

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

*Demonstrating
Resiliency & Growth
Through Transition*



**Bergen's
PROMISE**

Healthy Families, Safe at Home

www.bergenspromise.org

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| A Reflection from Dean Pastras | p. 3 |
| From the Board of Trustees | |
| Health and Safety | p. 4 |
| Quality Improvement Through Technology | p. 5 |
| Outreach and Partnerships | p. 6 |
| Growing Agency Achievements | p. 7 |
| Partnership for our Families | p. 8 |
| Good and Welfare-Support for our Families | p. 9 |
| Recruitment and Retention | p. 10 |
| By the Numbers | p.11 |
| Outcomes | pp.12-13 |
| In their Words | p.14 |
| Success Stories | p.15 |
| In Loving Memory | p. 16 |
| Revenue | p.17 |
| Partner with Us | p.18 |

Chief Executive Officer Reflection

Letter from Dean Pastras, ACSW, LCSW - Chief Executive Officer



In 2021, Bergen's Promise encountered monumental challenges attempting to overcome the effects of the unprecedented COVID-19 virus. It became very clear that as an Agency, community, and society at large that we would be forever changed. I am very proud to say that our dedication to operational excellence has helped us weather the storm and I believe we are a stronger agency as a result.

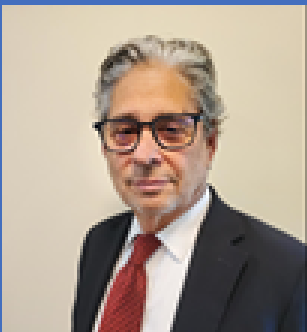
Throughout the last two years Bergen's Promise has persevered in our mission to provide valuable services to our community and the families we serve.

Our entire staff has been put to the test overcoming extreme adversity. They have gone above and beyond facing increasing caseloads due to the overall difficulties that children and families have been experiencing and doing so while managing many of their own personal challenges. In January 2021 we were serving 1,323 children and families, by January of 2022 that number approached approximately 1,600 and continues to grow exponentially.

The increasing number of children that need help, paired with an inability to hire staff quickly enough to fill the needed workforce to support these families has reached crisis level and needs attention and support from everyone. Joining the Bergen's Promise team should be something that we see as in the best interest of all of us and the Bergen County community at large. In 2022, I ask that you become a part of the solution and spread the word #BergensPromiselsHiring!

From Our Board of Trustees

Letter from Jeffrey Kahn, MS - President of the Board of Trustees



As we look back upon 2021, a year unlike any other, we seek to understand its impact. In addition, what we didn't anticipate, was the unprecedented increase in the number of youth and families needing our support as a result of the pandemic. We were forced out of our comfort zone to re-examine our ability to continue the delivery of wraparound support to the families we serve. It made us aware of the need to shift the paradigm of how we work. In a word, we were resilient. Webster's dictionary defines resiliency as "the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness."

2021 was a year where our organization, staff and families demonstrated flexibility, creativity, adaptability, and the will to persevere under extraordinary conditions. Being resilient allowed us to smoothly transition from remote, to hybrid, and finally, to return in person to continue to fulfill our mission, 'Healthy Families, Safe at Home.'

Health and Safety

The Covid-19 global pandemic raged on with new variants and the need for flexibility from both our staff and the families we serve. Every aspect of agency operations and service was delivered with Health & Safety in mind. The perseverance, adaptability, and commitment of our staff maintained and even improved the services provided to our youth and families.

Healthy Staff, Safe at the Office

Hybrid Environment - In August, our entire staff began returning to the office in a hybrid manner. In order to control capacity, different teams were in the office two days a week. This was a happy reunion for many co-workers who had only seen each other virtually. By November, we finally had 100% of our staff in the office 5 days a week. We are appreciative of our staff who have been flexible with the altering work environments throughout the pandemic.



Office Protocols - Protocols were established to regulate capacity and limit potential exposure while in the office. Protocols included:

- o Temperature Check Kiosks at the entrances.
- o Masks worn at all times when not alone in your workspace.
- o Capacity limits in the suite/conference rooms.
- o Hand sanitizer stations, disinfectant wipes and face masks available throughout the office.
- o Vehicle dividers separating front and back seats during transport.



PPE bags - Care Managers continued to be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) bags to protect themselves as well as the families served during in-person visits. The PPE bags consisted of N95 face masks, hand sanitizer, hand wipes, and protective gloves.



Protecting Staff and Families from COVID-19

Staff Vaccination - As a public health organization, in order to protect our staff and families we serve, all employees were mandated to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and booster.



Family Education - Multiple email blasts were sent to families throughout the year to promote vaccine education. This provided families with vital information about getting their family protected against COVID-19. In addition, we continued to update our COVID-specific resource page on BergenResourceNet.org. We were able to keep the Bergen County community informed of all the resources, assistance, and supports available to maintain health and wellbeing!



Quality Improvement through Technology

Cyber Security

Duo App - In order to ensure that access to information and equipment remained secure, the Duo app was implemented for Multi-Factor Authentication. This protected access to computers, email, and more. Duo's access security shields any and every application from compromised credentials and devices, and its comprehensive coverage helped meet compliance requirements with ease.



Nimbus App - While our office space had varying levels of capacity, it was essential that our Support Team still address each family phone call. This app allowed our team to answer main line phones remotely and give timely responses to incoming family issues.



Microsoft Teams - We continue to improve upon and utilize technology that makes the most sense. As an agency, we transitioned to Microsoft Teams as our virtual meeting platform. Having this platform in place was critical to maintaining regular interactions with families who were still not comfortable with in-person visits. As the world has evolved, it has also allowed for efficiency in communicating among staff and community partners.



