

2021 Psychiatric Intake Response Center Annual Report



WALKER AREA Community Foundation
RESPONSIBLE GIVING RESULTS

HILL CREST
FOUNDATION, INC.



United Way
of Central Alabama, Inc.

A Letter from the PIRC Director

Dear Community Partners, Providers, and Friends:

In 2021, the world experienced multiple crises: public and mental health being at the top. The coronavirus pandemic continued to spread, causing shutdowns, school closings, virtual learning and isolation. It adversely impacted all aspects of life.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), and the Children's Hospital Association (CHA), representing more than 77,000 physician members and more than 200 children's hospitals, declared a national state of emergency in child and adolescent mental health in October and urged policymakers to join in the efforts to address the growing concerns.

Being on the frontlines of children's health, Children's of Alabama saw the pandemic's toll firsthand. The Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC) was there to help children and caregivers who struggled with their mental health. The PIRC team received more than 3,000 calls statewide, a 58% increase over 2020, and provided psychiatric consultation services to more than 4,000 patients in the Emergency Department (ED), a 37% increase from 2020. Overall, the team provided services to more than 7,000 callers and patients.

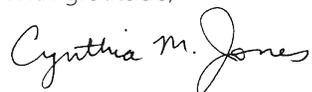
The increased volume represented what was happening nationwide. The Centers for Diseases and Control (CDC) reported during February 21–March 20, 2021, suspected suicide attempt ED visits were 51% higher among girls aged 12–17 years than during the same period in 2019; among boys aged 12–17 years, suspected suicide attempt ED visits increased 4%. Those impacted the most were children with pre-existing vulnerabilities (low-income, underinsured and complicated or multiple psychiatric concerns requiring a team of clinicians to coordinate care).

Reflecting on the state of children's mental health, I am grateful and proud Children's had the foresight along with Anne B. LaRussa and the Foundation of Hope to establish the PIRC in 2018. We were well-positioned and prepared to help caregivers and children during this unprecedented time. Sadly, Mrs. LaRussa died on March 9, 2022. Her vision for the PIRC was to help those who were needing and struggling to find children's mental health services. Thankfully, our communities continue to benefit from her and her family's generous philanthropy.

The PIRC's mission continues with the support of Children's Foundation and important community partners. This year, The Daniel Foundation of Alabama and the Walker Area Community Foundation contributed financially to support our efforts.

Thank you for partnering with the PIRC and extending your generous time, resources and vision. I echo what our Chief Executive Officer Tom Shufflebarger said about 2021, it was "a year of resiliency and we will continue to work together to ensure Children's of Alabama is ready to face tomorrow's challenges."

With gratitude,



Cynthia "Cindy" M. Jones, MA, LPC-S, NCC
PIRC Director, Children's of Alabama



PIRC leadership met with the Alabama Department of Mental Health's (ADMH) Coordinator of Children and Adolescent Services Gayla Caddell, second from left, to discuss ways to address Alabama's youth mental health crisis. From left, PIRC Medical Director Dr. Jesse Tobias "Toby" Martinez; Gayla Caddell; PIRC Director Cindy Jones; and Senior Executive Leader of Behavioral Health Stacy White.

Pictured on front cover: Members of the PIRC and Psychiatric Consult teams wear green t-shirts in recognition of Mental Health Awareness month. Left to right: Summer Intern Ashley Graber; Nurse Practitioner Shakila Moore; PIRC Therapists Shannon Messina, Matt Foster and Susan Smith; PIRC/Consult Medical Director Dr. Jesse Tobias "Toby" Martinez; PIRC Therapist Carmen Lambert; PIRC Director Cindy Jones; PIRC Therapists Melissa Edwards and David Dees; and Nurse Practitioner Teresa Moore.

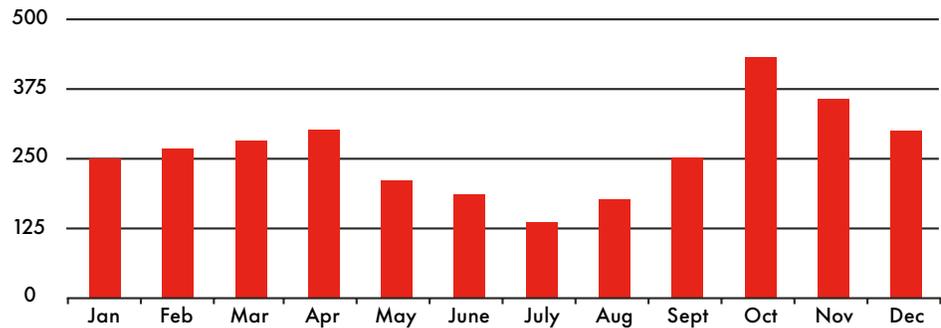
PIRC Statistics



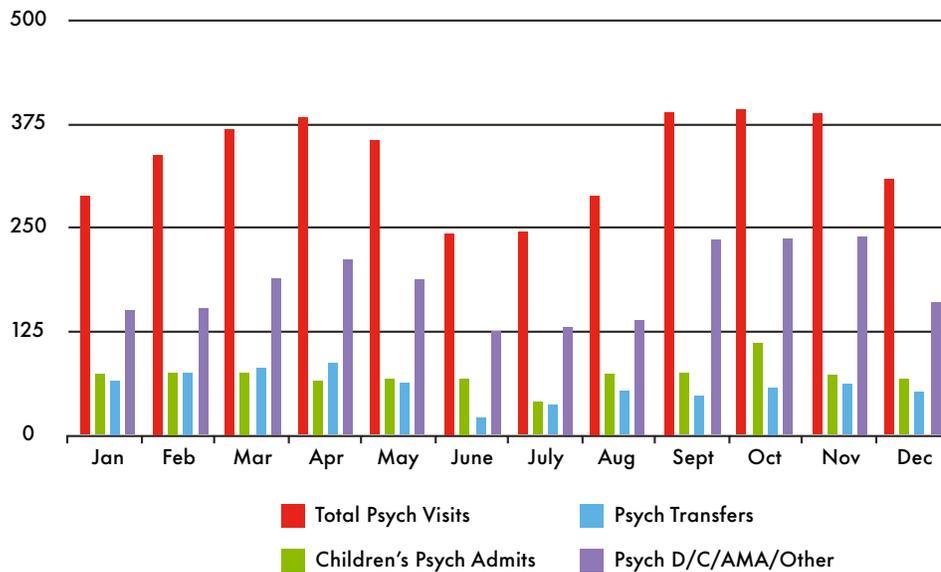
The Psychiatric Consult Team comprised of psychiatrists, UAB fellows, physician's assistants, nurse practitioners and PIRC therapists assessed and evaluated more than 4,000 patients in the ED.

