



Empowering Youth & Families  
for a Brighter Tomorrow

# 2019-2020 Annual Report

## Our Vision

Youth Dynamics is committed to providing comprehensive and progressive trauma sensitive behavioral health services to meet the ever-changing needs of youth and families.

## Our Mission

Youth Dynamics provides family focused behavioral health treatment founded on the principles of an actively caring and trauma sensitive culture in which people can realize their full potential.

# VALUES

**EMPOWERMENT • PARTNERSHIPS • COLLABORATION**  
**OPEN AND RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION**  
**INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY STRENGTHS**  
**INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SELF-DETERMINATION**  
**TEAM DECISION MAKING AND INDIVIDUALIZED CARE**  
**ACTIVE CARE AND TREATMENT**  
**TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**TRAUMA SENSITIVE CULTURE**

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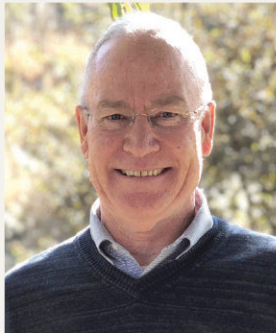
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# A Message from Our CEO



The year 2020 will be remembered for many historical events: a global pandemic, national unrest and a state in lockdown. All of these factors have led to an increase in mental and behavioral health issues for children and families everywhere. COVID-19 has brought not only an awareness of heightened hygiene, but it has caused each of us to dig deep, to do what is necessary to protect ourselves mentally from an invisible enemy trying to tear us down physically. While on the outset this might seem somber, more attention to our mental health might just be what is necessary to begin healing.

At Youth Dynamics, we believe we are teachers of mental health. We are called to be role models of inclusion, empathy and love. We must live lives we would be happy for our children to model. As Rosa Parks so eloquently stated *“each person must live their lives as a model for others”*. We recognize the responsibility we have to model healthy living and relationships for the next generation. Thankfully, we have a team in place prepared to meet the challenges ahead as leadership permeates the entire organization.

This annual report reflects the leadership mantra **“we are better together”**. At Youth Dynamics, we call this **#YDIsStrong!** A slogan developed at the beginning of the pandemic by our people to encourage one another to stay strong. Today, it remains an expression of hope for our team members.

Without the consistent effort from one corner of the state to another throughout the entire agency to assert leadership, loyalty to mission and energy to improve our organization, we would not have withstood the challenges brought on by the global COVID-19 pandemic. We are proud of our effort to provide the very best in mental health services to the children across Montana, and we are a **“people first”** business. An expression of immense gratitude goes out to all of our supporters in every community for making our services available to those who cannot afford healthcare on their own. This report is the indicator of progress, growth and challenges as well as the impact Youth Dynamics is making in the hearts, homes and communities throughout our state.

Respectfully,

Dennis Sulser, Ed. D.  
Chief Executive Officer

“  
Thank you for  
everything the  
people at YDI  
have done for us.  
~ Client  
”



# A Look Back

Mixed memories will always be associated with 2020, as we recall the challenges from COVID-19 and hope for a brighter tomorrow. At Youth Dynamics, our team has risen to the challenge to provide services to even more children and families than the year before.

## COVID-19 IMPACT

It is not surprising that mental health is now at the forefront for everyone. The pandemic has been difficult for all of us - even for mental health professionals. For over 225 team members we have developed telecommuting processes, paid COVID-19 leave and an increased commitment to flexible schedules.

Early on, the Facilities Department also secured Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other supplies for each of our locations, ensuring our team members at group homes and community offices had everything they needed in the event of a positive case. Each office implemented daily temperature checks, wearing masks in the presence of others, social distancing, additional sanitizing of work areas and frequent hand washing in an effort to keep their coworkers and clients healthy. We continue to keep these procedures in place until our state of emergency is lifted. Staying ahead of demands during this pandemic has proven difficult, but we have all come together and remain strong for each other and our families.



enhancements under the pandemic. An example of enhanced benefits is on-demand tele-healthcare which includes virtual mental health services for those covered under our health plan.

## PEOPLE FIRST

Our “people first” culture doesn’t just include our clients. At Youth Dynamics, we recognize our team members are our number one resource as we turn our attention to recruiting and retaining the best people and most mission driven mental health care professionals.

