

**Harford County Local Care Team (LCT)
Local Management Board
Office of Children, Youth & Families
Department of Community Services**

Fiscal Year 2021 Report

Role

The role of the Local Care Team (LCT) is to be a forum for families of children with intensive needs to receive assistance with the identification of potential resources; and provide interagency discussion and problem solving for individual child and family needs. The LCT can refer children and families to Care Management Entities when appropriate, and provide information on available local and community resources. During the LCT discussions, the youth's family members, LCT member agencies and others (e.g. members of the family's social support network, service providers and agency representatives) collaboratively develop a plan of care and then work to implement that plan across all agencies.

The LCT is not a venue to review a single agency's program plan and cannot guarantee admission to any recommended facility or program. It does not have any authority or responsibility over other agencies or facilities and does not directly control any funds for placements or community based services. Meetings occur on a regular, usually bi-weekly basis, in accordance with Harford County Public Schools schedule. The State Coordinating Council (SCC) and the Governor's Office for Children (GOC) provide oversight of the LCT and it is to function in accordance with terms set forth by Maryland Code, Human Services § 8-405 through § 8-408.

Each LCT has a Coordinator, which serves as staff support to the LCT. The LCT Coordinator maintains detailed notes from each case discussion and tracks attendance of the LCT meetings. They also maintain a directory of all community based resources in the jurisdiction and develop and present training modules to groups of stakeholders.

COVID-19

Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, Governor Larry Hogan declared a State of Emergency. The pandemic caused operational changes for many children and youth service organizations Statewide, which was and continues to be challenging because youth with intensive needs are still experiencing crises. To ensure that necessary assistance remained available to the most vulnerable citizens and the continuity of operations for LCTs, the following guidance was provided by the Children's Cabinet Implementation Team:

- LCT Coordinators and LCT operations are classified as "mission critical" employees/functions and as such both will continue operating during the Coronavirus pandemic.
- LCT members who are required to attend meetings must actively participate with LCT activities in a manner consistent with public health considerations issued.
- During the State of Emergency, and subject to budgetary limits, LCT Coordinators were permitted to assist with local pandemic response efforts that serve children, youth, and families on the condition that LCT functionality was maintained.

Harford County LCT moved to a virtual LCT meeting, via the Webex platform. Meetings continued as needed on a weekly basis.

Membership

LCT Members are expected to attend all meetings and if they are unable to attend, they should notify the LCT Coordinator in advance and send a designee whenever possible. The parent or guardian must be in attendance. LCT includes at least one representative from the following agencies:

- Department of Juvenile Services
- Department of Social Services
- Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Division of Rehabilitation Services
- Harford County Health Department
- Harford County Local Management Board
- Harford County Public Schools
- Maryland Coalition of Families
- Office on Mental Health / Core Service Agency of Harford County

All records or information shared at an LCT meeting is confidential and will not be re-disclosed without the written consent of the guardian.

Statistics & Data

This report includes demographic and descriptive data from completed referral forms, meeting minutes and action plans. During FY 2021, the LCT reviewed cases for 55 different youth. Some youth may come through LCT more than one time. Of the 55 youth, 53% were male and 47% were female. The average age of the both females and males was 13 years old (age range 1-17). The youngest female was 3 years old and the youngest male was 4 years old. The data on age is the age of the youth when they originally were referred to the LCT.

Case Types

The LCT reviews three types of cases: (1) technical assistance and resources, (2) review and approval for the Teen Diversion Program, and/or (3) review and approval for a Voluntary Placement Agreement request.

1. Technical Assistance and Resources

During the LCT meeting, technical assistance and resources are discussed. Families are given information on resources in the County with contact information. See Chart 1 for a breakdown of the different types of cases presented to the LCT.

2. Teen Diversion Program

The Teen Diversion Program is a psychiatric rehabilitation day program operating under the auspices of the Harford County Health Department and housed within the Harford County Public School system. Treatment is focused on diverting adolescents, ages 13-17, from a more restrictive therapeutic or educational placement and reintegrating them back into the community. Adolescents typically participate in outpatient treatment for a minimum of 12 weeks, although the length of treatment may be longer, or shorter, based on treatment progress.

