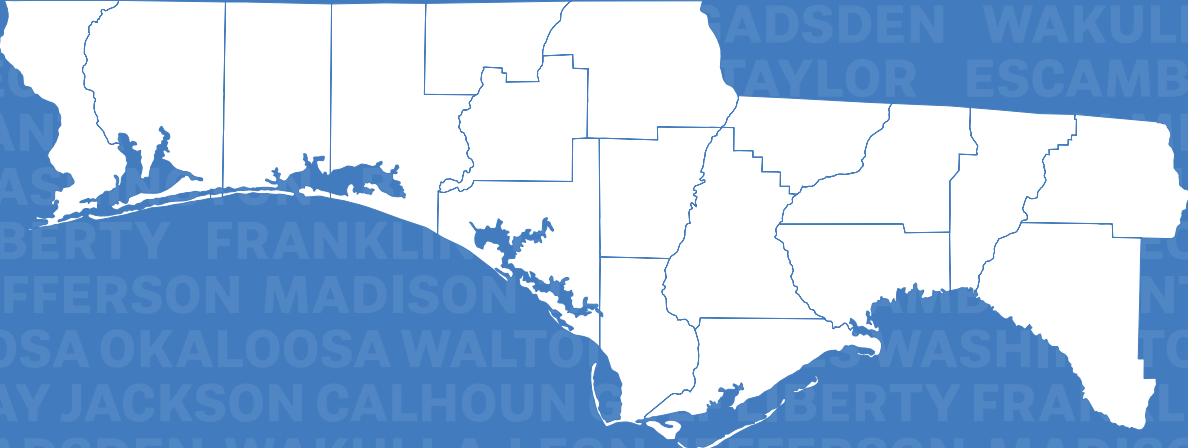


NWF Health Network



2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT

FROM THE DESK OF MIKE WATKINS

FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS, WE SERVED NORTH FLORIDA AS BIG BEND COMMUNITY BASED CARE. OVER THE YEARS, OUR PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND IMPACT HAVE GROWN CONSIDERABLY, AND BY 2020 WE HAD OUTGROWN THE NAME BIG BEND COMMUNITY BASED CARE.

That is why, in October of 2020, we transitioned to a new name that better reflects all of the work that we do – NWF Health Network. What has not changed is our passion, commitment, and higher purpose to serving North Florida.

At NWF Health Network we are still focused on providing unparalleled care to the people we serve. Whether in child protection, adoption, foster care, substance abuse treatment, or mental health services, we strive every day to be the very best in the industry.

SO, HOW ARE WE DOING?

Before I answer that, we must first acknowledge the challenges of the tasks before us. With an ongoing pandemic, a severe labor shortage, and the slow pace of the post-Hurricane Michael rebuild, the past year offered us more than the usual challenges.

That is why shattering our annual adoption goal was so rewarding. The Department of Children and Families set an ambitious goal for us at 184 adoptions and we ended the year at 226 children adopted into their forever homes!

Thank you to those families who opened their homes and their hearts to children in need in our community.

But that is not all, and as you will see throughout this document, we have numerous success stories and reasons to feel good – very good – about the work we do.

While these success stories can and should warm everyone's heart, I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment to remind our readers that NWF Health Network accomplished all this with an industry-best administrative rate of less than 3%.

Yes, again we set the standard for efficiency and effectiveness while providing top-notch services and breaking our own very high goals.

Kudos to our Board of Directors for their leadership and kudos to our staff and our service providers for leading the way once again, because each of us knows that the name may have changed but our higher purpose remains.

**SINCERELY AND
THANK YOU
FOR ALL YOU DO,**

**MIKE WATKINS
CEO**



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OUR **PURPOSE** HAS GROWN,
OUR **SCOPE** HAS GROWN,
OUR **IMPACT** HAS GROWN.

**IN OCTOBER 2020, WE OFFICIALLY
BEGAN A NEW ERA AS NWF HEALTH
NETWORK, INC.**

We began our work as a community based care Lead Agency for child protection services in 2003 with the formation of Big Bend Community Based Care. This occurred when a group of local providers—Camelot Community Care, Children’s Home Society, and DISC Village—came together to pool their collective resources and expertise to better serve their communities. What began as work in 8 counties quickly expanded to 14, and we provided high-quality child protection services in Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla, and Washington counties.

In 2013 we grew further and took on the role of Behavioral Health Managing Entity for our existing service area plus the addition of Circuit 1, which includes Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties—bringing our total service area to 18 counties spanning the Florida panhandle.

Since that time, we have continued to grow our footprint in North Florida by providing new and expanded services to those in need through our partnerships with local providers, the Florida

Department of Children and Families, and various federal agencies including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Our new moniker is a more clear reflection of who we are and what our corporate mission is today.

**OUR DEDICATION TO THE
COMMUNITIES WE SERVE HAS
BEEN REINVIGORATED AS WE
CONTINUALLY STRIVE TO BE
BETTER AND DO MORE FOR
THOSE IN OUR CARE.**



FINANCIAL UPDATE

NWF Health Network operated the 2020-2021 fiscal year with a budget of approximately \$123 million. We completed approximately \$11 million in Hurricane Michael recovery efforts related to severely damaged facilities during 2020-2021. NWF continued to face and navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and for much of the year the majority of our staff worked in a remote environment.