Using data and outcomes to inform strategy...

In 2021, Bergen's Promise invested in its data capabilities by hiring Data Analytics Manager, Matthew Lloyd, and implementing Microsoft Power BI. This business intelligence tool provides interactive data visualizations to support decision making. Power BI has allowed Bergen's Promise to integrate data from previously separated silo sources.



For example, we can bring in data from an Excel spreadsheet holding completed form submission information on youth critical incidents, a database of NJ's Electronic Health Record system and a website table from the State's list of Bergen County Schools. The data can then be joined together focusing on matters important to Bergen's Promise youth, families, and staff to uncover new valuable insights.

These reports can be securely shared across the agency via the Power BI platform. This gives our staff accurate and current data. Initial Power BI reports have been set up to support and monitor essential processes such as the assignment of new youth to the best suited care manager, ensuring that the most vulnerable youth are being regularly seen in person, and that the business office is accurately billing for services provided.

Bergen's Promise has made some substantial progress towards utilizing our data to better inform our decision-making process. We successfully tackled some of the expected foundational challenges that arise when advancing data usage across an organization, including data integrity, accessibility to data sources, end user adoption and understanding.

In 2022, we are looking forward to further developing our data capabilities, including bringing in a Data Specialist, improving accessibility to the data held in applications such as DocuSign (electronic documents) and use data to better measure and understand successful outcomes of our youth and families.

Outreach and Partnerships

Local Advertising - Paramus Park Mall Display

In May 2021, Bergen's Promise decided to purchase a mall directory ad at the Paramus Park Mall in Paramus, NJ, in an effort to diversify the advertising outlets in a high traffic location. The mall directory ad will be present up to mid summer 2022. It the first Bergen's Promise ad specific to a physical location.

The ad highlights: NJ Children's System of Care/PerformCare, Bergen's Promise career opportunities, and BergenResourceNet.org



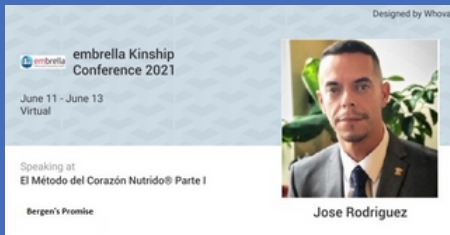
NJEA Teacher's Convention

This year marked the 1st time Bergen's Promise was represented at the NJ Education Association (NJEA) Teacher's Convention in Atlantic City. The "Education Liaisons" from Mercer and Passaic County CMOs along with Bergen's Promise Education Collaboration Manager (Daria Tabbacchino) exhibited to provide attendees information on accessing services and resources. This was a great opportunity to connect with school staff throughout the State to help them understand how we can support their students.



Variety of Presentations & Topics

We've remained active in community, informing residents and professionals about all the resources and supports available to them.



Jose Rodriguez, our Clinical Consultant, speaks at the embrella Kinship Conference 2021



Co-hosted "Regulation of School Anxiety: Making Your Return to School a Success" Workshop at the Paradigm Therapeutic Day School



New Jersey Recovery Advocates' Recovery Walk & Rally



Diane Ristaino, our Director of Quality Assurance, presented at the Transformational Collaborative Outcomes Management Conference



Lyndhurst Wellness Fair



Hosted "You are not alone: Suicide Prevention and Intervention for Families" webinar

Growing Agency Achievements

Shelisa Foster Joins Seton Hall University Customer Experience Advisory Board

Shelisa Foster, MA, LPC, NCC, our Chief Operating Officer, joined the Seton Hall University Customer Experience Advisory Board. Membership on the Board is by invitation only and is based upon personal and professional accomplishments. The Board is comprised of a diverse, innovative, and extremely well-connected network of senior executives at many high-profile companies.

Board members contribute to the School by:

- Preserving and enhancing the reputation and quality of the School through strategic review of credit and noncredit offerings
- Offering their experience to Seton Hall's faculty and students
- Promoting the School's goal of linking industry with academia



New Member of Board of Directors - Cheryl Touissant



Bergen's Promise welcomed Cheryl Touissant as the newest member of our Board of Directors. She is the Meet Director of the Colgate Women's Games, and has been part of the leadership team responsible for developing and managing the program since its inception. A decorated track and field athlete in her own right, Cheryl is an Olympic silver medalist (1972), Pan-American Games gold medalist (1971), 5x National Champion and former World Record holder at various middle-distance events. Cheryl's extensive knowledge and passion for inspiring people to overcome obstacles to achieve their personal best on and off the field have earned her the respect of business leaders, community partners, sports aficionados, and her peers.

Following her athletic career, Cheryl worked in the financial industry for several years and later founded her own apparel business. Cheryl is a Bergen County resident and in 2013 worked as Office Manager at Bergen's Promise. She brings a lifetime of experience, perspective, and passion to her role as Board Member at Bergen's Promise.

Bergen's Promise Published in Journal of Consumer Health

Director of Health Services and Integrated Care Liaison, Jan Schlaier, and Health & Wellness Educator, Amy Faus, published a report in the Journal of Consumer Health on the Internet called "Health Literacy of Youth with Co-Occurring Behavioral and Physical Health Care Needs: A Preliminary Report".



Health Literacy

Take time to ask.
Make time to listen

Adolescents and young adults are often active participants in their health care, but our understanding of health literacy needs in this population is limited. The significance of this gap in the literature is magnified for youth facing behavioral health challenges as well as to chronic health conditions. This preliminary report found that over two-thirds (68.7%) of a sample of youth ages 10–21 with co-occurring behavioral health and physical health challenges in Bergen County have low (12.7%), or the possibility of low (46.0%), health literacy. Based on this report, pediatric practices and organizations providing integrated health care services to youth may consider implementing health literacy screening to identify youth and families with the greatest need of intervention. Providing health literacy education and support to not only parents, but also youth, serves to help youth become more confident participants in their health care.