In 2020, our agency employed 286 regular full-time employees and 263 casual part-time employees. The majority of our part-time employees worked as Family Support Assistants (FSAs) and served as a mentor to a child. We employ people at all stages of their career, with the majority taking their first steps into the mental health industry.

We have implemented market adjustments for literally every worker over the past 18 months and initiated benefits that are true

## ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE SURVEY

We have also conducted more frequent check-ins with the staff. There has been a heavy reliance on the Organizational Climate Survey to address the work force needs. We are overwhelmed by the willingness of our employees to engage in quarterly feedback to improve our workplace culture and environment. Our Organizational Climate Survey is our most reliable tool for measuring the health of our culture. From the survey this year we learned: **We have a culture of highly motivated individuals with suggestions to improve the way we operate. Working conditions, compensation for professional positions, supervision tactics, professional development and internal communication are driving disengagement factors for employees.**

With the launch of a quarterly, ten-question survey, **we saw engagement in our Organizational Climate Survey increase by 200%.** The quarterly survey has allowed Leadership to become more agile in adapting to the agency’s needs. Changes have included:

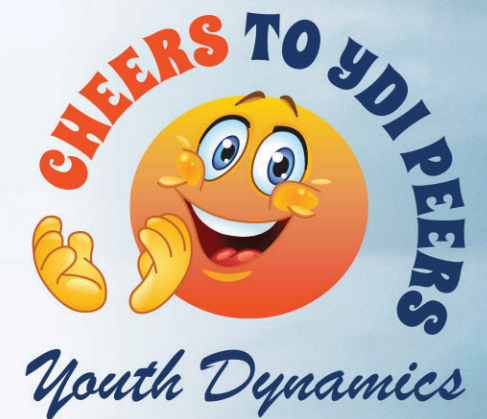
- Re-development of all initial training modules.
- The launch of the Youth Dynamics Leadership Academy to improve supervision tactics and increase leadership skills at all levels of the organization. Implementation for Executive and Administrative leadership was completed in early 2020, with further implementation taking place in the 2020-2021 fiscal year.
- Development of the “Cheers to YDI Peers Program” launched in the 2019-2020 fiscal year with benchmarking in the 2020-2021 fiscal year.
- Improvement to the internal communication process.

## TRAINING

Training continues to be a foundational element for our team members. Therapists report that they choose to work at Youth Dynamics because of the quality clinical supervision we provide. Team members list professional growth as one of the most needed factors to remain with Youth Dynamics.

As a result, this year we implemented a new interactive online training program, Talent LMS, with 50 new modules to improve our onboarding educational process for new employees. In addition, we completed our partnership with the University of Montana to create a 25-hour Principles of Trauma-Informed Care initial training series.

Youth Dynamics cultivates a culture of physical, emotional and intellectual security that promotes our team members’ empowerment to facilitate participation in the employee-employer partnership. At Youth Dynamics, we strive to be the employer of choice.



**I love how attentive and welcoming all of the staff are at YDI. You guys are amazing. Thank you!**  
~ Client

## LEADERSHIP

While 2018-2019 saw many leadership changes, we are fortunate our leadership team has remained largely intact throughout 2019-2020. Consistent leadership has helped our teams across the state maintain a sense of continuity. Our leadership team also completed a 15-hour online course, a 12-hour workshop and one on one coaching. The Leadership Academy designed by YDI and the University of Montana has improved relationships, communication lines and employee engagement at all levels of the organization. Each year, more team members will be enrolled in this training to increase leadership knowledge.

## EMPLOYEE-EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP

This year, we created two employee led committees made up of staff from across the state to give our team members more input into the day-to-day operations at YDI. The newly formed Workforce Development Committee is working to support an employer-employee relationship that promotes shared decision making and addresses the desires of the worker first, in the business environment. While our Communications Committee is hard at work improving our internal messaging processes and workflow. Quarterly feedback from our staff shows a vast improvement for both areas.

## OUR REACH

Youth Dynamics continues to expand the footprint of our profile across the state. Marketing and communications are central to our *"people first"* approach in providing mental health services. Over the last year, our website traffic continued to increase receiving over 106,000 visits. We expect the number of visitors to increase even more. Across our social media platforms, we have reached over 10,975,700 people with the majority of contact through Facebook and Instagram. We are thankful for the strong support of our 42,000+ followers on social media.

