



**SOUTHWEST
LOUISIANA
REPORT
CARD**

2023



Southwest Louisiana

LOUISIANA

#50

NO CHANGE IN RANK SINCE 2019

Louisiana once again ranked 50th in the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of “best” states.

#48

OPPORTUNITY

Economic Opportunity

#45

HEALTHCARE

*Health Care Access
Health Care Quality
Public Health
(up from #46 in 2019)*

#46

EDUCATION

*Higher Education
Pre-K - 12
(up from #48 in 2019)*

#49

INFRASTRUCTURE

*Transportation
Internet Access
(down from #47 in 2019)*

#38

FISCAL STABILITY

*Long-term Fiscal Stability
(up from #42 in 2019)*

#50

CRIME & CORRECTIONS

*Public Safety
Corrections*



Data compiled from
The Annie E. Casey Foundation
U.S. News & World Report
United States Census Bureau
Louisiana Department of Education
Louisiana Department of Health
United Way of Southwest Louisiana's ALICE Report

UNITED WAY OF SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

Much like a child's school report card, this regional report card will give you an idea of how Southwest Louisiana is faring. The data and statistics used to prepare the report will show you the make-up of our community and how well prepared our community members are for today's climate..

One thing is certain, **United Way of Southwest Louisiana is prepared to meet the challenges** ahead with your support.

Deise Lavel



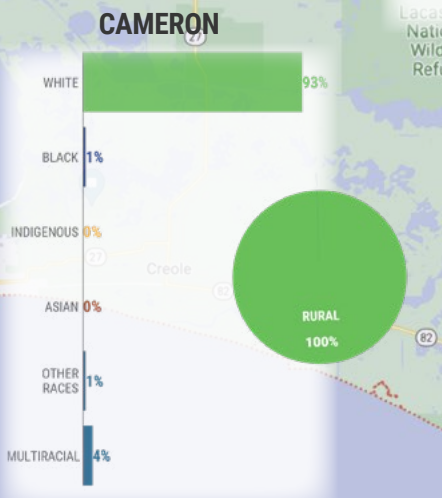
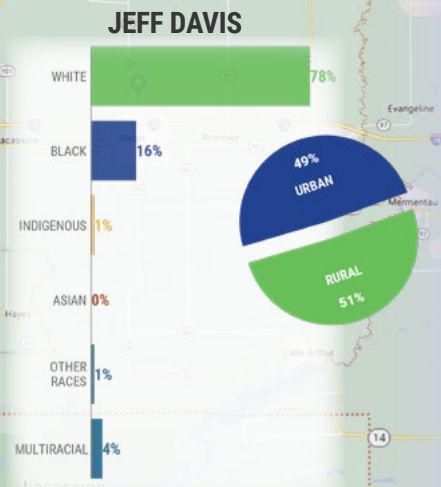
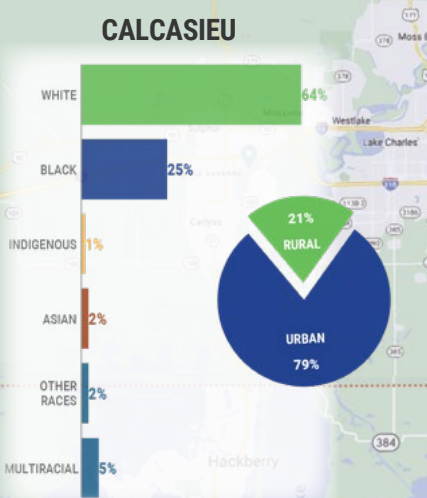
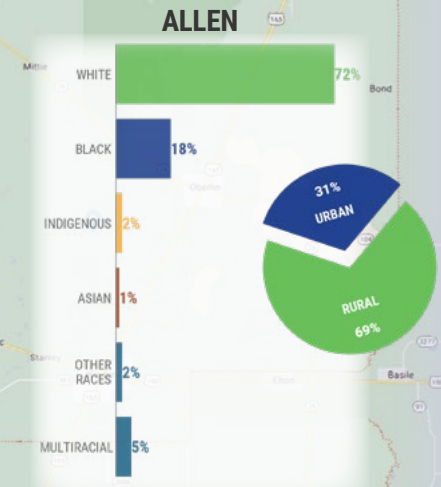
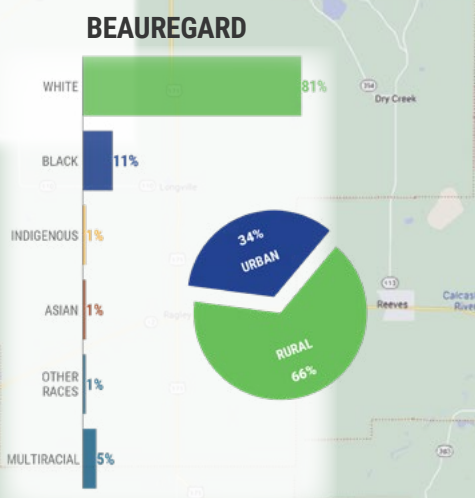
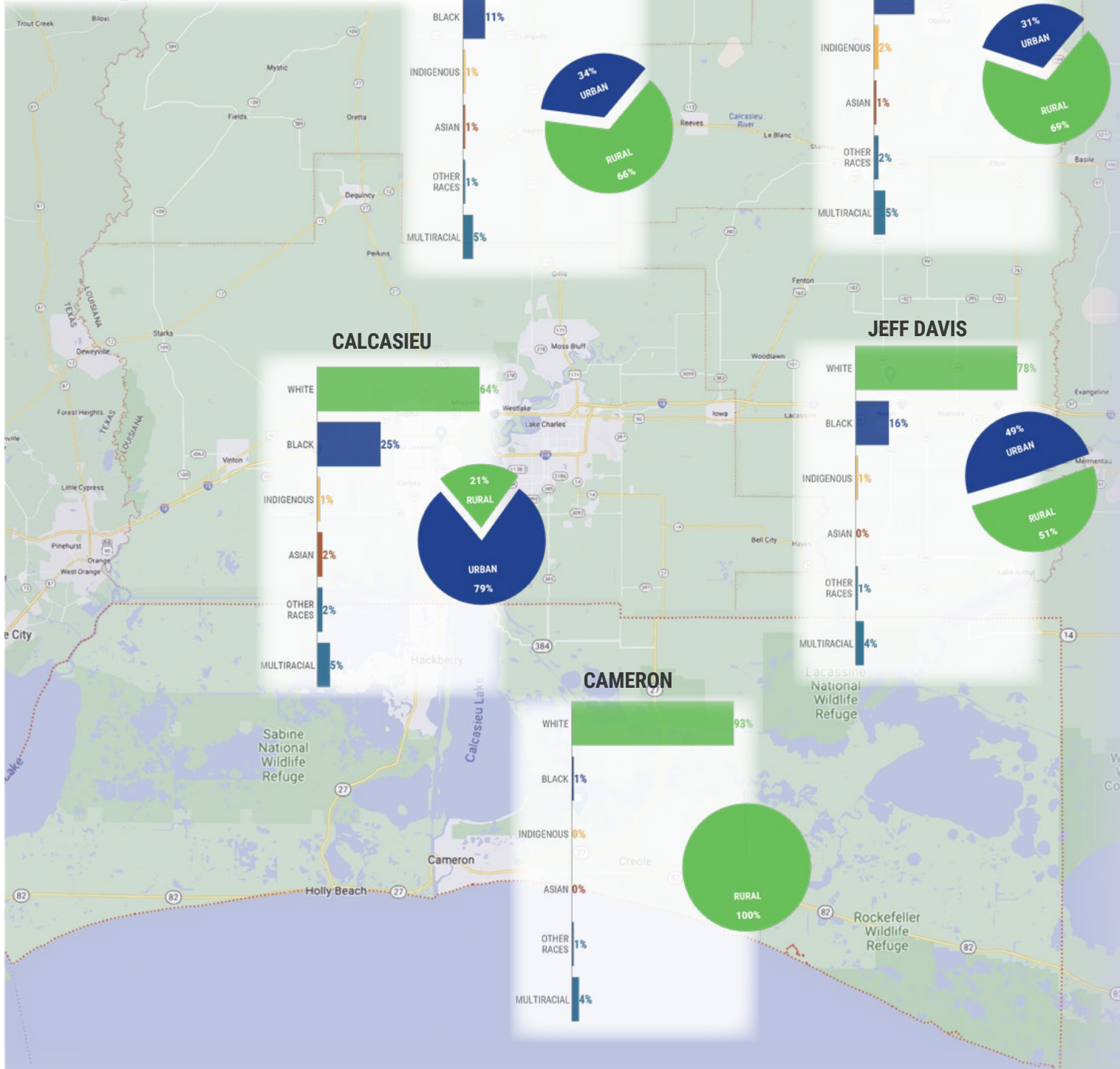
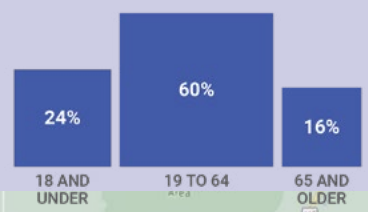
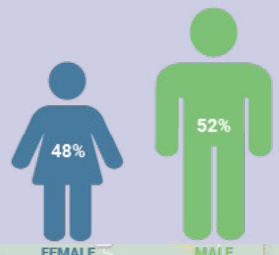
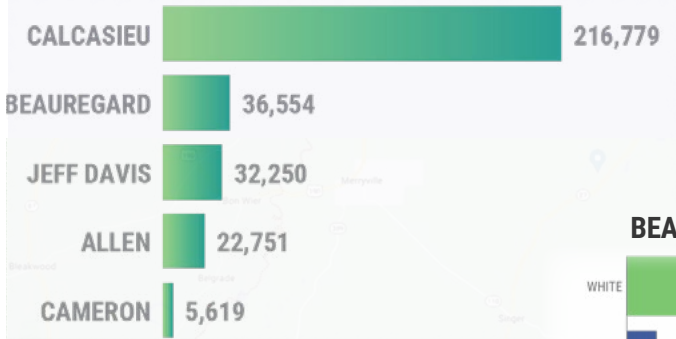
The continued investment in United Way by our donors is a testament to our sustained positive impact on families in our communities.

ABOUT SWLA

ALLEN, BEAUREGARD, CALCASIEU, CAMERON & JEFF DAVIS PARISHES

POPULATION 313,953

in five parishes





35,636
COUSINS



17,224
FRIENDS



58,535
STUDENTS



904,318
NEIGHBORS

1.1 MILLION
SOUTHWEST
LOUISIANANS
IN YOUR FAMILY OR
NEIGHBORHOOD
HAVE BEEN DIRECTLY
IMPACTED BY OUR
INITIATIVES
AND GRANTS
SINCE 2020

LEADING LASTING CHANGE

At United Way of Southwest Louisiana, we maximize the impact of our donors by focusing on four Pillars: Education, Economic Mobility, Health and Basic Needs—the building blocks of opportunity.

We lead, create and invest in Initiatives and grants that improve access to and opportunity in these interconnected, interdependent focus areas we call Pillars.

Together with our committed change-makers, we work to ensure more students graduate prepared for success, more families are stable financially and more neighbors are leading healthier lives.

By the numbers, our leadership directly impacted **1.1 million** individuals in your community.



Southwest Louisiana

EDUCATION



United Way of Southwest Louisiana's Born Learning Trails encourage outdoor play while learning and are bilingual.

United Way of Southwest Louisiana recognizes that for many students and families, school is more than just a place of EDUCATION. It also serves as a community center which supports each student and family beyond the classroom. Students bring information home to families. Families bring information to friends and coworkers.

We partner with schools, parents, counselors and anyone to engage families, reduce barriers to attendance, improve academic outcomes and spread information.

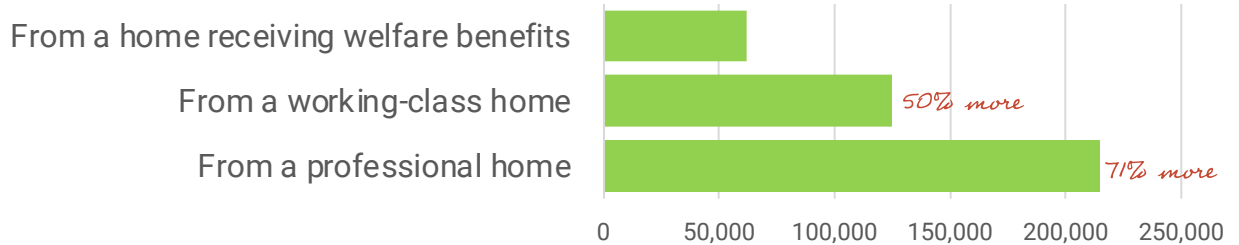
The United Way Team emphasizes any way to share the message as one way to support students in reaching key goals. Our efforts are designed to support academics, social-emotional and other developmental goals of each child in Southwest Louisiana.

EDUCATION



How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on EARLY CHILDHOOD SUCCESS?

The average words per week a child hears at home change depending on their home life. Not all children begin on the same footing.



Our focus is on all children entering school ready so they are successful in elementary school.



DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

3,901 children were mailed one book per month until the age of five to jumpstart their family libraries and help with vocabulary and comprehension.

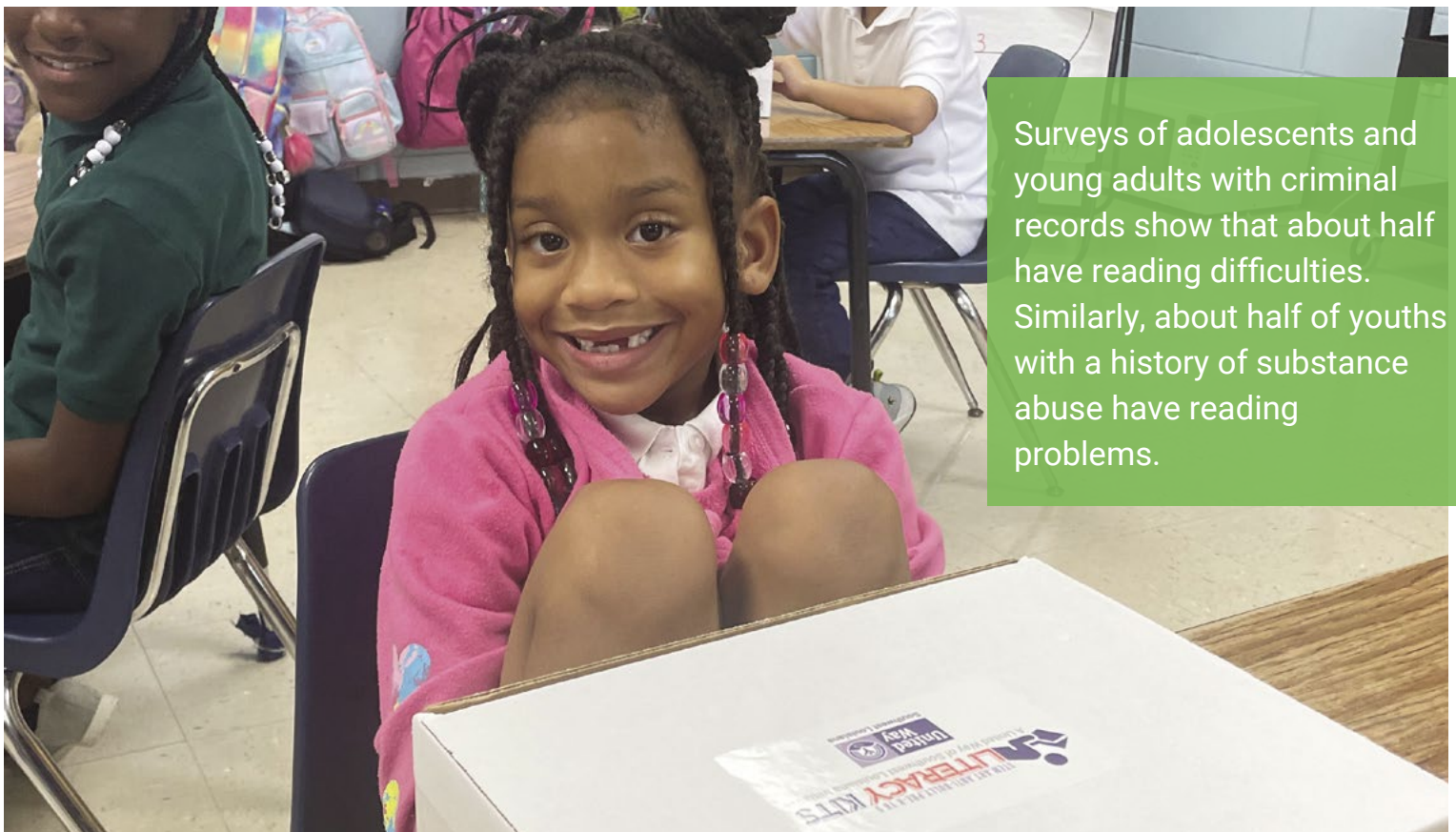
30,462 BOOKS

WRITESTART PROJECT

10,375 students assisted with school fees, uniforms and supplies

LITERACY KITS

1,000 students received a Literacy Kit with books and activities designed to encourage reading

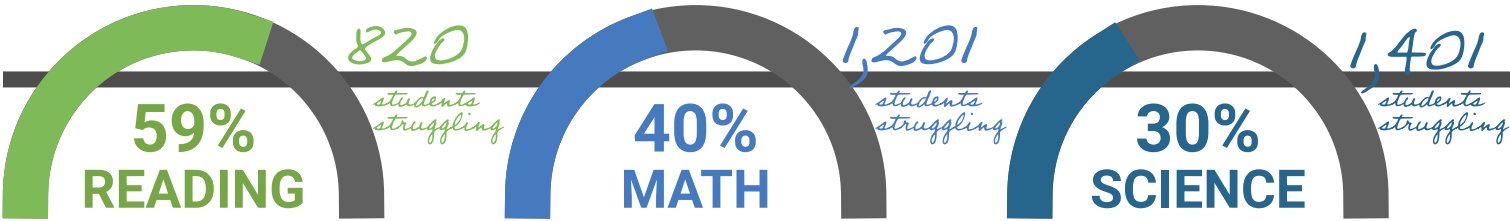


Surveys of adolescents and young adults with criminal records show that about half have reading difficulties. Similarly, about half of youths with a history of substance abuse have reading problems.

EDUCATION

ALLEN PARISH

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY AVERAGE FOR THE PARISH



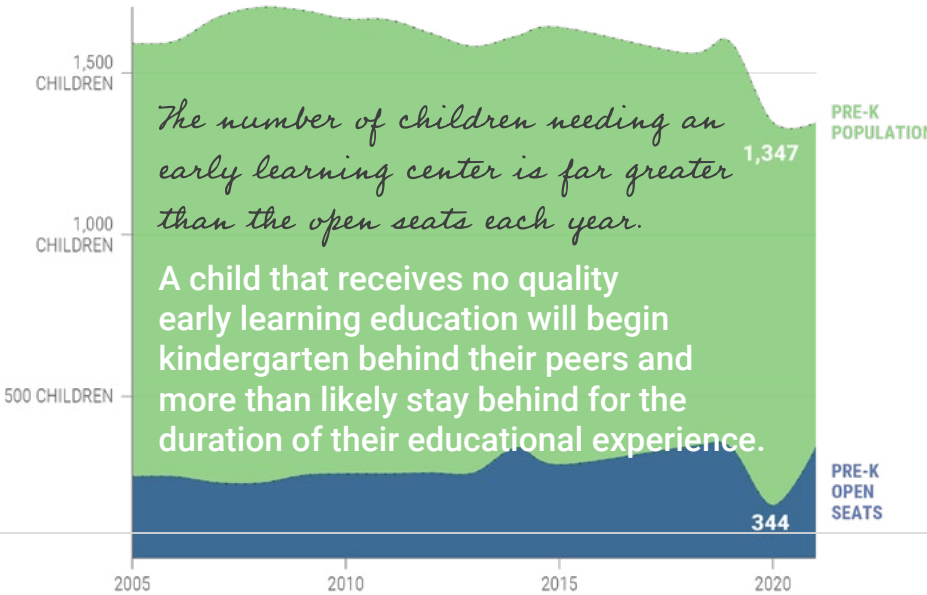
These are the percent of students who scored at or above proficient in the subject



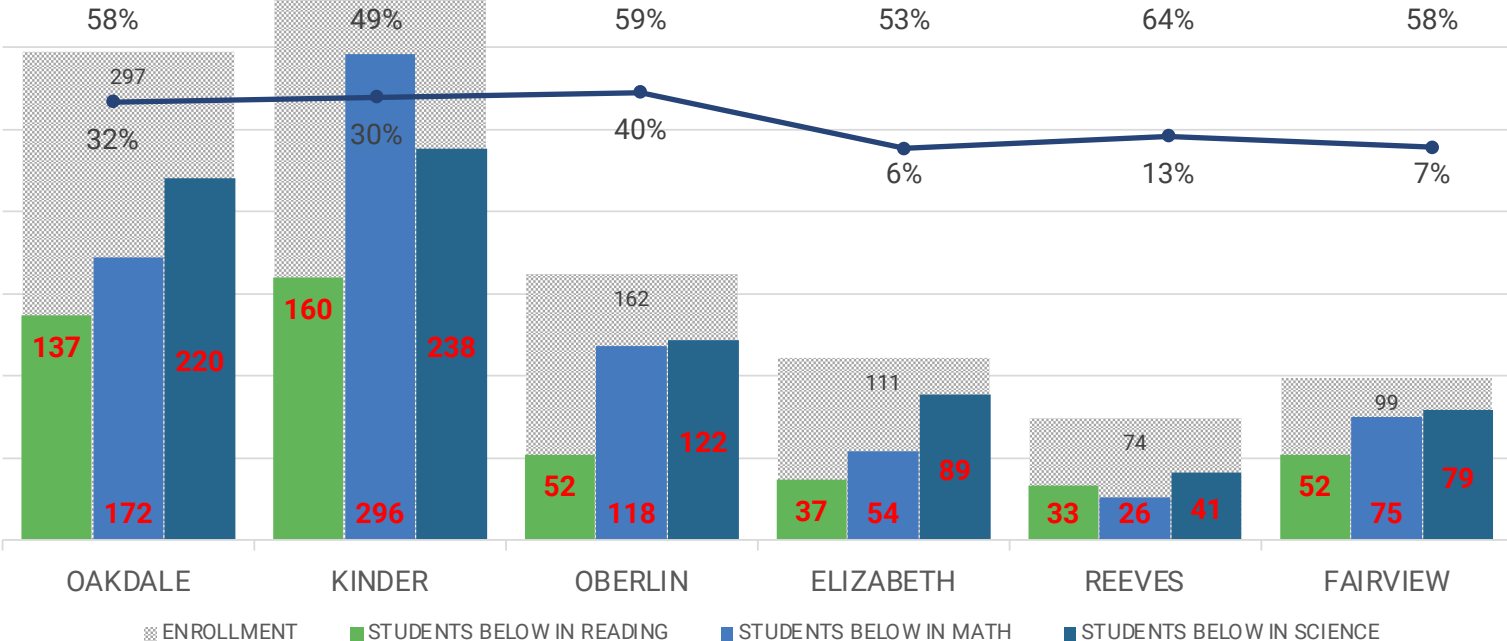
WHO ARE THE STUDENTS THAT ARE STRUGGLING?

High school proficiency averages are used to represent academic performance of students. However, it is important to remember that students are individuals with unique backgrounds and challenges, and their academic success is influenced by various factors beyond their control.

United Way of Southwest Louisiana supports all students, including those who may be struggling, in order to ensure their success and well-being. When you view the graph below, remember the red numbers represent children who may not finish high school or may finish unable to reach their full potential.



● MINORITY ● ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED

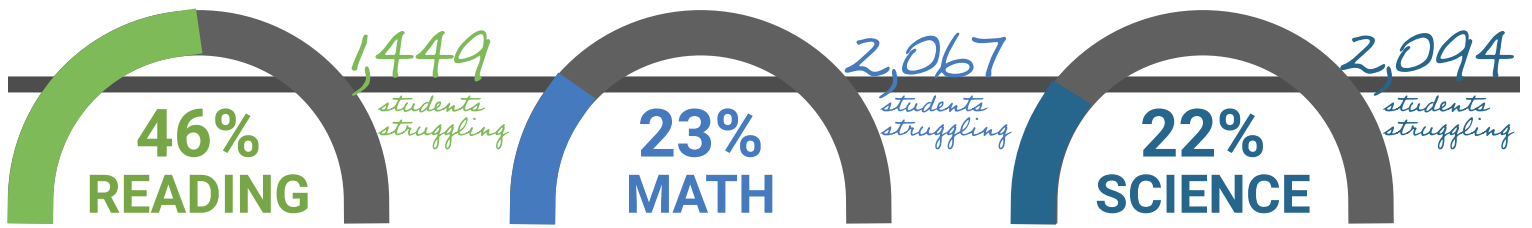


Oakdale High School is the only school offering Advanced Placement classes and has a participation rate of 30%

EDUCATION

BEAUREGARD PARISH

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY AVERAGE FOR THE PARISH



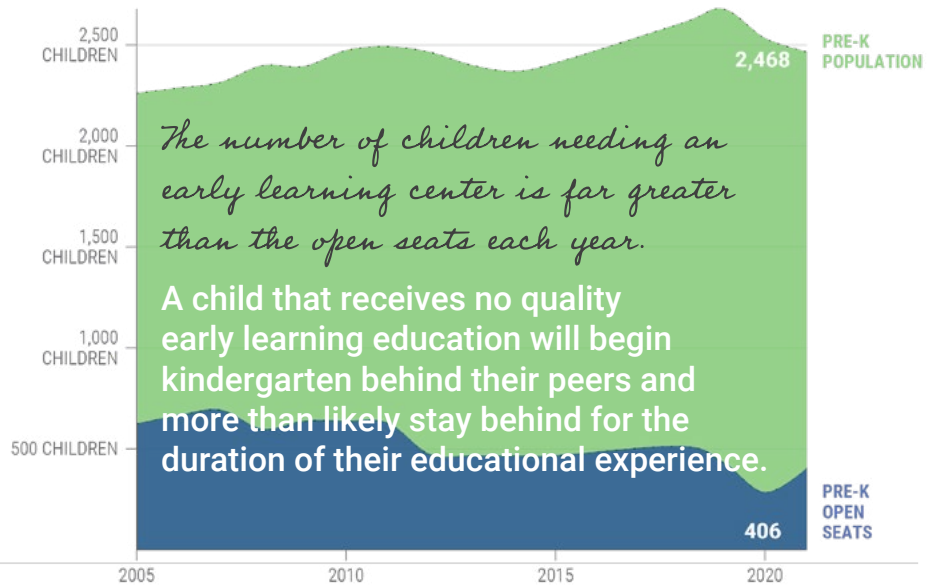
These are the percent of students who scored at or above proficient in the subject



WHO ARE THE STUDENTS THAT ARE STRUGGLING?