Partnerships for Our Families

Partnership with the Food Brigade



Bergen's Promise has partnered with The Food Brigade, a hunger-relief nonprofit charity. They generously contributed \$5k worth of ACME gift cards for Bergen's Promise families with food insecurity, in \$25 increments (one per child in need). We had 200 youth benefit from this partnership.

"We're pleased to join forces with Bergen's Promise, to assist even more Bergen County families dealing with food insecurity," said Karen DeMarco, President of The Food Brigade. "We knew that part of the mission of Bergen's Promise is to put together an array of services to benefit a child's growth, and to foster their future success. Food security plays a critical role in a child's development and well-being, so this partnership seemed like a perfect match."

In the wake of Hurricane Ida in September, Atlantic Aviation generously stepped up to help support one of our Bergen's Promise families. The Oliver Family was displaced from their apartment due to the effects of the hurricane and were forced to relocate into a hotel.

Atlantic Aviation presented the Oliver Family with the Atlantic Aviation Hurricane Ida Award in the amount of \$1,000. It was great to see partners in the community take an active role in supporting families. Their support during this natural disaster was greatly appreciated by the family and helped them to start the long journey back home.

"I am very appreciative of the financial relief offered. It was a huge help getting us back on our feet," said Mr. Oliver.

Atlantic Aviation Supports BP Family Affected By Hurricane Ida



During the weekends leading up to Easter, Church of Jesus in Paramus generously held a food drive for Bergen's Promise families in need. The baskets provided to families were filled with many non-perishable and nutritional food items. Families were very grateful for this act of generosity from Church of Jesus.

In addition, they generously contributed 50 gifts towards our Holiday Toy Drive, made a monetary donation, and volunteered at our Family Holiday Party.

We wish to express our gratitude to Jackie Berko, our Behavioral Health Home Nurse, who helped facilitate the partnership.

Church of Jesus Supporting BP Families



Good and Welfare - Support for our Families

With constantly evolving safety protocols, we were able to adapt our Backpack and Toy Drives for safe distribution. By the end of the year, the Family Holiday Party, resembled pre-COVID gatherings while ensuring all attendees remained safe. We had two different rotating attendee groups with capacities of 30 people each. Initially the families were treated to an engaging show by Mike Zig Magic. Then proceeded to another room to enjoy holiday music, arts and crafts, and gifts from Santa. The final stop was a photo booth for a holiday family photo. All attendees were required to wear masks, undergo temperature checks, and complete screening forms prior to entry. Families had a blast at this event that brightened their holiday season!



Through the generosity of our donors, we were able to fulfill 150+ school supply backpacks in the Fall Back to School drive and over 200 gift requests for the Toy Drive this year. Donor support was pivotal in meeting the increasing needs of our families. ***We are thankful to.....***

- ASun Star
- Bergen County Bar Association
- Church of Jesus
- EDNI Counseling
- Empower U
- Inspire the Youth
- Jersey Cares
- Jordana Stern Merkin
- Savia Community Counseling
- SG Companies (5+ years!)
- WAR Ministry
- Women's Club of Paramus

In addition, we were supported by generous individual donors through the website as well as utilizing Amazon Smile, which contributes a percentage of purchases to Bergen's Promise.

Recruitment & Retention

Bergen's Promise takes pride in recruiting and hiring staff that exemplify our agency values of **Professionalism, Collaboration, Talent Engagement & Development, Health & Safety, and Cultural Diversity**. This year required continued innovative ways of recruiting and retaining our team.

Recruitment

Virtual Career Fairs - Due to the success of our virtual career fairs, we increased the frequency of these events this year. Through Microsoft Teams, candidates were introduced to staff members, given an agency overview, and placed into breakout rooms for on the spot first interviews. Our agency ambassadors provided great perspective on the culture of Bergen's Promise as well as the requirements of the role. As a result.....

- 6 Career Fairs were held throughout the year
- 155 candidates attended these events; 23 candidates were hired.



Handshake & College Recruiting - Handshake and University Career Fairs have been a new and useful way of educating and recruiting current college students and upcoming graduates about the opportunities available at Bergen's Promise. This platform is designed for students to attend virtual career fairs, interviews, and get their resumes out there.

Home Grown - Professional Growth and Promotion Within

- 1 internal promotion from Care Manager to Certified Wraparound Coach
- 4 internal promotions from Care Manager to Supervisor
- Two new roles were created in 2021:

1. Education Collaboration Manager - A position was created exclusively for the increasing need to collaborate with schools. Long-time Care Manager, Daria Tabbacchino, was promoted to this role.

2. Data Analytics Manager - With the increased need for data to inform agency decisions, this position was created to oversee the efficiency and growth of data collection. Matthew Lloyd joined us from London with his extensive knowledge and expertise in data collection, analysis, and display in Power BI.



Exemplifying Diversity

Bergen's Promise is proud of, and continues to cultivate a workforce that mirrors the diversity of the youth we serve.