## SUPPORT

We recognize COVID-19 has affected the overall delivery of services and our financials. We have seized every opportunity to secure government funded support for our agency, whether it was through our local, state or federal emergency relief sources. The additional funding has resulted in the opportunity for us to deliver care virtually when in person visits were not possible and given us additional protection and support in providing our residential group home services. Our business model continues to work effectively as we recognize the needs of children in Montana are greater than ever. We have conscientiously invested in and incorporated technology enhancements across our workforce to make them more mobile and to meet the growing demands of our clients and staff.

**I love the services  
you guys provide and  
my kids love and get  
along with everyone.**  
~ Client

## LOCATIONS

Youth Dynamics is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable corporation with offices based in Billings, Montana and operates satellite offices in Colstrip, Miles City, Glendive, Wolf Point, Glasgow, Malta, Havre, Shelby, Kalispell, Great Falls, Missoula, Hamilton, Helena, Butte, Dillon, Boulder, Bozeman and Livingston. We also operate ten therapeutic youth group homes located in Billings, Helena, Boulder, and Great Falls. Altogether, the agency owns and leases property in over 30 locations across the state. Research is underway to consider opening an additional area currently not covered by our services.

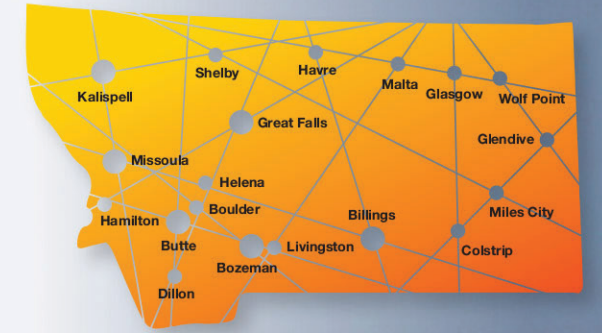
## LICENSES

YDI maintains several licenses through the State of Montana to provide mental and behavioral health services for youth and their families. In addition, Youth Dynamics and its programs are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), which certifies recognition of the quality of our business, personnel, governance and clinical functions. As an organization, we strive to provide excellent services on a consistent basis regardless of if our license is up for renewal.

## PROVIDER OF CHOICE

Finally, our response to improving the entire experience for the children and all people associated with Youth Dynamics is to become the trauma informed culture we desire. Our entire team at Youth Dynamics is focused on a trauma informed model of care. We understand each of us must continue to pursue trauma informed principles and knowledge to be better healthcare providers. It is time we begin a continuum of care that is surrounded by people and consider the stories behind the faces. We truly believe we are better together in overcoming the challenges that trauma has presented our children, our families, and not the least of which, our workforce.

OUR EFFORTS TO  
MAKE A **DIFFERENCE**  
ONE CHILD AT A TIME  
CONTINUES TO **MOTIVATE**  
YOUTH DYNAMICS TO BE THE  
**PROVIDER OF CHOICE**  
FOR OUR CLIENTS THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF MONTANA.



OVER  
**30** LOCATIONS  
STRATEGICALLY LOCATED ACROSS  
**MONTANA**  
**19** COMMUNITY  
OFFICES  
**10** GROUP  
HOMES



“  
Love  
having services  
with YDI.  
~ Client  
”