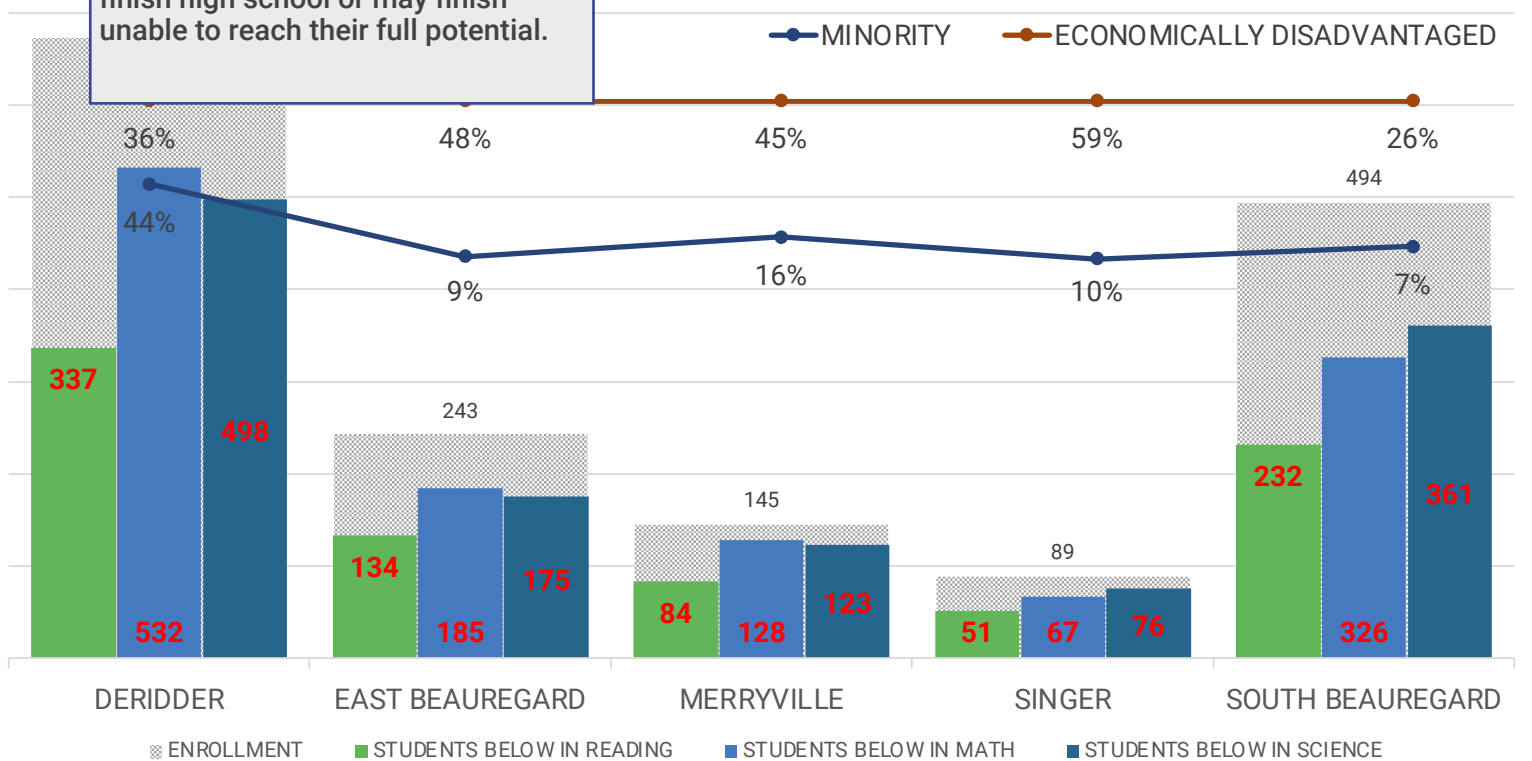
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The number of children needing an early learning center is far greater than the open seats each year.

A child that receives no quality early learning education will begin kindergarten behind their peers and more than likely stay behind for the duration of their educational experience.

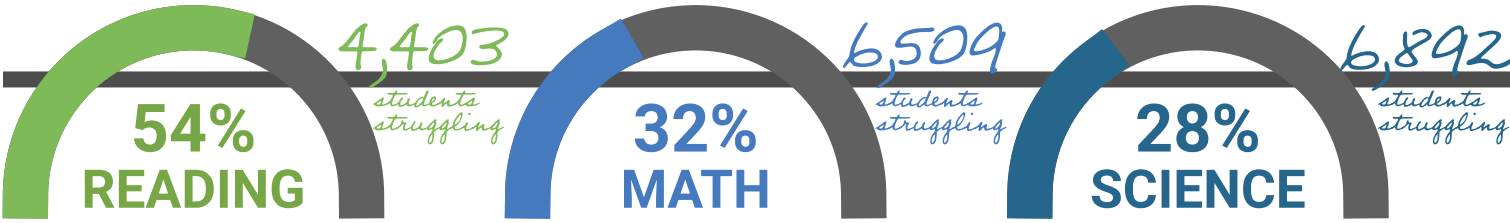


DeRidder High School is the only school offering Advanced Placement classes and has a participation rate of 50%

EDUCATION

CALCASIEU PARISH

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY AVERAGE FOR THE PARISH

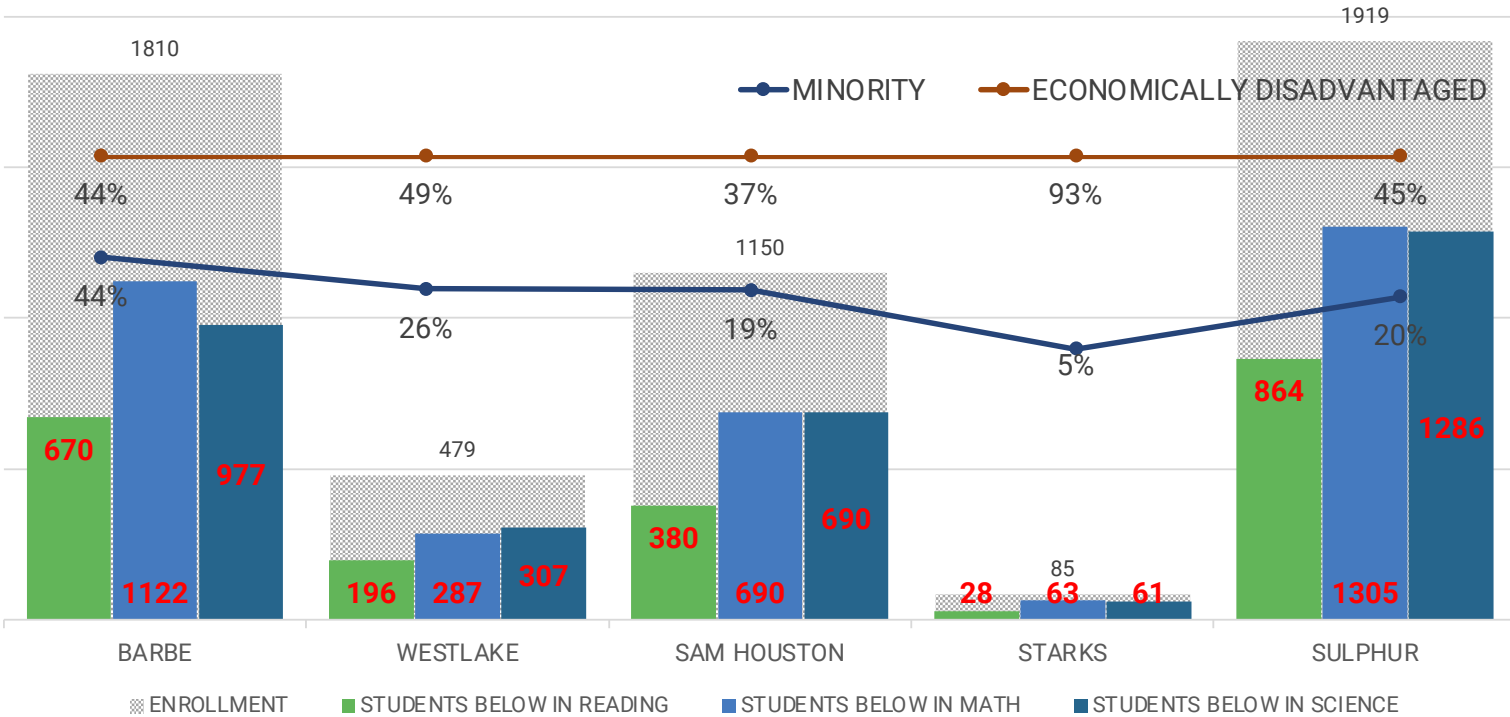


These are the percent of students who scored at or above proficient in the subject



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MENTORSHIP, HOMEWORK & SUMMER HELP

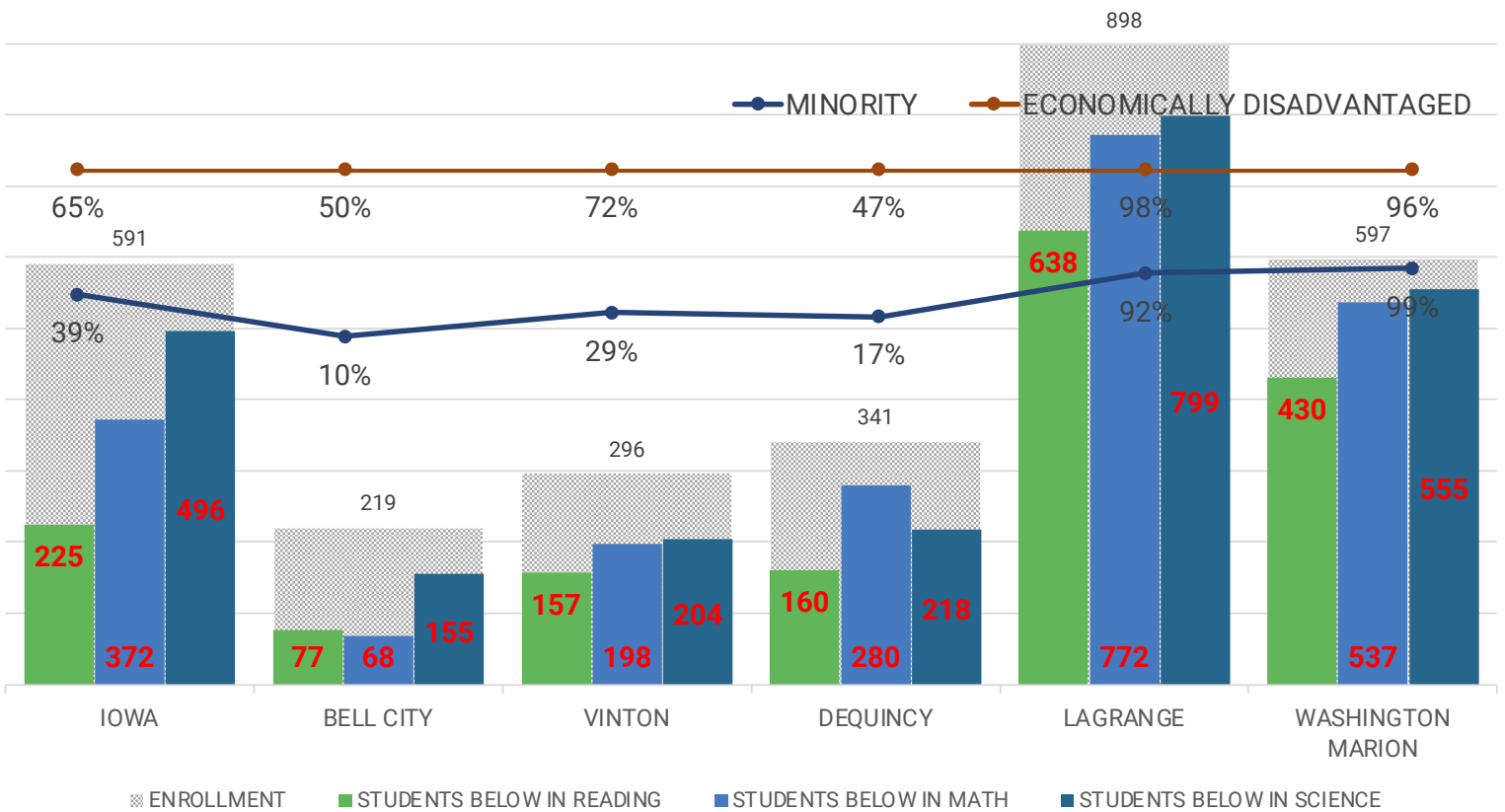
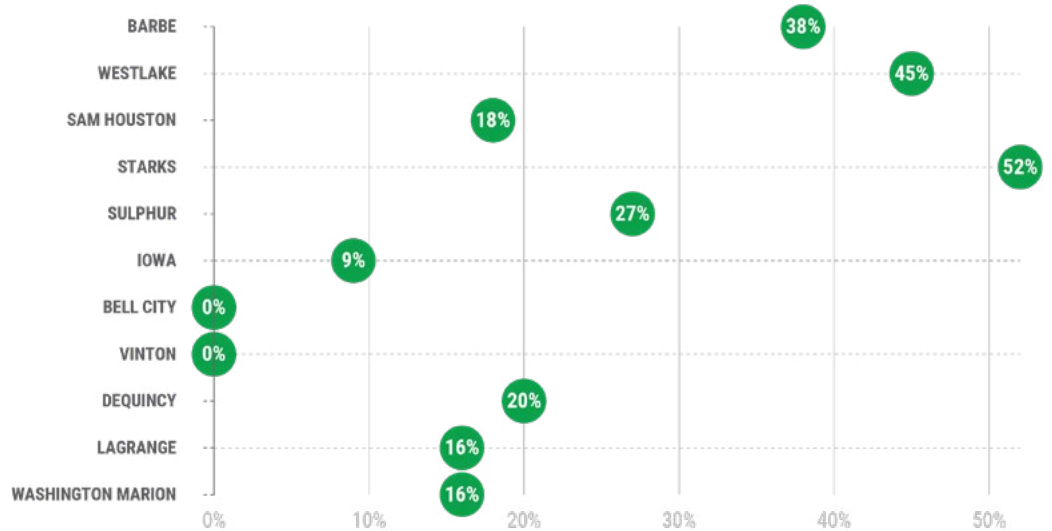
1,146 students