We're Always Hiring

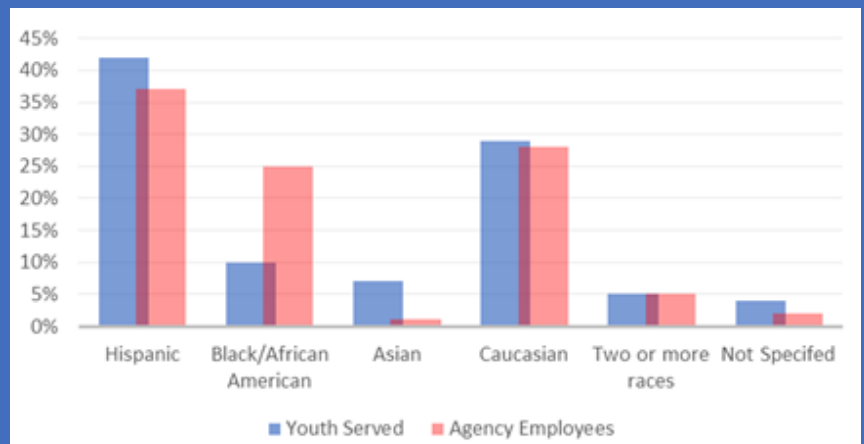
Our agency continues to grow at a rapid pace and there are always opportunities to join our team.

Apply today at

BergensPromise.org/careers or scan the QR code.



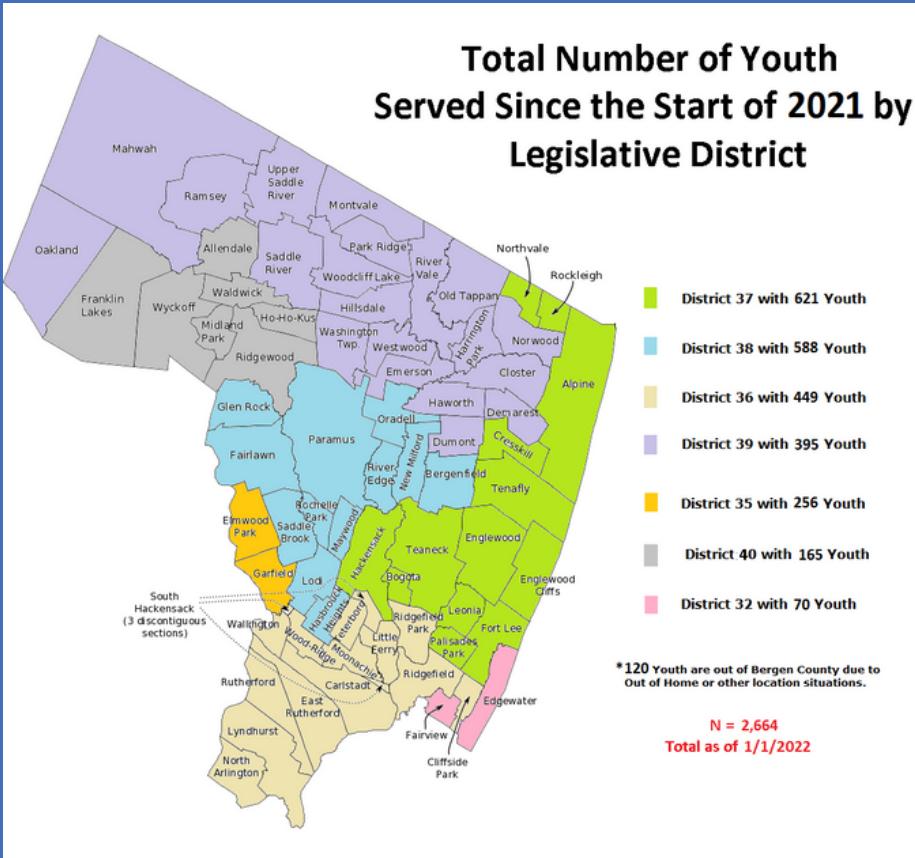
2021 Ethnicity Demographics



By the Numbers

Mental Health rose to the forefront as the pandemic pushed on. As society settled into our new normal, families were more open to seeking the help they needed for their children. This resulted in another year with record totals in number of youth served.

