

# Helping Families Initiative

JULY  
2018



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
TENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ALABAMA - BIRMINGHAM DIVISION

# Recognize Warning Signs

Chronic absence and disciplinary infractions trigger alert letters that inform families of available resources and the risks of dangerous student behavior.

**2,012** alert letters mailed in 17-18 school year

## Identify Root Causes

### Home Assessment

- Child well-being
- Parental capabilities
- Self-sufficiency
- Trauma
- Family health/mental health
- Family interactions
- Family safety
- Environment
- Social/community life

**32** families since program launch

**88** children

### Inter-Agency Team

Our IAT meets weekly to review the results of home assessments, offer additional background information on families, and craft individualized intervention plans.

**597** hours of expertise volunteered since program launch

## Empower Families

IAT members collaborated to move a family with young children into safe, stable housing after their father was killed by gun violence.

Grief counseling and academic support were provided for middle school siblings after the death of a loved one.

Emergency food assistance and employment opportunities were provided for a young man trying to resist gang involvement in the community.

HFI partners provided household furniture and school uniforms for families lacking basic necessities.

### Resources Accessed

- Mental health evaluations
- Counseling
- Driver's license recovery
- Volunteer lawyers
- School uniforms/clothing
- Furniture/household items
- Summer programs
- Food/utility assistance
- Housing
- Parenting classes
- Academic support

**80+** referrals for services in 17-18 school year

# Supporting Our Community

## Students

HFI staff conducts "attendance check ups" with students at school registration and back-to-school events. Early outreach focuses on resources available and the importance of attending every day.

## Parents

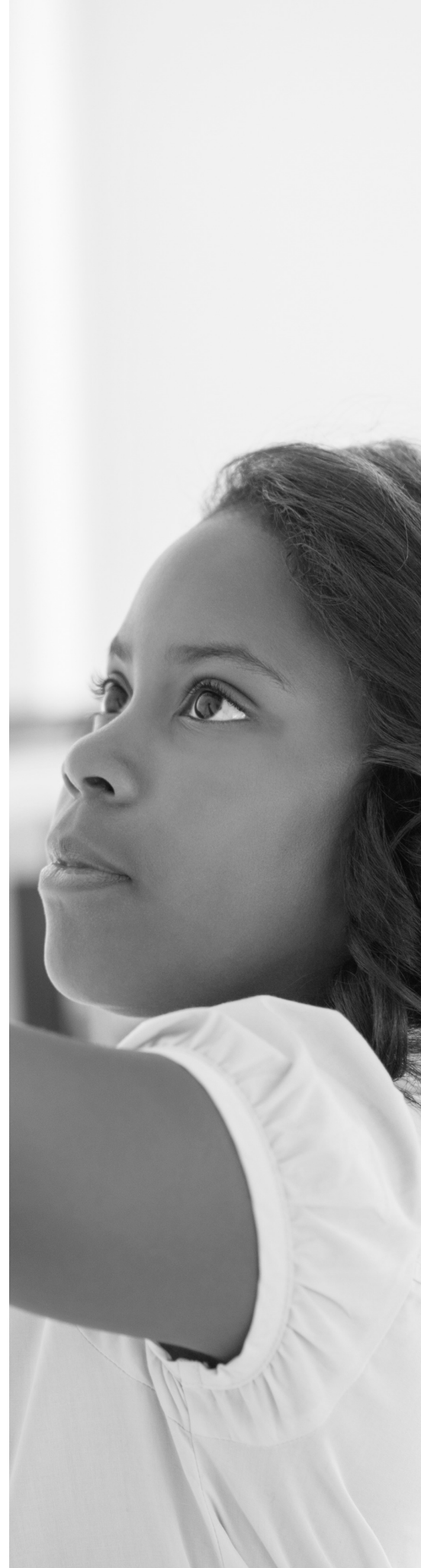
HFI staff lead workshops for parents at school parent nights focused on the importance of attendance and overcoming barriers. These workshops empower parents and build relationships.

## School Leaders

HFI staff conduct a professional learning community for principals and school leaders focused on reducing chronic absence in partnership with the United Way of Central Alabama Bold Goals for Education.

## Systems

HFI staff co-chair the Birmingham City Schools Attendance Task Force focused on creating systemic change to reduce chronic absence.



Helping Families Initiative accesses information across multiple agencies, conducts in-home assessments, and provides individualized intervention plans and case management support to meet specific needs across a wide range of domains BEFORE students and families are in trouble.

## Preventing Court Referral

70%

of Tarrant students who received attendance alert letters completed the year with fewer than 7 unexcused absences (preventing court referral)

273

Tarrant students received attendance alert letters and completed the year with fewer than 7 unexcused absences (preventing court referral)

536

Birmingham students

## Improving Attendance

28%

of Tarrant students who received attendance alert letters had no additional unexcused absences

278

students across all systems who received attendance alert letters had no additional unexcused absences

## Understanding the Need

322

transient students with behavior and attendance issues either withdrew from school or would not provide a valid address

326

students were issued behavior alert letters due to out of school suspensions



[WWW.JEFFCODA.ORG](http://WWW.JEFFCODA.ORG)



Kim Curry  
Case Officer

Melissa Niven  
Program Administrator

HELPING FAMILIES INITIATIVE



[WWW.H-F-I.ORG](http://WWW.H-F-I.ORG)