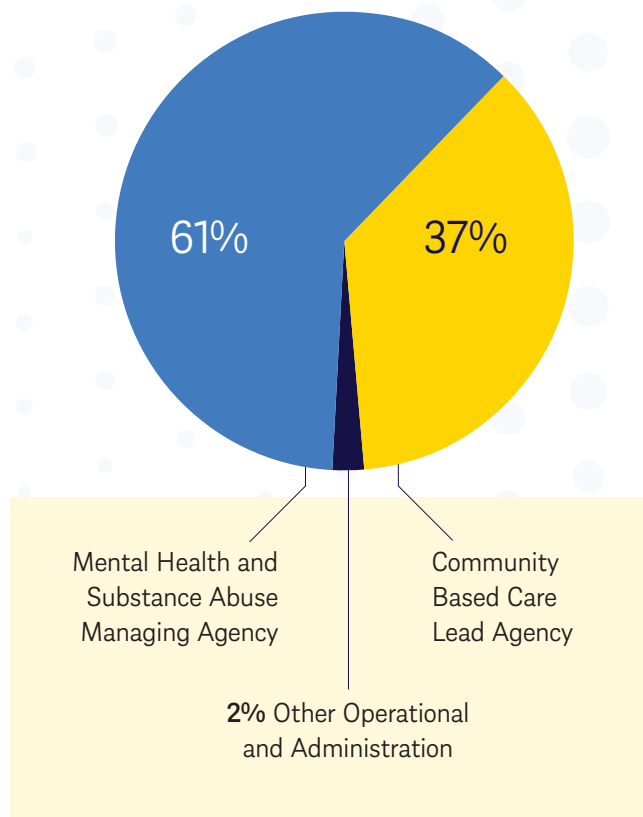
NWF Health continues to be proud to report that even on the heels of such significant loss from Hurricane Michael and the need to navigate through a raging pandemic, administrative service expenses have stayed at a rate less than 3%. This is something to be proud of, particularly in spite of the ever-increasing administrative requests and programmatic mandates without additional funding. NWF has been able to consistently maintain administrative expenses at a low level for more than ten years while continuing to provide high-quality services.

During 2020-2021, NWF Health Network completed a major construction effort on its Bay County Service Center which suffered catastrophic damages in excess of \$9 million during Hurricane Michael. Staff was able to move back into the newly reconstructed Service Center in November 2020.

NWF Health Network heads into the 2021-2022 fiscal year with a focus on renegotiation of the CBC Lead Agency contract with the Department of Children and Families while continuing to navigate the many changes to its system of care as a result of COVID-19.

NWF, like other CBC Lead Agencies and Managing Entities across the state of Florida, continues to face budget reductions for certain programs and services over the next several years. Due to a continued budget deficit in the CBC Lead Agency contract, NWF will continue to closely monitor expenditures and work through ongoing budget exercises to minimize the effect of anticipated deficits without compromising the services we provide.

EXPENDITURES DURING THE 2020-2021 FISCAL YEAR WERE INCURRED FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:



NWF Health Network continues to provide fiscal accountability through presentation of bi-monthly financial statements to its Board of Directors. Fiscal operating plans are reviewed by the finance committee and then forwarded to the full board for approval. An annual audit committee of the Board of Directors reviews the results of the Independent Auditors' Audit Report. James Moore & Co., P.L. serves as the independent auditor of NWF Health Network and issued an unmodified opinion on the most recent audited financial statements.

FOSTER FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM

SUPPORT DOESN'T STOP DURING A PANDEMIC

This past year, child protection agencies, courts, and community partners creatively adapted to meet the challenges of an unprecedented worldwide pandemic. While COVID-19 forced processes to happen a little differently, across the country people stepped up to continue supporting those families who open their hearts and homes to children in foster care.

NWF Health Network's Level 2 Foster Family Support Team immediately went into action converting their in-person preservice foster parent training classes (Quality Parenting Training classes, or QPT classes) to a virtual forum using Let's Talk Interactive's Zoom platform. Monthly in-person support groups were changed to virtual, intimate neighborhood community groups. Using social media advertisements to bring awareness to the need for new families and support for existing families, we saw an increase in families getting trained, licensed, and opening their hearts and homes to our most vulnerable children.

Weekly training emails provided families with a relevant training topic and connections to supplies, resources, and Foster Family Support Specialists guided foster families through online resources and how to use various virtual resources to partner with birth parents, educate the children in their homes, and receive therapeutic and medical support.

From March 2020 to March 2021, Quality Parenting Training classes were taught 9 different times using the new virtual platform. This allowed more people than ever to complete these trainings, and seventy-one new families were licensed! Existing families continued to serve our local children and 93 families relicensed their homes. Families continued to say

"Yes," and Foster Family Support made sure they had the tangible and intangible items needed to be successful. Christmastime brought gifts for almost 500 children in out-of-home care making sure that each recipient received the specific items on their wish lists. Community members donated 400 gift cards for caregivers to enjoy a cup of coffee on Valentine's Day, and they donated Easter baskets filled with personalized items, outfits, beach towels, and more to make sure every child in care had a special item for Easter.

Meals were arranged by staff members and donated by community members to help families at the start of a new placement, families welcoming babies, families transitioning children home, and other occasions. Clothing, diapers, and other necessities were left on porches during quarantine and were available for drop off and pick up.



This tangible and intangible support led to an increase in siblings being kept together, children kept in their home counties, and families staying licensed and continuing to say "Yes!"

During a time of uncertainty, one thing was certain... support doesn't stop during a pandemic.