# Clinical Services

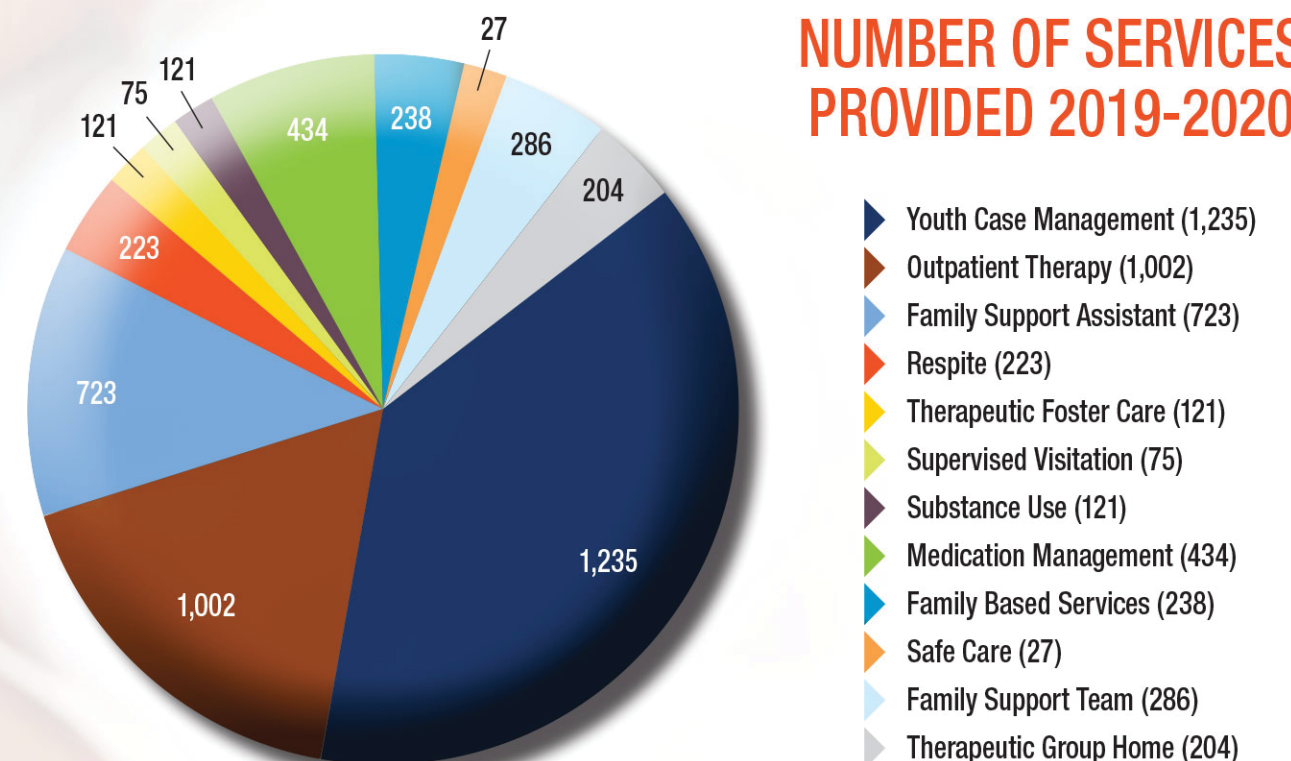
**TOTAL YOUTH SERVED IN 2019-2020 FISCAL YEAR: 2,698**

In all, we served 2,698 individuals throughout Montana in 2019-2020. The increase in the number of youth served represents a 3% growth by providing 5,878 individual services to youth. This increase is due to children experiencing sporadic school closures, additional pressures on families and continuing economic hardships due to the pandemic which has largely impacted our children and families' mental and behavioral health. Clinical services at Youth Dynamics include:

**INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY THERAPY • CASE MANAGEMENT  
YOUTH MENTORS • PARENTING EDUCATION AND SUPPORT  
THERAPEUTIC GROUP HOMES • SUBSTANCE USE EDUCATION & TREATMENT  
THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE • FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM  
MEDICATION MANAGEMENT • SUPERVISED VISITS  
TRANSITIONAL LIVING SKILLS  
THERAPY FOR CHILDREN WITH HIGHLY SEXUALIZED BEHAVIORS  
AND/OR WHO HAVE COMMITTED SEXUAL OFFENSES**

Consistently, the children in our program have either discharged to a lower level of care or maintained the current status of service while in our care. Each specific service is measured by its effectiveness for the individual, although multiple services are often provided to each youth—on average, each child receives 2.6 services. This is down from the prior year of 2.8 services per child in 2018-2019. We attribute the decrease in services per child to the pandemic where some services have not been an option, for example, Family Support Assistance, or a fewer number of available therapeutic foster families. COVID-19 has presented challenges to delivering our services.

## NUMBER OF SERVICES PROVIDED 2019-2020



# Diagnoses Served

At Youth Dynamics, we primarily serve youth categorized by the state as meeting severely emotionally disturbed (SED) criteria which may include the following diagnoses: anxiety, oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression or reactive attachment disorder (RAD). Because every child's needs are different, YDI customizes individual treatment plans. A complete continuum of behavioral health care and treatment to clients includes individual and family therapy, parenting education and support, service coordination and support, therapeutic group homes, therapeutic foster care, substance use education and treatment and family support assistants also known as mentors.