received mentoring, homework assistance or summer help with United Way-funded partners.

EDUCATION

CALCASIEU PARISH

Calcasieu Parish high schools Advanced Placement Participation rates.



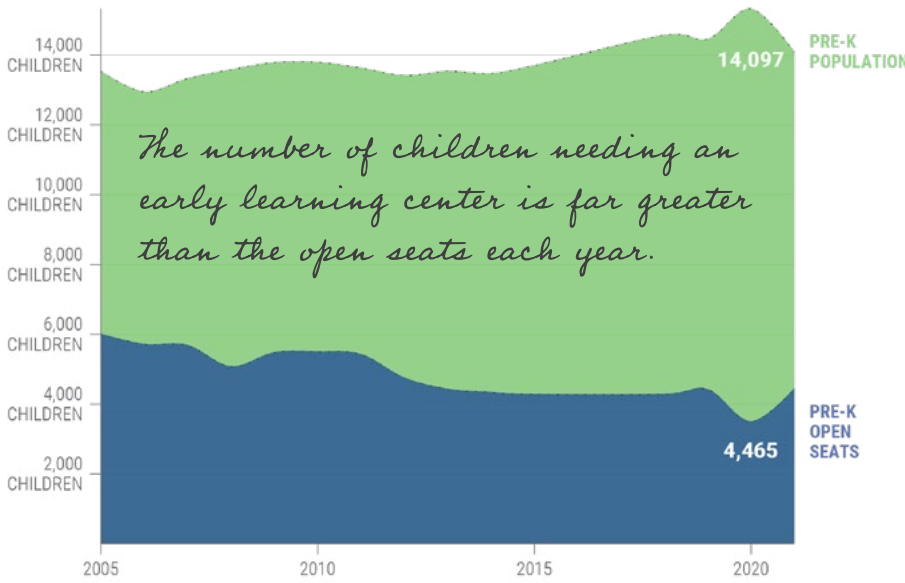
ADVANCED PLACEMENT

AP gives students the chance to tackle college-level work while they're still in high school—whether they're learning online or in the classroom. And through taking AP Exams, students can earn college credit and placement.



HOW DO WE KNOW EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY IS A PROBLEM?

Early learning centers typically offer a more structured educational environment for young children, with trained teachers and a curriculum designed to promote learning and development. In contrast, daycare centers may focus more on providing basic care and supervision. While both options can provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, early learning centers may offer more benefits in terms of long-term academic and social development.

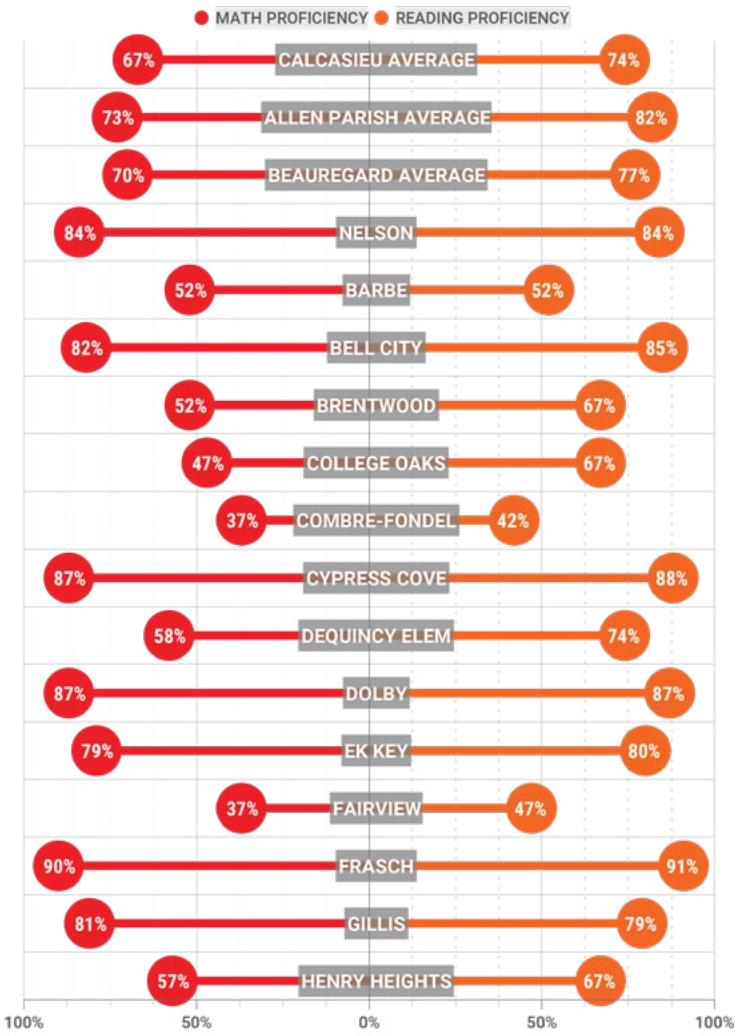


CPSB ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFICIENCY AVERAGES

A child that receives no quality early learning education will begin kindergarten behind their peers and more than likely stay behind for the duration of their educational experience.

90% of brain development happens from 0 to 3 years of age.

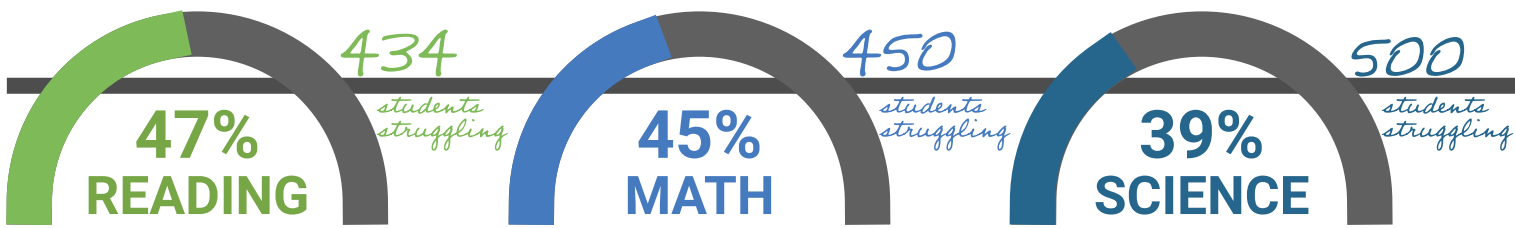
Children who are not reading proficiently by the end of third grade are more likely to struggle academically and have lower graduation rates.



EDUCATION

CAMERON PARISH

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY AVERAGE FOR THE PARISH



These are the percent of students who scored at or above proficient in the subject



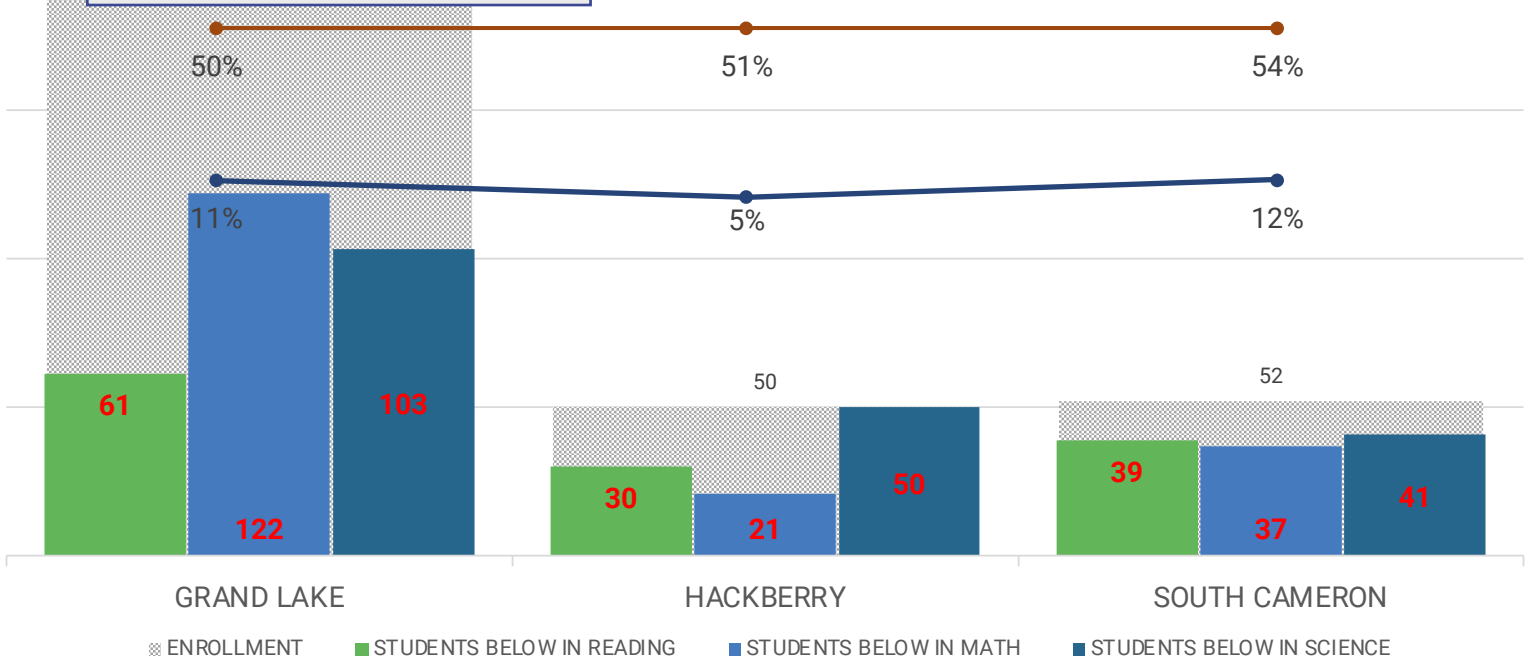
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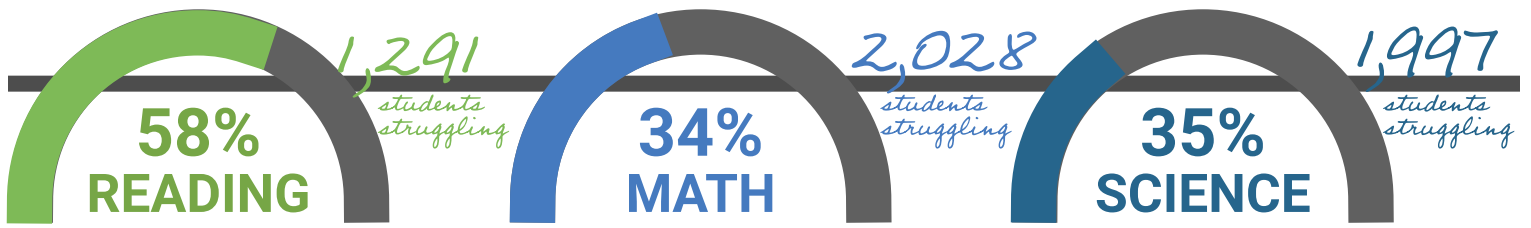