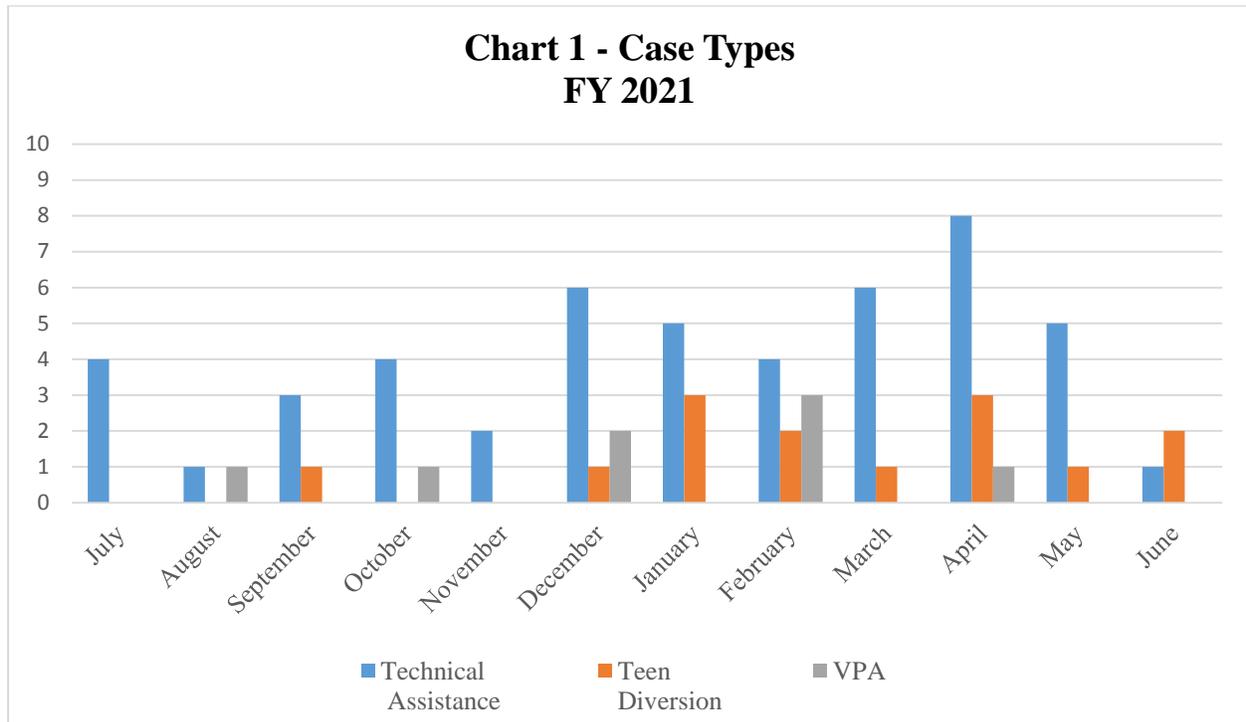
Youth can be referred to the Teen Diversion Program for a: Diagnostic Evaluation; as a Diversion from more intensive mental health or educational placement or for Step Down services after a residential treatment or non-public educational placement. The LCT serves as the mechanism that reviews and refers youth to the Program. An application and intake packet must be completed by the parent / guardian of any youth referred to the program; and all applications are reviewed by the Teen Diversion team for final determination of appropriateness and acceptance into the program.

Services in the program include: Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program; Individualized, Family & Group Therapy; Socialization & Recreational Activities; Psychiatric Evaluation & Psychological Assessment; Medication Evaluation & Management; Case Management & Transition Planning; Didactic Drug & Alcohol Group; Conflict Resolution & Communication Groups; Vocational Readiness Training; and/or Crisis Intervention.

3. Voluntary Placement Agreement

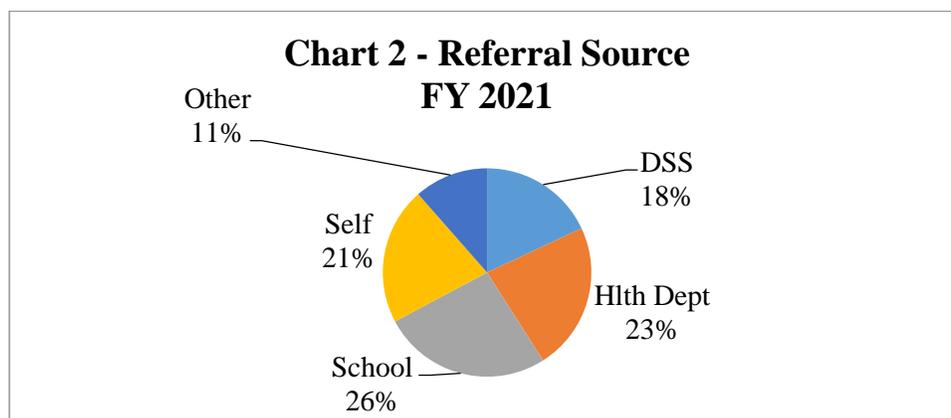
In Maryland, children enter out-of-home care for a variety of reasons and under a number of circumstances. The Voluntary Placement Agreement Act was enacted to provide a voluntary out-of-home placement for a child with a documented, developmental disability or mental illness in order to provide treatment for the child related to the disability

that they are unable to receive at home. The placement could include a Residential Treatment Center placement or a Diagnostic Center placement. See Chart 1 for the breakdown of case types per month.