WILLIAMS FAMILY

Chris and Louisa Williams have been Foster Parents with NWF Health Network since the beginning of 2020 and have welcomed multiple children into their home since then. They prioritize partnering with birth parents and played a major role in helping to reunify infant twins with their mother. Chris and Louisa created such a strong bond with the mother that they were officially named godparents of the twins and continue to maintain contact with the family. The Williams support the twins' mom how they are able to and have the twins over to their home regularly. They have been an excellent example of investing in the entire family and partnership with everyone involved in a foster placement.

When asked why they chose to become foster parents, Louisa said, "Chris and I have always loved children. In 2011 we adopted two boys out of foster care and assumed that completed our family - three boys was perfect! But this past year God really began putting foster care in our hearts - we knew the need was great and we knew it would be costly, but we had no idea how big the reward would be. The joy these babies have brought to our lives in the middle of this pandemic cannot be measured. Our faith calls us to action and loving these children in need is how we choose to answer that call."



HERENDEEN FAMILY

Derek and Tonna Herendeen have been Foster Parents with NWF Health Network since the summer of 2020. They welcomed a newborn baby girl into their home immediately after becoming licensed. During the next year as they watched & helped the baby grow, so did their relationship with the birth mother. Today, the Herendeen family has officially reunited the baby girl with her mother.

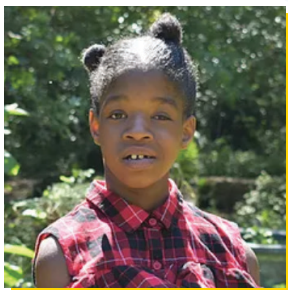
Asked about the experience, the birth mother Stacy stated, "The Herendeen family was so amazing to work with. Their kindness and love alone meant the world to me. They helped find a crib for my home and even purchased smoke detectors for me. I am so blessed that my daughter was placed in their family. They will be a part of our family and lives forever."

Tonna said that she and Derek wanted to foster to instill the importance of helping others in the lives of their children. Tonna said, "This is our first reunification. We plan to remain a support as long as Stacy wants us in their lives. As far as we are concerned, they are a part of our family. We couldn't have done it without the foster family support system partners."

HEART GALLERY



MASON



SERITA



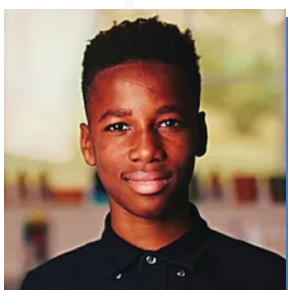
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SKYLER



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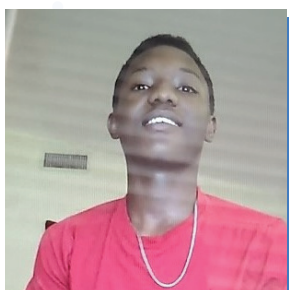
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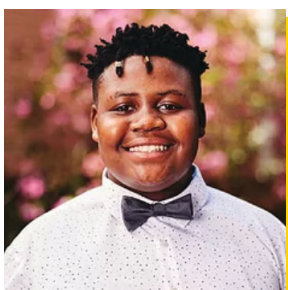
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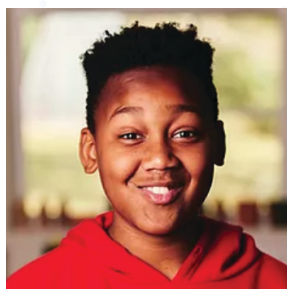
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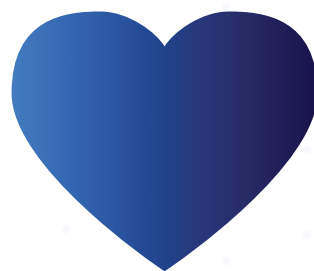
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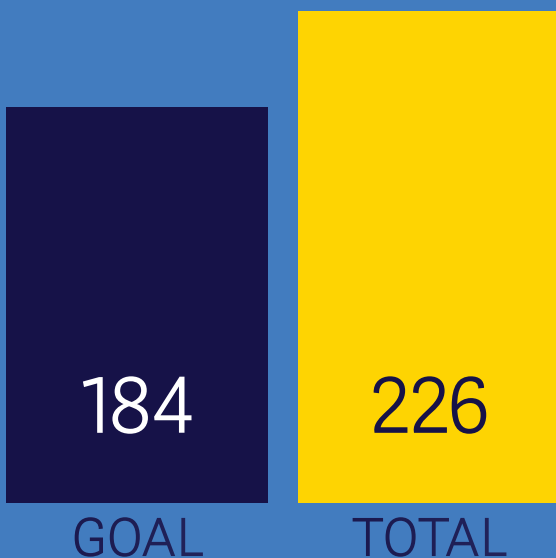
ANTWON



EXCEEDING ADOPTION GOALS

“Congratulations to the families that opened their hearts and homes for 226 children over the past year. The NWF Health Network team of staff and partners **SHATTERED A GOAL** during very difficult and challenging times. This success comes with a great deal of sacrifice, hard work, and an unbending commitment to the children of Northwest Florida. I am proud of every one of our team members and am of course very happy for the 226 children who have been placed in forever homes.”

–Mike Watkins, NWF Health CEO



JEREMIAH

Jeremiah's family had court involvement and he had been in and out of foster care placements his entire life. He was placed in a family-style group home in 2018 where he remained for three years. Jeremiah was very involved in his case and a very good advocate for himself, but he was stressed a lot, had a lot of body image issues, described himself as having “a lot of phobias,” and was wound tight all the time. He did fully participate with his recruitment team and a match was made with a single dad and father of two in Utah.