Grand Lake High School is the only school offering Advanced Placement classes and has a participation rate of 34%

EDUCATION

JEFF DAVIS PARISH

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY AVERAGE FOR THE PARISH



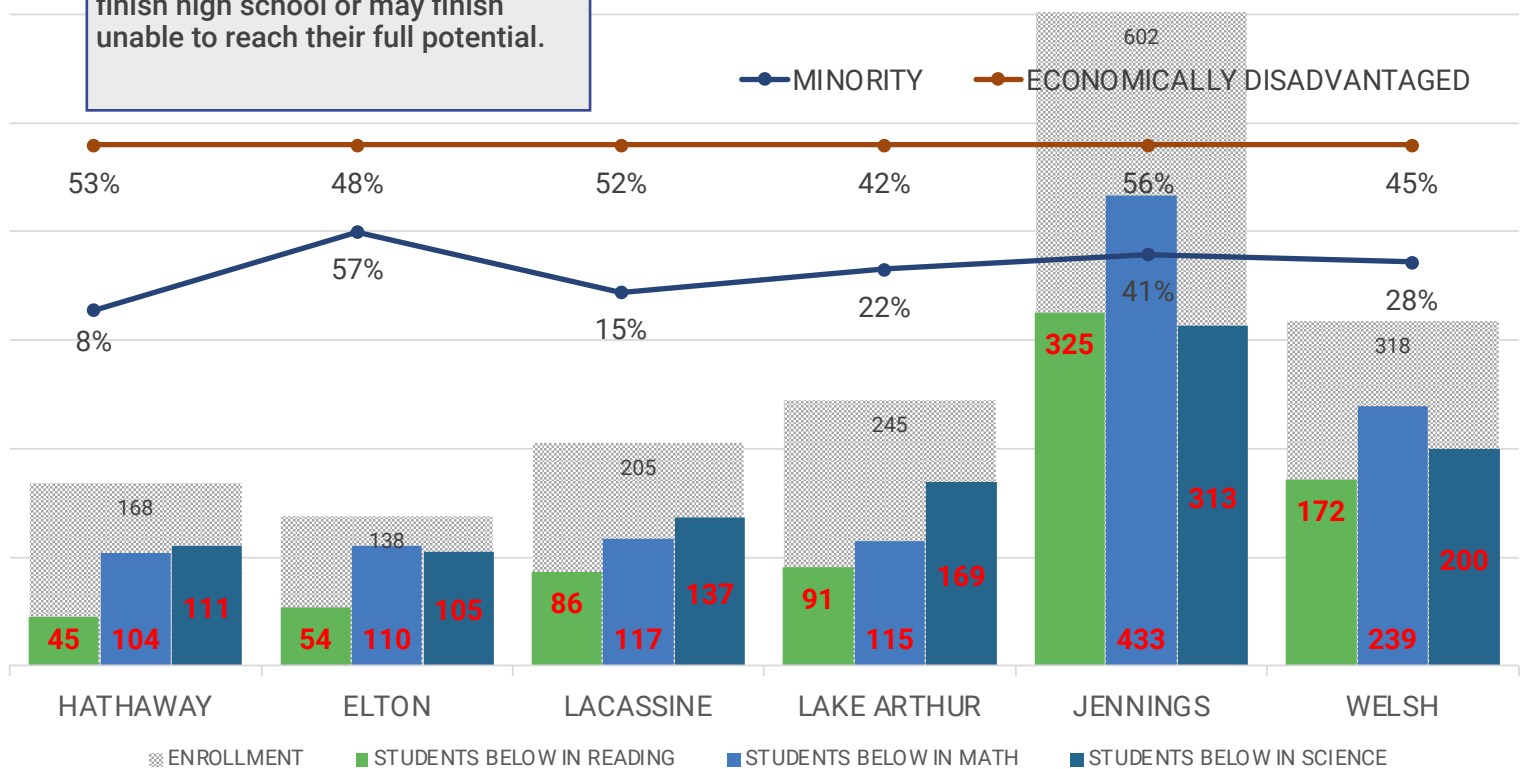
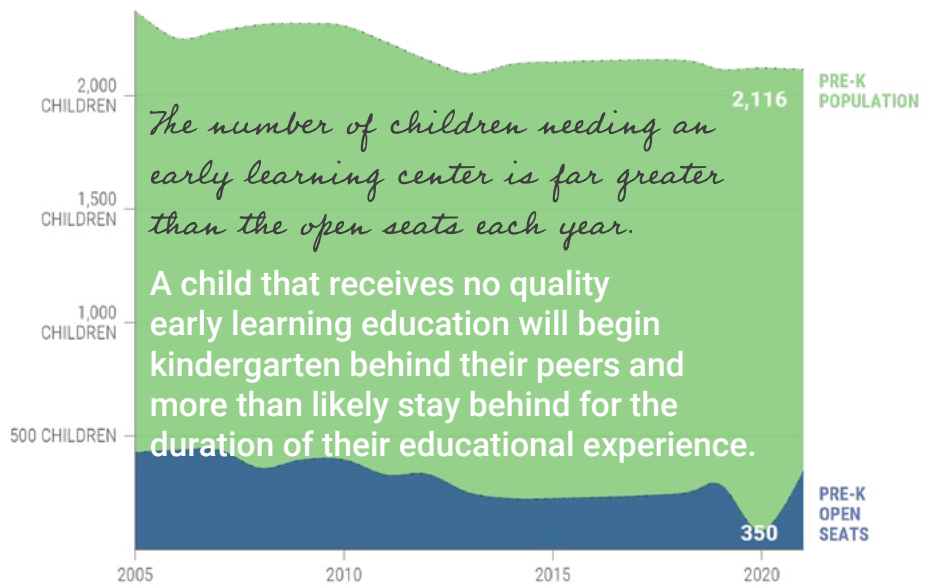
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HEALTH



The health of a community is directly related to the health of all of the families that make up that community.

#UNITEDGULF is United Way of Southwest Louisiana's natural disaster fund for assisting our Gulf Coast neighbors. This allows us to give back to other United Ways that assist our community after a disaster.

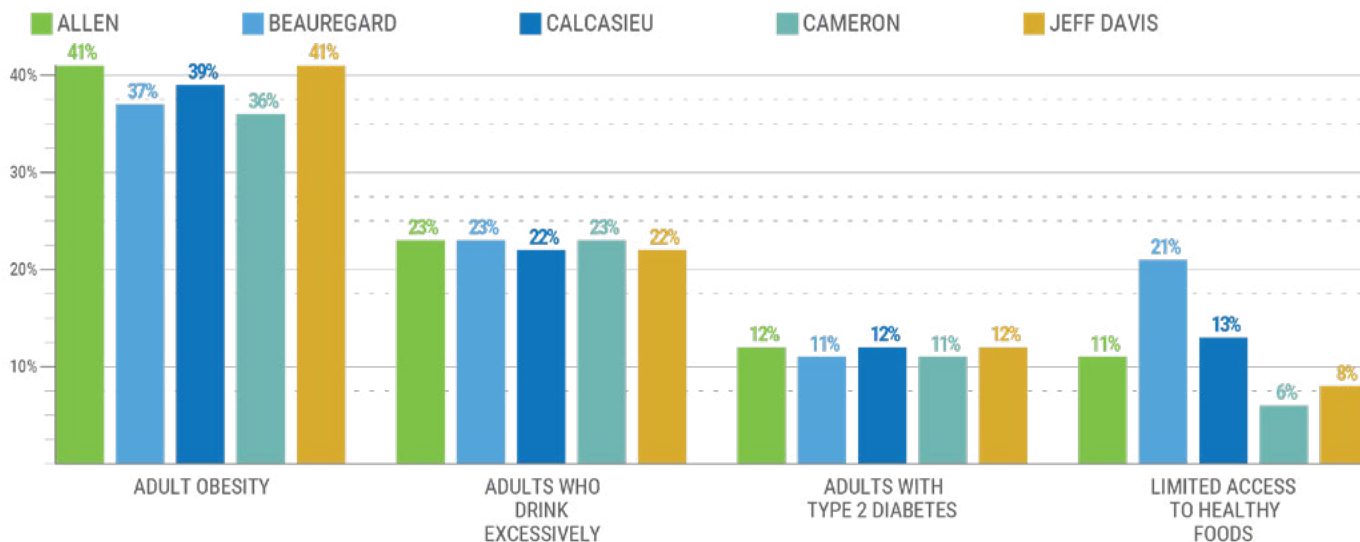
United Way of Southwest Louisiana's commitment to quality of life includes a future where children are born healthy and have the opportunity to grow, develop and live in a healthy environment.

United Way of Southwest Louisiana is promoting the basic tenets of positive physical, mental and social health for the individuals and families currently living in our communities through education, healthcare availability and access to essential services that many take for granted each day.



How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on HEALTHCARE?

Low-income families, rural regions and many other under-served areas face challenges in accessing healthcare services, nutritious food options and safe environments for physical activity. All of these can impact their ability to maintain good health for a long life.



Our focus is on all families having access to healthcare and resources to improving their health.



SINGLECARE PRESCRIPTION DISCOUNT PROGRAM

1,876 individuals

used the program on prescriptions at local pharmacies.

\$120,479.62 SAVED

CRISIS CALLS

29,865 individuals

assisted through a combination of funded partner agencies and United Way of Southwest Louisiana Initiatives.

1,432

Volunteering has numerous health benefits. Studies have shown that volunteering can help reduce stress, combat depression, and increase feelings of happiness and self-worth. It can also provide opportunities for physical activity and social interaction, which are important for overall well-being.

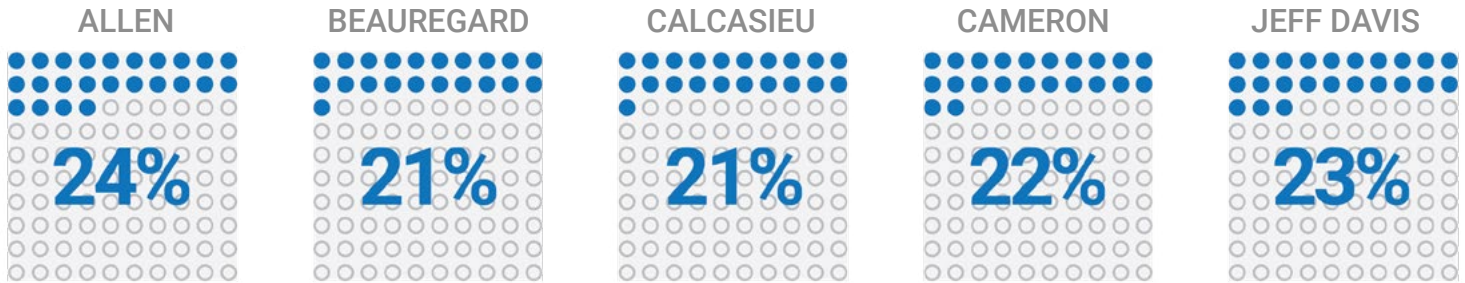




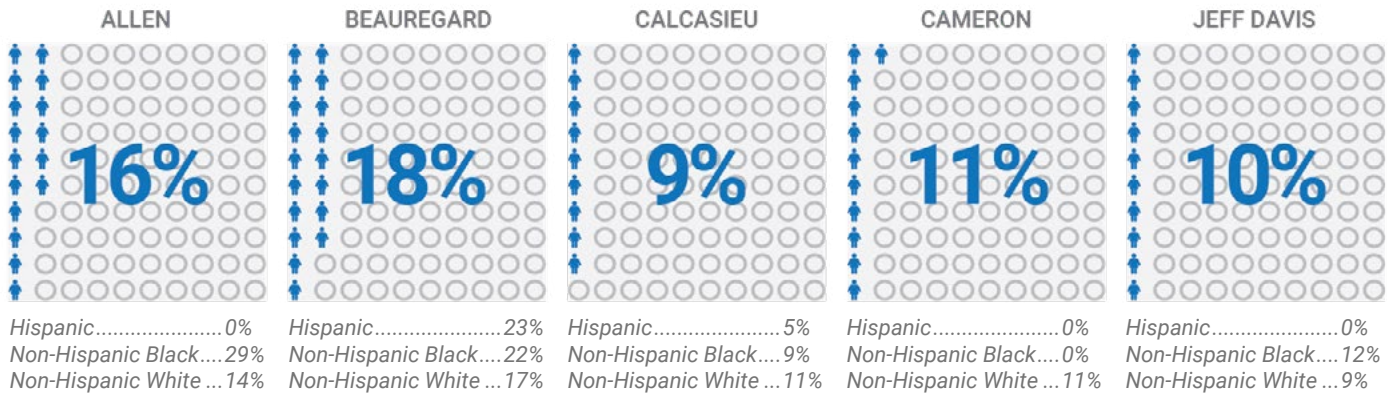
How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on HEALTHY LIFESTYLES?

TOBACCO USE

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death worldwide with over 70 chemicals known to cause cancer.



INFANTS EXPOSED TO NICOTINE IN THE WOMB



Babies whose mothers smoke are about three times more likely to die from SIDS. Babies whose mothers smoke while pregnant or who are exposed to secondhand smoke after birth have weaker lungs than other babies, which increases the risk for many health problems.