We offer support to youth living in the community with their biological family, foster and adoptive families through Family Support Services (FSS) utilizing a wrap-around philosophy. Youth Support Services (YSS) supports the youth and their family through a structured out of home placement in one of our therapeutic group homes which provides a family-like environment.

# Diagnoses Distribution

The youth we serve often have multiple diagnoses reflecting the severity and complexity of their clinical issues. Youth receive an admitting, working and discharge diagnoses. Trauma related disorders, anxiety, depressive disorders and oppositional and disruptive behaviors continue to be the most commonly occurring primary diagnoses. The historical trend of PTSD and anxiety are among the most reported diagnoses. As mental health care providers, we continue to support our current initiative of increasing our clinical services through trauma informed and sensitive practices.

“

I have two older kids at YDI and it has helped very much.  
~ Client

”

	TOTALS		TOTALS
Neurodevelopmental Disorders	496	Disruptive, Impulse-Control and Conduct Disorders	1,002
Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders	21	Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders	81
Bipolar and Related Disorders	74	Neurocognitive Disorders	2
Depressive Disorders	826	Personality Disorders	1
Anxiety Disorders	598	Somatic Symptoms and Related Disorders	0
Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders	3	Other Mental Disorders	0
Trauma and Stress or Related Disorders	2,136	Other Conditions That May Be a Focus of Clinical Attention	342
Elimination Disorders	6		
Gender Dysphoria	12		

# Youth Case Management

We are happy to report that the majority of youth receiving Case Management services are in a home, enrolled in school and not involved in the legal system. Also, the majority of children receiving Case Management from Youth Dynamics are receiving care in their own home or with a relative. When it is possible, *reunification with the family is always our first goal.*

## YOUTH'S PLACEMENT

IN-STATE PRTF	IN-STATE THERAPEUTIC GROUP HOME	OUT OF STATE ACUTE CARE	AT HOME
5	78	15	973

## YOUTH'S CUSTODY

PLACE IN CORRECTIONAL CARE	PLACED IN STATE FOSTER CARE	PLACED IN KINSHIP FOSTER CARE	PLACED IN NATURAL HOME ENVIRONMENTS
5	141	218	707

Doing a great job at working with my family, very positive results.  
~ Client

Montana has the  
**4th highest**  
teen suicide rate

Teen depression has risen  
**63%** since 2012

**38%** of teen girls and  
**26%** of teen boys  
suffer from some type of  
anxiety disorder

Youth Dynamics  
provided nearly  
**6,000**  
individual services to almost  
**2,700** children

**THERAPEUTIC GROUP HOME**

The number of youth served in Therapeutic Group Homes (TGH) increased over the last fiscal year from 195 to 204. For 2019-2020, our ten group homes including Lakeview Youth Home, which opened in October 2019, averaged being filled at 80% capacity. Our census figures indicate 37% of the youth served in our group home setting were Native American. In TGH, the average age receiving care is 15 years old. In the new fiscal year, we continue to average 80+% occupancy.

**THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE**

The Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) program continues to make positive changes. The amount of youth served in 2019-2020 decreased by 23. This is because there has been a substantial decrease in the TFC homes. Another reason for the decrease is the youth receiving services are staying for longer periods of time. Last year, the average length of stay was 9.6 months, but this past year the average length of stay has increased to 16.6 months. The children are staying in homes longer and there are not as many disruptions or discharges to a higher level of care compared to previous years. During 2019-2020, 25% of the youth who were discharged from the TFC program went to a higher level of care, while 44% went to a lower level of care. Increasing the number of TFC homes is a high priority for this program, as is ensuring it is trauma informed and therapeutic is also vital. This has been a high priority over the last year, and remains a recognized need for the children in our communities. Delivering quality training to TFC families so that they have the skill to handle behaviors of the youth being placed in their homes will also enhance the efficacy of the program. Therefore, we have redesigned the teaching of how trauma informed care looks in a child's behavior for TFC parents. Not only will there be continued training to TFC families, but also for staff who are working with TFC homes. There continues to be a significant need for additional foster families across the state.

