

FALL 2021



TMHA

Transitions-Mental
Health Association

2020-21 Community Impact Report

We Serve Those Who Need Us...

5,294

Clients Served

3,911

**in San Luis
Obispo County**

1,383

**in Northern Santa
Barbara County**

2,123

Families Supported

10,801

**Central Coast
Hotline Calls**

348

Clients in Housing



Neighbors Without a Home

TMHA Homeless Services increased by 37% in 12 months, reflecting the growing need for community solutions to San Luis Obispo County's unhoused population. Our Homeless Outreach Team nearly doubled the number of people served in the field (from 251 to 481), and the Board of Supervisors voted once again to expand our Housing First program. 65Now will grow to serve 80 clients, with talk of even more expansion and a name change to SLO HousingNow.

A Team Always on the Move

Three years ago, Bekkah Tucker and Dan Keller began working together within TMHA's Homeless Outreach Team. Each day, they take TMHA's mobile van to different sites in SLO County: the 40 Prado Homeless Services Center, Ramona Park in Grover Beach, Project Homekey in Paso Robles and ECHO in Atascadero. Their goal is to forge connections with community members who have fallen through the cracks, particularly those with mental health needs. Together, they look to make positive change any way they can.

"Sometimes it is just offering a sleeping bag or a bottle of water," says Keller, "kind of baby stepping them into some trust. Some people who've lived on the street for life, offering them an ear to hear their story can start a relationship."

"Some of these people are pretty far removed from society," adds Tucker. "They might not know what kind of resources are available, they might not have transportation to get to those resources, so I think it's great how mobile we are as a team. Sometimes we get there at the right time, when people are ready to take that step forward."

In a community searching for larger solutions to homelessness, the answer is both obvious and frustratingly out of reach. The County remains in a housing crisis, and large-scale solutions for the unhoused population

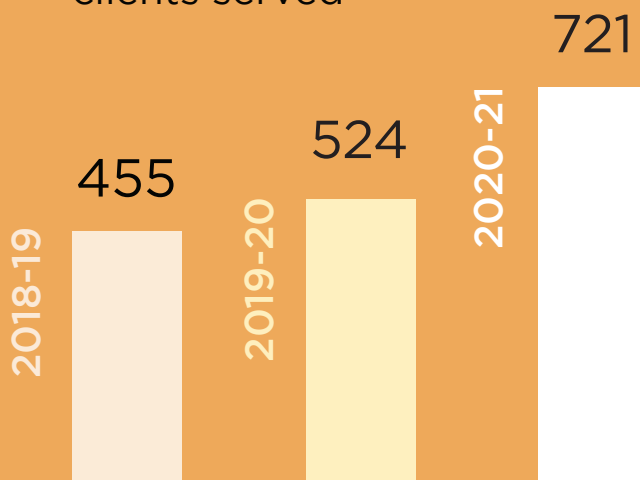
are few and far between. Both Tucker and Keller are enthused over the Housing Authority's new Landlord Incentive program which has many more landlords ready to accept Section 8 vouchers. Nearly 100 people have been housed through the program... but hundreds more still wait for their opportunity.

"A lot of people think homelessness is a choice," says Tucker. "As if folks choose to abuse substances, or they're too lazy to get a job. Whereas, what we see every day is that there's been massive trauma in their lives. And I wish there were more compassion, because these are our neighbors. Most of the people we work with have been in this community for decades. I get asked all the time, 'What are you guys doing to solve this problem?' And the question I ask back is 'What are *you* doing to solve this problem?' Because it's not just us. One nonprofit isn't going to solve it. It will take the community as a whole."



Homeless Outreach in Atascadero

Homeless Services clients served



Families Facing a Challenge

We find ourselves living in an age of heightened health concerns, changing rules, dashed hopes, and lingering uncertainty. While each of us absorbs this individually, families experience the ripples that emanate from every member of their household. It comes as no surprise that our Family Support Specialists and Youth Family Specialists were called on to provide services to over 2,100 family members in both San Luis Obispo and Northern Santa Barbara Counties.

A New Key to Parenting

TMHA's Family Services have been working with our communities for nearly three decades, and the program is always looking to improve the way it connects with local families. This year Program Manager Shawn Ison elected to have her staff certified as instructors of Triple P-Positive Parenting Program.