	ALLEN	BEAUREGARD	CALCASIEU/CAMERON	JEFF DAVIS
LOW BIRTHWEIGHT BABIES	6%	8%	10%	9%
PRE-TERM BIRTHS	11%	14%	12%	11%

Calcasieu Parish Police Jury picking up Weekend Food Packs made by volunteers for the 10th anniversary of United Against Child Hunger



COUNSELING

4,806 individuals

MEDICAL & DENTAL

3,139 individuals

accessed vital counseling, medical or dental assistance with professionals through a combination of funded partner agencies and United Way of Southwest Louisiana Initiatives



How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on HEALTHCARE ACCESS?

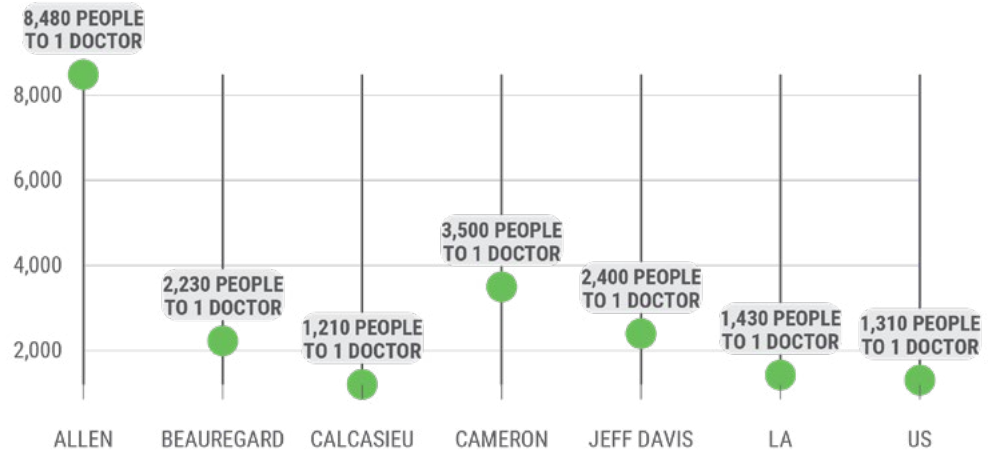
Access to doctors is crucial for maintaining good health. Without easy access to medical care, individuals living in rural areas may face difficulty in receiving timely medical attention and treatment for illnesses or injuries. This can lead to a higher likelihood of health complications and worse health outcomes. Therefore, it is important to ensure that rural communities have sufficient access to healthcare providers, including doctors, to promote and maintain good health.

There is a correlation between living in rural areas and experiencing poor health outcomes. Rural residents have limited access to healthcare services. This can lead to higher rates of chronic diseases, such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

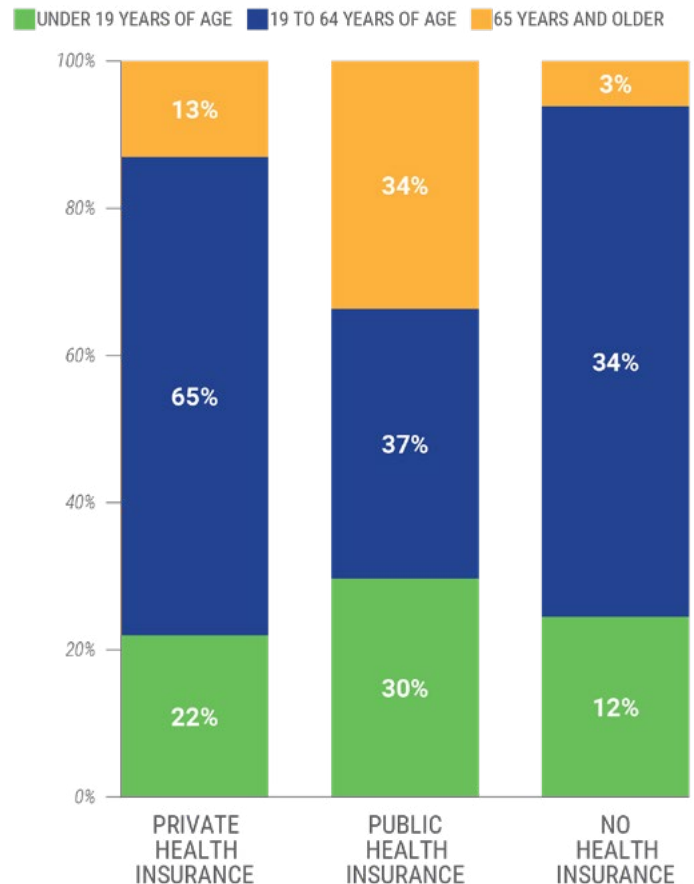
In Allen Parish, 69% of the population live in rural areas.

In Cameron Parish, 100% of the population live in rural areas.

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS PER ONE PRIMARY CARE DOCTOR



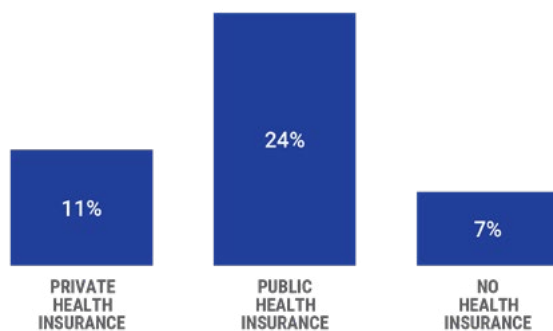
HEALTH INSURANCE TYPES BY AGE, CALCASIEU PARISH



There are challenges associated with public health insurance, such as limited coverage, long wait times for medical procedures and high administrative costs. Some people may not qualify for public health insurance or may not have access to it due to reasons such as income. See United Way of Southwest Louisiana's ALICE Report for more information.

UNITEDWAYSWLA.ORG/ALICE

PERCENT DISABLED BY HEALTH INSURANCE TYPE CALCASIEU PARISH

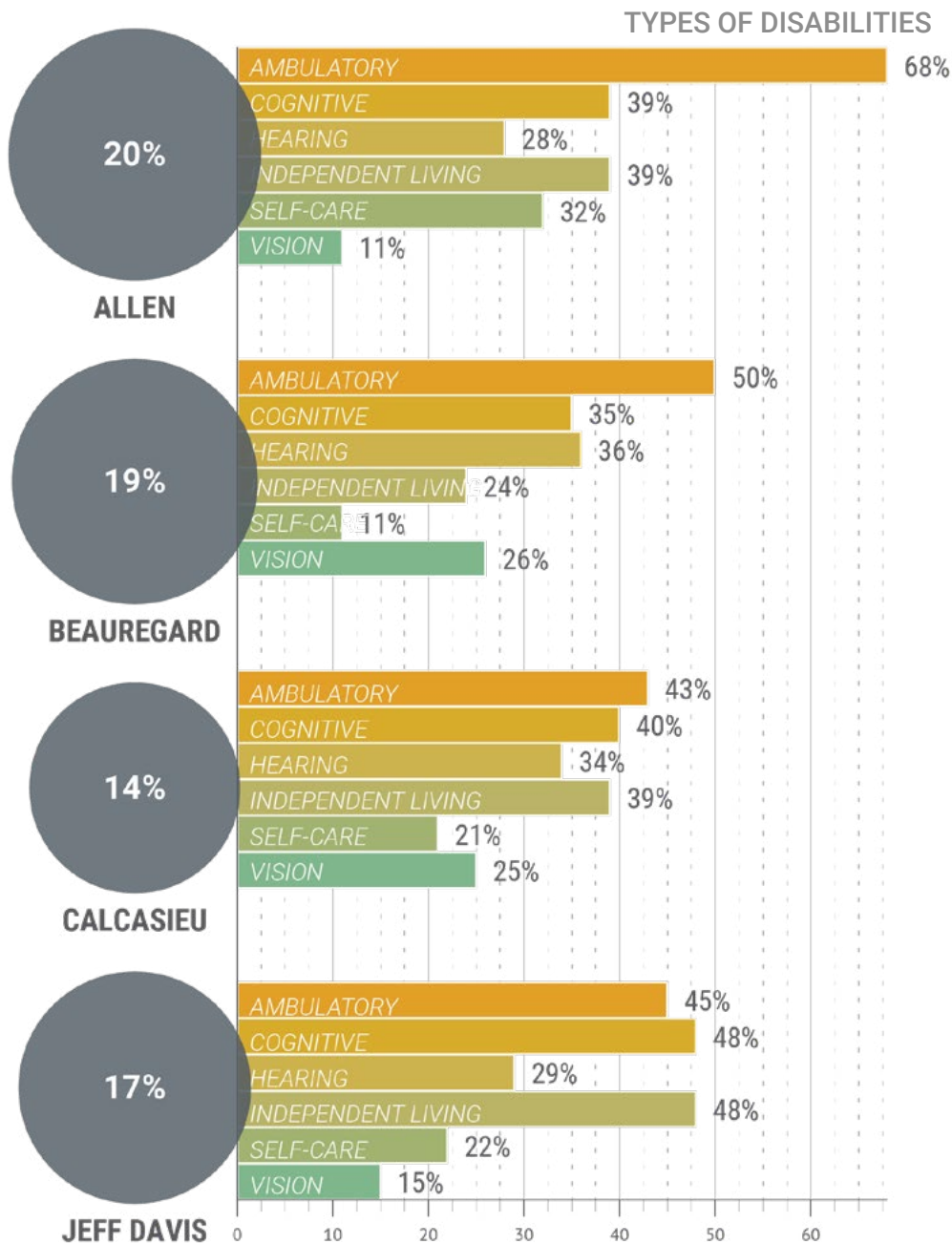




How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on INDEPENDENT LIVING?

Independent living is important for people with disabilities because it allows them to have control over their own lives and make their own choices. It promotes self-esteem, autonomy and a sense of belonging. It also helps to reduce social isolation and increase community participation, which can lead to improved physical and mental health outcomes.

PERCENT OF PARISH WITH A DISABILITY



CENSUS CATEGORIES

The Census distinguishes between

- AMBULATORY - includes people who have difficulty walking or climbing stairs
- INDEPENDENT LIVING - includes people who have difficulty performing activities of daily living such as bathing or dressing
- SELF-CARE - includes people who have difficulty performing basic tasks such as eating or using the restroom



INDEPENDENT LIVING & SELF-CARE

3,300 individuals

received homemaker services and assistance with Independent Living skills via United Way-funded partners.



How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on SAFE HOME & COMMUNITY?

Addressing crime and physical hazards in the environments that individuals and families live in has a positive impact on the entire community. By providing support and resources to children and their families we can prevent negative outcomes such as mental health issues, substance abuse and criminal behavior. This leads to a safer community for all.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

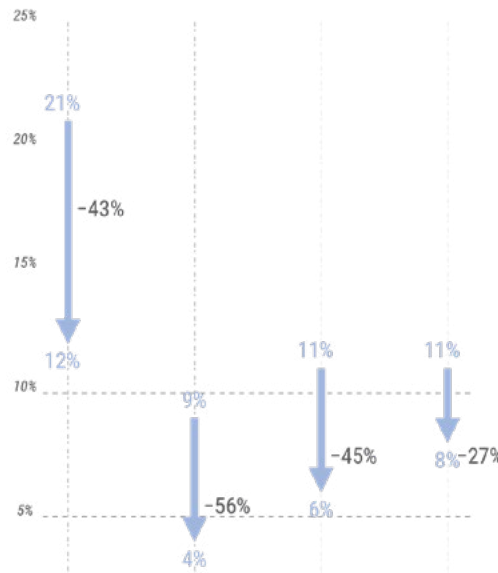
Traumatic events that occur during childhood such as abuse, neglect or household dysfunction

ACEs can have negative effects on both mental and physical health outcomes in adulthood. Studies have found a correlation between ACEs and a variety of health problems, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, obesity and heart disease.