Total Number of Youth Served Since the Start of 2021 by Legislative District



2,664

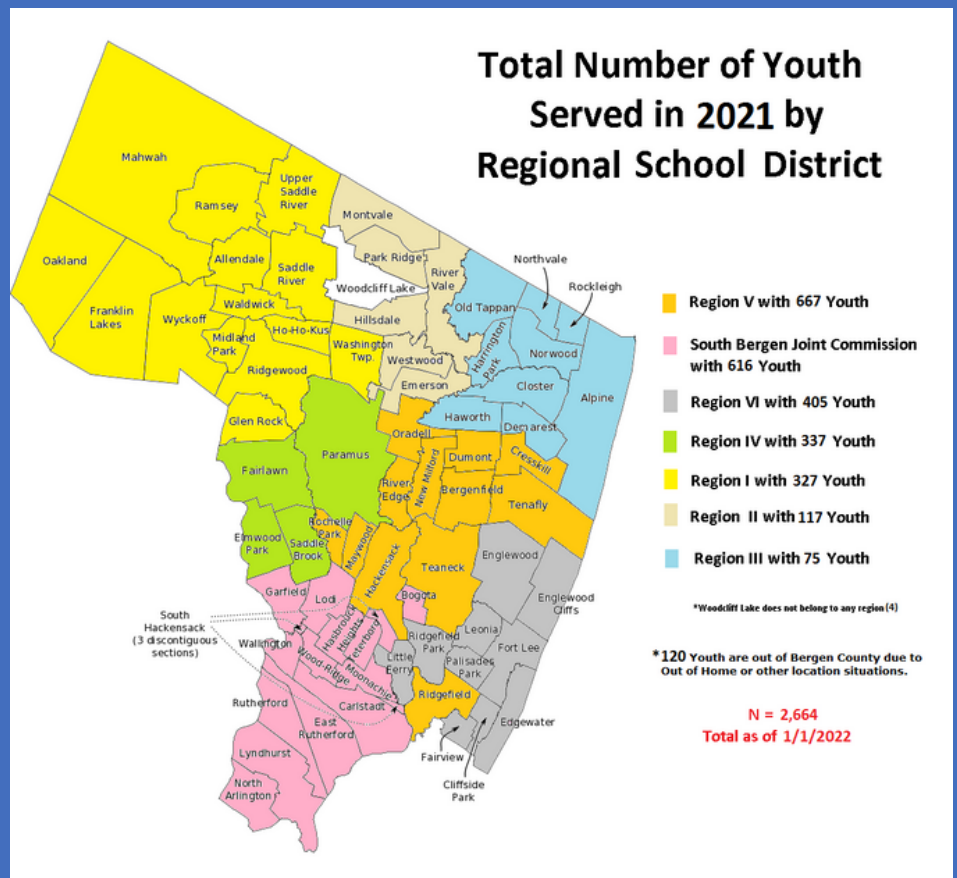
Total Youth Served in 2021

*500 more youth served than the prior year and a New Record

Our engagement with school partners demonstrated resilience to the ever-changing safety protocols of local schools. We were able to attend both virtual and in-person outreach presentations throughout the year.

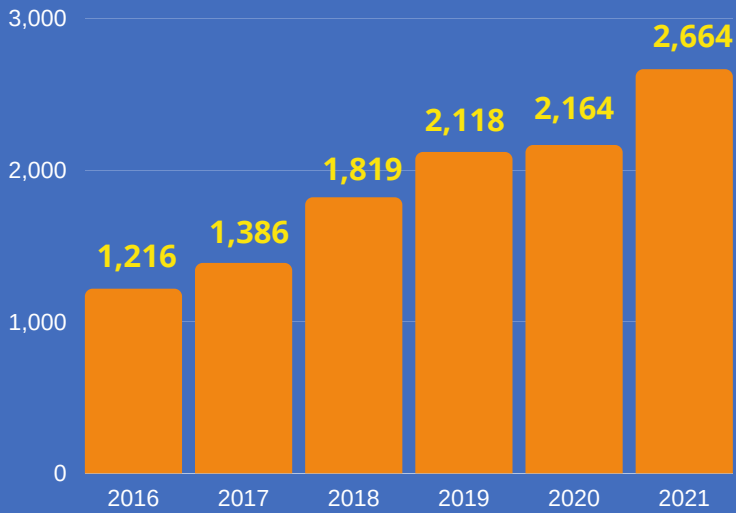
There were **36** outreach events held with school partners that included: wellness fairs, back to school nights, PTA meetings, in-service education for Child Study Team staff, sporting events, and much more.

Total Number of Youth Served in 2021 by Regional School District



Outcomes

Total Youth Served By Year



Top 5 New Referral Sources that led to Bergen's Promise enrollment

(Total New Referrals 2021: 1,448)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Community Provider | 356 |
| Self-Referral | 282 |
| Schools | 229 |
| Dept of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P) | 219 |
| Screening Center | 88 |

*1,064 referrals were made via Children's Mobile Response

Behavioral Health Home Outcomes

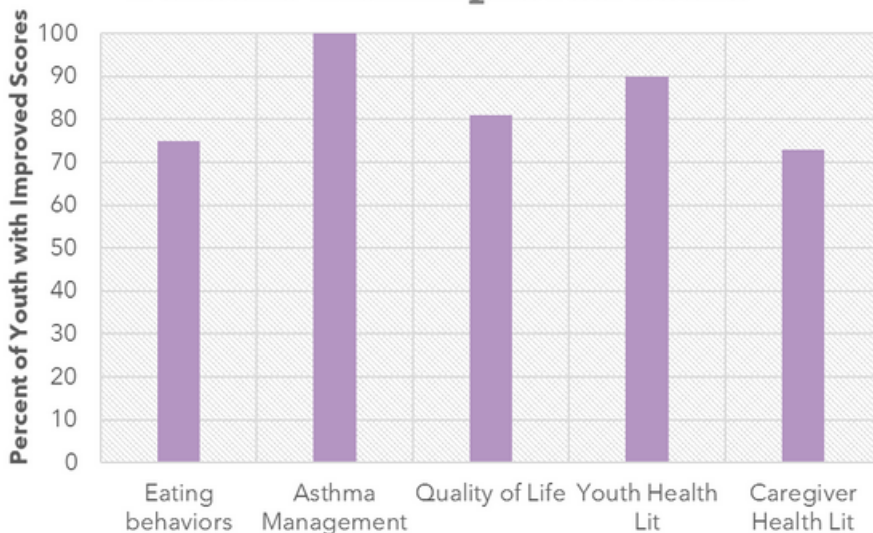
BHH Service Provision:

- BHH Health and Wellness Educators led a well-received 4-week e-mail based COVID-19 vaccine education campaign for staff
- BHH Health and Wellness Educator's COVID-19 Vaccine "Why I Did It" campaign provided peer encouragement
- BHH staff provided education for staff to impart to youth and families



Youth demonstrated improvements in the following categories:

Percent with Improved Score



166

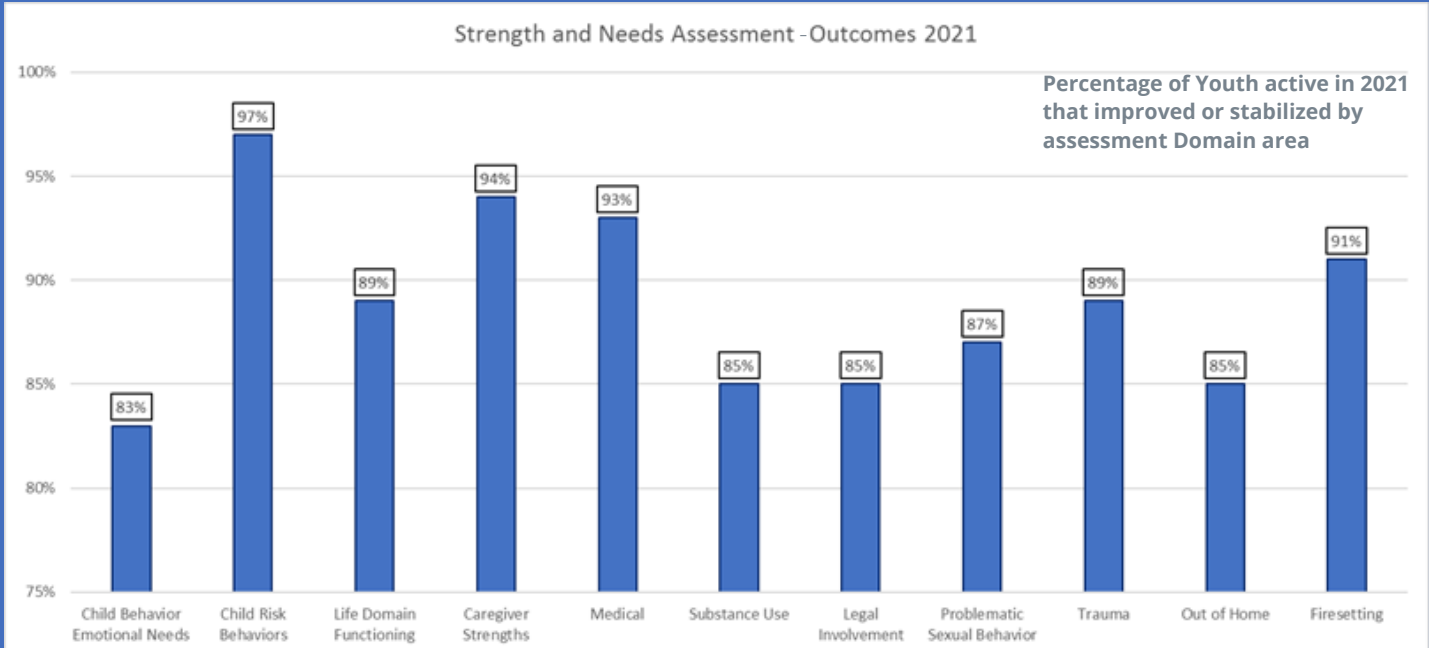
unique youth served by BHH in 2021 (a 2% Improvement)

- **75%** improved eating behaviors
- **100%** improved asthma control
- **81%** of youth improved health literacy
- **90%** of caregivers improved health literacy
- **73%** improved health-related quality of life per youth self-report

*Baseline and follow-up assessments completed based on youth's identified needs

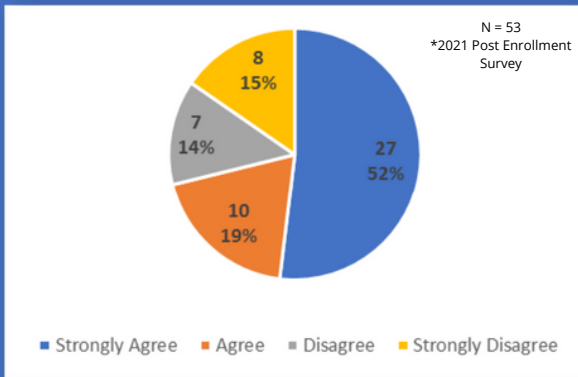
Outcomes

Strength & Needs Assessment Outcomes

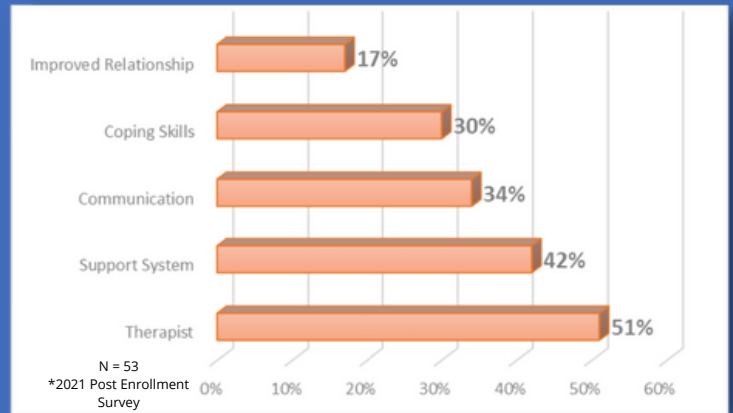


*CMO Strength and Needs Assessment Outcomes Report for youth 5-21 that were active with CMO between 1/1/2021 and 12/31/2021, for any length of stay. NJ Children's System of Care.