Jeremiah was really nervous at first because there is a big difference between Florida and Utah! It was clear right away that he was beginning to spread his wings as he got more familiar with Adam and his two adopted children. Before we knew it, we were meeting and speaking with a totally different kid. He went from X-Box addict to a mountain climbing, health-conscious teen. Adam's family accepted Jeremiah exactly as he was and that made all the difference in this child's life. The Jeremiah that came to his finalization hearing was just not the same kid that flew to Utah. He was smiling, light, and so proud of his new life and his new family. Also, Jeremiah decided veggie burgers aren't really as bad as he thought they might be.

It was an absolute blessing to be a part of this child's life and this new family's journey.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE COORDINATION

In Circuit 1, NWF Health Network been working closely with a family with multiple complex needs.

The family includes a mother and father with co-occurring mental health and medical needs and three children, all with autism spectrum disorder and who have complex needs. NWF Health had several multi-disciplinary staffings and utilized the Local Review Team process to determine how best to serve the family. Staff has worked especially close with one of the children; a child who was non-verbal, unable to communicate effectively with those around him, and who had displayed aggression and violent tendencies at times.

Over the course of the last few months the child, father, and staff have worked together to accomplish amazing things!

The child was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and intermittent explosive disorder. Armed with this information, staff was able to identify available services that would best meet his needs.

As the child had never been able to communicate effectively with those around him, family relationships and school life were both very challenging. Working with his school, NWF Health facilitated the child receiving a speech device in addition to speech therapy. Staff arranged for a home health nurse to assist the child and his family with daily tasks such as regular baths. The home health nurse has helped the child feel more comfortable with bathing and self-care and provided helpful guidance and resources for the entire family.

NWF Health also arranged for the child to receive Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy at Great Gaines Behavioral Solutions in Crestview 2-3 times per week. Staff was able to arrange for transportation to and from the child's school, Great Gaines, and his home.

This high level of care has helped the child minimize outbursts during transitions and non-preferred activities and reduced his violent behaviors. It is particularly rewarding to note that the child has developed positive relationships with his ABA therapists and his home health nurse. His father has reported that the child loves them!

With these interventions in place, the child has begun to communicate with family and teachers, requesting to participate in activities, and receiving tangible awards. He was able to attend school over the summer with minimal aggressive outbursts. His behaviors are now improved enough for his father to coordinate services and activities for the child's two siblings as well.

The child and family continue to rely on case management services to provide supports and advocacy for continued engagement in community services.

CHILD PROTECTION CASE MANAGEMENT: BAY COUNTY



August 2020 marked one year since NWF Health Network began providing direct case management services in Bay County.

The first year, August 2019-August 2020, focused on stabilizing the work force. The second year saw a focus on improving engagement with parents involved in the dependency court system receiving case management services.

Activities were provided to support parent engagement, including trainings designed to understand motivations for change, effective engagement in difficult conversations, and holding Partnership Meet and Greet meetings between biological and foster parents to improve communication and establish rapport.

One of the more innovative ways that NWF Health focused on parent engagement with highlighted through the creation of the “Do Better” award. This award was developed in honor of Mayo Angelou and her great words of wisdom: “Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.” Each month this award was given to a case manager who best embodied these words and embraced a focus on parent engagement in their daily work.

This outstanding work in parent engagement has been exhibited in a wide variety of ways. Trametha Ceasar

meets parents where they are and treats them as she would want to be treated. Ashley Stegemeyer has worked with several parents to increase their informal support systems so much so that reunification was able to occur in an expeditious time frame. Carla Wofford works so hard to establish rapport with parents that they trust her enough to be open and honest about relapse, which allows her to help them at critical points in their recovery.

Sarah Stys’ compassion for parents shines through even during difficult conversations. Rocky Cox has done outstanding work implementing the Partnership Meet and Greet meetings to establish better relationships between biological and foster parents. Tyrone Cleveland maintains a positive attitude in all that he does, including supporting some of the most resistant parents through positive change. Jacqueline Manni remains calm and consistent in a way that models that behavior for parents, successfully reunifying some families that initially refused all help.

While success comes in many forms when working with children and families, parent engagement speaks for itself when looking at the dramatic improvement in achieving permanency that this case management team has achieved.

FEATURED CASE MANAGER



DEMARCO

NWF Health Network is proud to honor DeMarco Johnson for his dedication and commitment to going above and beyond for the children and families he serves.

After graduating from Florida A&M University and serving as a Care Coordination Consultant with Boys Town for a year, DeMarco worked as a Dependency Case Manager with Children's Home Society for two years. As a Dependency Case Manager, DeMarco worked to bring stability and strength to children and families in foster care – particularly teenagers struggling to cope with trauma. DeMarco went far beyond his call to duty and mentored kids in need of guidance and encouragement.

DeMarco was awarded Case Manager of the Year for Circuit 2 in 2018 and was honored during Mentoring Month for his outstanding commitment to supporting the children and families he worked with.

He then transitioned to a new role as an Adoption Case Manager in 2020.

Many teens in foster care experience trauma resulting in risky behaviors including substance and alcohol abuse. DeMarco takes the extra time outside of his day-to-day responsibilities to show the children he cares about them – he attends football games, basketball games, church services, and gym sessions with the teens offering the encouragement of a trusted adult looking out for their best interests. He mentors them on healthy coping alternatives – often reminding the teens that it is easy to get into trouble that is hard to get out of.

