Your Roots" initiative, which provides ancestry DNA kits to families, enabling them to explore and celebrate their ancestral heritage. This program highlights the **"Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion"** standard by acknowledging and respecting families' diversity, supporting their participation in a diverse society, as well as engaging in ongoing learning and adaptation to diversity. The DNA test results serve as a foundation for a year-long, trauma-informed program aimed at reconnecting families with their roots which facilitates healing from generational trauma by fostering self-love and self-esteem within the family unit. Discover Your Roots culminates in a year-end cultural celebration featuring clothing and cuisine representative of their ancestral homelands.

### Parent Feedback (1 of 2)

Keena Franklin  
May 17 · 48

Today I celebrated with Hollywood at the Black Male Scholars African Ancestry at school to see what African tribe we came from. Well we came from the Limba tribe out of Sierra Leone. He was excited to be the only one from that tribe. It's been a really awesome year with the scholars and can't wait to see what the future holds for all the young men in the program.



Latoya Marks is with Oeht Skram.  
May 17 · 82

My babies, the muscle and the madness!! I am so proud of them, everyday, but this week I have to brag on them! Kinsey watched Raven Saunders in the Olympics, and her eyes lit up! She has wanted to throw shot put ever since representation matters because when she watched Raewee, my baby yelled, "Mommy she looks like me, and she isn't little, she's strong!" My pops has pushed to make sure she finds that here, and she had her first practice yesterday. BIG PROUD!! Kingston or "King Krab" lol as he's known at school, has been doing baseball and practicing football for a while. Not once has he complained. This year was a challenge for him academically but he grew so much as a young man. So thankful for all the teachers and staff of Black Male Scholars for pouring into him. Today we got DNA results from a project they did with the program to learn who they are and who they come from. Kingtores nickname from me is Booby, and he is of the Bubi Tribe! A maternal lineage from the Bubi, Tikar, Hausa, and Fulani people. So amazing!! If you know nothing else in this world Kingston and Kinsey, know you are our greatest gift, our pride and joy!! ❤️❤️

I just have to thank you all again for this amazing gift of our heritage! My family has been on a Group Message all day after I shared the results, looking up things and sharing with their kids. My Aunts were so excited to have that piece of history. Their mom passed 2 years this week and they loved having this. Even my skeptical, conspiracy theorist Cousin finally agreed that it was an amazing thing to share with our kids. Thank you for this blessing today! And thank you so very much for an amazing year and enriching these kiddos here! It was beautiful to see the brotherhood that they've grown to be and their love for you all. Thank you! And have an amazing summer!

Thank you!  
It has been such a re year!

## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

As you can see from the highlighted comments in the slide, the Discover Your Roots project has left a profound impact on the Black Male Scholars and their families. For instance, one family discovered the origins of traditions they had celebrated as a family, which deepened their understanding of their ancestors and their own sense of identity and belonging. This realization had a powerful and healing effect, reaffirming their connection to their heritage they did not have before.

Moreover, the program created new connections among families. Some found that they shared a common African tribe, which strengthened the bonds among students on a profound level. It also enhanced students' understanding of their African National peers.

One family was so moved by the results that they shared them with their entire extended family and embarked on tracing their family tree. For another family, who had previously felt disconnected from their African roots and primarily identified as American, this experience transformed their perspective and rekindled a strong connection to their roots.

The families uniformly expressed that this program brought healing in various ways, uniting them with their heritage and enriching their sense of self and history.

<i>When the BMS program has a parent/family event, I enjoy it and look forward to the next event.</i>	<b>50%</b> Strongly agree	<b>38%</b> Agree	<b>14%</b> Neutral
<i>As a parent/guardian, I feel supported by the BMS Program and its staff.</i>	<b>75%</b> Almost Always	<b>25%</b> Very Often	x Often
<i>The BMS Program and its staff communicates well with me regarding my scholar's schoolwork and progress.</i>	<b>86%</b> Strongly agree	<b>14%</b> Agree	x Neutral
<i>The BMS Program really cares about my scholar.</i>	<b>86%</b> Strongly agree	<b>14%</b> Agree	x Neutral

\*Several questions from the parent survey were adapted from the EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-being; others were questions that measured how supported parents and guardians felt.