Triple P is designed to give parents and caregivers the opportunity to develop their own problem-solving skills and strategies, particularly when raising children who have mental health issues. This is a curriculum that goes beyond the classroom, as TMHA staff do a series of assessments to best understand the unique challenges of each family participating.

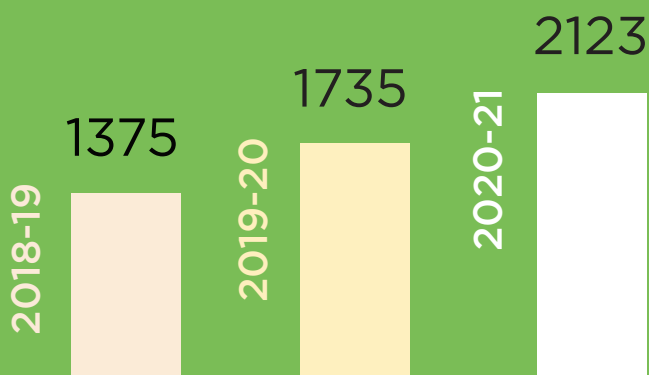
“What I like is how positive the approach is,” says Mayra Valencia. “It’s not about judging, it’s not about fixing the children. It’s about building connection with your kids in a positive way. For myself, it has really helped me working with my nieces.”

Zandra Alfaro-Olea, who teaches the course in Northern Santa Barbara County, reiterates this last point. “I love to share examples of what I’ve used at home with my kids. Some families I work with know I have a little one with special needs, so I’m able to relate to them that way. And once they have the opportunity to try some of these strategies for themselves, they want to learn more.”



Mayra Valencia and Melanie Davenport lead a class

Family Services clients served



TMHA offers two versions of Triple P, one for parents of children 0–12 and one for parents of teens. Both are offered in English and Spanish. To date, over 60 parents have participated in the courses, and interest continues to grow.

“A huge aspect of the program is modeling new behavior,” says Family Support Specialist and instructor Melanie Davenport, “especially when so many parents start with what they learned from their own parents.”

Teens That Need Support

In January 2021, the National Center for Health Statistics released a dire report: 56% of young adults (18-24) surveyed reported symptoms of anxiety and/or depression. 26% reported having suicidal thoughts. The mental wellness of our youth is reaching a crisis point, and in the coming year we hope to make Central Coast Hotline far more accessible to our community's young people.



Melanie Barket and Hotline Volunteers

National texting services all experienced a dramatic increase in activity during COVID-19. The national Crisis Text Line reports that 53% of their users were under 17, and the most frequently used word in conversations was “school.”

TMHA believes this is a critical moment to launch a texting component within Central Coast Hotline, and we are aggressively seeking funding for the expansion. The program will provide greater value than established national services because it is rooted in our community and draws upon a comprehensive database of our many local resources.

Power of the Written Word

Suicide and depression are difficult subjects to face head on, but they exist in our communities and require a proactive response. In the last fiscal year, Central Coast Hotline responded to 10,801 calls. This is an enormous community service, but there is a widening gap that must be addressed.

Out of those 10,000+ calls, about 10 came from people 14 and under. Despite everything we know about the mental health challenges of our teens, we saw .001% of Hotline calls serving that demographic. A puzzling fact with an obvious answer.

Young people would rather text.

“If we are going to reach our youth on the Central Coast, we have got to move with the times,” insists Melanie Barket, the new Program Manager of Central Coast Hotline. “Without a 24/7 texting service, we are closing the door on people who need us badly.”

Other TMHA Programs for Youth

99 young adults worked with Youth Behavioral Health Navigators

10 teens were residents of the Youth Treatment Program

140 students participated in CalHOPE Art Workshops

Clients Who Want to Work

The pandemic slowed much of TMHA's employment activities over the past two years, and we are eager to ramp up in the new fiscal year. We recently produced a video celebrating the legacy and impact of our Growing Grounds Enterprises—three social enterprise businesses that continue to change lives. You can see this inspiring short film by visiting [TMHA's YouTube page](#).

The Power of Experience

TMHA has always understood the value of lived experience, of those who have received mental health services as well as family members who have navigated those services. It has been an agency goal to formally develop trainings for our peer service positions, and once the State of California created a Peer Certification, we knew the time had come.