“There are no ‘bad kids,’” says DeMarco. “Only kids in tough situations struggling to cope with what to do next. As adults, it’s our responsibility to help our community’s children see their full potential and find the right ways to reach it. We can guide them towards the right opportunities.”

DeMarco is passionate, takes pride in his work, and is motivated by results. DeMarco stated what he enjoys most about his current position is the interactions with children and their families and “the big day” finalizations. During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, DeMarco assisted 36 children in being adopted into their forever homes. DeMarco added, “I believe the work is more of a collective effort and it takes a team to achieve adoption finalizations for children.”

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



This year, NWF Health Network participated in a number of community engagement activities. Two of the most exciting events of the year were our annual Christmas toy drive and the new faith-based initiative created by Governor DeSantis.

NWF Health partnered with hundreds of individuals and groups to help fund \$150 each for the wish lists of 420 children in Level 1 and Level 2 licensed foster homes, as well as toys, gift cards, and a variety of other gifts for the other 600+ children in our care. Additionally, many community partners joined the effort, including: the United States Marine Corps, Toys for Tots of Panama City, Destiny Worship Center in Panama City, Kiwanis Club of Panama City, and American Legion Auxiliary in Panama City Beach. When it was all said and done, we had a record-setting collection drive for more than one thousand children in our care across the Florida panhandle, with gifts, money, gift cards, and more. The hundreds of individuals, churches, and who contributed to this toy drive made Christmas that much more special for thousands of kids.

In addition, NWF Health embraced a new faith-based initiative developed by Governor DeSantis. The Governor's office joined with places of worship across Florida connect community-based care organizations with local houses of worship to help children and families in their care. The first local event was held in Leon County on October 16th. The Governor's Office shared the goals of the initiative and introduced a

partnership with Share Your Heart, a non-profit that collaborates with county, state, local, and faith-based organizations to provide help and resources for children and their families across the State of Florida.

The Governor's Office also announced statewide virtual events for faith leaders and child protection professionals from communities around the state titled "An Act of Good Faith." These virtual events focused on Florida's child protection system and introduced new resources available to faith-based institutions and community organizations. Florida's First Lady Casey DeSantis, NFL Super Bowl-winning Coach Tony Dungy, award-winning singer/songwriter Chris Tomlin, then-DCF Secretary Chad Poppell, and Erik Dellenback, the Governor's Liaison for Faith and Community, hosted virtual events with faith and community leaders across Florida. NWF Health CEO Mike Watkins joined the group for virtual events in Circuits 2 and 14.

These community engagements have contributed to our ability to build positive relationships with the people we serve, our provider network, community partners, and staff help to ensure child protection and behavioral health needs are being met.

OUT-OF-HOME CARE TEAMS

INTAKE & PLACEMENT TEAM

The NWF Health Network Placement team identifies appropriate placements for the children in need of licensed care in our communities. The team is guided by the following core principles: keeping siblings together, providing stable placements, keeping children in their home community, placing children in the least restrictive placement appropriate for their individual needs, and ensuring healthy transitions.



Placement referrals are received from DCF Child Protective Investigators and Dependency Case Managers with local Case Management organizations. While searching for placement, the team works to prioritize keeping as many familiar and positive connections for the child intact as possible. In preparation for the Family First Prevention Services Act, which provides additional federal funds for approved foster prevention programs that strengthen families, there has been a statewide effort to reduce the number of children served in group care. This also aligns with our core goal of placing children in the least restrictive placement type possible. In the past year, the NWF Health placement team has reduced the number of children in group care from 103 to 63 and continues to push for further reduction.

LEVEL I FOSTER CARE LICENSING TEAM

NWF Health Network's Level I kinship caregiver licensing team began in July 2019. The program serves families that have accepted the placement of a child as a relative, non-relative, or fictive kin caregiver. These families are in a unique position in that the day before the placement, they were living without anticipation of having to step up and care for a vulnerable child. Level I Kinship Caregivers don't have the luxury of preparing to care for additional children. This can present barriers for the family in meeting foster home licensing standards.

Our Level I Licensing Team has become known as "Barrier Busters" for their work ensuring that families can overcome these barriers and become licensed. When families receive their license, they are eligible for increased financial support to meet the needs of the children entrusted in their care. Since the program began two fiscal years ago, the Kinship Caregiver Team has refined its approach to licensing families and created an efficient and effective approach to achieving goals. The team currently has 230 children in Level I Licensed Kinship Care placements, that is approximately 42% of all children currently in Relative and Non-Relative care. Over the past 25 months the team has licensed a total of 206 Kinship Caregiver families.

Our Level I Licensing Team has become known as "Barrier Busters" for their work ensuring that families can overcome these barriers and become licensed.

REUNIFICATIONS



PENNIE

Pennie is a single mother who was recently reunified with her two daughters, ages five and nine years old. Pennie has shown enormous growth, resilience, and determination in the face of many challenges. Pennie found the strength to remove herself from a dangerous domestic violence situation and move out of Tallahassee to get a fresh start. Pennie worked diligently in substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling to get healthy and sober. She secured herself a good job and was quickly promoted to Assistant Manager due to the leadership and integrity that she demonstrated.

Shortly after Pennie was legally reunified with her girls, she lost the house that she had been making a home in due to circumstances outside of her control. She has arranged a transfer at her job and has found a new rental property.

Pennie reported that her daughters are thrilled to be back in school this year and are excited to sign up for cheerleading and softball soon!