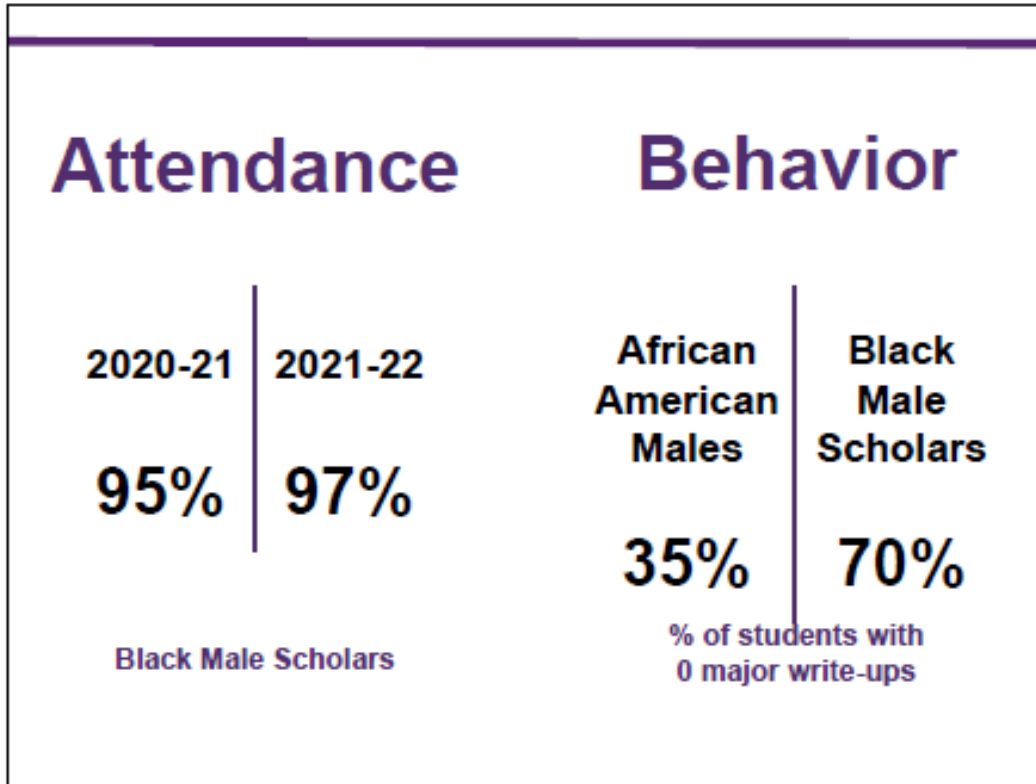
## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Looking at the numbers, it is clear that Family Thrive has resulted in profound transformations for the families in the Black Male Scholars Program.

These outcomes speak to the program's success:

- **Economic Empowerment:** Families have experienced a remarkable increase in their annual income, shifting from an average of \$20,000 - \$30,000 before the program to now averaging between \$40,000 - \$50,000. This financial growth has translated into reduced reliance on assistance programs, including SNAP and unemployment benefits. Families now have greater financial stability, affording them the means to meet their monthly needs.
- **Renewed Hope:** Families participating in the program have reported a significant boost in their sense of hope for the future. The program has instilled a renewed sense of optimism and aspiration, highlighting the potential for long-term positive change.
- **Quality Family Time:** The time spent together as families has significantly increased. From virtually no quality family time to a noticeable improvement, the program has encouraged families to strengthen their bonds and create cherished moments together.
- **Positive Parenting:** Parents' perceptions of their children's behavior have shifted from viewing it as disrespectful or purposefully disobedient to a more positive and understanding stance. They have recognized that their children are facing challenges and have transitioned from
- discipline to open communication, fostering healthier relationships.
- **Enhanced Support Network:** A significant increase has been noted in families feeling supported. Those who initially had limited belief in the support from others now strongly believe in the backing of their trusted networks. The program has empowered parents to seek help and assistance when needed.