In August, TMHA was awarded over \$680,000 in Peer Workforce Investment grant funding from the California Department of Health Care Services. The funds will enable the agency to provide 6-month paid internships to individuals with lived experience. These internships will be held in both counties, encompass a variety of TMHA programs, and include extended education for Peer Certification.

This exciting new program has been entrusted to a TMHA veteran and a new staff member with plenty of outside perspective. Denise Manriquez has worked with TMHA in Northern Santa Barbara County for 17 years, most recently coordinating the LEAD (Lived Experience Advocacy Development) program.



Denise Manriquez and Jamie Cardoza

Jamie Cardoza joined TMHA this past year, beginning in the Supported Employment Program before becoming the coordinator for this new project in San Luis Obispo County.

“I think the peer movement is a social justice movement,” says Manriquez. “For any social justice movement to have an impact, it cannot remain on the ground, it has to be on every level. This is the beginning, but it shouldn't be the end by any means. We need peers at the table as directors, as people making decisions.”

Cardoza was delighted to share that within a week of marketing the new opportunity, 9 people had already applied, and TMHA programs are eager to put the new interns to work. “Family Services, Behavioral Health Navigators and the Wellness Centers are all about it,” said Jamie. “This will really help integrate our interns into the mental health field.”

Individuals Finding Work Through TMHA Programs

Growing Grounds Nursery – 68
Growing Grounds Downtown – 20
Growing Grounds Farm
Santa Maria – 47
Supported Employment - 272

Adults Leaving Jail

Our Forensics Services are designed to not only help those coming out of incarceration with behavioral health needs, but also assist local law enforcement in finding alternative solutions when encountering homeless citizens and individuals in psychiatric crisis or emotional distress. TMHA helped pioneer the County's first Community Action Team, and the success of that program has the City of San Luis Obispo poised to create two more teams: one working with the police, and one with the fire department.

A Bridge At the Right Time

A conservative estimate reveals over 3,000 individuals living with a mental illness are incarcerated each year at the SLO County Jail. There have been recent attempts to improve the services provided to this population, and TMHA is an active collaborator in the process.

The Forensic Re-entry Services (FRS) is a team of two, Brooke Klever and Cyle Erks. Together, they assess and meet the needs of individuals who have mental health diagnoses and/or co-occurring disorders and are about to be released from the County Jail. The team tends to work with clients 30 days prior to release and two months post-release, serving as a bridge back into society. Last fiscal year, the FRS team served 90 clients making this transition.

"We spend a lot of time connecting the dots," said Erks. "We end up being the liaison for communication across the board for mental health, drug and alcohol, probation, inside jail staff, sober living environments, parole...it's like stitching together a treatment plan and always providing the insight and information our collaborators need."

When asked how they measure success, Brooke Klever breaks into a smile. "The small wins are big wins. Sometimes it's keeping an appointment.

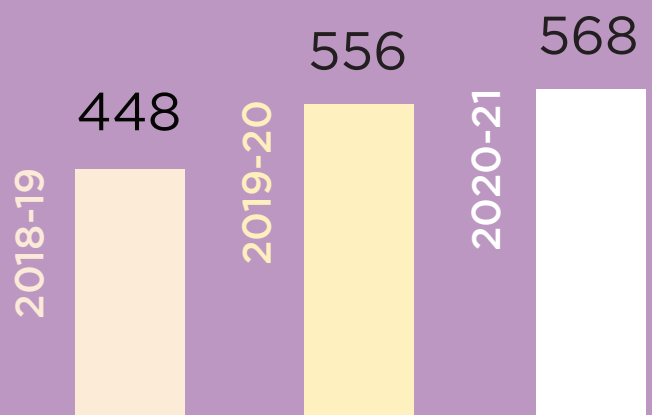


Cyle Erks and Brooke Klever

Other times, it's a Thank You...and then not hearing from them again. Not because something happened, but because they've got their boxes checked off and they're jumping back into their life."

The two acknowledge this is not a TMHA program with high visibility. As a result, they want the community to know that referrals can come from anywhere, not just jail staff or attorneys. If someone has a friend or family member with a mental health issue who has recently been incarcerated, they can reach out directly to Brooke at (805)459-7286.