The NWF Health Dependency Case Coordination team says that the strength they have seen in this mother has been inspiring and she works herself tired on a daily basis in order to keep her girls safe and well. They have seen her self-value increase during her dependency journey which has made her a stronger woman and mother.



SARA

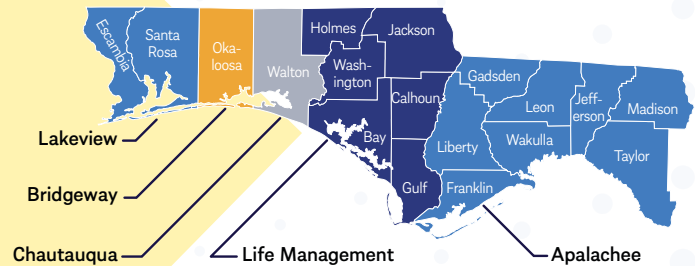
Sara* was in foster care as a child until she aged out at 18 years old. She then spent years suffering domestic violence while trying to keep her two children safe. One night, after a domestic violence incident, Sara's husband left the home and she was able to safely flee with her children. Sara connected with service providers in her community that expanded her understanding of the impacts of domestic violence on not only herself but her children and gave her space to process the trauma she had experienced while growing her self-esteem. Her children were placed in out-of-home care while Sara rebuilt her life and created a safe home for herself and her children.

Sara has always been a fierce advocate who deeply loves her children. She never missed a visit and remained incredibly involved in her children's lives, attending all meetings and appointments for her children. Sara worked diligently and sought support from her family to make a safe and stable home for her children to return to.

Sara and her children were successfully reunified 6 months ago and have been thriving! Sara balances the demands of her job with parenting and supporting her children, plus ensuring that they receive the services they need. Her children have been doing well in school and Sara hopes to move into a new home with them soon. **Name changed to protect client's safety and privacy*

COMMUNITY ACTION TREATMENT (CAT)

A Community Action Treatment (CAT) Team is a multi-disciplinary clinical team that provides comprehensive, intensive community-based treatment to families with youth and young adults, ages 11 to 21, who are at risk of out-of-home placement due to a mental health or co-occurring disorder and related complex issues. CAT Teams focus on clients whom traditional services are not/have not been adequate.



LAKEVIEW: Although challenged by COVID, Lakeview’s CAT Team has a number of kids who are doing really well as a result of the wraparound approach of the CAT. They have been able to divert hospitalizations, identify a relative placement that prevented potential foster care, and assisted youth in getting a stable job. They are also working with young adults in graduating high school, getting jobs, and learning financial literacy skills.

APALACHEE: Using creative approaches, motivational interviewing, and cognitive behavioral therapy, Apalachee’s CAT Teams have also seen successes, including teens being employed, graduating from high school, dating, and getting along well with their family.

BRIDGEWAY: Bridgeway has incorporated an aftercare program to assist with a smooth transition out of CAT. They have been working with young adults who would otherwise be struggling and have seen youth become employed, play on sports teams, and graduate high school. They have been able to help young adults quickly secure safe housing and are even supporting one as he seeks to join the military.

CHAUTAUQUA: Chautauqua’s CAT Team described the powerful impact of their mentorship on participants. They provided a specific example of a youth with severe depression and trauma but found support in a mentor who encouraged him to attend CAT outings and described him as a “whole different kid” after just one outing. They have also been utilizing Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) training with youth and seeing significant breakthroughs with kids in short periods of time.

LIFE MANAGEMENT CENTER: Life Management Center’s CAT Teams are seeing improvements and increased participation since returning to face-to-face activities. They are also seeing youth who had received earlier services returning to the program as young adults as self-referrals for assistance with successful transition to adulthood. This demonstrates not only the strength of the program but the lasting impacts it has on the youth it supports.

STUDENTS TAKING ACTIVE RESPONSIBILITY (STAR)

THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC CREATED A GREAT MANY BARRIERS TO HOLDING IN-SCHOOL DRUG PREVENTION ACTIVITIES DURING THE PAST YEAR.

Our Students Taking Active Responsibility (STAR) team members went straight into the schools with the new school year and safely held in-person classes despite these obstacles. During the school year they continued to provide LifeSkills classes to middle school participants at all 4 of our traditional middle school locations in Walton County. Their dedication ensured that our middle schoolers continued to get the information and training needed to help them stay drug-free while building commitment to their education goals.

During the summer, the STAR team continued to serve Walton County youth in community settings and during the extended school year at two of our middle school locations. In total, the summer portion of the STAR program had 62 youth participants. The students that participated in the Summer Bridge program were incoming 7th and 8th graders who needed to recover credits in order to pass their previous grade level and advance to the next grade with their peers. Two of the STAR prevention counselors helped these



students make the most of their time during this extended school year, and as a result these prevention services helped the participants successfully earn their required credits. STAR team members mentored these students to reinforce LifeSkills topics like making good decisions, coping with anger, and social skills. They also helped with tutoring the students to help them better understand what was required during this compressed timeframe of the summer.

The Summer Bridge program was successful, and prevention played an important role. Our STAR team members reported that all of the students they worked with advanced to the next grade, even though there were originally some concerns with their ability to do so. It is great to be able to show how having prevention counselors work with students during the summer can show such great results in such a short time helping kids achieve their school goals despite the negative impact of the COVID-19 epidemic.

STAR team members mentored these students to reinforce LifeSkills topics like making good decisions, coping with anger, and social skills.

