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2018 Annual Report Intellectual and Developmental Disability Services Supported by Denver Mill Levy Funding

Working Together for Denver

January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018

Introduction

Rocky Mountain Human Services (RMHS) is a non-profit human service organization that provides services annually to more than 4,500 individuals in Denver County with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD). We are a community-centered board (CCB), which means we act as a local hub and resource for individuals with I/DD and their families who need assistance in Denver. We serve the community by providing case management and direct services to individuals and families with I/DD. Our staff conducts more than 16,000 visits in the Denver community annually and ensures that individuals with I/DD are receiving the services necessary to meet their needs.

In 2003, Denver voters generously approved a mill levy property tax to benefit Denver residents with I/DD. As a result, Denver residents can access programs and services, and receive funds to pay for individualized services and resources not available from Medicaid or other funding sources. In this report, RMHS is highlighting its efforts to meet Denver residents' needs through two primary goals:

- 1. Increase access to services.**
- 2. Increase flexible service options to address individualized needs through a variety of providers.**

Goal 1: Increase access to services

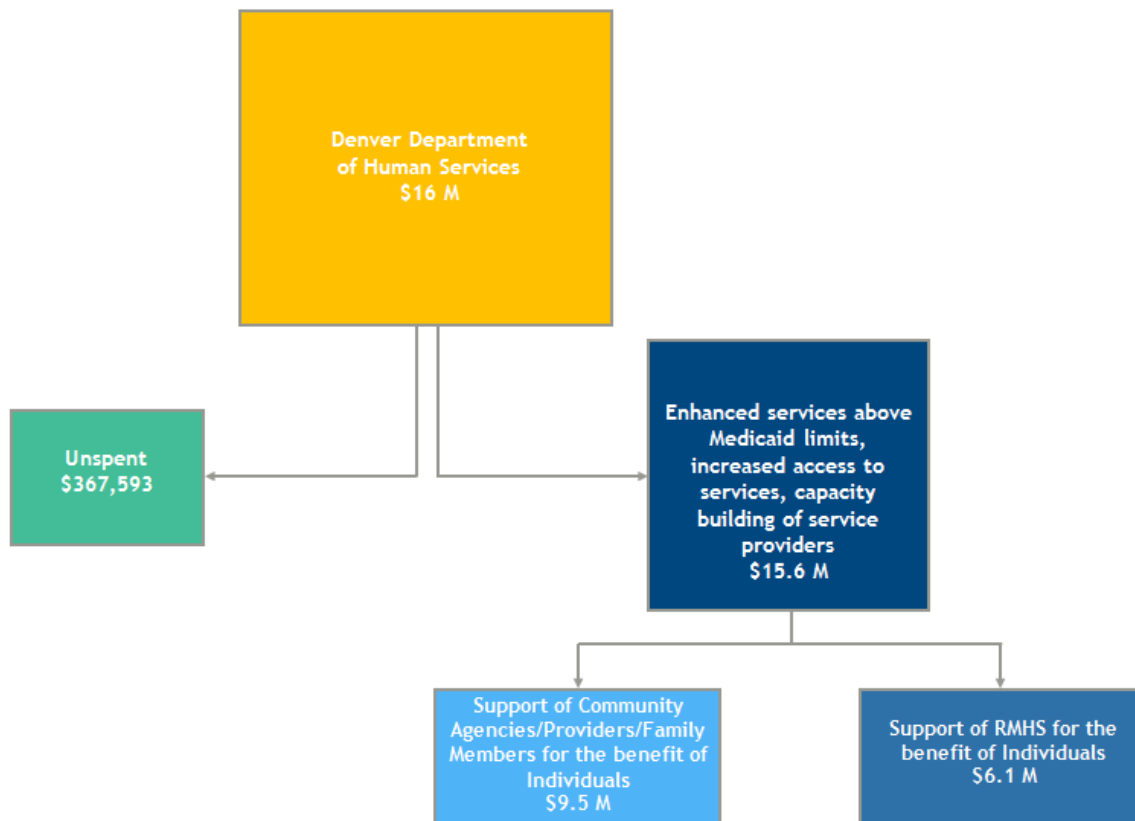
The Denver Department of Human Services (DHS) maintains administrative oversight of the mill levy dollars and maintains a contract with RMHS to deliver programs and services to support the community. Since 2016, RMHS has increased funds going into the community to support individuals, family members, existing providers and new program development.

This shift in funds going directly to the community represented a major change in the way we use mill levy funding; we achieved this transformation through a variety of means. First, we listened. We heard from stakeholders about community needs and reoriented our efforts to support those needs. Second, we developed processes and infrastructure to simultaneously meet the needs of individuals with I/DD and providers who serve them. Next, we conducted outreach and information-sharing through our website, public and one-on-one meetings to get the word out about this resource. Through these combined efforts, we provided enhanced services to 4,857 unduplicated Denver residents with I/DD between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2018.

There were two contracts between DHS and RMHS during the calendar year of 2018, the period of time covered in this report. The first was a six-month contract in effect from January 1, 2018, to June 30, 2018, with a maximum contract amount of \$7.5 million. The second contract is in effect from July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2020, the initial term of which was July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018 with a maximum budget amount of \$8.5 million. The total maximum contract amount for the full calendar year was therefore \$16 million. In 2018, RMHS expended \$15.6 M for enhanced services to the I/DD community. Of this amount, approximately 39 percent of funds supported RMHS services for this population, and 61 percent supported individual requests, community agencies, providers and family members.

Graph 1

January 2018 – December 2018 Mill Levy Summary



Denver mill levy dollars provide enhanced services for people with I/DD. These dollars support RMHS services, as well as the enhanced services that community organizations and agencies provide. In this way, both individuals and the provider community benefit from mill levy support. RMHS recognizes the importance of monitoring programmatic intent and outcomes, and tracks mill levy dollars by how they were originally accessed – whether by an individual or by an agency. Ultimately, it is the individual with I/DD who benefits from enhanced services.

Services Sought through Mill Levy

Our stakeholders and Community Advisory Council members outlined the seven priority areas of mill levy funding. As RMHS has approved mill levy funding to community agencies, providers, family members and individuals, 100 percent of approvals have been for the benefit of individuals with I/DD and met the definition of one or more of the following priority areas.

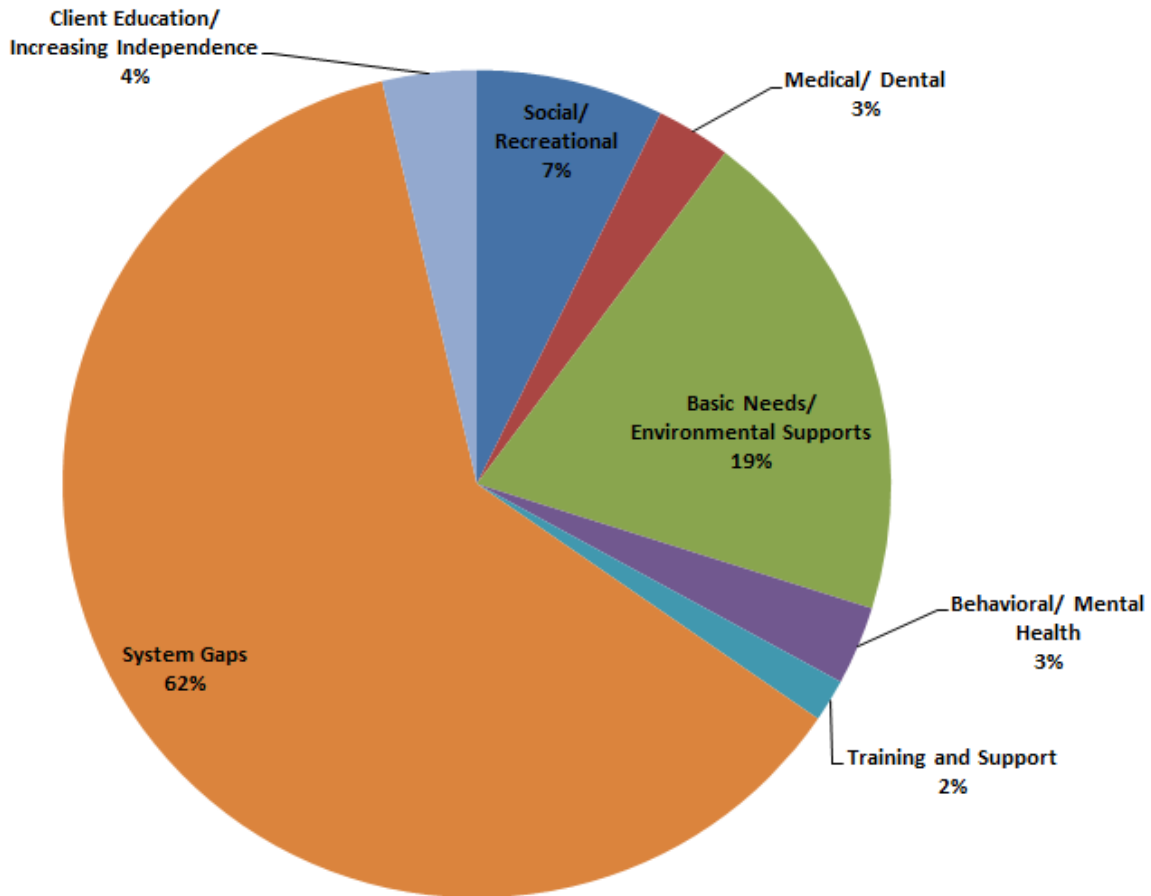
1. **Basic Needs/Environmental Supports:** Meeting individuals' and families' needs such as housing, transportation, wheelchair accessibility, and furniture or clothing expenses.
2. **Behavioral/Mental health:** Improving individuals' access to quality mental health and behavioral health services and supports.
3. **Client Education and Increasing Independence:** Providing opportunities for individuals to learn, grow and increase self-determination over their lives.
4. **Medical/Dental:** Improving individuals' access to quality medical and dental supports and services.