The PIRC received a record 3,149 calls this year. Of those, 64% of parental caregivers and concerned callers were provided information on multiple mental health providers in their communities.

Total PIRC Calls



Total Emergency Department Psychiatric Consults



PIRC Team



Hand-in-Paw (HIP) team members Carol Ritter, second from right, and her Great Dane Duke, center, attend his retirement party. Carol and Duke provided animal-assisted therapy to Behavioral Health patients in the Emergency Department. Pictured with the team are left to right, PIRC Therapists Susan Smith, Ariel Armstrong and Deanna Schultes; PIRC Director Cindy Jones; PIRC Therapist Matt Foster; and Child Life Specialist Courtney Wells.



PIRC Therapist Susan Smith conducts individual therapy with a patient waiting on inpatient placement.

Being at the center of a mental health crisis required the PIRC team to work tirelessly to assess, support and guide patients and families through difficult times. The therapists assisted caregivers and community members in finding the most appropriate mental health providers in every county in Alabama. More than 3,000 calls were fielded, a 58% increase over the previous year.

In response to this growing need, the PIRC team added or updated more than 1,000 mental health providers statewide. The focus was identifying autism and Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services, substance use and eating disorder treatment programs, registered play therapists, practitioners specializing in trauma and abuse, various other practices and Medicaid providers in Jefferson County, the most frequently requested county and insurance by caller.

Children being in crisis wasn't a new concept to our teams, but the acuity and complexity was challenging. More than 4,000 patients were evaluated in Children's Emergency Department (ED) by medical staff and the Psychiatric Consult Team comprised of psychiatrists, UAB fellows, physician's assistant, nurse practitioners and PIRC therapists. To respond to the increased demand for services, the PIRC team expanded by offering 24/7 therapist coverage. These consults represented a 37% increase over 2020 with close to half of the patients needing inpatient hospitalization. Altogether, more than 7,000 callers and patients received PIRC services.

Increased Behavioral Health patients in the ED led to longer wait times for inpatient placement. In response, an improved hand-off communication process was developed among the consult and ED teams. Our highly skilled PIRC therapists offered brief, individual therapy and virtual Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) groups were available to patients boarding more than 24 hours. In addition to traditional therapy, Hand-in-Paw, animal-assisted therapy, was provided once a week. The PIRC and Psychiatric Consult Teams also received sensory training and provided accommodations to Behavioral Health patients. Coping kits and iPads were made available to patients and families to provide a healthy distraction and comfort. These interventions along with several process improvements in the ED increased patient, family and employees' overall satisfaction.

"I wasn't getting the information I needed and she (daughter) wasn't getting information for suicidal thoughts. A lot of people are having mental health issues. I called and the lady gave me so many numbers and it was so helpful. It gave me a lifeline for something that I didn't think I was going to get help with. They were so nice."

Anonymous Mother of 15-year-old daughter

PIRC Team



PIRC Therapist Matt Foster, left, explained PIRC services to participants at the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention walk to honor victims of suicide and raise awareness about suicide prevention.



PIRC Therapist Melissa Edwards talked to more than 200 Shelby and Chilton county residents about PIRC services and mental health wellbeing at the Be Well Shelby Fair.

PIRC Administrators and Directors

Thomas "Tom" G. Shufflebarger, MBA, FACHE, President and Chief Executive Officer

Andrew "Andy" Loehr, DNP, RN, CNML, CPNP, Senior Vice President of Operations and Chief Nursing Officer

Stacy White, MBA, MSHA, FACHE, Senior Executive Leader, Behavioral Health

Jesse Tobias "Toby" C. Martinez Jr., MD, Medical Director, Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC) and Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry

Cynthia "Cindy" M. Jones, LPC-S, Director, Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC)

PIRC Mental Health Therapists

Ariel Armstrong, ALC

Summer Baker, LMFT

Susan Bennett-Smith,

LICSW, PIP

Ahmad Brewer, LICSW, PIP

David Dees, LICSW

Melissa Edwards, LPC

Matt Foster, LPC

Jalana Johnson, LPC

Carmen Lambert, LMSW

Naren Leopard, LICSW, PIP

Ashley Loftis, ALC

Shannon Messina, LICSW

Tahuna Rembert, ALC

Deanna Schultes, LPC

Jermaine Wall, LICSW

Erica Wilson, LPC

PIRC Impact

- 3,149 calls, averaging 262 a month and an increase of 58% from 2020.
- 4,025 Emergency Department psychiatric consults, averaging 335 a month and a 37% increase from 2020.
- Increased database to more than 1,600 providers statewide.
- Community outreach to 3,711 health/mental health professionals, school representatives and community members, including rural, poor and underserved populations.
- Therapeutic interventions such as, individual and group therapies provided in the ED for patients boarding more than 24 hours.

"Tell the powers that be that I give it (PIRC) five stars. This has been a time-saver and helped so much. Thank you!"