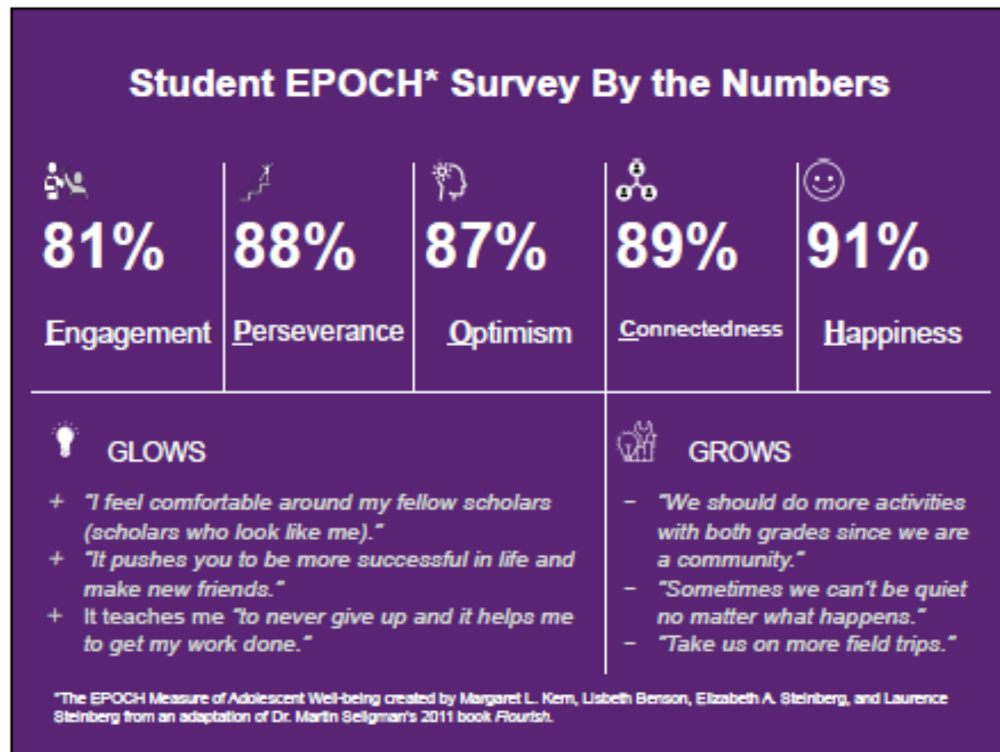
The numbers also demonstrate the positive impact the Black Male Scholar Program has had on student behavior and attendance:

**Attendance Results:** The implementation of the program has led to notable improvements in student attendance. In the academic year 2020-21, prior to the program's introduction, the school's attendance rate for Black Male Scholars stood at 95%. However, after the program's implementation in the following academic year, 2021-22, the attendance rate rose to 97%. This indicates that the program has positively influenced students' commitment to attending school regularly, which is essential for their academic success and overall well-being.

**Behavior Results:** The program has also significantly improved student behavior, with an impressive 70% of Black Male Scholars having 0 major write-ups. In contrast, African American males not enrolled in the Black Male Scholar Program have a lower rate, with only 35% achieving the same outcome. This demonstrates the program's effectiveness in fostering positive behavior and reducing disciplinary incidents.

The Black Male Scholar Program has made a significant impact on student behavior and attendance, fostering a more positive and engaged educational experience for its participants.





"The EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-being", consists of five different positive characteristics that together support higher levels of well-being :

- E - Engagement
- P - Perseverance
- O - Optimism
- C - Connectedness
- H - Happiness

We gave this survey to the students to measure outcomes related to the wellbeing of the Black Male Scholars in our program.

- **Happiness:** An impressive 81% of the Black Male Scholars reported experiencing happiness, marking a significant component of their well-being.
- **Engagement:** A remarkable 88% of scholars conveyed a strong sense of engagement, indicating their deep involvement and connection within the program.
- **Perseverance:** An encouraging 87% of scholars exhibited resilience, showcasing their determination to surmount challenges.
- **Optimism:** An impressive 89% of scholars felt optimistic, demonstrating a positive outlook on their future.
- **Connectedness:** An overwhelming 91% of scholars experienced a profound sense of connectedness, underscoring the strong community