5. **Social/Recreational:** Increasing opportunities and access to social and recreational activities.
6. **Training and Support:** Providing training and educational services to assist caregivers, providers, families and the general public about I/DD topics.
7. **System Gaps within the I/DD System and Across Other Systems:** Services and supports needed during times of transition or not covered by other resources such as the transition out of foster care, provision of music therapy, testing for I/DD eligibility, and services beyond those covered by Medicaid or other funders. A primary service in this priority area is respite care.

Individual Requests

Residents of Denver with I/DD have two ways to access mill levy funds. They can either contact their RMHS service coordinator or submit a request directly through the RMHS website. In 2018, RMHS received 3,866 requests for 1,610 individuals. The total amount of funding granted to support those individual requests was \$2,995,977.81. This covers requests that come in both through the Client Assistance and FSSP Supplement Programs.

Graph 2
January 2018 – December 2018 Funding for Individual Requests by
Category (n=3,866)



Individual requests have resulted in funding for diverse needs. Examples of these are:

- Diapers for a child that was struggling with potty training
- A weighted blanket recommended by a youth’s physician to help him with increased focus and body regulation
- A tumbling class to increase a child’s socialization and mobility skills
- Aquatic therapy to increase a youth’s modality and maintain sensory regulation
- Respite for a child to keep him safe while his mother was in the hospital with another child
- Assistance with a medical bill for an adult so that the bill was not sent to a collection’s agency
- Funding the replacement of a water heater for an adult so that he could remain in his family home

On average, an RMHS service coordinator meets four times a year with individuals who use RMHS for their case management services. The service coordinator works with the client to identify his or her needs, which may include services or resources not available from Medicaid or other funding sources. These needs are documented in an individualized service plan, and mill levy funds are then used to pay for identified services that other funding sources do not support.

Similarly, when an individual submits a request directly through the RMHS website, staff reviews the request in accordance with the contract between RMHS and DHS to ensure the request is appropriate

to an individual's needs and not available through other resources before approving. **Individuals in Denver are eligible for mill levy services regardless of current case management agency.** Those who RMHS does not currently serve can request access to mill levy-funded services and supports through our website at www.rmhumanservices.org/ml.

The ability for individuals with I/DD and their support systems to submit funding requests to support individualized needs through Client Assistance quickly became one of the most successful and fastest-growing pieces of the RMHS Denver Mill Levy Program. Prior to September 1, 2018, RMHS approved most requests.

Beginning on September 1, 2018, RMHS made several changes to Client Assistance for the following reasons.

- After two years of fulfilling these requests and listening to the community, RMHS has a better understanding of the community's needs and how to administer the program that is consistent, fair and sustainable. Our goal was to ensure that mill levy funding lasted for the duration of the year.
- As the number of requests grew, RMHS had to consider the availability of future funding. RMHS faces a \$2 million budget reduction in mill levy funding from 2018 to 2019 and has had to make necessary reductions in spending to ensure its sustainability for individuals in Denver.

To ensure we are responsive to the community's needs and accurately recording complaints, RMHS established a complaint hotline and email Sept. 1 for individuals to voice their concerns regarding these changes. This complaint process has enabled us to again examine whether other resources exist and access those if appropriate. Between September 1st and December 31st, RMHS has received one total complaint. This complaint was successfully resolved. Staff worked closely with the family to determine there was no other funding source available for the annual recreation pass they were seeking, and approved it ultimately meeting his needs.

Given the programmatic changes beginning Sept. 1, more requests received in the last four months of the year were denied. Of the 3,866 requests received, 59 completed requests (<2 percent) were not funded. Requests for funding were denied for the following reasons:

- 11 were for individuals residing outside Denver or not confirmed as having an I/DD
- 27 were due to the availability of other resources to support the request
- 21 were for services/supports that either did not directly benefit the individual with I/DD or were not allowable (purchasing a pet or international travel, for example)

In all 59 denials, RMHS provided explanation about the reason for denial to the individual and/or their family, and provided information and referrals to other community resources when appropriate. Individuals who did not live in Denver were encouraged to contact their county officials regarding mill levy availability in their county of residence.

Goal 2: Increase flexible service options to address individualized needs through a variety of providers

Mill Levy Service Plans

In addition to providing funds to meet individual requests, RMHS continues to implement the individualized mill levy service plan model, which began in August 2017. Our goal is that service coordinators develop mill levy service plans for every Denver resident whom RMHS serves and reach as many Denver residents not accepting services through RMHS as possible. Individuals may receive services through either a Medicaid Waiver program or Early Intervention¹, and will have a mill levy service plan completed over the course of the year.

Community Agency Requests

Because calendar year 2018 spanned across two contract periods for RMHS, community agencies were also contracted in two six-month terms: one for January to June and one for July to December. Two tables are included in this report to provide additional detail about the community agencies' mill levy-funded work. For some projects, the contracted scopes of work changed from one contract term to the next. The Appendix provides further information and success stories for the agencies contracted July to December. (Please see the RMHS semi-annual report for January to June contracted agencies' successes.)

In total, RMHS contracted with **84 community agencies** in 2018 to provide mill levy-funded services and supports.

- 19 community agencies were contracted with RMHS to provide only special projects. (Please see Tables 1-2 for more detail about these agencies.)
- 62 community agencies were contracted to only provide services through individualized mill levy service plans.
- Three community agencies provided services through special projects as well as through individualized mill levy services plans.

In addition to community agency partnerships described above, program-approved service agencies (PASAs) are also invited to contract with RMHS to provide services through individualized mill levy service plans, as described on page 7.

Because of mill levy funding, community agencies have expanded and implemented new programs and services over the last year that are meeting the holistic needs of Denver residents with I/DD. In the fall of 2018, RMHS revised our process for receiving and reviewing proposals for both new and continuing projects. We were excited to launch our partnerships with community agencies in 2017, and we work every day to improve this funding program so more Denver residents with I/DD have access to these unique services. This process (located here: www.rmhumanservices.org/community-partners) offers a framework for how applications are evaluated, as well as the associated timelines for submission and approval.

¹ Mill Levy Service Plans for Early Intervention were piloted beginning Feb. 1, 2018.

Table 1
January 2018 – June 2018 Mill Levy
External Community Partner Projects

Implemented Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Q1/Q2 2018 Spending ²	Individuals Served ³
<i>Basic Needs/Environmental Supports</i>			
Homelessness Project (CFPD)	<i>Conducts outreach to homeless individuals who are diagnosed with or have indications of I/DD and who need assistance connecting with I/DD services and other benefits.</i>	\$245,000	53
<i>Behavioral/Mental Health</i>			
ASPEN Program (Tennyson Center for Children)	<i>Provides behavioral supports and educational services to students with I/DD in ASPEN program.</i>	\$261,825	5
Laradon Expansion of Behavioral Services	<i>Offers behavioral services and supports beyond Medicaid-defined services, including crisis support, customer-specific trainings, and consultation and training to external systems.</i>	\$20,955	13
<i>Client Education/Increasing Independence</i>			
Ability Connection Colorado: RAMP Extension Program	<i>Serves transitional-age, foster care youth with disabilities through a 16-week national mentoring and live-skills program that is evidence-based and career-focused.</i>	\$62,750	8
Colorado Cross Disability Coalition (CCDC): Probate Power	<i>Provides estate planning and probate legal services to adults with I/DD in Denver.</i>	\$928	1

² Total Q1/Q2 spending is equal to the total amount paid for services delivered in Q1 and Q2. Depending on the timing of invoices received, spending totals included in Table 1 may not be reflected in reported agency spending.

³ Agencies are responsible for submitting number of individuals served to RMHS on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual basis.

Implemented Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Q1/Q2 2018 Spending	Individuals Served
<i>Client Education/Increasing Independence (Cont.)</i>			
Guided by Humanity Yoga	<i>Enhances quality of life by providing inclusive, accessible yoga classes within the community.</i>	\$55,172	161
Pizzability	<i>Provides job opportunities in a restaurant for individuals with I/DD. This project is in the process of opening and was not fully implemented by June 30, 2018.</i>	\$192,512	0
Resource Ability (Financial Health Institute)	<i>Provides a social learning environment to strengthen financial health and advance quality of life for people with I/DD and their support systems.</i>	\$296,047	147
REVEL: Mentor Program	<i>Provides an integrated setting called the REVEL Lounge for teens with autism to hang out, make friends, learn new skills and explore interests.</i>	\$77,322	12
Self-Employment Education (Celebrate EDU)	<i>Teaches the benefits of entrepreneurial education.</i>	\$53,262	42
Supported Employment Collaborative: Goodwill & Jewish Family Service	<i>Offers a supported employment online jobs bank with mobile staff to engage clients and help them meet their employment goals.</i>	\$218,132	160
T.A.C.T.	<i>Provides trade and technical skills to children and young adults with autism spectrum disorder.</i>	\$200,613	29
<i>Social/Recreational</i>			
Arts & Community Exploration - ACE (Jewish Family Service)	<i>Provides vibrant and creative art projects, group and individual music therapy, cultural and holiday explorations and recreation.</i>	\$37,446	20
Active Community Access	<i>Provides community-integrated evening and Saturday activities.</i>	\$34,186	16
Project World (Activity Options)	<i>Offers community activities and overnight travel opportunities.</i>	\$164,325	561
Social Inclusion (Connect Us)	<i>Provides opportunities for families and youth for social connections through after-school social groups, inclusive recess facilitation and parent support groups.</i>	\$118,327	141
StellarCare Vacations	<i>Provides opportunity for travel to enhance personal growth, reunite family members and support social skill development.</i>	\$50,488	13

Implemented Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Q1/Q2 2018 Spending	Individuals Served
<i>Social/Recreational (cont.)</i>			
The Wayfaring Band	<i>Offers multi-day trips that focus on taking participants off the beaten path to increase independence and foster community connections.</i>	\$175,259	20
<i>Training and Support</i>			
Autism Society of Colorado: Autism 101 Community and Police Training	<i>Provides community trainings to increase knowledge and improve interactions with individuals with an autism diagnosis in the community.</i>	\$52,089	250
Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG): DD Network of Care website	<i>Provides a searchable database of resources specific to the I/DD community. Due to the nature of the project, a number of individuals "served" was not recorded.</i>	\$69,589	N/A
Laradon Early Intervention Family Navigator	<i>1. EI Play & Learn Group 2. EI Parent Support Group</i>	\$36,880	138
Parent to Parent	<i>Developing a data system to help match support parents with parents new to the system. Also trains new support parents.</i>	\$19,685	10
THRIVE: Project Independence	<i>Delivers trainings to parents and youth with I/DD to provide information and resources during the time of transition from high school to adulthood.</i>	\$44,728	20