Hilary Barnett, mother of 4-year old son

PIRC Advisory Committee

Members provided crucial guidance and direction to the PIRC on how to meet growing children's behavioral and mental health concerns during the pandemic.

Brian Blakes, Fire Chaplain, City of Birmingham Fire and Rescue Service

Kyle Echols, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Private Practice

Joan Elder, Education and Programs Coordinator and former President, NAMI Alabama

Katrina Freeman, Director of Outpatient Behavioral Health, Children's of Alabama

Susan Griffin, Director of Alternative Mental Health Services and Pediatric Tele-Mental Health (PATHS) Network Project Manager, Children's of Alabama

Gus Heard-Hughes, Vice President of Programs, Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham (CFGB)

Cindy Jones, Director of Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC), Children's of Alabama

Morissa Ladinsky, Associate Professor of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, UAB and Children's of Alabama

Benny LaRussa, Jr., Chief Executive Officer, Sterling Capital Management

Michelle Littleton, Director of Grants & Donor Relations, Children's of Alabama

Leigh Long, Social Worker, Community Advocate

Lisa Maloney, Director of Emergency Department, Children's of Alabama

Kathy Marino, Director of Admissions, Pinnacle Behavior Health

Jesse Tobias "Toby" C. Martinez, Jr., Medical Director of Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC) and Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry, Children's of Alabama

Kathy Monroe, Professor and Divisional Director of Emergency Department, Children's of Alabama

Artie Nelson, Child, Adolescent, and Family Psychiatrist, Child, Adolescent & Family Psychiatry

Kadie Peters, Vice President of Community Impact Strategy and Resource Development, United Way of Central Alabama (UWCA)

Robin Sparks, Mental Health Initiative Director, Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham (CFGB)

Garland Stansell, Chief Communications Officer, Children's of Alabama

John Stone, Government Relations Community Action Manager, Children's of Alabama

Stacy White, Senior Executive Leader of Behavioral Health, Children's of Alabama

Erica Wilson, PIRC Therapist, Children's of Alabama, and School Counselor, Thompson Middle School



PIRC Advisory Committee member and Children's Director of Alternative Mental Health Services and Pediatric Tele-Mental Health (PATHS) Network Project Manager Susan Griffin, right, represented the PIRC at the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AL-AAP) spring conference along with the Alabama Department of Mental Health's (ADMH) Director of the Office of Infant and Early Childhood Special Programs Jane Duer, left.

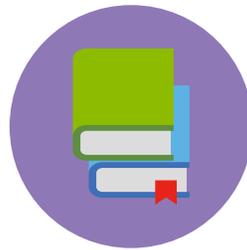
PIRC Community Outreach

As invited speakers, exhibitors, educators and sponsors of 41 events statewide and totaling 504 hours, PIRC information was shared with:



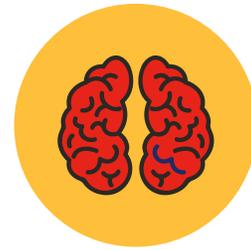
632

Health & Mental Health
Care Professionals



203

School
Representatives



2,876

Community
Members

"My 4- year-old was struggling with impulse control issues at daycare and we were feeling really overwhelmed and didn't know how to help him. He was two when the pandemic started, so we weren't sure how it was impacting him and didn't know how to help him with his feelings. We called our pediatrician, and they connected us to PIRC.

When I called, they listened to me with compassion and empathy as I explained what had been going on. I wasn't sure what our specific needs were other than therapy, but I got numbers for play therapists in our area, and it has made such a difference. I am so grateful for the kindness and expertise PIRC showed me when I was feeling overwhelmed. My son is doing a lot better, and we have PIRC to thank for getting us connected to resources we needed. My family really is so grateful for the help and we appreciate the work you and the PIRC team do! Thank You!!"

Lauren Benson, mother of 4-year-old son

PIRC Community Outreach



PIRC Director Cindy Jones and PIRC Medical Director Dr. Jesse Tobias "Toby" Martinez present on "Pediatric Depression, Suicide and Self-Injurious Behavior" to PATHS rural pediatricians and health providers.



ADMH's Children and Adolescent Services Coordinator Gayla Caddell, left, reviewed the state's youth mental health services with Behavioral Health's leadership team. Seated right of Gayla Caddell, Inpatient Charge Nurse Vanessa Barlow; Inpatient Assistant Director Natalie Allums; PIRC Director Cindy Jones; PIRC Medical Director Dr. Jesse Tobias "Toby" Martinez; and Social Worker Monica Jones.

The mental health crisis required more collaboration among healthcare providers, schools, state agencies and community organizations to fully address the demand for children's mental health services. The PIRC team offered resources, education, information and support to 3,711 community members.

Mental Health/Healthcare Providers

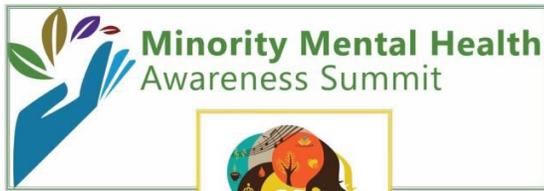
Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH): Children and Adolescent Services Coordinator Gayla Caddell participated in a half-day meeting with Children's Behavioral Health leadership team to discuss ways ADMH may partner with Children's to provide a better continuum of mental health care for children and adolescents.

Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AL-AAP): Children's Director of Alternative Mental Health Services and Pediatric Access Tele-Mental Health (PATHS) Network Project Manager Susan Griffin and ADMH's Director of the Office of Infant and Early Childhood Special Programs Jane Duer represented the PATHS and PIRC programs at the AL-AAP spring and fall conferences. About 75 pediatricians statewide attended each event.