“  
Thank you  
for helping me.  
~ Client  
”



*Gender and Age by Program*

GENDER DISTRIBUTION BY TOTAL SERVED	MALE			FEMALE	
	1,454			1,244	
AGE	0-5	6-12	13-18	19-20	21+
DISTRIBUTION BY PROGRAM 2018-2019	354	1,201	1,089	1	50

2019-2020

# Race Distribution

The majority of the youth served at Youth Dynamics are **69%** Caucasian,

while the Native American population served is **20%**. In relation to the Caucasian race and ethnicity distribution in Montana, we assist a greater percentage of Native American youth when compared to the total Native American population in Montana.

**(6.5%)**

With the disproportionate number of Native Americans being served, as compared to the general population, we are addressing cultural competencies in our training so we can help youth cope with the unique challenges they face when returning to their communities.

## RACE DISTRIBUTION 2019-2020

	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN
TOTAL BY SERVICES	1,102	8	123
TOTAL BY YOUTH SERVED	551	3	66
	WHITE	NATIVE HAWAII AND/OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	MULTI-RACIAL
TOTAL BY SERVICES	3,324	4	231
TOTAL BY YOUTH SERVED	1,877	5	126
	DECLINE TO SPECIFY	UNKNOWN	BLANK
TOTAL BY SERVICES	15	144	94
TOTAL BY YOUTH SERVED	5	77	6



I had an amazing time learning/interacting.  
~ Client



# Measuring Success

## DISCHARGE STATUS

One measure used for the 2019-2020 reporting period is the Discharge Status. This is the fifth year we have been monitoring youths’ “Discharge Status” rather than “Reason for Discharge”. The reason for this change is that it was difficult to ascertain which discharges were truly “successful”. This is the second year we have looked at discharge status by program level.

*For community service programs previously included in Family Support Services, if a youth maintains his or her level of care or discharges to a lower level of care, we believe this is successful.*

For residential programs previously included in Youth Support Services, we would like to see youth discharge to a lower level of care.

One of the goals of the residential team is to transition youth in TGHs and TFC to lower levels of care. This may involve the youth in TGHs transitioning back to a community placement or a youth in TFC transitioning back to their original home or an adoptive home.

“  
Thank you  
for all you do.  
~ Client  
”

In 2019-2020,  
**73%**  
of youth in TGH  
transitioned to a lower  
level of care, which is an  
improvement from  
**69%**  
the year prior.

In 2019-2020,  
**44%**  
of youth in TFC  
programming transitioned  
to a lower level  
of care.

## DISCHARGE STATUS BY PROGRAM 2019-2020

	HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE	LOWER LEVEL OF CARE	MAINTAINED	MISSING
TOTALS	381	714	2,081	235

# Measuring Success

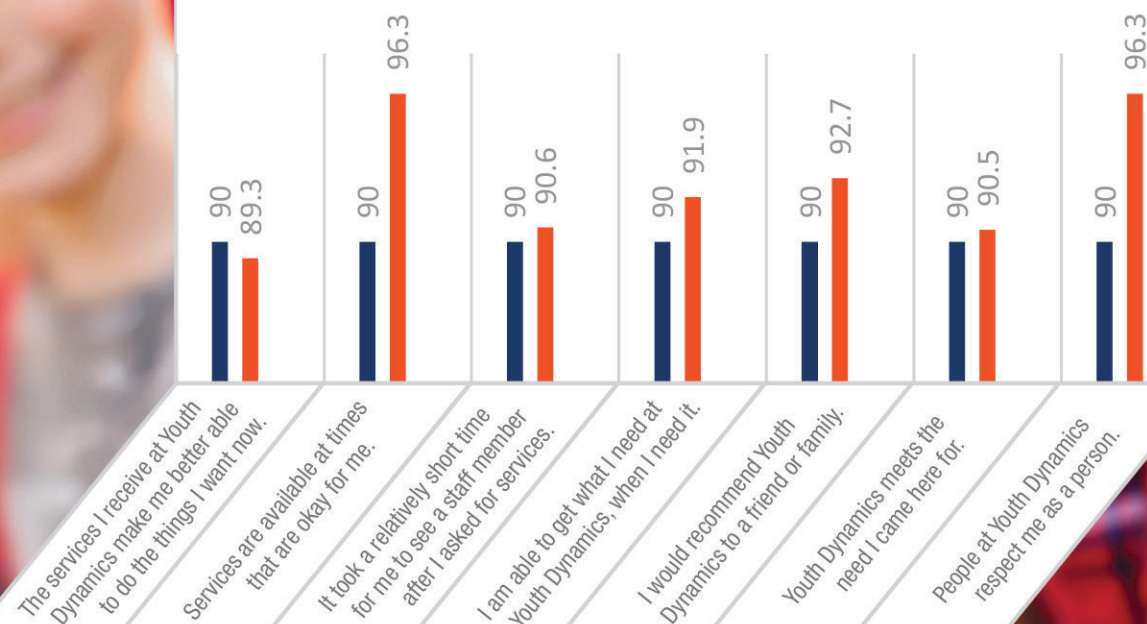
The final measurement we are including for effectiveness is a new client survey. We have collaborated with uSPEQ to distribute surveys two times a year to our clients and will continue to measure our effectiveness, access to services and satisfaction by compiling responses to the following questions:

We have set our benchmark for all youth at **90%**. This benchmark originates from uSPEQ's compilation reports based on responses from similar agencies. This year, we have met or exceeded all of the benchmarks with the exception of *"The services I receive at Youth Dynamics make me better able to do the things I want now"*, which scored a satisfaction rating of

**89.3%.**

## uSPEQ SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS 2019-2020

■ Benchmark Goal ■ 19-20 Results



Keep up the good work.  
~ Client

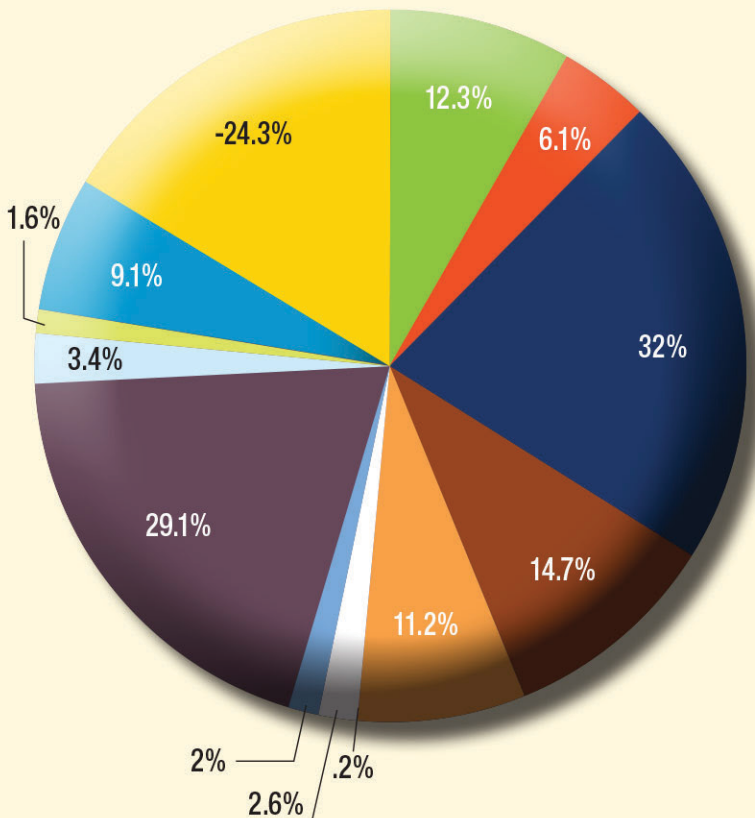
**95%**

of youth served by YDI believe it has a positive impact on their lives.

**95%**

of projects rely on Medicaid or state-level assistance to pay for much needed services