Table 2
July 2018 – December 2018 Mill Levy
External Community Partner Projects

Implemented Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Q3/Q4 2018 Spending ⁴	Individuals Served
<i>Basic Needs/Environmental Supports</i>			
Homelessness Project (CFPD)	<i>Conducts outreach to homeless individuals who are diagnosed with or have indications of I/DD and who need assistance connecting with I/DD services and other benefits.</i>	\$158,000	56
<i>Behavioral/Mental Health</i>			
ASPEN Program (Tennyson Center for Children)	<i>Provides behavioral supports and educational services to students with I/DD in ASPEN program.</i>	\$183,808	10
Laradon Expansion of Behavioral Services	<i>Offers behavioral services and supports beyond Medicaid-defined services, including crisis support, customer-specific trainings, and consultation and training to external systems.</i>	\$22,705	17
<i>Client Education/Increasing Independence</i>			
Ability Connection Colorado: RAMP Extension Program	<i>Serves transitional-age, foster care youth with disabilities through a 16-week national mentoring and live-skills program that is evidence-based and career-focused.</i>	\$34,630	22
Colorado Cross Disability Coalition (CCDC): Probate Power	<i>Provides estate planning and probate legal services to adults with I/DD in Denver.</i>	\$6,190	11
Guided by Humanity Yoga	<i>Enhances quality of life by providing inclusive, accessible yoga classes within the community.</i>	\$32,110	161
Pizzability	<i>Provides job opportunities in a restaurant for individuals with I/DD. This project is in the process of opening and was not fully implemented by June 30, 2018.</i>	\$154,500	14

⁴ Total Q3/Q4 spending is equal to the total amount paid for services delivered in Q3 and Q4. Depending on the timing of invoices received, spending totals included in Table 2 may not be reflected in reported agency spending.

Implemented Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Q3/Q4 2018 Spending	Individuals Served
<i>Client Education/Increasing Independence (Cont.)</i>			
Resource Ability (Financial Health Institute)	<i>Provides a social learning environment to strengthen financial health and advance quality of life for people with I/DD and their support systems.</i>	\$263,787	607
REVEL: Mentor Program	<i>Provides an integrated setting called the REVEL Lounge for teens with autism to hang out, make friends, learn new skills and explore interests.</i>	\$46,130	52
Self-Employment Education (Celebrate EDU)	<i>Teaches the benefits of entrepreneurial education.</i>	\$48,000	91
Supported Employment Collaborative: Goodwill & Jewish Family Service	<i>Offers a supported employment online jobs bank with mobile staff to engage clients and help them meet their employment goals.</i>	\$129,557	165
T.A.C.T.	<i>Provides trade and technical skills to children and young adults with autism spectrum disorder.</i>	\$155,000	25
Social/Recreational			
Arts & Community Exploration - ACE (Jewish Family Service)	<i>Provides vibrant and creative art projects, group and individual music therapy, cultural and holiday explorations and recreation.</i>	\$33,497	16
Project World (Activity Options)	<i>Offers community activities and overnight travel opportunities.</i>	\$125,300	51
Social Inclusion (Connect Us)	<i>Provides opportunities for families and youth for social connections through after-school social groups, inclusive recess facilitation and parent support groups.</i>	\$110,000	282
StellarCare Vacations	<i>Provides opportunity for travel to enhance personal growth, reunite family members and support social skill development.</i>	\$56,631	7
The Wayfaring Band	<i>Offers multi-day trips that focus on taking participants off the beaten path to increase independence and foster community connections.</i>	\$130,000	18

Implemented Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Q3/Q4 2018 Spending	Individuals Served
<i>Training and Support</i>			
Laradon Early Intervention Family Navigator	1. <i>EI Play & Learn Group</i> 2. <i>EI Parent Support Group</i>	\$17,164	160
Parent to Parent	<i>Developing a data system to help match support parents with parents new to the system. Also trains new support parents.</i>	\$17,925	57
THRIVE: Project Independence	<i>Delivers trainings to parents and youth with I/DD to provide information and resources during the time of transition from high school to adulthood.</i>	\$41,290	22

Looking Forward: External Community Partner Projects in 2019

RMHS implemented a new process at the end of 2018 for funding external provider for 2019. The RMHS Community Advisory Council (CAC) advised RMHS on an application and scoring system that was revised and utilized for 2019 interested partners. The input provided by the CAC was utilized in a variety of ways:

1. CAC provided feedback about the specific needs of Denver residents with I/DD including data gathering, anecdotal information, and/or personal and professional experiences.
2. CAC advised RMHS on the priorities for services including for project funding through the development of scoring criteria.
3. CAC provided feedback on the communication of funding announcements.
4. CAC participated in the project selection process by providing input on the summaries of submitted projects.

**Table 3: Mill Levy Distribution Details by Priority Area
January 2018 – December 2018**

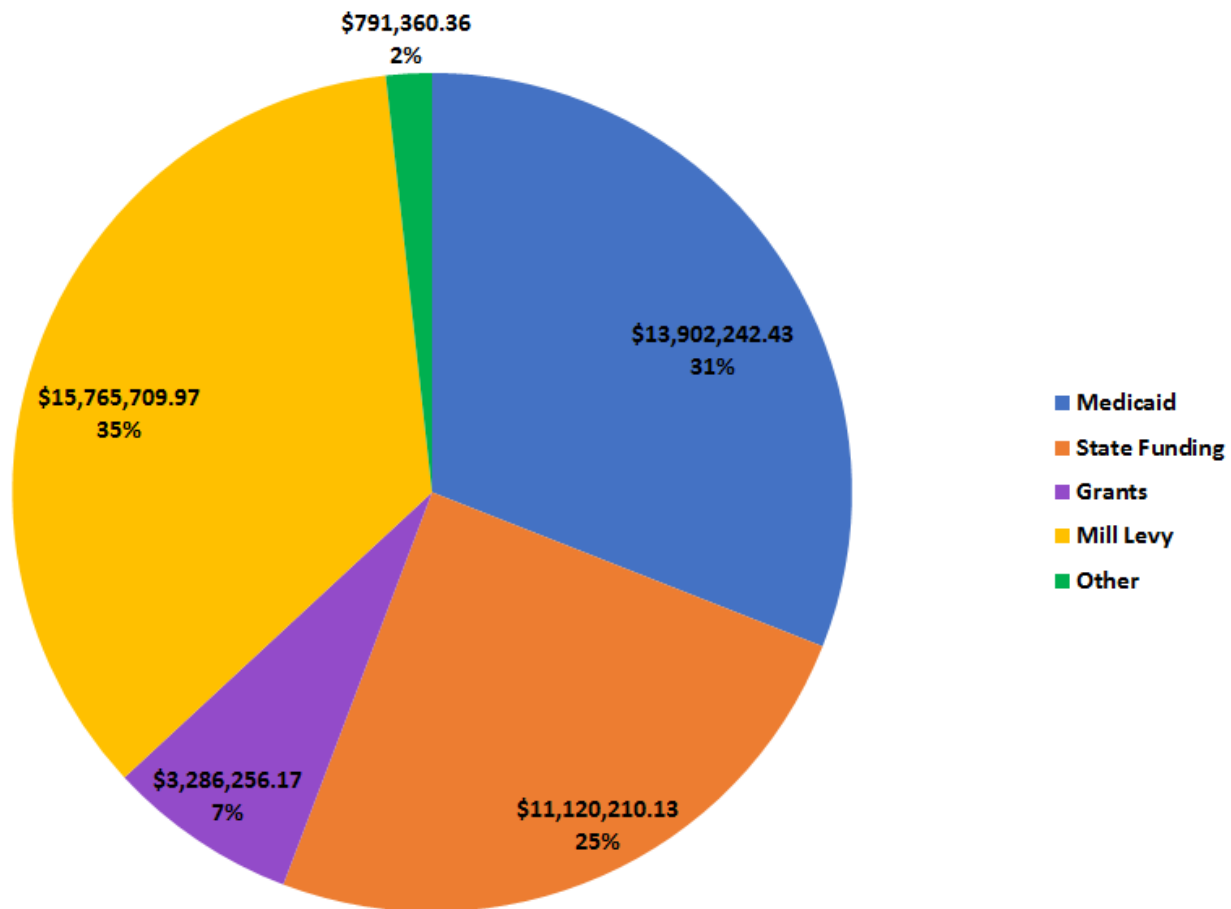
Priority Area	Number of Providers/Families/Organizations Paid⁵	Transaction Amounts
Basic Needs/Environmental Enrichment		\$1,349,954.21
Assistive Technology	64	\$174,466.69
Basic Needs (diapers, clothing, personal care)	5	\$284,478.66
Housing Stability (rent, utilities, etc.)	149	\$473,059.22
Home Accessibility Adaptations	43	\$234,553.66
Residential Habilitation	3	\$83,146.18
Specialized Med Equip/Wheelchair	6	\$22,512.81
Transportation, vehicle modifications	55	\$77,736.99
Social/Recreational		\$1,464,564.61
Other Social/Recreational Services	47	\$253,419.50
Recreational Activities	124	\$1,211,145.11
System Gaps		\$1,911,455.86
Day Habilitation & Mentorship	37	\$225,918.00
Interpretation Services	9	\$38,965.89
Occupational, Physical, Speech, other therapies	84	\$123,639.18
Respite	930	\$1,522,932.79
Client Education/Increasing Independence		\$2,236,640.09
Client Education	67	\$1,431,379.45
Prevocational Services	3	\$421,682.57
Supported Employment	15	\$383,578.07
Behavioral/Mental Health		\$725,658.48
ABA & Other Behavioral Services	14	\$476,367.39
Behavioral Therapy & Counseling	41	\$249,291.09
Medical/Dental		\$351,766.18
Dental & Vision	21	\$31,148.80
Medical Care & Medical Supplies, Pharmacy	134	\$320,617.38
Training & Support		\$340,476.91
Trainings, Conferences	15	\$292,779.80
Parent Ed/Support	34	\$47,697.11
Total		\$8,380,516.34

⁵ Table 3 provides information regarding the total number of payees per category and is not intended to align with number of individuals benefitting or number of transactions

Rocky Mountain Human Services Enhanced Services

In 2018, RMHS provided services to individuals in Denver through a variety of programs and funding sources. A breakdown of the costs of services and supports in 2018 is detailed in Graph 3.