Pediatric Access to Tele-Mental Health (PATHS) Program: PIRC Medical Director Dr. Jesse Tobias "Toby" Martinez and PIRC Director Cindy Jones presented a Project ECHO training on "Pediatric Depression, Suicide & Self-Injurious Behavior" to 27 rural Alabama healthcare providers.

Children's of Alabama Adoption Clinic and Alabama Treatment Centers: The PIRC team participated in virtual presentations with three providers helping families and children who have behavioral and mental health challenges. The organizations were: Children's of Alabama Adoption Clinic, which provides adoption services worldwide; Magnolia Creek, a co-occurring disorders treatment program for adolescent females; and Elk River Treatment programs, a residential treatment center focused on providing care for teens with behavioral and substance use disorders.

PIRC Community Outreach



Beyond BIPOC: Naming Ourselves for Ourselves



For the third year, PIRC sponsored the No More Martyrs Minority Mental Health Awareness Summit in July. The virtual conference was held nationwide and offered three days of mental health training related to Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and their challenges.

Children's of Alabama Adoption Clinic staff met with the PIRC team to discuss ways to support the needs of adoptive parents and their children from around the world.

Mental Health/Healthcare Providers (cont.)

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) LEAH Program: PIRC Medical Director Dr. Jesse Tobias "Toby" Martinez and PIRC Director Cindy Jones presented to the program's fellows on PIRC services and mental health needs in the community. The LEAH program, part of UAB's Division of Adolescent Medicine, is committed to improving the health status of adolescents, particularly those in the southeastern region of the U.S through its interdisciplinary leadership education of adolescent health professionals in medicine, nursing, nutrition, psychology and social work.

No More Martyrs: For the third year, PIRC sponsored the No More Martyrs Minority Mental Health Awareness Summit. The nationwide, three-day virtual conference focused on Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and their challenges. Health and mental health care providers, medical professionals and community representatives participated in the training. No More Martyrs is a mental health awareness campaign committed to building a community of support for Black women with mental health concerns.

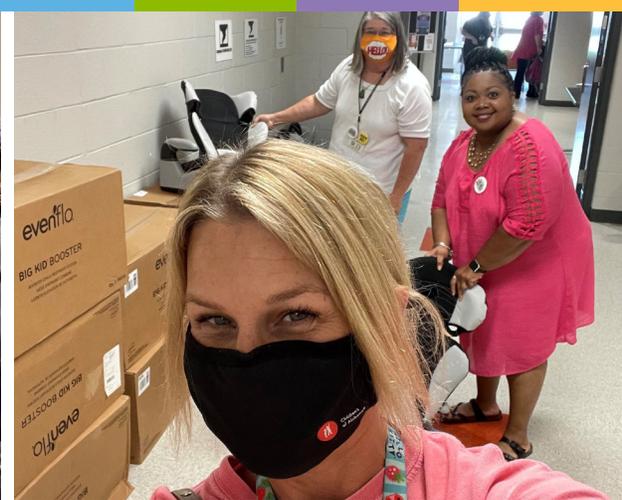
Medical Advocacy and Outreach (MAO): PIRC Director Cindy Jones presented at a one-day training on "Perspectives in Pediatric Mental Health" sponsored by MAO, formerly Medical AIDS Outreach and Montgomery AIDS Outreach. MAO provides health and wellness services to people living with HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and other life-threatening illnesses.

Mental Health Roundtable (MHR): PIRC Director Cindy Jones participated in quarterly meetings throughout the year. The organization fosters collaboration among more than 100 healthcare systems, mental health providers, faith-based entities and stakeholders in Jefferson and Shelby counties.

PIRC Community Outreach



PIRC Director Cindy Jones presented on PIRC services at the ADMH and Alabama State Department of Education's (ALSDE) "Operation Student Success: The Role of the Mental Health Service Coordinator" kick-off meeting in September. Pictured left to right, Education Specialist Shenitra Dees, ADMH Coordinator of Children and Adolescent Services Gayla Caddell, Education Prevention and Support Services Administrator Dr. Kay Warfield and PIRC Director Cindy Jones.



Health Education and Safety Center Safe Kids Coordinator Leslie Brown helped distribute Children's of Alabama car seats and health and mental health services information to volunteers at the "JUST BE" Well Pickens County Back-to-School Rally.

Schools

Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) and Education (ALSDE): PIRC Director Cindy Jones presented on PIRC services at "Operation Student Success: The Role of the Mental Health Service Coordinator" kick-off meeting of 175 School-Based Mental Health Service Coordinators employed statewide. The coordinators' aim is to allow children and adolescents, both general and special education, enrolled in local school systems have access to high-quality mental health prevention, early intervention and treatment services.

Leeds City Schools: PIRC Director Cindy Jones met with the school system's School-Based Mental Health Service Coordinators to inform them on how to access mental health resources and provide student crisis intervention in Jefferson, Shelby and St. Clair counties.

Tuscaloosa City Schools: Coordinator of Social Services Audrey Ellis and her team of educators participated in a site visit at Children's of Alabama in July. The team met with and toured the Social Services and PIRC departments as a way of being informed on Children's social and mental health services available to Tuscaloosa City School students.

Pickens County Schools: Health Education and Safety Center Safe Kids Coordinator Leslie Brown, CHIPS Prevention Education Coordinator Jo Davis, PIRC Director Cindy Jones and Director of Alternative Mental Health Services and Pediatric Access Tele-Mental Health (PATHS) Network Project Manager Susan Griffin participated in planning the "JUST BE" Well Pickens County Back-to-School Rally in August. Information on Children's services were provided by Brown to more than 300 people who attended the health and safety resource fair sponsored by the school district. This team is committed to ongoing outreach in Pickens County, an historically poor and underserved county in Alabama's Black Belt region. PIRC's partnership with PATHS in Pickens County accomplished a 2021 goal to focus supports on at least two underserved counties, the other was Walker County.