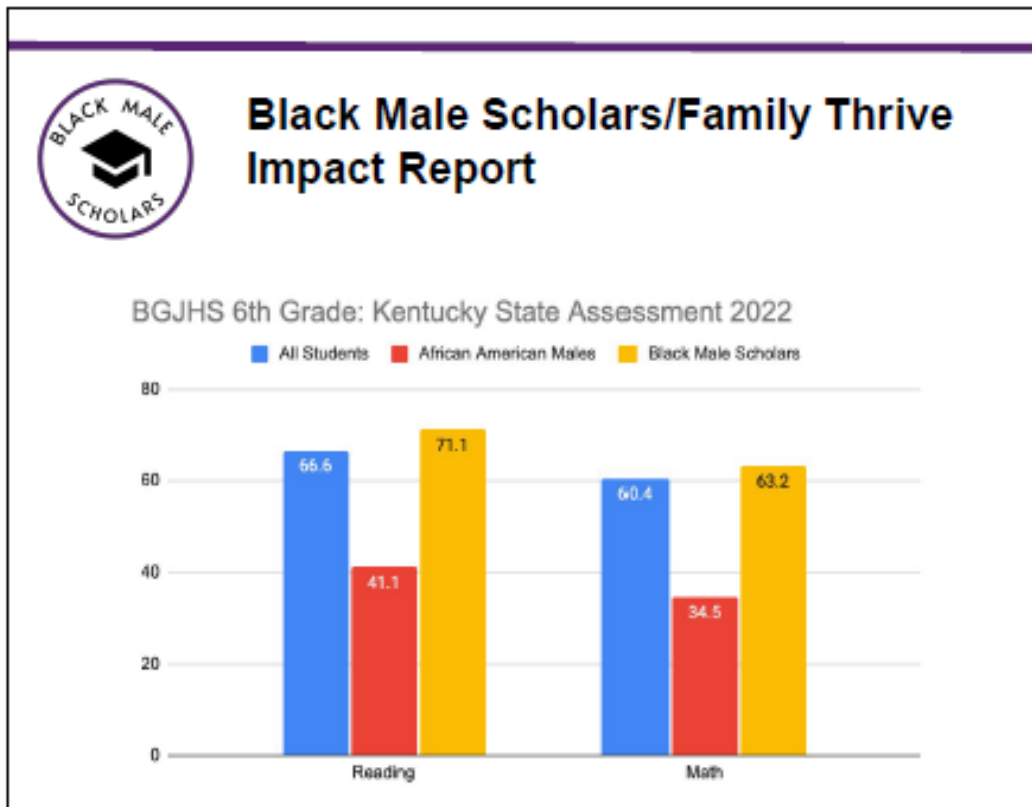
## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

- bonds nurtured within the program.

These findings are further supported by the comments from the students themselves:

- "I feel comfortable around my fellow scholars (scholars who look like me)." - The program has succeeded in creating a comfortable and inclusive atmosphere for the scholars.
- "It pushes you to be more successful in life and make new friends." - The program has instilled a drive for success and has helped scholars form meaningful connections.
- "It teaches me to never give up and helps me to get my work done." - The program has imparted essential life lessons, including resilience and effective work habits.
- "We should do more activities with both grades since we are a community." - Scholars express a desire for more inclusive community-building activities that involve all grade levels.

These outcomes show the positive impact of the Black Male Scholars program on the well-being of students, as evidenced by the positive emotional experiences, engagement, and resilience reported by the Black Male Scholars in our program.



## FAMILY CRISIS/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

When we first launched our program, we did not know how long it would take to see progress in reducing the achievement gap. However, the initial successes of Black Male Scholar program has emerged as a beacon of hope.

This outcome data reveals a narrative of transformation. While the combined academic index scores for African-American 6th-grade males in reading and math lagged significantly behind their peers, the inaugural cohort of Black Male Scholars shattered these barriers. In reading, they achieved a remarkable score of 71.1, outperforming not only their African American male peers but also the overall 6th-grade scores. Similarly, in math, the Black Male Scholars achieved an impressive score of 63.2, once again surpassing both their African American male peers and the overall 6th-grade scores.

This data is a testament to the effectiveness of our program in bridging the educational gap and creating an environment where Black Male students and their families can thrive. The Black Male Scholars Program has not only met but exceeded its mission by providing a program infused with African American culture, a robust social/emotional support system, mentorship, and active family engagement programming. This success story underscores the impact the GEER grant had in transforming the educational experiences of African American male students at Bowling Green Junior High. With the success of this initial cohort, we have secured sustainable funding to continue the Family Thrive Program. Without the startup funding provided by the GEER grant, this program could not have been created. Thank you!