PROVEN CASES OF ABUSE & NEGLECT CHILDREN UNDER 18

CHANGE FROM 2012 TO 2021

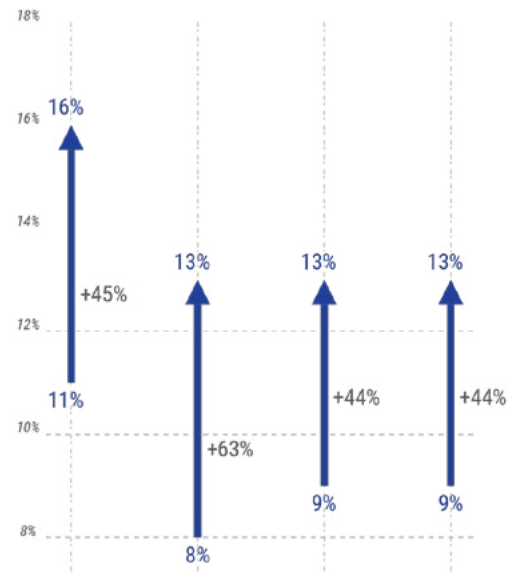
ALLEN BEAUREGARD CALCASIEU JEFF DAVIS



COHABITATION WITH A GRANDPARENT CHILDREN UNDER 18

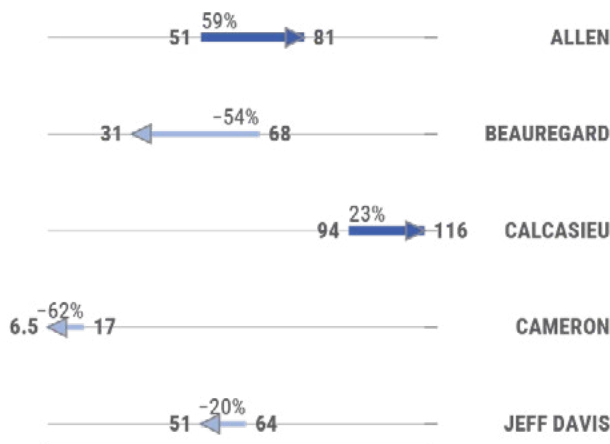
CHANGE FROM 2012 TO 2021

ALLEN BEAUREGARD CALCASIEU JEFF DAVIS



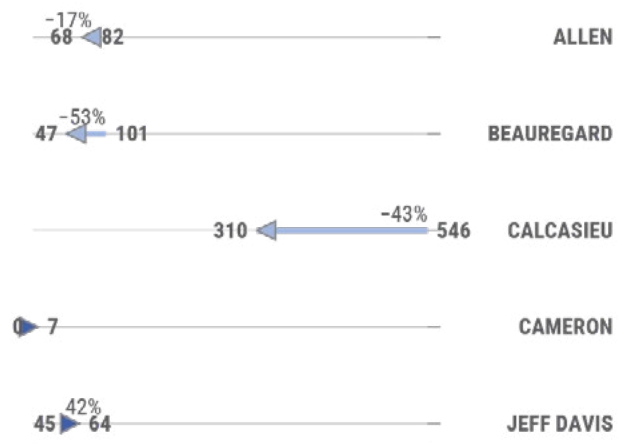
CHILDREN UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

CHANGE FROM 2011 TO 2021



CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

CHANGE FROM 2011 TO 2021



UNITED AGAINST CHILD HUNGER & DAY OF CARING

6,000 children

131 volunteer hours

MENTORSHIP, HOMEWORK & SUMMER HELP

1,146 students

received Weekend Food Packs prepared by volunteers at the Day of Caring.

received mentoring, homework assistance or summer help with United Way-funded partners.

BASIC NEEDS



United Way of Southwest Louisiana's Build Back the Block is assisting working families with hurricane repairs in an effort to maintain safe and clean neighborhoods for children to thrive in.

United Way of Southwest Louisiana knows that it can be difficult to experience happiness when one lacks access to basic necessities.

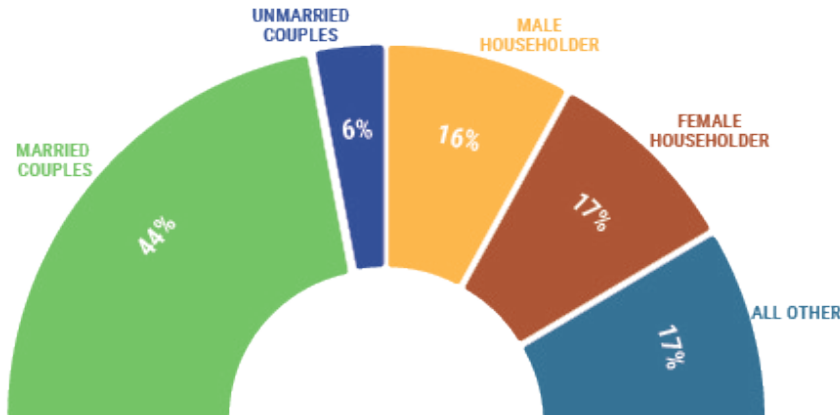
Our neighbors and family members who struggle to meet their basic needs such as food, clean water or shelter can find it challenging to find joy or contentment in life. Poverty creates significant emotional and psychological barriers that prevent individuals and families from being able to focus on moving ahead.

BASIC NEEDS



How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on RESOURCES?

Access to resources is crucial for individuals and families facing a crises of any kind. Resources can range from financial assistance and food support to mental health and housing support. Providing temporary assistance can get an individual or family prepared while long-term changes are addressed.



CHILDREN LIVING IN A HOUSEHOLD RECEIVING SSI, CASH PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, OR SNAP IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS & LIVING IN A HOUSEHOLD WITH ONLY A SINGLE MOTHER

Beauregard52%
 Calcasieu63%
 Jeff Davis.....55%

Single mother households are more likely to experience financial difficulties compared to other groups.

EXTREME WEATHER

Weather-related power outages doubled across the nation over the last two decades. Louisiana is one of three states experiencing a 50 percent increase in the duration of these outages due to the nation's aging electrical grid.

12% OF THE SINGLE HOUSEHOLDS ARE SENIOR CITIZENS

HOUSING

Housing is one issue the pandemic and hurricanes brought to the forefront. After losing their income, thousands of our neighbors—many of whom were already struggling to keep up with their housing costs—suddenly faced the threat of eviction.

In response, we launched a COVID Relief Fund for ALICE families and now run a portfolio of casework, which provides rental and utility assistance to enable people to stay in their homes.



211 RESOURCE HELPLINE

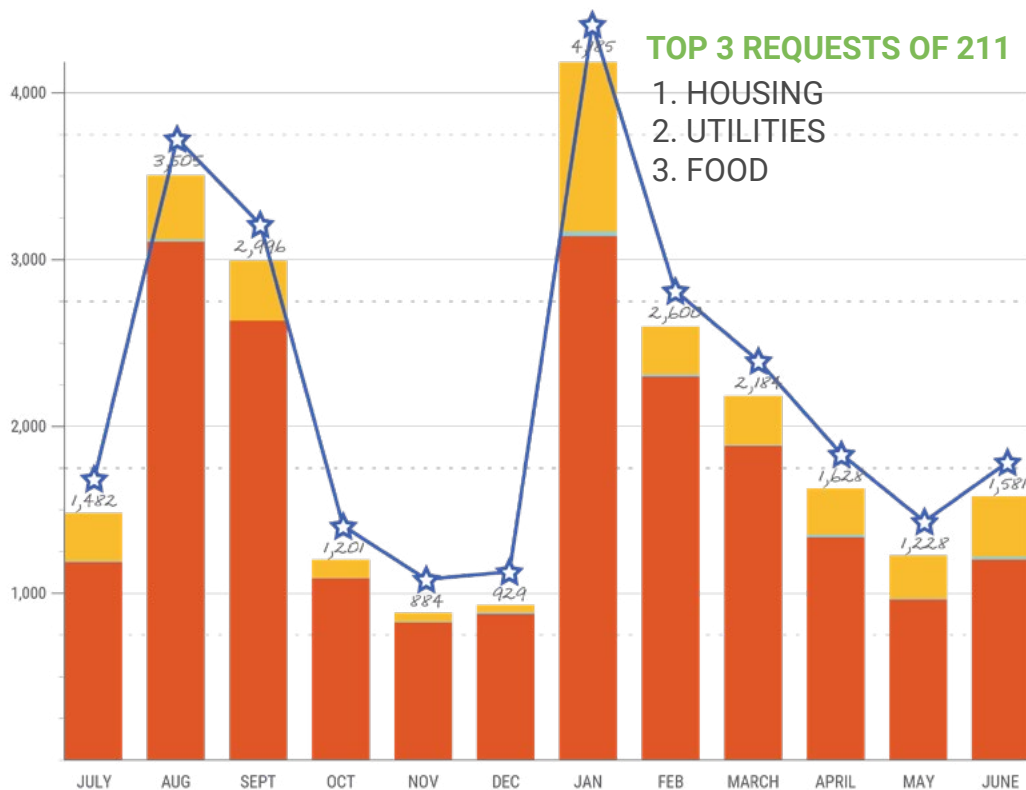
25,734 requests for help

CASEWORK PORTFOLIO

716 families received help with utilities

1,059 individuals received shelter

186 individuals received help with bills



TOP 3 REQUESTS OF 211

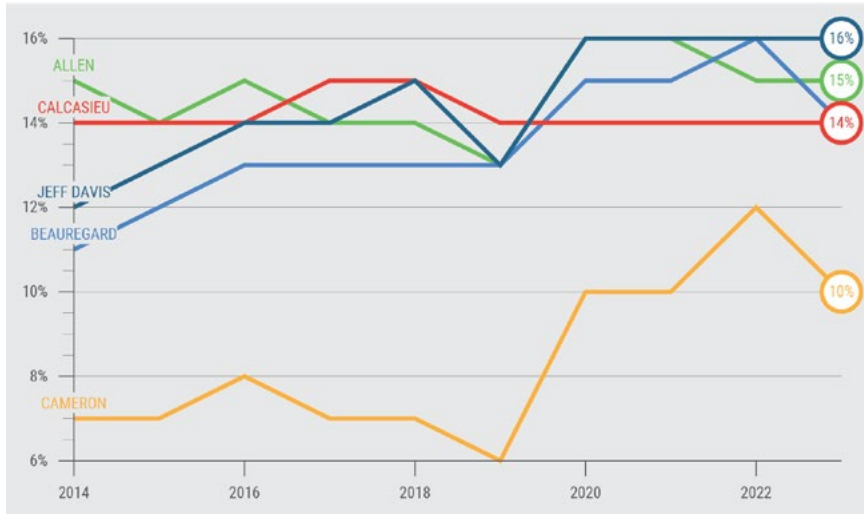
1. HOUSING
2. UTILITIES
3. FOOD

BASIC NEEDS



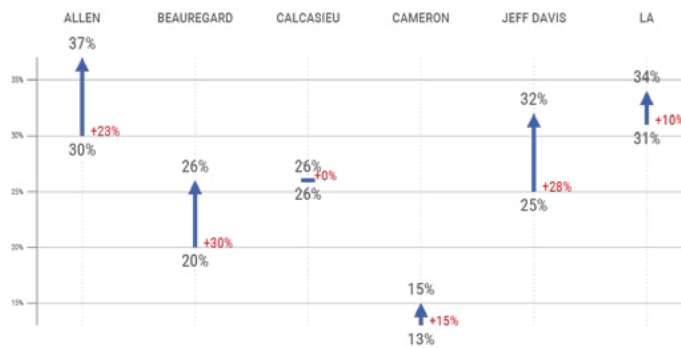
How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on CRISIS?

Individuals and families struggling through a traumatic time or emergency situation can experience long-term health or financial consequences when they are not assisted. Providing supports that are the basic necessities of everyday life for us temporarily, can help someone get on their feet. Long-term change for someone cannot happen in the midst of a crisis.



FOOD INSECURITY CHANGE FROM 2014 TO 2023

Food insecurity can have serious short-term and long-term consequences, such as poor physical and mental health, and reduced productivity.

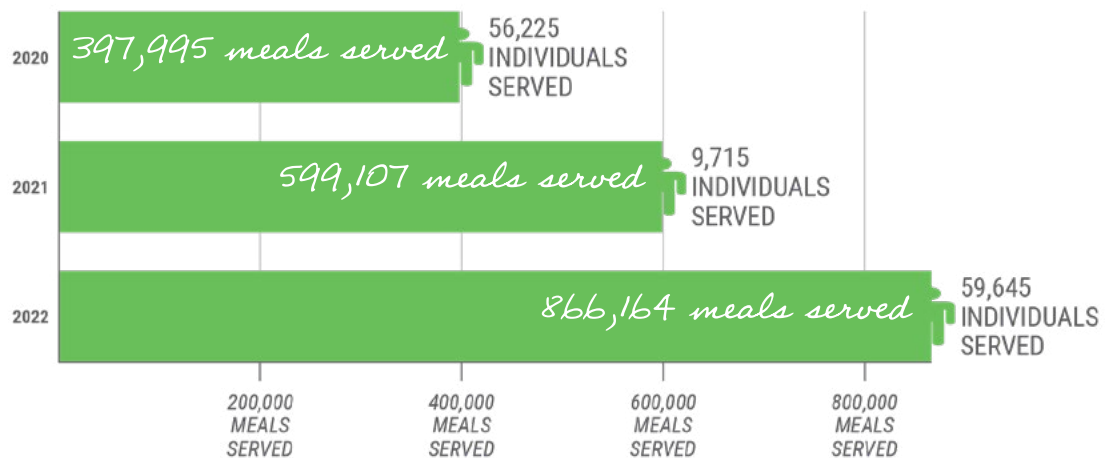


GROWTH OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN THE SNAP PROGRAM FROM 2005 TO 2022



MEALS

served through delivery to seniors, shelters, food pantries and our own Initiatives all funded by United Way of Southwest Louisiana



EXTREME WEATHER SHELTERING

623 individuals received hotel rooms and meals during winter weather

HOME REPAIRS

86 families received home repairs through funded United Way partners

ECONOMIC MOBILITY



United Way of Southwest Louisiana's partnership with the City of Lake Charles provides Community Connections. A free learning series open to residents..

United Way of Southwest Louisiana recognizes that stable income and sufficient savings lead to financial security, enabling families to plan for the future, build good credit and weather unexpected expenses.