PIRC Community Outreach



Children's Behavioral Health employees, the largest team for the second year in a row, participated in the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Birmingham Walk.



PIRC Therapist David Dees represented the PIRC at the third annual Alabaster health fair at Thompson High School.

Community Events

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Birmingham Walk: Children's Behavioral Health was the largest team for the second year in a row to participate in the NAMI Walk. The 1.5-mile walk is an annual event held to kick off National Mental Health Awareness Week in September.

Alabaster Health Fair: PIRC Therapist David Dees attended the third annual health fair at Thompson High School. The fair was hosted by the city of Alabaster, Shelby Baptist Medical Center, Shelby County Commission and the Warrior Foundation. More than 100 members of the community attended.

Celebrate the Family Expo: PIRC Therapist Carmen Lambert represented PIRC services at the Christian Family Publication's annual event organized to meet "the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the family" living in Jefferson and Shelby counties. The expo, attended by more than 75 people, was held in May as a part of Mental Health Awareness Month.

Central Alabama Wellness Be Well Shelby Fair: PIRC Therapist Melissa Edwards participated in the mental health center's event, which included family fun, music and community resources, including PIRC services, for more than 200 Shelby and Chilton county residents.

Happy, Healthy Kids Fair: PIRC Therapist Matt Foster attended this event where families learned about healthcare services, schools, educational programs, enrichment classes and community services. Foster shared PIRC services with about 50 attendees from Central Alabama.

Get Well Walker County Health Fair: PIRC Director Cindy Jones represented PIRC services at the health fair where more than 75 residents attended the half-day event, which included health screenings and activities and community exhibits

University of Alabama Birmingham (UAB) Mental Health Resource Fair: PIRC services were featured during Mental Illness Awareness Week in October via a virtual fair sponsored by UAB Employee Assistance & Counseling Center for UAB employees and family members. The healthcare and school systems have 26,000 employees.

PIRC Community Outreach



PIRC Therapist Matt Foster shared about PIRC services along with Children's Poison Control Team at the Happy, Healthy Kids Fair.



PIRC Therapist Carmen Lambert talks to a child at the Celebrate the Family Expo held as a part of Mental Health Awareness Month in May.

Community Events (cont.)

Alabama Giving: PIRC Medical Director Dr. Jesse Tobias "Toby" Martinez presented on the state of children's mental health at an Alabama Giving stakeholders meeting. Alabama Giving is an association of grantmaking organizations that works to increase, promote and encourage philanthropy by helping its members share knowledge, collaborate and advocate to improve conditions in Alabama.

Alabama Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) Out of the Darkness Walk: PIRC Therapist Matt Foster represented the PIRC at this annual event where more than 300 people walked to honor victims of suicide and raise awareness about suicide prevention.

Shelby County Sheriff Department's Crisis Response Training: PIRC Director Cindy Jones presented on PIRC services at the department's quarterly crisis response training. More than 90 officers attended the four training sessions during the year.

Shelby County Children's Policy Council: PIRC Director Cindy Jones and Partial Hospitalization Program Manager (PHP) Lauren Byrd spoke to the council on both programs and mental health services offered to children and adolescents in Shelby County.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T. Back-to-School Rally: The rally is organized by R.E.S.P.E.C.T., a faith-based organization which provides information and essential services to children and families as they prepare for the upcoming school year. PIRC provided information on its services at a virtual drive-thru event for more than 2,000 residents of Birmingham.

WVTM TV 13: PIRC Medical Director Dr. Jesse Tobias "Toby" Martinez was interviewed in April by the Central Alabama station on increases in suicidal thinking among children.

WABM TV My68: PIRC Director Cindy Jones talked about PIRC services during the intermission of Friday Night Rivals Game of the Week high school football games in the fall. The broadcast reached residents in West and Central Alabama.

Music & Miracles Dothan Radiothon: PIRC Director Cindy Jones was interviewed about PIRC services during the Music & Miracles Radiothon with Dothan's WTVY 95.5 FM station. The radiothon, broadcast throughout Southeast Alabama, raised more than \$61,000 for Children's of Alabama.