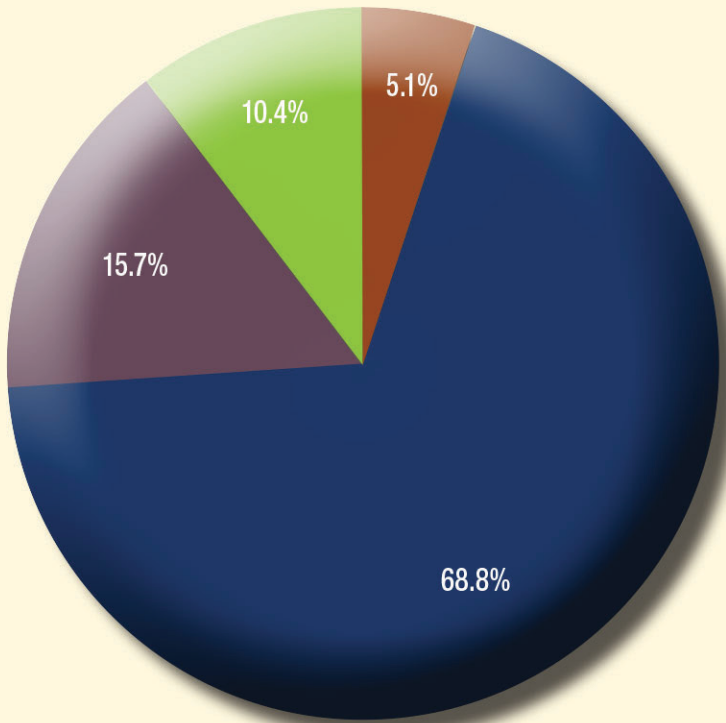
# 2020-2021 Budgeted Revenue



- Group Home/Shelter Care (32%)
- Family Support Assistants (14.7%)
- Therapy (11.2%)
- Respite (.2%)
- Day Treatment (2.6%)
- Family Based Services (2%)
- Youth Case Management (29.1%)
- Substance Abuse Revenue (3.4%)
- Medication Management (1.6%)
- Other Income (9.1%)
- Disallowed Charges (-24.3%)
- Therapeutic Foster Care (12.3%)
- Family Support Teams (6.1%)



# 2020-2021 Budgeted Expenses



- Employee Wages, Taxes and Benefits (68.8%)
- Other Operating Expense (15.7%)
- Administrative Expense (10.4%)
- Client Expense (5.1%)

## Referral Sources

DPHHS/CPS/CFS  
 Billings Clinic Hospital  
 Shodair  
 BIA  
 YBGR  
 AWARE  
*and many others.*



# Who We Are

## YOUTH DYNAMICS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Dr. Dennis Sulser

Chief Executive Officer, Youth Dynamics  
Billings, MT

### Danny Zimmerman

Board Chair  
Clinic Administrator, The Children's Clinic  
Billings, MT

### Bob Connors

Retired  
Bozeman, MT

### Luke Kobold

Director of Strategic Planning and  
Marketing, Billings Clinic  
Billings, MT

### Tara Roberts

Billings, MT

### Alice J. Hinshaw

Helena, MT

### Michael Tennant

Crowley Law Firm  
Billings, MT

### Curt Wheeler

Retired  
Billings, MT

### Joe Maynard

Crowley Law Firm  
Billings, MT

### Marina Tucker

Crowley Law Firm  
Billings, MT

## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM



**Dennis Sulser,  
Ed. D**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Moyra Anthony,  
MSW, MBA, LCSW**  
Clinical Director of Community Services



**Kevin Wyse,  
LCPC, M.Ed, MSOTA**  
Clinical Director of Residential Services



**Kim Brown**  
Marketing &  
Communications Officer



**Will Tedrow,  
MA, SHRM-CP**  
Human Resources Director



**Nina Hernandez**  
Development Director



**Leslie Falcon**  
Finance Director



**Dawn Wilson**  
Director of  
Supportive Operations

*We are grateful to the donors who offer us  
additional support each year to provide  
the best service possible to our clients.*

### VISIONARY DONORS



### CATALYST DONORS



### ADVOCATE DONORS



### CHAMPION DONORS



### ALLY DONORS

Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation  
Berkshire Hathaway, Bozeman

### FRIENDS OF YDI

St. Pious X Parish  
Curt and Dani Wheeler, Billings  
(YDI Board Member)  
NorthWestern Energy

Erin Weenum  
Robert Fowler  
Crowley Fleck PLLP Attorneys  
(YDI Board Members)

Glenn and Michelle Foy  
Jay Pascoe  
Martin Wendland  
Kiwanis Club of Miles City





# *Youth Dynamics*

Throughout 2019, we reached over 14,000,000 through our social media channels.  
We invite you to follow us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.



Youth Dynamics of Montana  
People of Youth Dynamics



@youthdynamicsmt



Youth Dynamics of Montana

Empowering **Youth & Families**  
for a **Brighter Tomorrow**

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