We create, lead and invest in programs and Initiatives that make it possible for individuals and families to get and keep better jobs, build their savings and hold on to more of what they earn.

RENTAL UNITS

Buildings with one to four units are a crucial source of rental housing, accounting for about half of all US rental units. These buildings are more likely to be owned by individual landlords than by institutional investors, and are more affordable than units in larger multifamily buildings.

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

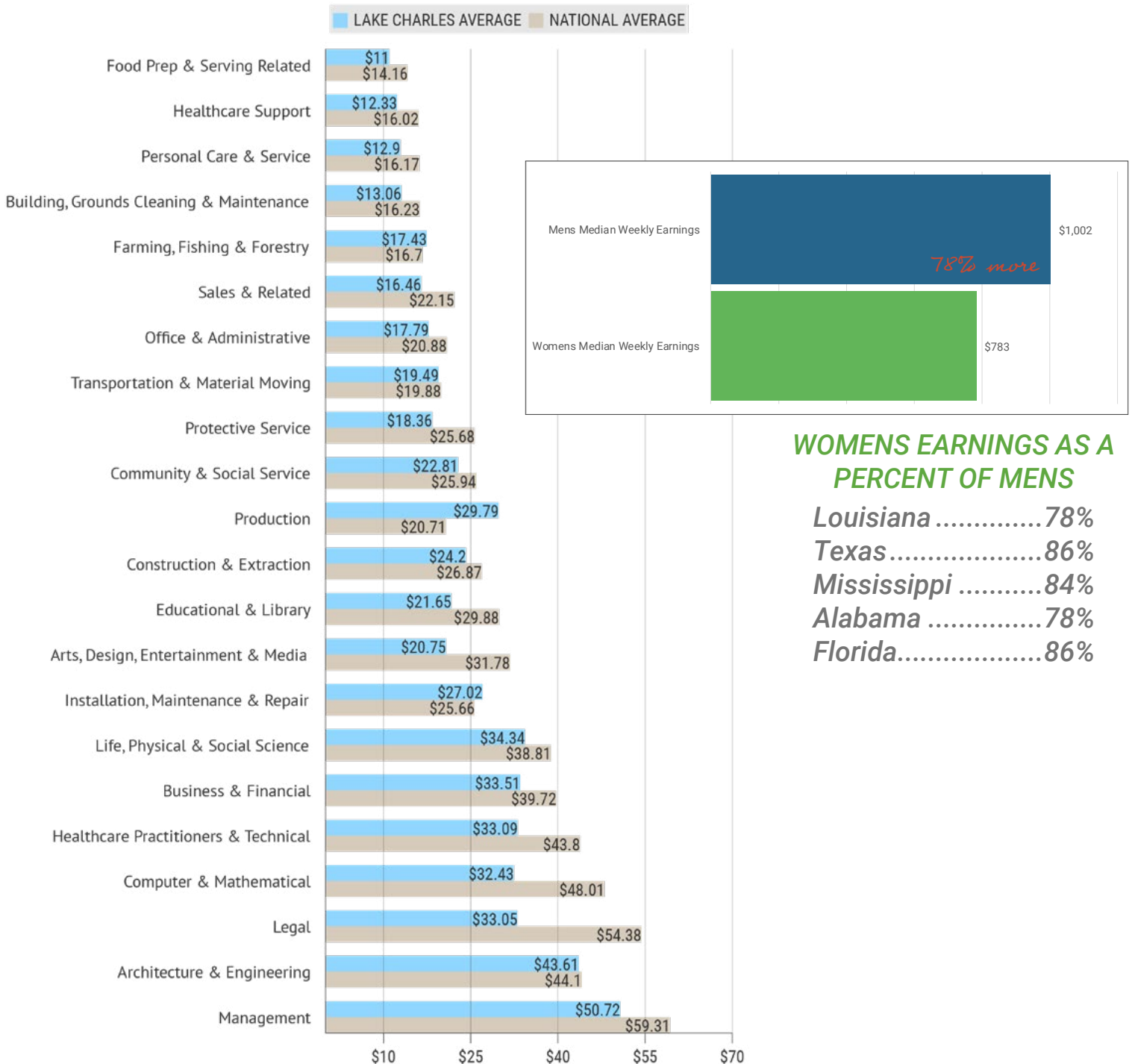


How do we know our grants and Initiatives need to focus on EARNINGS?

Independent living is important for people with disabilities because it allows them to have control over their own lives and make their own choices. It promotes self-esteem, autonomy and a sense of belonging. It also helps to reduce social isolation and increase community participation, which can lead to improved physical and mental health outcomes.

Low-wage jobs have been on the rise making it harder for individuals to find work that will pay for the increases in the cost of living.

Basic benefits like paid sick days and employer-sponsored health insurance or retirement programs are not available to most low to mid-wage workers.



A.L.I.C.E.

ASSET LIMITED, INCOME CONSTRAINED, EMPLOYED

ALICE lives in every town and in each of our parishes – working as childcare providers, aides for the elderly, cashiers, waiters and so much more. ALICE provides essential services that keep our economy moving, often without adequate healthcare or childcare support.

ALICE households earn above the Federal Poverty Level, but cannot afford the basic cost of living in their parish. ALICE households do not qualify for public assistance or other programs that households living in poverty receive, despite their struggling to make ends meet.

ALICE households have no savings to fall back on and often are one emergency away from falling into poverty.

Able to save money for emergencies and afford monthly expenses

THRIVING

ALICE THRESHOLD

ALICE lives in a gray area, struggling to pay for basic necessities and without a safety net.

The ALICE THRESHOLD is the minimum average income that a household needs to afford housing, childcare, food, transportation, healthcare and a smartphone. This amount varies by parish and household type.

A household that is ALICE or living in poverty is considered BELOW ALICE THRESHOLD.

To calculate the ALICE Threshold for your household type or download the entire report, visit

[UNITEDWAYSWLA.ORG/ALICE](https://www.unitedwayswla.org/alice)

ALICE

POVERTY

Able to apply for public assistance and help from nonprofits



United Way of Southwest Louisiana's Build Back the Block put a new roof over ALICE families still waiting to recover from hurricanes.

ALLEN PARISH

Number of Households: 7,687 (-3% change from 2019)

Median Household Income: \$47,660

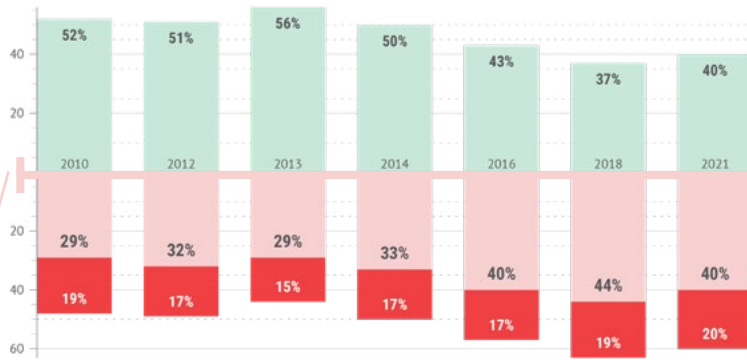
HOUSEHOLD SURVIVAL BUDGET SINGLE FAMILY OF 4

Monthly Total \$2,027 \$5,230

ANNUAL TOTAL \$24,324 \$62,760

Hourly Wage \$12.16 \$31.38

working full time to afford just the Household Survival Budget



BEAUREGARD PARISH

Number of Households: 13,352 (-1% change from 2019)

Median Household Income: \$57,130

HOUSEHOLD SURVIVAL BUDGET SINGLE FAMILY OF 4

Monthly Total \$2,132 \$5,241

ANNUAL TOTAL \$25,584 \$62,892

Hourly Wage \$12.79 \$31.45

working full time to afford just the Household Survival Budget



CALCASIEU PARISH

Number of Households: 71,511 (-7% change from 2019)

Median Household Income: \$58,020

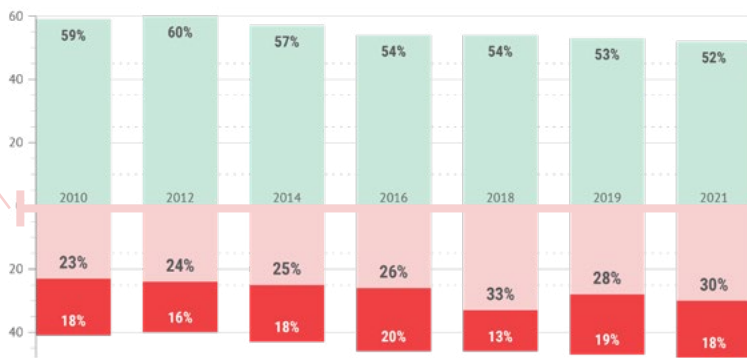
HOUSEHOLD SURVIVAL BUDGET SINGLE FAMILY OF 4

Monthly Total \$2,171 \$5,436

ANNUAL TOTAL \$26,052 \$65,232

Hourly Wage \$13.03 \$32.62

working full time to afford just the Household Survival Budget



CAMERON PARISH

Number of Households: 2,216 (-19% change from 2019)

Median Household Income: \$64,525

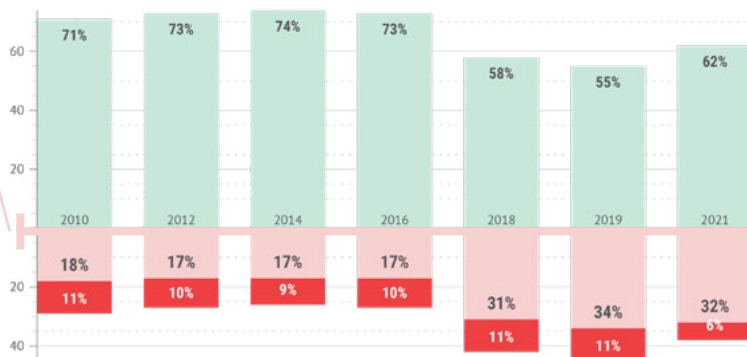
HOUSEHOLD SURVIVAL BUDGET SINGLE FAMILY OF 4

Monthly Total \$2,171 \$5,436

ANNUAL TOTAL \$26,052 \$65,232

Hourly Wage \$13.03 \$32.62

working full time to afford just the Household Survival Budget



JEFF DAVIS PARISH

Number of Households: 11,351 (-3% change from 2019)

Median Household Income: \$45,578

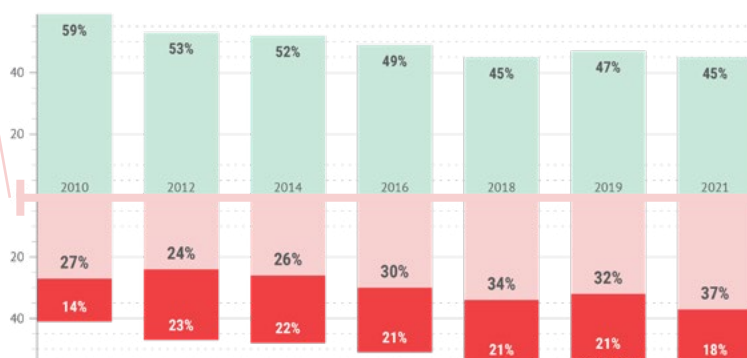
HOUSEHOLD SURVIVAL BUDGET SINGLE FAMILY OF 4

Monthly Total \$2,138 \$5,260

ANNUAL TOTAL \$25,656 \$63,120

Hourly Wage \$12.83 \$31.56

working full time to afford just the Household Survival Budget



PRESIDENT & CEO

Denise Durel



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VOLUNTEER CENTRAL**

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Ashley Norman
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Director



COMMUNITY IMPACT

Laurie Martin
Vice President



Sarina Clooney
Director of 211

Kim Heckard
Community Initiatives Manager



Janelle Harrison
Community Initiatives Manager

ACCOUNTING & FINANCE

Jennifer Dimas
Senior Director





SPECIAL PROJECTS OUR INITIATIVES

BASIC NEEDS

211 | 898-211
SWLA VOAD
The Path Home
United Against Child Hunger
Build Back the Block

EDUCATION

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library
WriteStart Project
Literacy Kits
Born Learning Trail
Summer of Service

HEALTH

833.TXT.TEEN
Crisis Chat Online
Singlecare Prescription Discount Program
United Against Human Trafficking

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)
Calcasieu Prisoner Reentry Program (CAL-PRI)
Matched Savings Program
Bank On SWLA

ALICE

Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed

CASE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (CPPJ)
Power To Care (Entergy La)
Emergency Food & Shelter Program (FEMA)
Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (DCFS)

EVENTS

Smoke & Barrel
Battle for the Paddle
Rum Revival
Reelin' For Veterans Fishing Rodeo
La Food & Wine Festival
SOLA Giving Day
Day of Giving
Juneteenth Golf Tournament

United Way of Southwest Louisiana Volunteer Forces

Disaster Response Specialist
Literacy Kit Assembly
In-Office Assistance
Summer of Service Youth Forces
Summer of Service Adult Forces
VITA IRS-Certified Preparers
Fannie Mae Specialists

VOLUNTEER

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