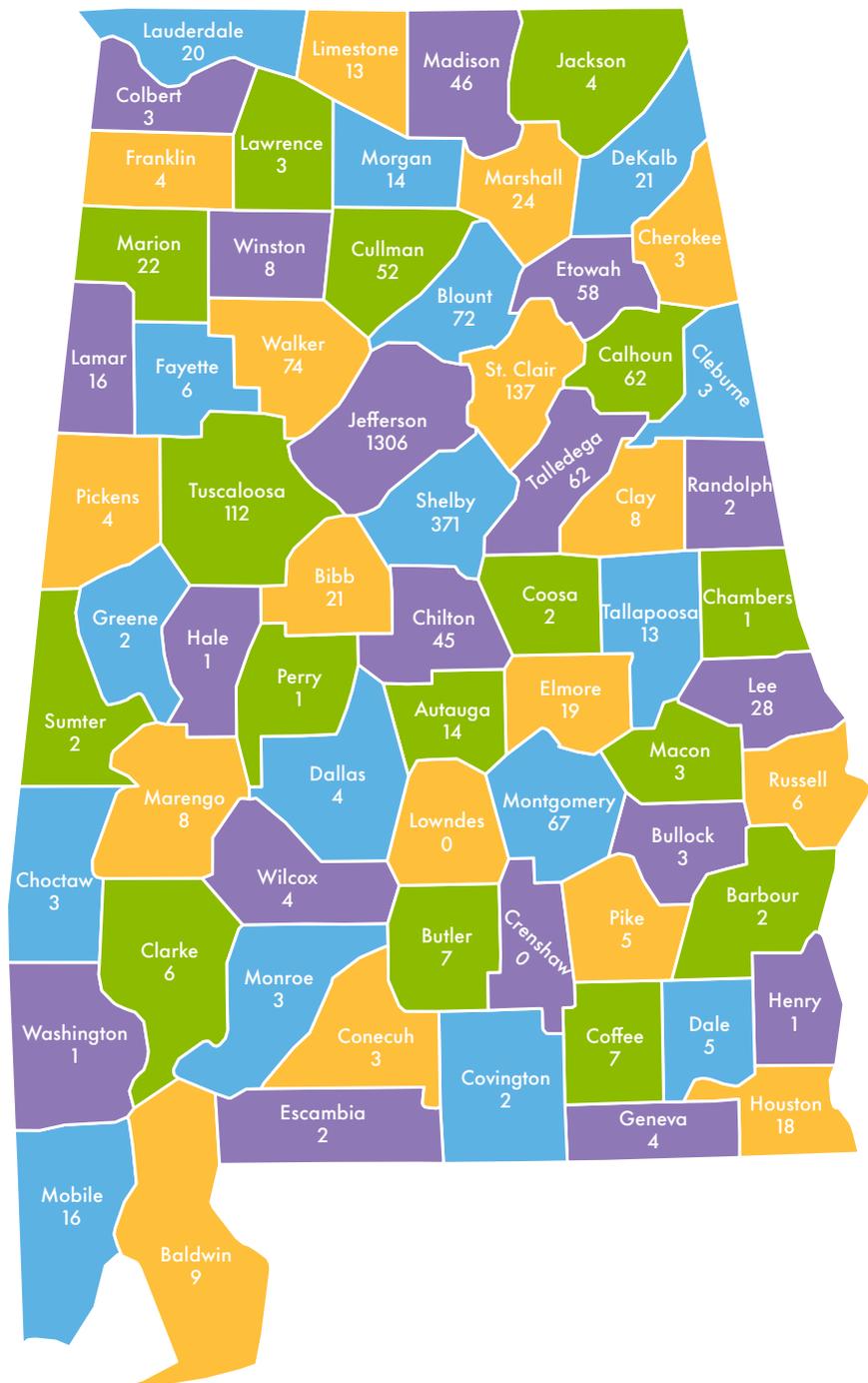
PIRC Statistics

PIRC Callers by County*

TOTAL:
3,149

*276 callers were not identified by county.

Five calls were from out of state.