Forensic Services clients served

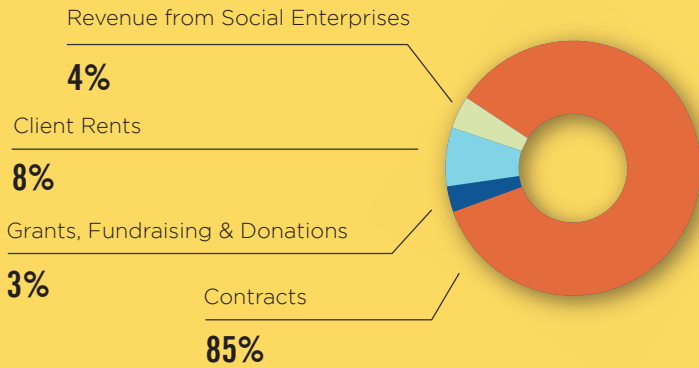


119 **35** **43** **17** **566**

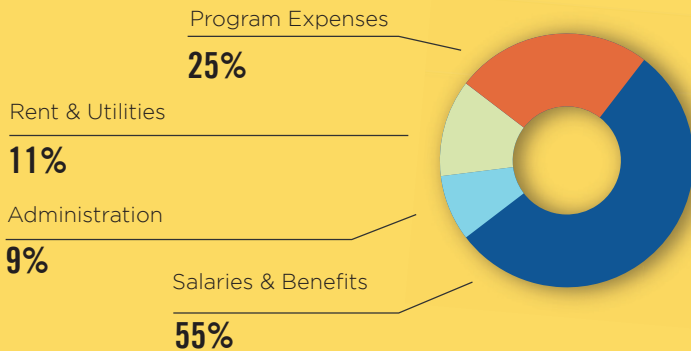
FULL-TIME STAFF **PART-TIME STAFF** **TRANSITIONAL STAFF*** **RELIEF STAFF** **TMHA VOLUNTEERS****

**Client Staff working for our agency via TMHA Employment Programs*
***Many volunteer opportunities were paused due to COVID-19*

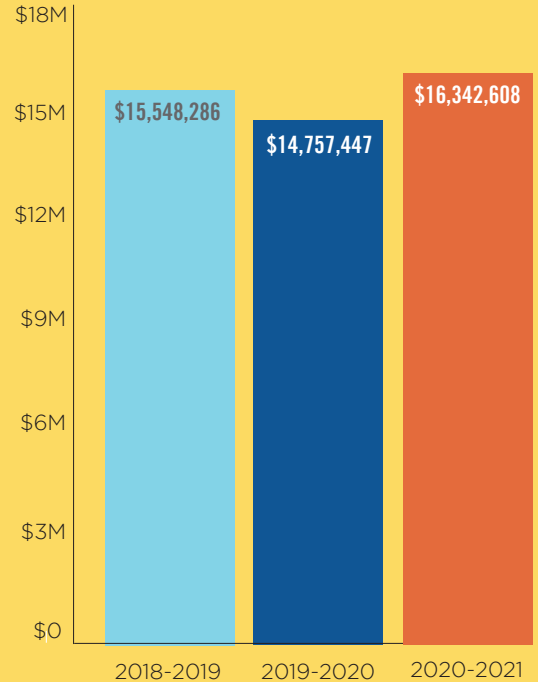
Revenue **\$16,772,039**



Expenses **\$16,342,608**



Agency Growth **Annual Budget**



16

PROPERTIES OWNED



71

PROPERTIES LEASED

TMHA pursues real estate holdings rather than a traditional endowment. This serves the double purpose of providing the agency with valuable assets as well as buildings that we actively use in our housing programs. Consider donating your property as part of our Planned Giving program. Call our Community Engagement Team at (805)540-6513.

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

Donations and in-kind services are both appreciated and vital. Please consider including TMHA in your year-end tax planning, or making a legacy gift. For more information on Planned Giving, please contact Michael Kaplan at (805)540-6513.

Volunteers are always welcome in our programs and fundraising events. One or two hours of your time can make a significant difference. [Please visit our Volunteer page.](#)



WELLNESS • RECOVERY • RESILIENCY

TMHA receives funding from Proposition 63, California's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) through collaborations with the San Luis Obispo County Behavioral Health Department and the Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Wellness.