Graph 3
RMHS Cost of Services and Supports by Funding Source
January 2018 – December 2018



RMHS delivers services through multiple programs for children and adults with I/DD. Approximately 39 percent of the total mill levy funding expended in this reporting period supported enhanced services that RMHS provided to 4,265 unduplicated individuals in Denver. In many cases, RMHS is the only provider of these services in Denver, and the services are not otherwise reimbursable but are important for the individual’s well-being. RMHS has continued to increase efficiencies and reduce its use of mill levy for enhanced services, which results in more funding for individual needs and community agencies. Mill levy expenditures by department are detailed in Table 4 and described below.

Table 4
 RMHS Enhanced Services
 January 2018 – December 2018

RMHS Departments Providing Mill Levy-Funded Services	Mill Levy Funding
Early Intervention	\$ 736,738.17
Family Services and Support	\$718,079.57
Life Essentials Provider Network	\$597,989.96
Service Coordination	\$1,031,654.58
Assessment and Consultation Team	\$1,428,426.32
Behavioral Health	\$244,054.76
Community Outreach and Communications	\$147,179.21
Total	\$4,904,122.57

Early Intervention Services

The Early Intervention (EI) program provides eligible infants and toddlers and their families with services and supports to enhance child development in the areas of cognition, speech, communication, physical development, motor development, vision, hearing, social or emotional development, and self-help skills. EI is a public health-entitlement program and does not have a waitlist. However, in the 2017 legislative session and prior years, State of Colorado staff and EI providers indicated their concerns about funding shortfalls that could affect the current system’s ability to meet the program’s goals.

The two primary EI services are case management and direct services, which include clinical assessments and therapies to address identified needs. Funding for these services includes state funds, Medicaid and private insurance. EI case management for children with Medicaid is capped at 60 hours per recipient annually. Moreover, a CCB is required to pay for any identified therapy needs of individuals in this program. In both instances, mill levy funding pays for case management and therapy when an eligible infant or toddler needs more than is reimbursed through existing EI funding. RMHS is the sole provider of EI case management in Denver. During this reporting period, RMHS served **2,231 Denver individuals**⁶ in this program. Over 90 percent of the children served in EI received additional mill levy-funded case management services. Without mill levy funding, these children’s needs would not be met as comprehensively or as expeditiously as possible.

Family Service and Supports Program

The Family Service and Supports Program (FSSP) is a partnership between families and publicly funded supports. The program assesses each individual’s and family’s circumstances to determine the appropriate types of services or supports that can best assist and are least likely to disrupt the family’s lifestyle. In FSSP, state funding covers direct services and case management activities, both of which are capped contractually to CCBs. Mill levy funding pays for the case management or direct

⁶ Some individuals receive services from more than one RMHS program during the year and are therefore included in each program’s count.

services that other funding sources do not reimburse. RMHS is the sole provider of FSSP services in Denver. During this reporting period, FSSP served **1,220 Denver individuals**. Without mill levy funding, more than 800 individuals in FSSP would have lost case management and direct services and would be placed on a waitlist.

Life Essentials Provider Network

The Life Essentials Provider Network (LEPN) provides direct services for adults and children with I/DD through Medicaid programs. RMHS oversees a service model that uses family members as subcontractors to provide services. This increases individual choice and creates a mechanism to reimburse family members for the valuable services they provide. LEPN uses both nursing and quality assurance staff to enhance the quality of delivered services that are neither required nor funded outside of mill levy. RMHS uses mill levy funding to offer state-mandated trainings, such as first aid, to LEPN providers at no cost. During this reporting period, LEPN served **120 Denver individuals**. LEPN used mill levy funding to supplement the costs of providing oversight to 123 contractors serving those individuals. Other CCBs in Colorado have ceased providing services in this model due to the high administrative costs. Without mill levy funding, RMHS would be unable to provide this option to Denver residents.

Service Coordination

Service Coordination provides case management to children and adults receiving Medicaid-funded developmental disability services. Case management includes intake activities, eligibility determinations, service enrollment, and locating, coordinating and monitoring services. Service coordinators also assist individuals in securing other non-developmental disability-funded services and benefits, such as medical, social and educational services. As Denver's CCB, RMHS must process intake and eligibility for individuals in Denver seeking service coordination. During this reporting period, service coordination served **967 Denver individuals**.

Case management reimbursement for services is capped at 60 hours per waiver recipient annually and some case management functions are not eligible for Medicaid reimbursement. Mill levy funding pays for case management beyond what is reimbursed through other sources. Without mill levy funding, RMHS service coordination caseloads would increase, reducing the organization's responsiveness to the community's needs.

Assessment and Consultation Team (Children's Clinical Services)

The Assessment and Consultation Team provides comprehensive assessment, consultation and intervention services to infants, children and adolescents, from birth to age 18. As a CCB, RMHS conducts developmental assessments and diagnostic evaluations for children including those with autism spectrum disorder. Additionally, RMHS provides and uses subcontractors for intervention services, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathology and psychology. Current funding for these services does not provide reimbursement to meet all of an individual's needs, nor for the administrative oversight of sub-contractors. In this reporting period, the Assessment and Consultation team served **1,289 Denver individuals**. Approximately half received assessment services only and half continue to receive ongoing intervention services. Mill levy funding in this area is making a significant impact. RMHS is able to complete diagnostic evaluations in two months or less, while other entities in the community are taking six months or longer.

Behavioral Health

The behavioral health needs of individuals with I/DD are unique and require complex coordination of care. This population has limited resources in our Denver community. The RMHS Behavioral Health Clinic was staffed with psychiatry, psychology and licensed therapists, all with specialized expertise

and extensive experience in working with individuals who are dually diagnosed with I/DD and mental and behavioral health issues. Because specialized staff is required to meet these needs, the cost of providing services was greater than current funding reimbursement. RMHS used mill levy funding to support individuals' needs in these areas. During this reporting period, our Behavioral Health clinic served **50 Denver individuals**.

RMHS made the difficult decision to close the Adult Behavioral health Program on November 30, 2018. We had hoped to identify a business model that would adequately fill the gap between the cost of providing adult behavioral health services and the reimbursements we receive from Medicaid waivers, mill levy funding and other sources. Unfortunately, we were not able to come up with a model that would be sustainable by the end of 2018. Our clinicians and service coordinators worked with all individuals affected by this closure to identify other providers. We recognize that there is great need for adult behavioral health care for individuals with I/DD in the Denver community, and we regret having to make this decision. But we do it while looking to the future and will continue to seek a sustainable way to support these individuals in obtaining the behavioral health services that they need.

Community Outreach and Communications

Mill levy funds are used to support community outreach and communication activities regarding services for Denver residents with I/DD, ensuring that their voices are heard and that the community is aware of how to access mill levy funds. The following RMHS outreach activities were conducted in 2018.

- Conducted seven Community Advisory Council meetings.
- Held three Community Forums for RMHS clients, family members and the community to provide input on needs and priorities and to learn about RMHS activities, including programs provided by community partners. One was on March 5 at Laradon, the second on May 31 at Montbello Rec Center and the third on November 12 at the Eisenhower Chapel in Lowry.
- Presented to Denver City Council SAFEHOUSE Committee in March and June of 2018.
- Began reporting quarterly to City Council members regarding mill levy activities.
- Regularly updated the RMHS website to:
 - Provide new information about community partners and valuable resources and programs.
 - Publish Board and Community Advisory Council meeting agendas, presentations and minutes and organization reports.
 - Provide translations of key information for Spanish speakers.
 - Maintain online calendar of client, partner and community events.
 - Share stories about clients and families who have benefited from mill levy funding.
 - Offer an online request form to non-RMHS clients needing to request mill levy funds to meet individual needs.
- Shared information about DHS needs assessment survey and public meeting on website, in newsletters and through email blasts, and internally through emails and intranet.
- Attended DHS needs assessment public meeting.
- Promoted mill levy-related efforts, including community partner events and client stories, through social media communications.

- Created Mill Levy Partner Facebook Group Page for partners to share resources and information.
- Distributed a monthly e-newsletter to more than 2,000 subscribers.
- Conducted over 55 meetings with 40 community agencies interested in accessing mill levy funding for their program ideas and services.
- Presented at or had a resource table at over 50 Registered Neighborhood Organization meetings and community events.
- Hosted two social events for people with I/DD in Denver. The Summerfest event was on September 7 at Ruby Hill Park and the Halloween dance was on October 25 at Laradon.
- Coordinated three meetings for service agencies working with I/DD individuals.
- Created a Mill Levy Program brochure to be used at outreach events beginning in 2019.

Program Outcomes

RMHS provides mill levy funding directly to individuals and families in Denver, and caregivers and agencies that support Denver residents. RMHS is committed to meeting the unique needs of individuals; additionally, RMHS is committed to enhancing the capacity of community agencies to develop programs and deliver services to support Denver residents with I/DD.