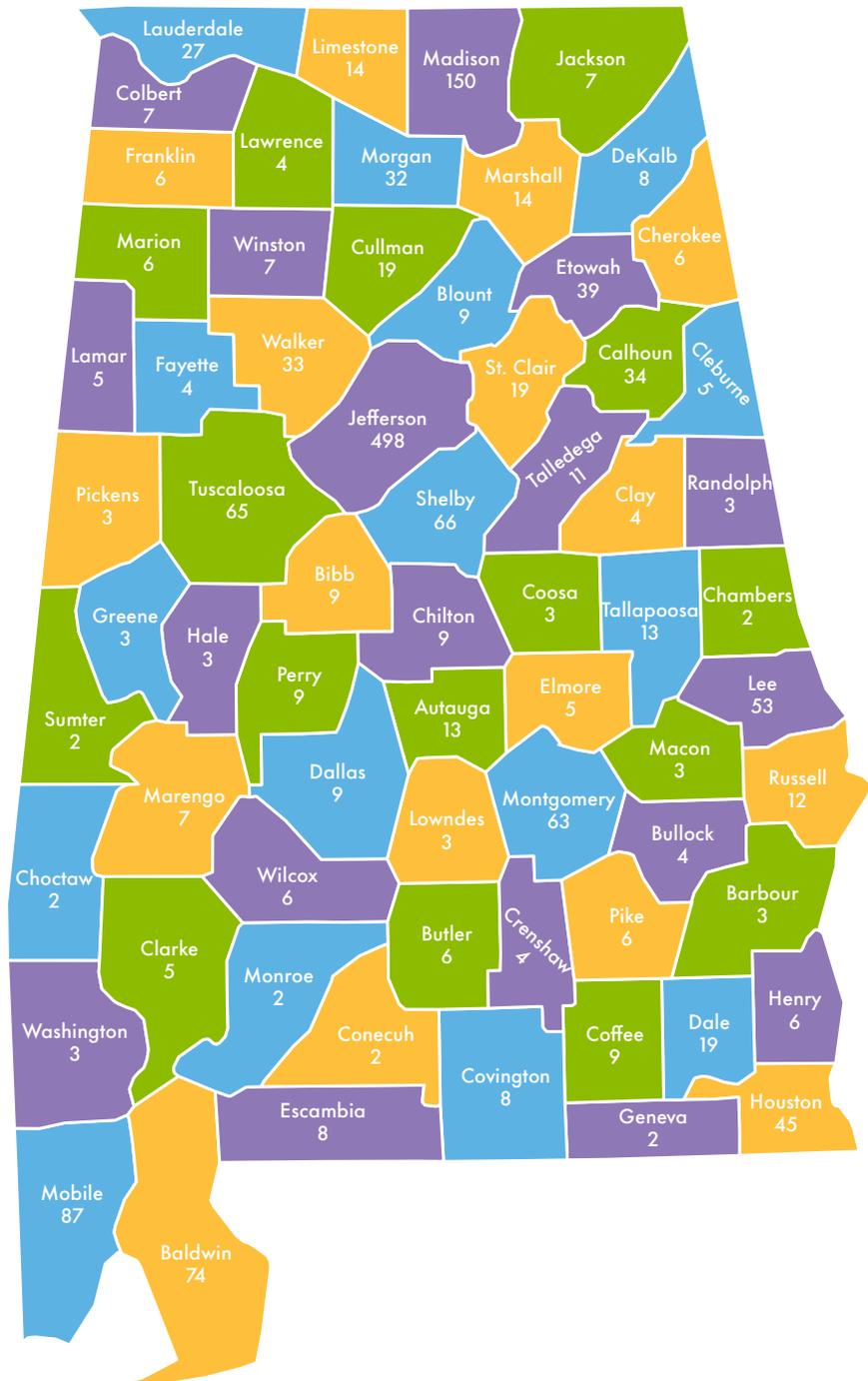


PIRC Statistics

PIRC-Identified Mental Health Providers by County*

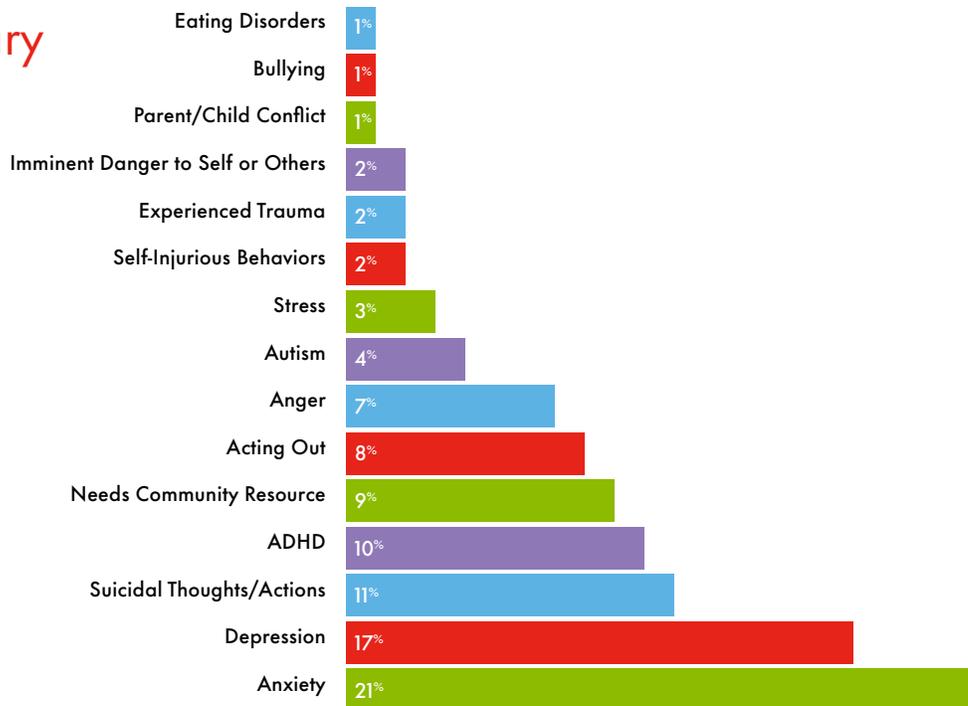
TOTAL:
1,673

*Totals indicate the number of mental health care providers identified in the PIRC database. Though providers may have multiple specialists on staff, the database recognizes these providers as one listing. There are 46 out-of-state providers in the database.