Referrals

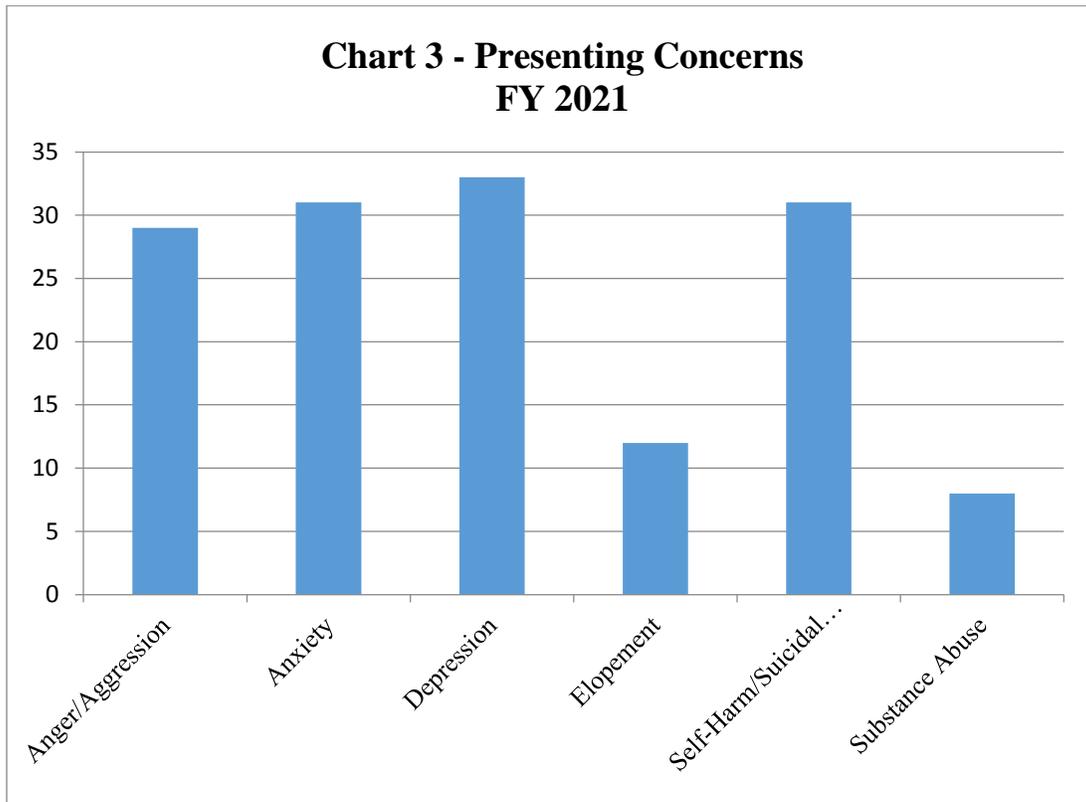
Families can be referred to the LCT by member agencies or families may self-refer. See Chart 2 for a breakdown of the agencies that referred to the LCT. Referrals from ‘Other’ includes: hospitals; non-profit agencies; Office on Mental Health/Core Service Agency; Residential Treatment Centers, the Courts, etc. See Chart 2 for the top referral sources.



Presenting Concerns

Families come to the LCT with varying levels of concerns for their children. Of the 55 youth included in this report, the top presenting concerns were anger/aggression, anxiety, depression, elopement, self-harm/suicidal ideation and substance