RMHS is proud of the results achieved in 2018 through mill levy-funded services and supports. Whether new services were working to increase individuals' independence; keeping individuals and families healthy, safe and in their homes; increasing caregivers' skills; or improving quality of life, the results are remarkable. A summary of outcomes is provided in Appendix A. Below are some 2018 highlights:⁷

- More than 100 individuals and families received support for **housing stability** and home modifications, so they can remain safely in their homes.
- Twelve individuals experiencing **homelessness** were permanently housed.
- Hundreds of individuals reported through survey efforts an improvement in their **quality of life** through social and recreational opportunities.
- Approximately 1,300 individuals successfully learned about and **increased their independence**:
 - Learning **trade skills** toward gainful employment
 - Increasing **cultural and artistic** exposure
 - Appropriately participating in **integrated yoga** classes
 - Improving **financial health**
 - Turning their interests into **entrepreneurial opportunities**
- Individuals improved their **quality of life** through social and recreational opportunities.
 - Nearly 700 individuals have participated with our community partners in a variety of community engagement opportunities, including local day trips and overnight trips.

Summary

RMHS provides case management and direct services to adults and children with I/DD in Denver and surrounding areas. As the CCB and single point of entry for individuals seeking assistance for needs related to I/DD, RMHS is in the best position to meet this community's needs. RMHS has embraced the opportunity to create responsive, innovative programs through the mill levy funding. For calendar year 2018, RMHS continued to maximize the impact of these dollars on the lives of Denver residents with I/DD. RMHS has used these funds to enhance the well-being of children and adults in a multitude of ways, including the following:

- Funding individual requests from over 1,600 individuals, including needed medical care and therapies when they are not covered or only partially covered by Medicaid or private insurance.
- Building services that are unfunded or underfunded by Medicaid or other funders, such as respite care, into hundreds of individuals' annual service plans.
- Supporting innovative programs through 83 community agencies to provide services to thousands of individuals, including educational and supportive services for school-age children with severe behavioral and other needs; providing entrepreneurial education to young people;

⁷ May include duplicate numbers due to reporting restrictions over two contracted terms.

and providing parents of infants and toddlers with opportunities to meet other parents while their children develop social skills in therapeutic play settings.

- Enhancing RMHS services, such as additional case management, first aid training for family members, and therapies for infants and toddlers, to 4,265 individuals when adequate funding is not available from the state, Medicaid or other sources.

RMHS is grateful to the City and County of Denver for its generosity to people with I/DD and is honored to serve these individuals every day.

Appendix A: Program Outcomes by Priority Area

Priority: Basic Needs/Environmental Supports

Meeting basic needs and providing environmental supports for individuals and families includes addressing needs such as housing, transportation, wheelchair accessibility, and furniture or clothing. Approximately 16 percent of mill levy funding expended in this reporting period has been utilized to help meet these needs.

Client Assistance (RMHS)

This project provides a way for individuals to access funds for emergencies and when appropriate for services not covered elsewhere. Requests are reviewed twice a week and the typical time to process the request is less than 48 hours. RMHS approved 3,866 individual requests in 2018. Requests have included temporary assistance with rent or utilities to ensure housing stability, clothing, beds, tutoring, adaptive equipment, trainings for family and caregivers, and co-pays for needed therapies.

Client Assistance Successes

- Hansel is a 1-year-old who did not have a car seat or stroller to safely transport him in the community. The family was having difficulty taking him into the community due to this. RMHS funded \$412 to purchase a car seat and stroller for Hansel.
- Alex is a 2-year-old who was receiving services due to Failure to Thrive. He was struggling with many medical needs due to lack of weight gain. Alex needed another procedure so RMHS funded \$342 to pay the portion that was not covered under insurance.
- Calvin is an 8-year-old who is diagnosed with autism. He has limited attention and becomes easily overstimulated. He was able to use a lap pad and blanket in his OT therapy sessions and they were proven to be successful. Insurance would not fund these items. RMHS provided \$134.98 to purchase these items for Calvin.
- A is a 24-year-old who uses a wheelchair and enjoys accessing his community. His family takes care of him and as they age their ability to physically transfer him in and out of their vehicles has become increasingly difficult. A's insurance and Waiver were able to fund a portion for a vehicle lift and Mill Levy funded the remaining \$4,598.

Homelessness Project (CFPD-Mission Supports)

Through collaboration with the Colorado Fund for People with Disabilities (CFPD), Mission Supports locates homeless individuals with or suspected to have I/DD. The program structure offers individuals one-on-one support with a peer advocate to obtain services and secure housing and other environmental resources. In the first half of 2018, the team served 53 individuals and 56 individuals in the second half of 2018. All individuals received case management, information and referral, wrap-around services, and other assistance to mitigate crisis situations and address immediate needs. Some long-term outcomes achieved this quarter include:

- Nine individuals obtained stable and/or permanent housing.
- Five individuals have been determined eligible for I/DD services through RMHS.

CFPD-Mission Supports

Patty is a woman who was very recently determined eligible and received a DD Waiver resource. CFPD received a referral in October of 2017 indicating Patty might qualify for the Mission Supports program. At the intake CFPD learned that Patty had been discharged 12 times since she was in her mid-twenties from CMHI's Ft. Logan and was moved into various mental health programs and housing supports without any success of stability or safety. Her last discharge from Ft. Logan was in early 2016 and she was either homeless, in the county hospital, or incarcerated until the time of her intake with Mission Supports. While CFPD staff collected required documents and attended court hearings they worked tirelessly on getting her connected to Catholic Charities' Samaritan House so she knew she always had a shelter bed to sleep. She received the results from her Psych. eval. done in 2018 and it recommended Patty pursue services through RMHS based on her IQ and adaptive scores. Patty attended introduction meetings for host home and PCA providers in December and began to become more involved and enthusiastic about these services. There is no indication that Patty has ever lived safely in a stable home as an adult. She hasn't really learned to trust anyone and isn't used to a system that holds a person's rights and choice as central to their services. Patty is expected to be introduced to a housing and service agency at the beginning of 2019 with the hopes that she will learn of her new permanent housing and supports.

—Arnie Swenson
Program Manager, CFPD

Priority: Client Education/Increasing Independence

Approximately 27 percent of mill levy funds expended in this reporting period was utilized for client education and increasing independence. The following are community project partners offering education to clients with a focus on increasing their life skills and gaining independence.

Guided by Humanity Yoga

Guided by Humanity (GBH) was created to provide inclusive and accessible yoga opportunities for the I/DD community in Denver. GBH served 161 individuals in the first half of 2018 and served 161 individuals in the second half of 2018. From 2017 to 2018, GBH doubled in size. This program is giving students the tools to control their own well-being. GBH added a cooking class in 2018 to further focus on increasing healthy living skills. Below are the outcomes realized in 2018:

Guided by Humanity Yoga

Guided by Humanity has worked with Goodwill for approximately two years. During our All Abilities Classes we are very adamant that this is a self-advocacy program and that all poses, participation etc is your choice. We have had one person that does not engage with the group, tends to be on the cranky side. This individual will work on her photo album or watching videos while the other All Abilities Group practices yoga. Recently, the individual joined class on her own, engaged in all the poses and was laughing throughout the practice. Building rapport and safety is essential in our classes to have individuals participate! We were over the moon to have our student feel comfortable enough to join the group.

—Mary Sims
Owner, Guided by Humanity

- Increased accessibility of services: serving 161 yoga students from July to December 2018.
- Increased self-confidence: Continued attendance has shown that students increased confidence in familiarity of the sequence of poses and are beginning to rely less on the teacher. Students are also beginning to advocate for themselves when they need assistance and choosing to talk more during community discussion. Also, beginning to engage with each other before and after class.
- Increased leadership skills: Students are volunteering to begin sound work and assisting the teacher by demonstrating what the pose looks like. They are becoming leaders in assisting others.
- Increased independence skills: Students are able to navigate the yoga studio, sign in and interact more with community members and fellow classmates.
- Increasing nutritional cooking skills: Cooking class participants each class made their own snack or meal with the assistance of staff by cutting up food, mixing food, and gathering necessary items.
- Increasing healthy living skills: Cooking class participants were instructed during each class to use a mindful sensory eating tip to use throughout cooking class and during the week such as listening to their food or smelling their food before tasting.

Pizzability

The majority of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are either unemployed or underemployed, despite their ability, desire, and willingness to work in the community. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2016 only 17.9 percent of persons with a disability were employed. Not only does Pizzability provide employment for individuals with I/DD, but it provides supports needed to sustain employment and gain transferrable skills within the service industry. There are some programs that hire adults with I/DD to assemble pizza boxes, but not make pizzas or serve pizzas.

Pizzability opened in 2018 and has begun employing individuals. Some outcomes that have been achieved include:

- Increasing confidence level among employees: Staff has a routine each time they work. They know exactly what to expect and do. They begin each shift with a visual checklist in front of a mirror to ensure they are work-ready. They have seen increased confidence levels in all staff as they work and get paid for the work they do.
- Change attitudes of public about I/DD population: The location in Cherry Creek is central to Denver and reaching many individuals that lack other experience with the I/DD population. Many people have stated they didn't know "those" kinds of people could work. Public perceptions are changing daily.
- Offer safe and friendly atmosphere: When fully operational, Pizzability will offer an innovative and inclusive dining experience for individuals and their families where they can have their unique dining needs met in a safe and friendly atmosphere.

Pizzability is also reaching more people through media and changing the perceptions of how individuals with I/DD should work. They have been featured on ESPN Game Changers, Special Olympics, and CBS4 Denver. Here is one clip, [ESPN Game Changers](#).

THRIVE Center

THRIVE provides trainings and an all-day college visit to parents and caregivers of children and young adults with I/DD, with a focus on outreach to underrepresented families. The trainings give parents a better understanding of the nature of their children's disabilities, and both parents and youth with I/DD better understand their educational, developmental and transitional needs. In 2018, THRIVE held 16 successful trainings for parents and youth. The program increased the training by 4 in the second half of the year, holding a total of 10 trainings. During these training sessions, parents learned how to better prepare to assist their children for life after high school. The youth participants attend

their own sessions to learn about self-advocacy and are making new friends. They are finding and feeling confident in using their voices.

According to the evaluations collected from parents and youth for the training sessions in the second half of 2018:

- 95 percent of parent and youth participants report an increase in knowledge related to special education, post-secondary options and community resources.
- 95 percent found the sessions useful, relevant and the products and services of high quality.
- 95 percent of participants who requested individual family support were satisfied to highly satisfied.