CDAC COMMUNITY PREVENTION & ACHIEVE ESCAROSA

CDAC Behavioral Healthcare's Community Prevention program, for the FY 2020-2021, is highlighting our partnership with Achieve EscaRosa.

Achieve EscaRosa is a partnership in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties that organizes parents, educators, business owners, health providers, faith-based leaders, community organizers, and residents. They bring key organizations like CDAC together to advocate for significant improvement rooted in data and action, where the needs of children, students, families, and adults are prioritized.

The FY 2020-2021 brought about strategic planning to complete a public health survey to collect data on community members' input on health disparity needs. We identified obesity, mental health, and substance abuse disorder as the top 3 health priorities in our community. Achieve EscaRosa closely partnered with Baptist Hospital representatives, Lakeview Center, Sacred Heart representatives, Florida Department of Health Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties, University of West Florida, and many other stakeholders for the project. CDAC has been actively involved in data collection, data analysis, strategic planning, and being an active member of the project group since the inception.

Community Prevention at CDAC continues to be a prevention leader working with multiple sectors to meet the needs of the families and individuals in Circuit One. During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, leading prevention efforts were:

- An online Community Discussion on Addiction and Recovery with questions and answers from community members to panel experts. The partnering agencies were provided by Lakeview, a private physician who specializes in addiction, and 2 community members with life experiences.
- The Community Prevention Director was a leading partner for the Escambia County Tobacco Coalition with the facilitation and participation as a panel expert on VAPING and a Vaping prevention online Community Discussion.
- The Community Prevention team lead the planning and preparing for National Night Out 2020. We were able to conduct a drive-through event partnering with law enforcement and community centers in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. This annual event grows every year even with recent challenges. We distributed 15,000 pounds of food, school supplies, and resource information.

WRAPAROUND PRACTICE MODEL



Wraparound is a facilitated support planning model designed to work with individuals and families experiencing complex needs. The purpose of the Wraparound practice model is to engage the person or family in a team-based approach to meeting their goals – helping families identify their strengths, culture, and needs, and then use those strengths to achieve their individualized goals.

NWF Health Network has received a federal grant to offer Wraparound services free of charge to families in Bay, Gulf, Jackson, and Calhoun Counties who were impacted by Hurricane Michael. The Wraparound Bay Program currently serves adults involved in the child protection system working towards reunification, and this program will soon start serving youth in K-12th grade with complex needs. Some of the trainings/activities the wraparound team has provided to families are vision boards to visualize their goals, GED preparation tutoring, and driving lessons. This program has been very successful in promoting self-efficacy within the families being served.

PROJECT RISE

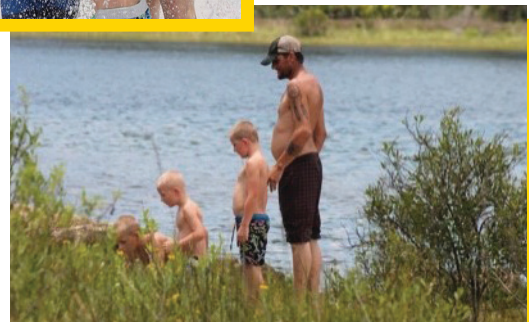
Project RISE began on July 1, 2020 when NWF Health Network partnered with Twin Oaks for this program. The goal of Project RISE is to support adults and independent youth involved in the child protection system as they work to become the best parents they can be with comprehensive wraparound services and treatment. The wraparound unit at Twin Oaks consists of a supervisor, 3 wraparound specialists, and one peer specialist that provide evidence based wraparound services to parents and a small number of independent youth in Bay County. The parents involved in Project RISE are those whose behavioral health disorder is a contributing factor to their involvement in the child protection system and the second population are young adults with past and/or current trauma exposure who have “aged out” of the local foster care system, have no family support or other support network, and are now in independent living status.

NWF Health Network has utilized Project RISE grant funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to fill a significant post-disaster gap in services and care by implementing wraparound services to the aforementioned clientele impacted by Hurricane Michael and with involvement in the child protection system. We strive to reduce the barriers that prevent them from accessing mental and substance use disorder treatment, crisis counseling, and other related supports (such as housing, healthcare, peer support, transportation, employment, childcare, etc.) that are central to their long-term recovery.

These pictures are a father and his sons participating in supervised visitation with Wraparound staff at a water park. The father shared that he was much more comfortable spending time with his children in a natural environment instead of a clinical visitation room. He and his three sons enjoyed this opportunity tremendously! What a joy to see the happy times this family enjoyed as part of their overall care plan.

NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PROJECT RISE:

- 11 of our clients who had been in the system for more than two years and headed to termination of parental rights were able to turn things around and regain custody of their children.
- Housing was secured for many which has been one of the biggest barriers our clients face.
- Employment was found and maintained for our clients
- Project RISE staff has taught several clients how to drive, helped them study for their driving test, and assisted them in purchasing vehicles.
- We offered a GED prep course and helped clients get their GED



EARLY CHILDHOOD COURT



NWF HEALTH NETWORK'S EARLY CHILDHOOD COURT (ECC) INITIATIVE HAS BEEN OPERATING AT OR NEAR CAPACITY AND CONTINUES TO BE ACTIVE IN ALL SIX COUNTIES IN CIRCUIT 14.