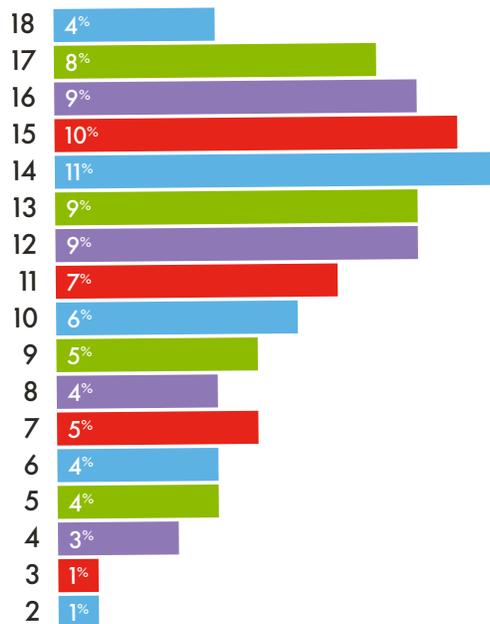


PIRC Statistics

Caller's Primary Concern

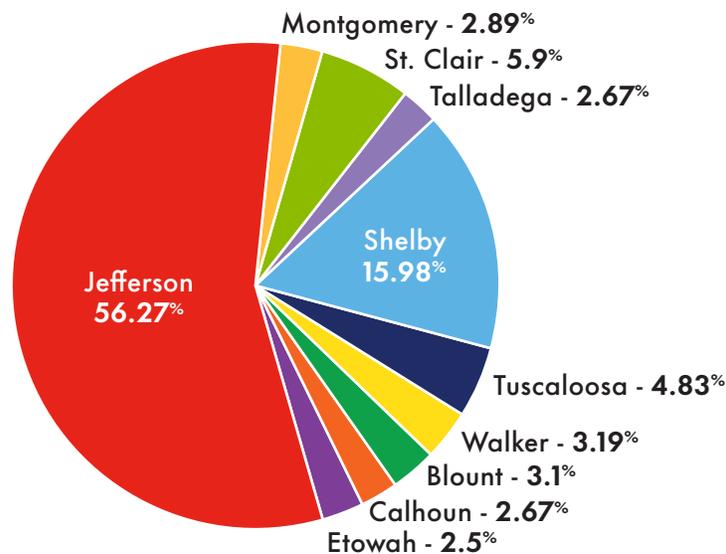


Caller's Concerns by Ages

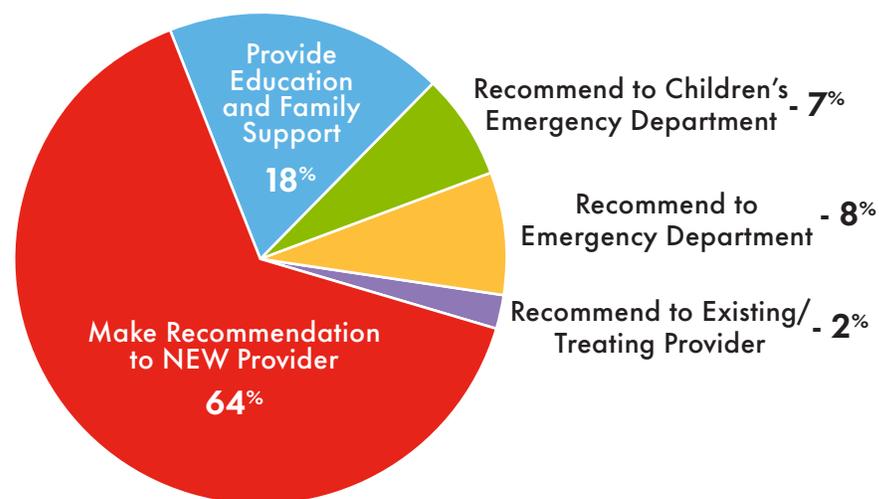


PIRC Statistics

Top 10 Counties by Caller

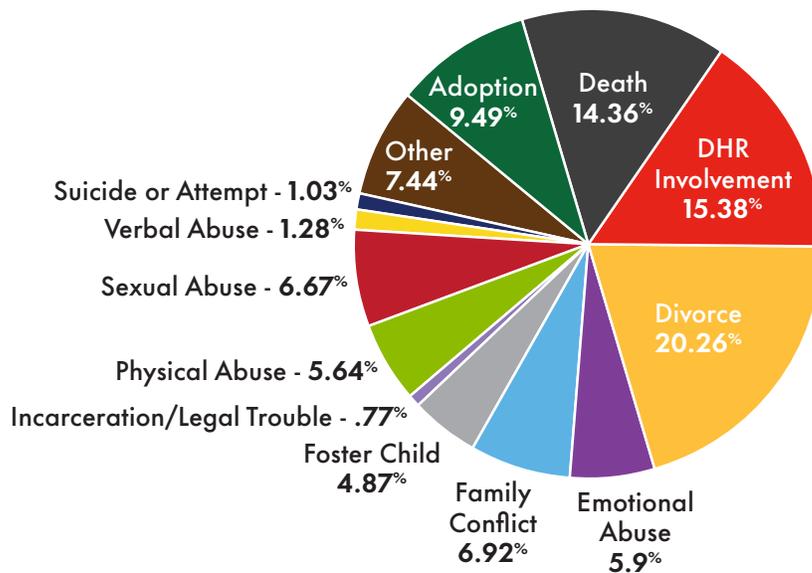


Caller's Disposition Profile

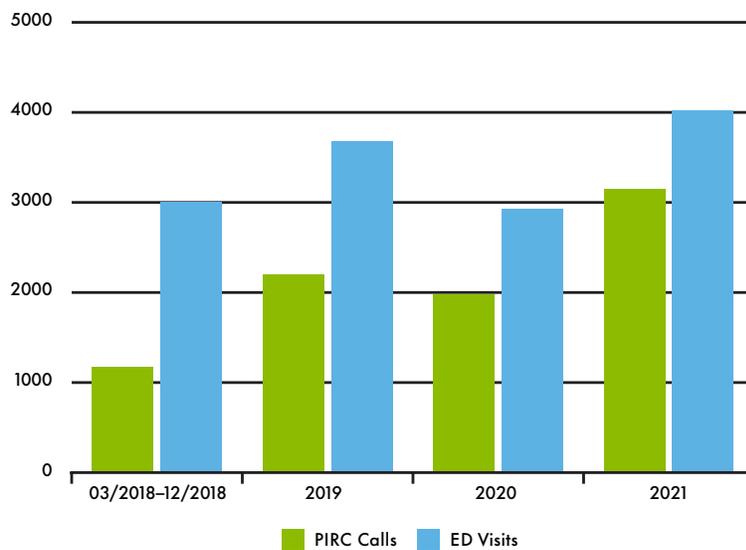


PIRC Statistics

Caller's Psychosocial Indicators



PIRC Growth Since 2018



PIRC Future Plans



In 2021, Blacks and Latinos had substantially lower access to mental health and substance use treatment services. Unfortunately, 59.6% of youth with Major Depression did not receive any mental health treatment. Among youth with severe depression who received some treatment, only 27% receive consistent care. The PIRC is committed to facilitating access to proper mental health care.

A study by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) suggested that in 2021 more than 140,000 children under age 18 or approximately 1 out of 500 children in the United States had experienced COVID-19-associated orphan-hood or death of a grandparent caregiver. Children of racial and ethnic minorities accounted for 65% of those who lost a primary caregiver due to the pandemic.

Children and adolescent's positive mental health is an imperative. The U.S. Surgeon General, in his report on the youth mental health crisis, said we should all recognize that mental health is an essential part of overall health. His words ring true as Children's of Alabama along with the PIRC have a mission to be an advocate for all children and work to educate the public about issues affecting children's health and well-being. We proudly stand committed to this mission and desire for all children to achieve overall positive mental health.

2022 Goals

- Be innovative and responsive to the ongoing mental health crisis facing Alabama's children and adolescents, including ways to facilitate better access to care.
- Increase the PIRC's database listing, including cross-referencing information on more than 2,700 BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama mental health providers.
- Continue ongoing partnerships with PATHS Tele-Mental Health program and Children's Health Education and Safety Center's community advocacy group to target outreach and education in rural, underserved and/or marginalized Alabama communities.
- Increase PIRC services and improve patient and family satisfaction in the ED through therapeutic interventions and process improvements.
- Continue to partner with Children's Foundation to seek funding opportunities from community supporters.



Children's
of Alabama®



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[ChildrensAL.org/PIRC](https://www.ChildrensAL.org/PIRC)