Thrive

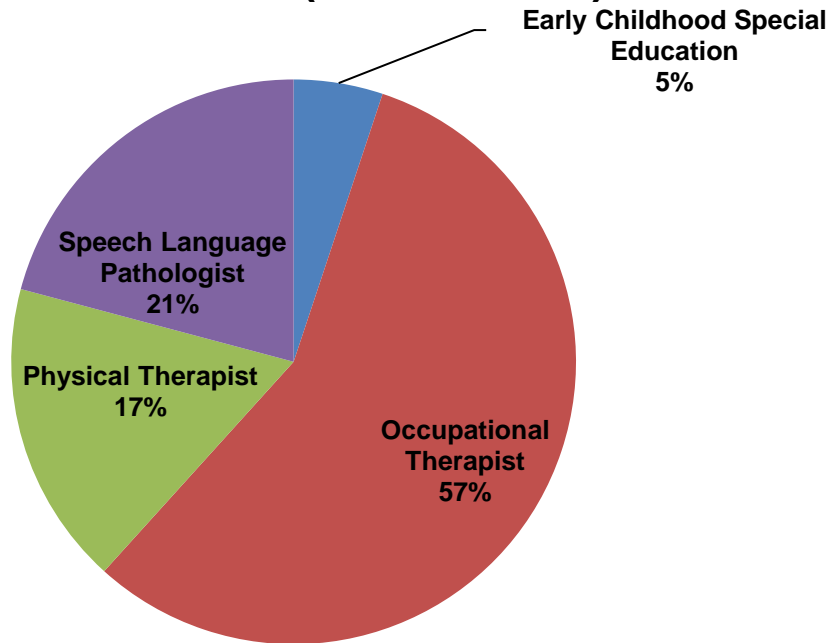
A parent shared how grateful she was for Project Independence and wish that it didn't end so soon. She was unaware that college was possible for her daughter and that there were choices for her. She confided with me that the thought of her living on her own frightens her but she plans to have the family participate in PATH Planning to better understand her daughter's desires. They will also participate in disability planning so things will be in place for her child when she and her husband are no longer around.

–Yvette Burkhalter
Executive Director, Thrive

Colorado Cross Disability Coalition (CCDC): Probate Power

Our services include preparing simple and complex wills, revocable living trusts, special needs trusts, financial power of attorney documents, uncontested guardianships/conservatorships, ABLÉ accounts, probate administration, and advanced medical directives. Probate Power also periodically gives presentations regarding special needs planning, guardianships, and public benefits to groups of families with special needs, so that they better understand the opportunities available to them and what they should consider as their children with special needs transition to adulthood. The mill levy enables us to provide special needs planning and presentation services to families and individuals with I/DD in Denver County who would be otherwise unable to access these important services.

Graph 4
Play & Learn Library use by discipline
Jan-Dec 2018 (n=235 items)



ResourceAbility Program (Financial Health Institute)

Financial Health Institute (FHI) developed a program to improve financial health throughout Denver’s I/DD Community. During 2018, FHI scheduled and delivered classes for groups of customers with nine community partners in the I/DD system. Over the course of the past year, it has become clear that unless the agency leadership incorporates the ResourceAbility curriculum in the schedule, there is a very small window for additional staff training on the subject of financial health. FHI was able to successfully deliver staff trainings to staff at one agency in 2018.

ResourceAbility

Steve is a serious student during the RA classes. As he participates in the class discussion and exercises, he also uses a small, antiquated, dimly lit hand-held video game and fills in the blanks of a cross word puzzle with a worn pencil with most of the eraser missing. He is polite and direct in his verbal communication to others, including the RA facilitator team and Laradon staff. Steve is listening to everything around him even though the appearance is that he is fully distracted. After the morning RA classes, he goes to the ARC store four days a week to sort boxes of clothing and has had this job for over two years. Steve said “It is good that I learn about saving and spending wisely because I do not want to run out of money on my card. When I have money on my card it makes me happy. Running out of money is disastrous. If that happens it means my Mom or Aunt would have to pay for things and that would not be good. I don’t want to have to be dependent on my Mom.”

–Michael Kilgore interviewing Steve
 Financial Health Institute

FHI has developed and tested a customer survey to gain direct feedback about the classes provided. Here are the results from its survey for 2018:

- 91 percent said they liked the classes.
- 88 percent said the classes were helpful.
- 83 percent said they would like to attend more classes.

Staff at host sites for the classes was also surveyed regarding their perceptions about their customers' reactions to the classes. Staff rated:

- 73 percent of the participants were engaged all the time or most of the time
- 72 percent of the participants learned all or most of the topic
- 73 percent of the curriculum was very or mostly relevant to the participants.

Self-Employment Education Project (Celebrate EDU)

Celebrate EDU's Self-Employment Education Project provides opportunities for client education and increased independence by offering innovative entrepreneurial education for I/DD individuals ages 15 to 50. Individuals receive training to learn how to create a business plan, and explore their own business ideas that build on their interests and passions. Celebrate EDU is shifting perceptions of family members, service providers and staff providers about the possibilities that entrepreneurship provides for people with I/DD. In 2018, Celebrate EDU served 133 individuals with 91 individuals being served in the second half 2018.

During the second half of 2018, Celebrate EDU launched their Discovering Entrepreneurship Course. This is a free course that replaces their Entrepreneurial Education Program and is quickly making a big impact. During the fourth quarter, they had 50 people in the Denver area utilize this program, 15 who identify with I/DD. They also successfully trained program partners to teach their entrepreneurial education programs and will also provide 75 individuals with I/DD access to The Spark Program.

T.A.C.T. – Teaching the Autism Community Trades

T.A.C.T. offers for-credit classes for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), ages 14 to 21, as well as night and weekend workshops for individuals with ASD ages 5 to 21. Workshop classes vary and include trades such as photography, welding, electronics, fiber arts, graphic design, audio engineering, carpentry, auto mechanics and instrument-making. In 2018, T.A.C.T. served 54 individuals. T.A.C.T.'s outcomes included improving students' empowerment,

T.A.C.T.

TACT's summer program enabled our youngest boy to push boundaries and learn skills he never would have been exposed to. I can't overstate how important it is to achieve in life, to feel as if you've done something substantial, meaningful, and lasting, especially when life keeps telling you that something about you is wrong or off or different. TACT not only let him achieve. It let him excel.

During the summer, my child sampled careers and built both a bass guitar and a skateboard. These things were real and tangible and meaningful, and beautifully made: beyond the skill and finish levels we would have ever imagined him capable of. He pulls his guitar out with pride and shows them to people, able to say "I made this myself" before subjecting them to what can only generously be called music but comes fully from his heart. He could never have done this without a program that believed in him more than he believed in himself. Allowing kids to use big equipment and take big risks to create real things is something you don't find even for kids without challenges. At TACT, they set the bar high and allowed my son to reach it.

– Erica Sadun
Parent

independence, socialization, flexibility, problem-solving and self-confidence, and therefore increasing the likelihood of gainful employment. Here are the results realized during the entire semester through pre- and post-assessment scores:

- 90 percent showed improvements in trades skills.
- 76 percent showed improvements in workplace etiquette.
- 62 percent showed improvement in empowerment and independence.
- 38 percent showed improvements in socialization.
- 90 percent showed improvements in flexibility and problem-solving.
- 52 percent showed improvements in inclusion and aptitude.

T.A.C.T. has a student that has been working to create beautiful baskets that he has been able to sell for an income through TACT's LLC. The baskets can be purchased on their Etsy site. [BuiltWithTACT on Etsy](#)

A TACT parent also helped to create a video that interviews TACT students and families. [TACT video](#)

Supported Employment Collaborative

The Supported Employment Collaborative (SEC) project addresses the supported employment gap for individuals with I/DD by decreasing the number of unemployed individuals in Denver. Currently, several government and private agencies provide supported employment on a small scale. SEC is designed to fill in the gaps in employment services in a more accessible and comprehensive way, specific to the needs of individuals in Denver. The collaborative includes two local organizations with a long history of serving individuals with I/DD. Once placed into supported employment in the community, individuals can participate in and actively contribute to the Denver community. In the first quarter of 2018, all evaluation tools and measurements were fully implemented. In the second quarter of 2018, the client management database was launched and implemented. The informational website was also launched: www.supportedemploymentcollaborative.com. SEC's informational website has been much more heavily trafficked by employers than clients.

In 2018, SEC served 325 individuals. Below are the results of their work in 2018:

- 129 individuals received an intake/assessment.
- 179 individuals were provided pre-vocational training.
- 325 individuals received hands-on, job-readiness training.
- 14 matches led to sustainable employment.
- 12 job seekers were placed in community employment.
- Seven job seekers retained employment for 30 days.
- 47 employer interviews completed by job-seekers.

RAMP Extension for Foster Care Youth (Ability Connection Colorado)

The RAMP Extension program serves transitional-age foster care youth with I/DD through a 16-week intensive program. RAMP is an innovative, national mentoring and life-skills program, which provides evidence-based, career-focused mentoring for youth with disabilities and other challenges. According to available statistics from the Institute for Educational Leadership, youth with disabilities are four times more likely to be adjudicated and only 30 percent receive high school degrees. SMART data reveals that in challenging fields of study and employment, such as STEM, individuals with disabilities are the most underrepresented.

During 2018, RAMP targeted and conducted outreach to 222 youth, families, and community support agencies. In 2018, 75 youth were targeted to enroll in the program, 40 youth registered, and 30 youth were able to enroll and start the program based on the return of guardian permission and enrollment forms. The challenge continues to be increasing the number of foster care youth and getting

parents/Guardians to return the necessary paperwork for a youth to enter the program. Participants have completed:

- Over 30 hours of soft skill, self-advocacy, positive skills and abilities, and community support awareness activities. The attendance rate at one-day sessions was 85 percent.
- A total of 62 short term goal were completed by youth. Short Term goal examples range from helping around the house, getting to school on time, or completing an application for part time employment.
- All youth have identified completing school as a long term goal.

