

Organization Name: University of Florida Health

### Organization Info

**Year Established:** 1999

**Most Recent 990 Year:**

**Total Revenue:** 0

**Total Expenses:**

**Philanthropy Hub Profile Created:** No

### Program Snapshot

**Program Name:** Partners in Adolescent Lifestyle Support (PALS) THRIVE; Youth Mental Health Support During After-School and Summer Programming

**Contract Number:** 11575

**Award Amount:** 80275

**Expenditures through 9/30/20:** %:

**Extension Requested:**

**Type of Program:** Health - Mental/Behavioral Health

**Program Summary:** Provides free mental health services for youth ages 8-18

**Target Population:** School-Age: 6-18

**Program Staffing:**

3 positions:

-Licenses Clinician

-Mental Health Counselor

-Program Admin

-Clinical Coordinator

**Program Site(s):**

Girls Place (322 SW 4th Ave, Gainesville, FL )

YMCA (5201 NW 34th Blvd, Gainesville, FL)

**Partner(s):** Girls Place, The Boys and Girls Club, The North Central Florida YMCA, In Due Time Solutions LLC; Virtual Setting; Alachua County Schools

**To be completed by the Providing Agency**

How much?		How well?		Anyone better off?	
<p><b>Expected # of children to be served:</b> <b>450</b></p> <p><b>Intensity of Services:</b> <b>On-going engagement (weekly sessions)</b></p> <p><b># of youth attending mindset/mental health groups, individual counseling, family counseling</b></p> <p><b>basic needs distribution (backpacks and sleeping bags) s at the YMCA and the remaining basic needs resources were donated to Alachua County Public Schools to meet the needs of over 200 students that identified with the McKinney-Vento Act (i.e., students identified as homeless).</b></p>	<p>984</p> <p>7840 (calculated at 20 hrs of sessions times 14 counselors from March to Sept)</p> <p>200</p>	<p>% of youth attending mindset/mental health groups 46%</p>		<p>% of youth experience thoughts of self-harm</p> <p>% of youth increased healthy coping skills</p> <p>% of youth seeing violence as a solution</p>	<p>34% to start before treatment; 3% after treatment</p> <p>100%</p> <p>14% at start of treatment; 0% after treatment</p>

## Project Narrative:

Describe what has been accomplished year-to-date.  
Include any adjustments due to COVID-19 or any other helpful information

Due to COVID-19, we made additional adjustments to reach students in Alachua County during the 2020 grant cycle. We initially connected with the North Central Florida YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, and Girls Place. Of the three programs, the North Central Florida YMCA was able to allow on-site and virtual mental health sessions for enrolled children. We provided basic needs at the YMCA and the remaining basic needs resources were donated to Alachua County Public Schools to meet the needs of over 200 students that identified with the McKinney-Vento Act (i.e., students identified as homeless).

In addition, due to COVID we found that many organizations had shut down leaving hundreds of children/teens without mental health services. At the same time, the students in many of the schools were going virtual with parents at home becoming frustrated, students having difficulty adjusting, and parents losing jobs. This created a storm of mental health issues, potential child abuse, and unanticipated need way beyond expectations.

However, due to the strong infrastructure and community connections our program was able to adjust and meet this increased need. Due to the strong infrastructure of UF Health, much of these services were donated. This was done by the following:

1. UF Health Shands matched funds as grant funds were not enough to cover the greater need. This approval was based on CTAC continuing with seed funding. If this seed funding is not continued, the program may not continue.
2. 11 additional staff were brought on to meet the increased need and funds were moved in an amendment to increase direct hours of two of the counseling staff. Due to the connection to U. of FL departments of Psychology and Counselor Education, advanced graduate students (supervised in individual and group weekly supervision by licensed psychologists, mental health counselors, and LCSWs) made up most of the additional staff.
3. A team approach was quickly put into place with the assistance of the IT department of UF Health and Alachua County Schools in order to provide services virtually. This was no small task but all worked together to make it a reality. Additional computers had to be made available, programs had to be worked out where the counselors personal computer information was not shared, and permission slips allowing virtual counseling and groups had to be distributed and returned.
4. At the same time in direct services counselors had to be protected from COVID. UF Health donated PPE equipment for every counselor as well as sterilization techniques.

In conclusion, our experience was likened by one of our staff to Forrest Gump when the storm hit and all shrimp boats were anchored and their boat was strong enough to withstand the storm and gather huge numbers of shrimp. Due to the strong infrastructure and community support of UF Health we have thus far withstood the storm of COVID, pulled together with the community, and managed to assist the larger number of children and their families as well as the larger number of interactions needed to provide much needed services.