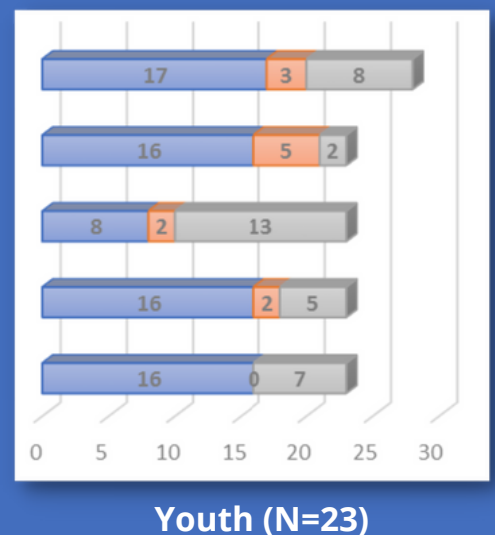
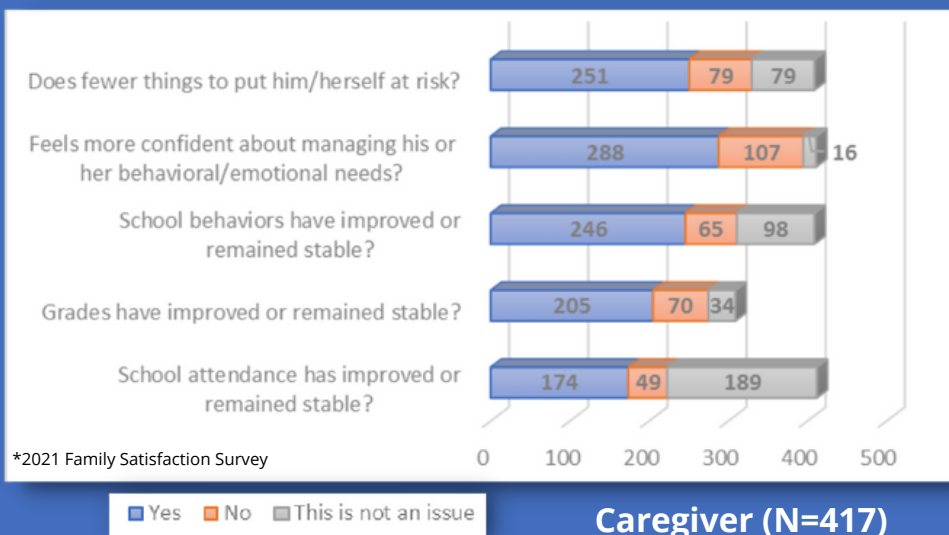
I am confident in my ability to access health care & other services in my community.



What is the most significant and long-term benefit of participating in Wraparound?



Since participating in Bergen's Promise Wraparound Child and Family Team process, would you say that you/your child:



Caregiver (N=417)

Youth (N=23)

IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

Testimonials from Families

"They helped our family through the pandemic when we felt we had no one to turn to. As soon as I reached out I was heard and help was provided right away."

"It has helped my husband & I learn to set boundaries for our children and be consistent so we can see a change."

"Our Care Worker has been a gift from Bergen's promise to our family, and she has been there for our family 110%. She cares for us like family."

The Care Manager is in regular contact to assess progress and has registered my daughter for an extracurricular activity that provided exactly the kind of social and artistic connection that was missing through the pandemic and causing distress. She is so incredibly perceptive, positive, and supportive of the whole family."

"The wraparound process provides us with support to handle any difficulties that arise. As a team, we collaborate to address and modify application of techniques as needed."

"We felt welcomed and cared for. It brought us on the right track of life and showed me and our kids the right coping mechanism"

"My son is more confident and independent. Also, he can control his anger issues better. Now, I can understand better my son's problem and help him."

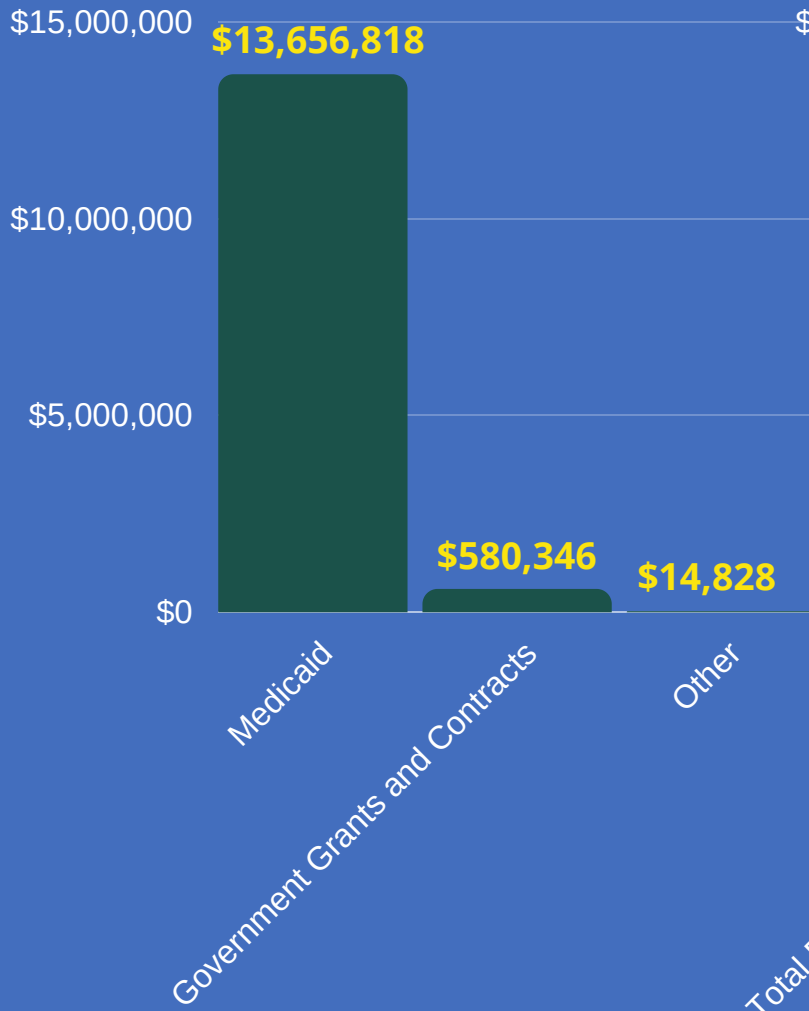
"Provided counseling, resources and have been fully engaged with us since the beginning. Continues to monitor my daughter's wellness, progress, and always offers resources and solutions which enable her improve in these areas. Staff is kind, empathetic, and knowledgeable."