RAMP Extension for Foster Care Youth (Ability Connection Colorado)

Our RAMP youth, Delilah, has been with the program since August of 2018. At the beginning of the program Delilah struggled with anger management issues and follow through. She has worked intensively with her peers, RAMP staff and her mentor to identify the issues that trigger her in order to help her be better able to control her anger and thus be more successful in work and school. Through the positive bond with her mentor, Delilah has someone she can work through her problems with in a positive way. At the end of each session Delilah and her mentor spend 15 minutes together working on math, which she has identified as a short-term goal to improve on. Delilah has raised her math grade by one letter grade and has begun to be a strong advocate for herself when communicating her needs. She has also begun to reach out and help other youth in the session and has been open to accepting help when she is struggling. Delilah continues to grow and her RAMP coordinators are looking forward to helping her practice the skills she has learned in the community by volunteering or working in the summer if she is able.

–Tracie Hammons
Ability Connection Colorado

Mentor Program (REVEL)

Research suggests that individuals with autism are at a greater risk of social isolation and depression than other populations. One in four individuals with autism has been completely isolated, meaning he or she has not seen or spoken to friends in the past year.

REVEL's project will benefit a variety of individuals including teens and adults (ages 14 and older) with autism through a supported transition program.

REVEL

Meet one of our REVELers, Ben, a determined 21-year-old who loves to travel, make friends, run, and work. Ben is talented in so many ways. He is bilingual in English and French, has run two half-marathons and completed three triathlons, loves to cook, and has his own lawn mowing company, B's Lawn Mowing Service. People know and love Ben for his joy in life and love of friendship. When we first met Ben, he was going through the tough transition of leaving school, his home away from home for 15 years. During this daunting experience he lost interest in his passions and his independent skills suffered. Ben went from being the joyful, independent young man to someone who often cried, wandered around the house, and appeared lost according to his mom. After a month of being part of REVEL, Ben showed interest in life again. He woke up one morning and said, "I feel fine Mom, I'm not scared." He had found his new home away from home.

– Parent of current REVELer

REVEL has developed a comprehensive, year-long mentor program, encouraging teens and young adults in the Denver area to foster meaningful friendships with individuals with autism while learning valuable, applicable life skills. The REVEL Lounge provides a social setting where people with and without disabilities can be themselves, try new things, learn, make friends and have fun. Revel served 12 individuals in the first half of 2018 and 52 individuals in the second half of 2018. They increased the number of individuals attending in the second half of the year, and many have returned several times and are self-reporting enjoyment in the activities and being with peers.

REVEL has continued to expand their understanding of mentor commitment, recruitment, participation and retention. Mentor involvement during activities is increasing. Staff have trained mentors to increase initiation with REVELers and promote socialization. Self-report from parents and individuals continue to state increased levels of happiness and sense of belonging from attending REVEL's program resulting in recurring attendance.

Priority: Behavioral Health/Mental Health
Priority: Medical and Dental

Medical/Dental and Behavioral/Mental Health services include a wide variety of health-related services to ensure the health and well-being of individuals with I/DD. Combined,

approximately 13 percent of mill levy funding year-to-date has been utilized toward these two priority areas.



Laradon Expansion of Behavioral Services

Laradon's Expansion of Behavioral Services project supports clients with behavioral challenges beyond what is reimbursable through Medicaid, including crisis support, behavioral support training of staff, and involvement with the legal system. This project served 13 individuals in the first half of 2018 and 17 individuals in the second half of 2018.

The first quantifiable, measurable outcome proposed in the logic model is a decrease in average occurrences of inappropriate/problematic behaviors by 35 percent for all individuals served over five years. A reduction from an average of 12.5 to 6 incidents per quarter represents a 52 percent reduction, well over the entire 35 percent decrease sought in the logic model for a five-year period and art of a consistent downward trend for all of 2018. However, GER (General Event Reports) data does not capture all disruptive behaviors that decrease quality of life.

Additional BISSP tracking documents all types of disruptive behaviors which affect quality of life because they limit inclusion, but are not necessarily inherently dangerous. Although the trend had been going downward for the overall numbers of behaviors, there was a sharp increase during the last quarter of 2018. This is because the new individual added to the census, who was extremely behaviorally involved, had not had behaviors tracked at all prior to the fourth quarter and another individual had radically increased numbers.

Project goals include decreasing inappropriate or problematic behavior of adult individuals and increasing the average length of placement in day, vocational and residential settings. Laradon developed positive behavioral supports for all individuals served, increasing their quality of life and enabling greater inclusion in the Denver community. This program allowed direct service providers to receive training in:

- Antecedent intervention.
- Signal recognition.
- Engineering environments and approaches to mitigate triggers.
- Differential reinforcement of alternate and incompatible behaviors to de-escalate during the early stages of crisis,
- Person-centered approaches, especially social role valorization through strengths-based thinking.

A long-term outcome for this project is data from usage of the mill levy funds to offset expenditures for staff time related to the 18 different categories will be conveyed, at a future time, to HCPF and DIDD officials assessing the scope of behavioral service categories defined under the waiver.

Laradon Behavioral Services

Staff didn't know what to do with Rufus. He was a hard worker when he put his mind to it but recently, when he got frustrated, his mouth would get him into trouble with community employers. It began to offend many of his peers and they started getting frustrated. Staff also noticed that random community members were taking notice and commenting to the community employer. The community employer let staff know this had to stop immediately or they would no longer be able to have the work crew there.

Staff pleaded with the behaviorist for help. Unfortunately, Rufus did not have any money for behavioral services designated in his support plan. Fortunately, Mill Levy money made it possible for the behaviorist to consult on this 'non waiver-billable' person with staff and do a little counselling with him. Rufus found more proactive ways of dealing with his frustration. Staff began reacting in ways that were less likely to reinforce the behavior. Things calmed down, the community employment site was saved and Rufus really started enjoying his job.

– Edward Hubbard
Laradon

Tennyson ASPEN and BRANCH Program

This project expands the number of Denver County children receiving services through Tennyson's Autism Services ASPEN and BRANCH programs. They provide needed therapeutic services, including family therapy and support that is otherwise unfunded. The project outcomes are to decrease maladaptive behaviors, increase social skills and increase academic proficiency.

The most pressing need this project addresses has been to expand services to the Denver I/DD child population. Before mill levy funding for ASPEN and BRANCH programs, Denver kids were underrepresented due to the Denver Public School policy to decline full reimbursement of the program's service costs, including direct and integrated therapy. Consequently, many students were not Denver residents. Classes are now made up of four Denver Public Schools children. Tennyson set expected performance measures for the project and gave updates on these measures for 2018:

1. Students demonstrate reduced severity of crises they navigate as measured by the CAFAS assessment (ASPEN/ BRANCH)
 - a. ASPEN = 100 percent (4/4) made meaningful improvement
 - b. Branch = 50 percent made slight improvement (1/2)

2. Increased numbers of resource connections to maintain student and family network of support (e.g. therapeutic services, medical needs, school services, housing support, transportation, etc.) as reported by teacher and clinician referrals (BRANCH/ ASPEN effective 10/18):
 - a. Branch Q4 Resource Connections = two resource connections made in Q4
 - i. Only counting those made to the two eligible clients
 - ii. Operation Santa and a Gift Card to use for Food
 - b. ASPEN Q4 Resource Connections = zero resource connections made in Q4

3. Percentage of parents/ guardians who participate in family therapy as reported by clinician (BRANCH)
 - a. Total Denver: two
 - b. 100 percent attended family therapy sessions with or without client at least 90 percent of the time.

Tennyson

Our BRANCH groups really took off this quarter and have been incredible to witness. While we know that families had signed up and were interested, we were not sure how many would truly make the commitment to the group – many of our families have busy schedules and transportation/logistics can be a challenge. Parents of the families we are serving in these groups have been on waitlists without services for a long time, some over a year. These group services are the only ones they are receiving. Our families are so grateful and engaged because it is the first time they have had access to something like this. Some of our families are taking Ubers and multiple buses transfers to arrive on our campus to receive these services – it is the only thing that most of them have and seeing their commitment to care is inspiring.

– Brandon Young
Tennyson

Priority: Training and Support

Training and Support services include classes, conferences for parents/caregivers or providers, as well as the development of information provided to the general public about I/DD, such as on websites and at community events. Approximately 4 percent of mill levy funding year-to-date has been utilized in this area.

Laradon Early Intervention Family Navigator

This project supports a family navigator to address gaps in EI supports for children from birth to age 3 and their parents. The project has three primary areas of focus: 1) Connecting parents to resources in the community, 2) Implementing weekly play and learn groups, and 3) Assisting families in enrolling children in preschool. The weekly Play-and-Learn groups not only increase children’s social-emotional development, but also create valuable social support for parents who meet others facing similar challenges, as many of them are socially isolated. The Family Navigator uses the evidence-based teaching practices and intervention approaches of the Pyramid PIWI Model in the Play-and-Learn groups to promote children’s social and emotional development and address challenging behaviors.

Laradon Early Intervention Family Navigator

A family has been attending the group since early September and the mother never thought her daughter would love it as much as she does. The daughter is really shy and quiet and the mother thought they would only be there once but they both love the group. The mother does not drive and has trouble getting to group but the older daughter can help when she is off work. The group has helped the younger daughter and now it takes her less time to “warm up” to others and the daughter really enjoys the interaction with other children. She has made lots of improvement with her speech and is communicating with the children and adults during the group. The Mother loves meeting at the library because it gives more opportunity for fun and increasing interaction. They look for books together and help build skills that are important.

– Barbara Shaw
Laradon

The model’s group parenting programs promote positive social emotional outcomes by helping to create supportive early childhood and home environments.

During 2018, 15 children have turned three and 10 have enrolled in a preschool.