The ECC team has focused on sustainability and gained several Medicaid billable Child-Parent Psychotherapy providers in the past year. This is a positive step as we can increase service availability to those in ECC and others involved in the dependency system. Healthy Families Florida (HFF), an evidence-based prevention program, selected Gulf County to begin piloting an approach that works in tandem with the ECC program. It is anticipated that this partnership will increase HFF's service availability in other areas as well. This year, NWF Health's ECC program also facilitated training for attorneys & Court Team members on Child-Parent Psychotherapy and its place in problem-solving courts. Due to COVID-19, we continue to utilize Zoom to facilitate Family Team Meetings and monthly court. We have seen a positive increase in the participation of parents and families in both!

In March 2021, NWF Health worked with Florida State University on a film titled Hope and Healing that was

featured at Florida's ECC All Sites Training. This film was also accepted to be shown at the American Public Health Association's 2021 film festival from October to December.

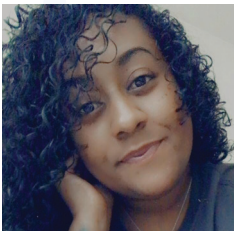
As a result of the success of many ECC sites throughout Florida, the courts obtained funding from the Legislature that will directly support the Community Coordinator positions for the implementation of the ECC initiative. Beginning in September 2021, NWF Health's ECC Community Coordinator will transition to the court system. This transition will be relatively seamless for NWF Health as leadership has been essential in partnering with the courts in navigating this significant and positive step for the ECC program.

The ECC program has been supported by NWF Health since its inception in 2015. The success of this program has been a direct result of the agency's support and investment.

IN MEMORIAM

Sadly, NWF Health recently lost three of our dedicated team members. They each committed themselves to our charge of providing support to children and families in north Florida and their loss will be felt widely. We will continue to honor their legacy through our work and helping those we serve.

Janiece Marie Cantres



We mourn for the loss of our beloved friend and colleague Janiece. The 33-year-old mother of two was not only a shining light in the lives of her two daughters Sianalisa and Marielle,

but in the lives of all the children she cared for while working as a valued Family Support Worker. It is hard to come by people like Janiece that have a true passion for what they do. Always seeing the positive in others, she treated our parents, caregivers, and children with kindness and respect.

NWF Health Network lost a valued and irreplaceable member of the family, and we will never forget her impact on us. We would like to extend our condolences to Janiece's family and hope they find peace in this time of sorrow.

Thomas Ethan Dunkle



We mourn the loss of our friend Thomas Dunkle, who was one of our team's most valuable and passionate members. To many, what Thomas had achieved in his life was beyond admirable. After obtaining a bachelor's

degree from the University of West Florida and a Juris Doctorate from Loyola Law School, Thomas was admitted to the Florida Bar in 2014. He did not seek to serve himself, but to serve those who needed him the most with his wealth of knowledge.

Both in his work with NWF Health and his time at Camp Victory, the Cocoa Beach native was able to positively affect the lives of children and families alike through humor and council. Thomas was one of a kind, and we will never forget the impact he had on our lives and the lives of others. In this time of sadness, we would like to send our sincere condolences to Thomas's parents, Scott and Charlotte, and his brother and sister, Timothy and Tara.

Jeanna Lilette Olson



We are deeply saddened by the loss of our friend Jeanna Olson, a caring person and a valuable member of our team. Jeanna was recognized as one of the "25 Women You Need to Know" by the Tallahassee Democrat,

along with numerous other accolades she collected throughout her life and career. With her wide-ranging education, from attending fashion school to obtaining a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice, Jeanna realized her passion was helping those in need. This passion led her to be an active and passionate member of the Department of Children and Families, where she often worked closely with NWF Health.

We would like to extend condolences to her husband, Donald and her daughter, Leanna, as well as the many others that cherished her as much as we did. Her service will never be forgotten.

HANDLE WITH CARE

NWF Health has successfully instituted “Handle with Care” processes in three out of four counties in Circuit 1, with the final county working to establish the program in the coming fiscal year. Handle with Care is an evidence-based, trauma-informed program that provides a ‘heads up’ to the school system when a student’s family has been involved with law enforcement.

Nationally, 60% of American children have been exposed to violence, crime, or abuse. Prolonged exposure to trauma or violence can severely undermine a child’s ability to focus, behave appropriately, and learn in school. NWF Health implemented the Handle with Care program to combat these potential outcomes and to better support children through times of struggle.

Handle with Care programs promote school-community partnerships aimed at ensuring that children who are exposed to trauma in their home, school, or community receive appropriate interventions to help them achieve academically at their highest levels despite whatever traumatic circumstances they may have endured. Handle with Care programs support children exposed to trauma and violence through improved communication and collaboration between law enforcement, schools and mental health providers, and connects families, schools and communities to mental health services.

In communities with our Handle with Care programs, police are trained to identify children at the scene, find out where they go to school, and send the school a confidential email or fax that simply says . . . “Handle Johnny with care.” That’s it. No other details. In addition to providing notice, officers also build positive relationships with students by interacting on a regular basis. They visit classrooms, stop by for lunch, and simply chat with students to help promote positive relationships and perceptions of law enforcement officers.

Teachers have been trained on the impact of trauma on learning and are incorporating many interventions to mitigate the negative impact of trauma for identified students.

We are proud to have implemented Handle with Care in some of our school districts and look forward to expanding the program’s reach to ensure that children across north Florida are supported in the wake of violence or trauma that they witness or experience.



HANDLE WITH CARE: FLORIDA
PROTECT • HEAL • THRIVE

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- Twin Oaks Juvenile Development
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