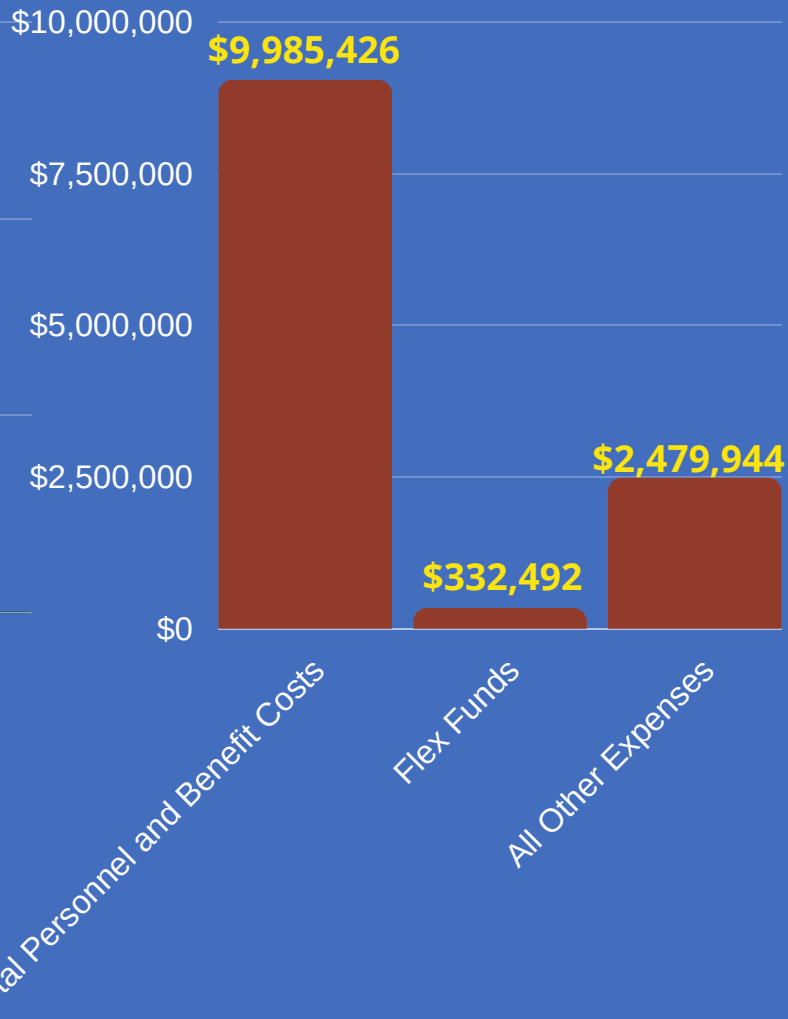
Revenue

2021 Fiscal Year Financial Report (7-1-2020 through 6-30-2021)

Revenues



Expenses



In Loving Memory of Judy Nelson



In January 2021, the Bergen's Promise family was deeply saddened by the loss of our longtime Human Resources Director, Judy Nelson. For 15 years, Judy helped grow the agency from 30 to 130 employees. She specialized in employee rights, human resource technology, and benefits management.

Judy represented everything that is good within our organization. For many employees, she was the first warm and welcoming impression of Bergen's Promise. She put everyone at ease with her distinctive laugh and talking about her love of cats, beach adventures, folk music, and scrapbooking. More importantly, Judy was the kindest, most friendly, positive person you will ever know.

We will miss her dearly!



Partner With Us - Donate

Annual Drives - Throughout the year we hold drives to support the needs of our youth and families. In August, we hold a backpack drive for our youth in need of school supplies. In December, we run a toy drive which culminates with our Family Holiday Party. There are other fundraising events to get involved in throughout the year for food or supply donations, family engagement rewards, etc. Here's how you can contribute....

- **Cash Donor** - Support youth with a one-time or monthly donation:
 - Website - <https://www.bergenspromise.org/donations>
 - Mail check payable to Bergen's Promise - Send to the attention of:
Community Resources at 3 University Plaza Dr. Suite 300. Hackensack NJ 07601
- **Participate in one of our Drives** - Email CommunityResources@bergenspromise.org to arrange a drop off of your donated goods
- **Amazon Smile** - Use Amazon Smile when purchasing through Amazon, and select Bergen's Promise as your charity of choice. We receive a small percent of your purchase.

Join our Team

Fulfill your passion to help others! Join our rapidly growing agency that supports the social, emotional, and physical health needs of over 1,700 Bergen County youth!

Become the newest Hero to our kids served!

Apply Today!

[BergensPromise.org/careers](https://www.BergensPromise.org/careers)



Scan here with your phone to see our open positions!



Stay Connected

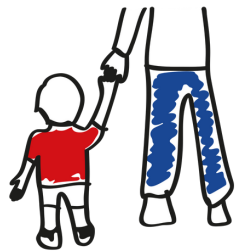
Connect and contribute to the conversation by following our social media sites:

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/Bergen-Resourcenet-1491800140966030/>

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/5264308>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/bergenspromise/>





Bergen's **PROMISE**

Healthy Families, Safe at Home

www.bergenspromise.org

3 University Plaza Drive
Suite 300

Hackensack NJ 07601

Phone: 201-712-1170

Fax: 201-712-0391