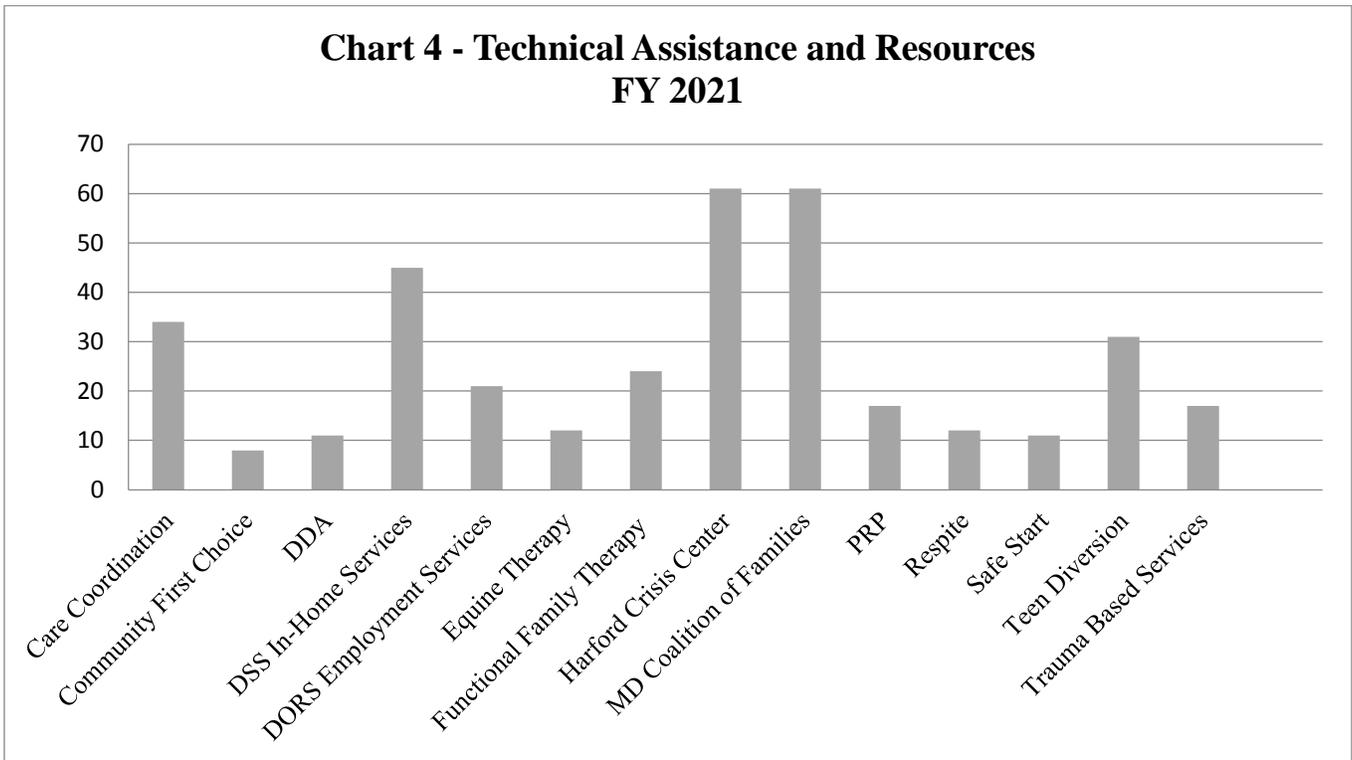
abuse. There are other presenting concerns that arise at LCT, but only those most discussed are included here. See Chart 3 for a breakdown of the top presenting concerns that were discussed.



Technical Assistance and Resources

During the LCT meeting, technical assistance and resources are discussed. Families are given information on resources in the County with contact information. See Chart 4 for a breakdown of the types of resources provided to families. Each resource is described in greater detail below. This list is not all inclusive of the various resources within the County that are available to families.

**Chart 4 - Technical Assistance and Resources
FY 2021**



Care Coordination

Care Coordination involves organizing activities and sharing information among all of the participants concerned with a youth's care to achieve safer and more effective care. The main goal of Care Coordination is to meet participants' needs and preferences in the delivery of high-quality, high-value health care. Care coordination involves conducting an intensive family interview upon entry and then building a team of people that will work with the youth and family in their community. That team could be composed of school staff, mental health professionals, advocates, family members, and community members.

Community First Choice

Community First Choice Program is under the auspice of the Harford County Health Department. The program provides assistance with activities of daily living to Medicaid recipients who have a chronic illness, medical condition or disability. Services are provided in the eligible individual's home or community residence. Individuals who need help with activities of daily living may also receive help with: household services related to medical needs; escort services to a medical appointment; and personal hygiene and grooming.

Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) partners with people with developmental disabilities to provide support and resources to live fulfilling lives. It is the primary State agency that funds community-based services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. It provides a coordinated service delivery system, so that people receive appropriate services oriented toward the goal of full integration into their community. It includes various home and community-based services and supports provided through either a Medicaid State Plan, Waiver program or via DDA State funded services.

Department of Social Services (DSS) Consolidated In Home Services

Consolidated In-Home Services is a continuum of non-entitlement service programs designed to promote the safety and well-being of children and their families; enhance a parent's ability to create a safe and stable home environment; and maintain permanency while preserving family unity. The programs are designed to enable a child to remain safely at

home while receiving intervention services. Ensuring the safety, well-being and permanence of children is paramount to child welfare practice throughout Maryland. A referral to Consolidated In-Home Services is based upon the safety and risk factors present in the family, as determined by standardized risk and safety instruments.

Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS)

Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS) helps people with physical, emotional, intellectual, developmental, sensory and learning disabilities go to work and keep their jobs by providing services such as career assessment and counseling, assistive technology, job training, higher education and job placement.

Equine Therapy

Equine Therapy is a form of experiential therapy that involves interactions between patients and horses. It involves activities (such as grooming, feeding, haltering and leading a horse) that are supervised by a mental health professional, often with the support of a horse professional. The goal of equine therapy is to help the youth develop needed skills and attributes, such as accountability, responsibility, self-confidence, problem-solving skills, and self-control.

Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an empirically grounded family intervention program for at-risk youth aged 11-18 and their families; including youth with problems such as conduct disorder, violent acting-out, and substance abuse. FFT is multi-systemic and focuses on the treatment system, family and individual functioning, and the therapist as major components. Within this context, FFT works first to develop family members' inner strengths and sense of being able to improve their situations.

Harford Crisis Center

The Klein Family Harford Crisis Center is a public-private, integrated system of behavioral health care addressing mental health and addiction in Harford County. It offers immediate access to care in a safe and comfortable setting and coordination of services strengthening the path to recovery and wellness. The Center provides a 24/7 crisis hotline and mobile crisis team, a walk-in urgent care clinic, scheduled outpatient services and short-stay residential services for adult guests requiring an extended period of concentrated care.

Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF)

Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) helps families who care for someone with behavioral health needs. Using personal experience as parents, caregivers, youth and other loved ones, they connect, support and empower Maryland's families. Staff provides one-to-one support to parents and caregivers of young people with mental health. MCF staff work with caregivers and other loved ones to help them access needed supports and services for their families; support and amplify the youth voice; and empower family members to advocate for improving services in all systems of care for children, youth, adults and families.

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (PRP)

A Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (PRP) provides a wide-range of support services and educational programs to promote independent living skills such as understanding symptoms/illness; medication management; proper nutrition; personal hygiene; money management; and smoking cessation. The program also offers therapeutic recreational components including art; creative writing; wellness and exercise; computer classes; and group activities. Off-site therapeutic activities may include shopping trips, picnics, bowling, the library and visits to local attractions.

Respite

Respite care provides guardians and other caregivers with short-term child care services that offer temporary relief, improve family stability, and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect. Respite can be planned or offered during emergencies or times of crisis. The two types of respite offered in the County include: community based and out of home respite.

Safe Start

The Safe Start Program is an assessment and intervention program for families with children ages 2–11 that provides behavioral management techniques, stress management, problem-solving, budgeting, communication and organization skills. The program focuses on preventing child abuse and neglect by providing a continuum of services that support and strengthen families through screenings, referrals, and intervention services either in the family home or in the community.

Teen Diversion (TD)

Teen Diversion (TD) is a psychiatric rehabilitation day program operating under the auspices of Harford County Health Department and housed within the Harford County Public School system. Treatment is focused on diverting adolescents, ages 13-17, from a more restrictive therapeutic or educational placement and reintegrating them back into the community. Adolescents typically participate in outpatient treatment for a minimum of 12 weeks, although the length of treatment may be longer, or shorter, based on treatment progress.

Trauma Based Services

Trauma-informed services seek to: realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand paths for recovery; recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in patients, families, and staff; integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and actively avoid re-traumatization. The increased understanding of the pervasiveness of trauma and its connections to physical and behavioral health and well-being, have propelled a growing number of organizations and service systems to explore ways to make their services more responsive to people who have experienced trauma.

Outreach

The LCT Coordinator spends time working on outreach efforts within the County to let community stakeholders know about the LCT and the services it can provide. For FY 21, those outreach efforts decreased significantly due to the closure of schools, community organizations, public agencies and numerous other sectors of the community due to COVID-19.

Outreach efforts included:

- Presented at the Harford County Department of Social Services In Home Administration staff meeting and the Harford County Department of Social Services Out of Home Administration staff meeting.
- Provided information at the 2021 Transitioning Youth Expo (virtual).
- Provided information to Harford County Public Library's 1st Rodeo Community Event
- Provided information to the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) and the Child Fatality Review Board
- Provided information to Harford County Public Schools:
 - o Superintendent's Bulletin
 - o Magnolia Elementary Family Advisory Board
 - o Riverside Elementary Community Fair (virtual) and provided the school with LCT brochures
 - o Training for school counselors
 - o Provided Halls Cross Roads Elementary with LCT brochures
 - o 411 Newsletter