Parent to Parent of Colorado (Ability Connection Colorado)

Parent to Parent of Colorado (P2P-CO) is a parent support organization, which provides ongoing information and emotional support to over 4,000 families across Colorado. The organization offers a unique parent support service through its Individual Parent Support Program. In this program, a parent (typically someone with a child with a new diagnosis) can request a connection to a trained support parent for one-on-one support. P2P-CO has experienced an increase in requests for the Individual Parent

Support Program. Approximately one-third of new members request this matching program when they join. The standard for making a match is 48 hours upon request, as many times the parent is in a crisis situation already when making the request. Due to insufficient database structure (previously an Access database), the staff were taking days to a week or more to make this match. Along with the increased demand, there is a backlog of parents who are willing to complete the Support Parent training. P2P-CO did not have the staff capacity to provide this training within the next year. With the mill levy funding, P2P-CO has been able to achieve many of its goals:

- The database to link families has been completed and implementation began in April 2018. The implementation was completed at the end of July 2018.
- Support parent training has taken place in three sessions with 15 volunteer parents completing training in 2018.
- Three additional facilitators for support parent training have been trained and have been able to provide training to parents.
- The translation of support parent training materials into Spanish was completed in June 2018.

Due to the implementation of the data system, additional data was collected in the second half of 2018:

- New parent to parent members: 23
- Number of parents provided with individual support from a Support Parent: 13
- Number of parents provided with information/referral support: 34
- The baseline number of days it takes to respond to parents request for a Support Parent match is an average of 16 days to complete a match request and they are completing an average of 11 matches per month. For 2019, they will strive to decrease the time it takes to make a match to 12 days and strive to increase the number of matches per month.

Priority: Social/Recreational

RMHS received overwhelming feedback to generate more social and recreational opportunities for individuals, an area not currently supported by Medicaid or other insurance programs. Individuals on Medicaid with limited income have little to no resources to pursue social opportunities without support from mill levy funding. According to a recent AAA survey, 35 percent of Americans were planning to take a vacation 50 miles or more away from home in 2016⁸. In contrast, a recent poll of I/DD providers indicates that fewer than 5 percent of individuals accepting services can afford to travel, particularly given the additional expenses associated with supports for supervision and personal care necessary to travel safely. The benefits of projects in this area are in line with the benefits to anyone who needs a vacation: reduced stress, lowered anxiety, possible decrease in heart disease, improved mental health and improved interpersonal relationships. *The Journal of the American Medical Association* published a study that concluded men who take frequent annual vacations were 32 percent less likely to die from heart disease than those who did not take frequent vacations⁹.

Stakeholder feedback to RMHS indicates that gaps exist in current systems and programs supporting people with I/DD related to recreational opportunities, health and fitness, and community integration. Approximately 17 percent of mill levy funding expended during this reporting period has been used for social and recreational goals. Several programs provide social and recreational opportunities for individuals with I/DD in Denver, ranging from supporting individuals to attend summer camp, taking local day trips to regional points of interest, and taking trips with family members or to see family members out of state. RMHS also provides annual regional recreation center passes through Denver Parks and Recreation for clients, as well as additional caregiver passes for children. In 2018, RMHS has distributed:

- 292 Denver Parks and Recreation Center Annual Regional Membership passes to individuals with I/DD, as well as 37 caregivers of children under 18 years of age.
- 262 Denver Botanical Gardens passes, 239 Children’s Museum passes, 132 Denver Museum of Nature and Science, and 395 Denver Zoo passes to individuals with I/DD.

Arts & Community Exploration – ACE Program (Jewish Family Service)

The ACE Program was developed to enhance cultural and artistic exposure for clients to participate in community offerings, while cultivating new skills and awareness in the process. ACE benefited 20 individuals in the first half of 2018 and 16 individuals in the second half of 2018. These participants developed skills and were exposed to numerous arts activities. Mill Levy dollars provided tickets for 12 individuals to attend 3 performances of “A Christmas Carol” at the Denver Center for Performing Arts. Upon their return to the ACE Program, the participants were excited to share their Play Bill booklets and share their experience with other clients. Another fun activity the ACE clients were able to participate in was going to the planetarium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. The clients loved learning about space and the solar system and conveyed their stories of learning with their peers.

⁸ <http://newsroom.aaa.com/2016/04/aaa-one-third-americans-will-take-family-vacation-year/>

⁹ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jill-l-ferguson/health-benefits-of-taking-a-vacation_b_9384466.html

Project World (Activity Options)

The purpose of “Project World” is to facilitate access to community activities and overnight travel that will enable adults with I/DD to experience the world in the ways that other people do to increase inclusion, independence, social skills and quality of life. They continue to see participants engaging with each other in and outside of activities. They exchange phone numbers and spend time together. Several report that they have tried new things, and they have made suggestions for things to do. Parents and caregivers have been able to attend other family and personal events because they had funding and time.

Project World

Alan regularly attends Project World activities. We have been able to schedule some of them at the families’ request when they wanted to go somewhere independently. They report that Alan seems happier being connected with a community of peers that he didn’t have before and to be able to attend sports games, outdoor activities and travel with friends.

He also seems to be building independence and learning how to be more giving and helpful with many more opportunities to interact. This individual doesn’t meet the profile of a lot of the other participants as he is very independent and has a community around him, but he did not have access to a peer community.

– Peggy Decker Berry
Activity Options

Social Inclusion Project (Connect Us)

The work of Connect Us provides a unique and powerful opportunity for families and youth with disabilities to become more socially connected. Youth on the autism spectrum are significantly more likely to suffer bullying, low self-esteem and social isolation, and have a higher-than-average risk for suicidal ideation or attempts. The transition to kindergarten is one of the most challenging times for children with developmental disabilities. The goal is to equip children in early childhood with the tools and support they need to develop friendships and be included with their peers. Because the Connect Us model is based on social skill-building and creating inclusive settings for children with developmental disabilities, Connect Us programs incorporate and serve typically developing children alongside children with developmental disabilities. This mix helps ensure an inclusive social environment in which children with developmental disabilities are not stigmatized, and involves a variety of social aptitudes so children can learn positive relationship skills from one another guided through trained facilitators.

Connect Us served 74 Denver children with I/DD in the first half of 2018 and 131 in the second half of 2018, as well as typically developing children, in integrated settings totaling 662 children in the second half of 2018. The assessments also identified an additional 77 children in the first half of 2018 and 151 children in the second half of 2018 as socially at-risk, fitting many criteria for I/DD despite a formal diagnosis being disclosed. The project's intended outcomes include measurably improving social and emotional capacities of children participating in the recess programs and social groups, as well as improving peer interactions that are supportive and inclusive.

Connect Us

Over the past decade, we've seen an increase each year in dysregulated kids entering kindergarten. They have become increasingly disconnected from each other, likely due to an increase in technology and screen time. It is hugely important right now that schools have programs like Connect Us in place as early as possible to teach kids how to engage with each other and to develop the skills that will enable them to connect with others.

– Dr. Cooper, Principal

We're unable to facilitate those connections at recess with 3 classes outside at one time. Having Connect Us there every day has been a dream. Students get the support right away that so many of them need especially during unstructured time.

– Adrienne Nault, Principal

Connect Us works with our ECE students daily on how to be a kind and caring friend. Our students have become more empathetic. They've gotten better at sharing and helping each other. I recently recommended Connect Us to a friend who is an administrator at another elementary school. What they do makes our job as teachers much easier.

– Mr. Paul, Teacher

Connect Us is now delivering 6 youth programs; Connect the Tots, Kindergarten Recess Program and Study, Grade Recess Facilitation, After School Friendship and Leadership Groups, Winter Break Camp, and K-5th Grade Recess Facilitation.

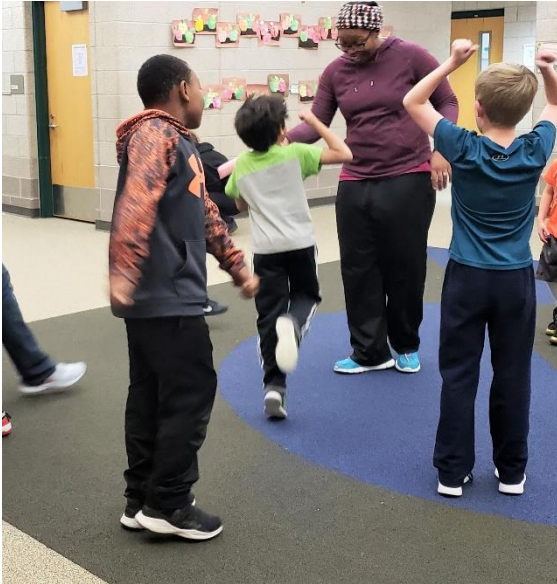
Program results are supported by quantitative data (SAS evaluations) completed by Connect Us and Elementary kindergarten staff and through qualitative data collected throughout the study. Extensive post-program interviews were conducted with kindergarten teachers and para-professionals. Data from pre and post-program Social Aptitude Scales completed by the three kindergarten teachers on their own students and by recess paraprofessionals on all study-approved students indicates that Connect Us had a positive impact on students' social-emotional growth. In the second half of 2018:

- 79 percent of all program participants improved in one or more of these areas: self-confidence, social skills, resiliency
- 78 percent of participants with DD improved in one or more of these areas: self-confidence, social skills, resiliency
- 100 percent of participants whose pre-program assessment scores placed them in the lowest social-emotional skill category advanced to a higher category

When asked to rate their children's social and emotional growth after the 12-week session, parents reported the following:

- 88 percent reported improvement in initiating social interaction
- 94 percent reported improved cooperation with adults and peers

- 85 percent reported improved flexibility and willingness to try new things
- 82 percent reported improved resiliency/rebounds faster from disappointment and frustration
- 94 percent reported improved self-confidence



StellarCare Vacations

StellarCare Vacations works to allow individuals with I/DD the experience of travel and community integration more often afforded to people without disabilities. This project prioritizes family reconnections, while also enabling individuals to have new experiences, improve quality of life and decrease overall stress. Family reunification is perhaps the most important benefit for the client when it is achieved. When this is provided the family can reconnect and become supportive, as well as serve as advocates for their family members who have I/DD. Our sense of value often comes from our connection to others. Healthy family connections are a catalyst for how we perceive ourselves in a positive way. This in turn affects all aspects of living for the better.

StellarCare has worked with 20 individuals in 2018 to complete trips. The following outcomes were achieved:

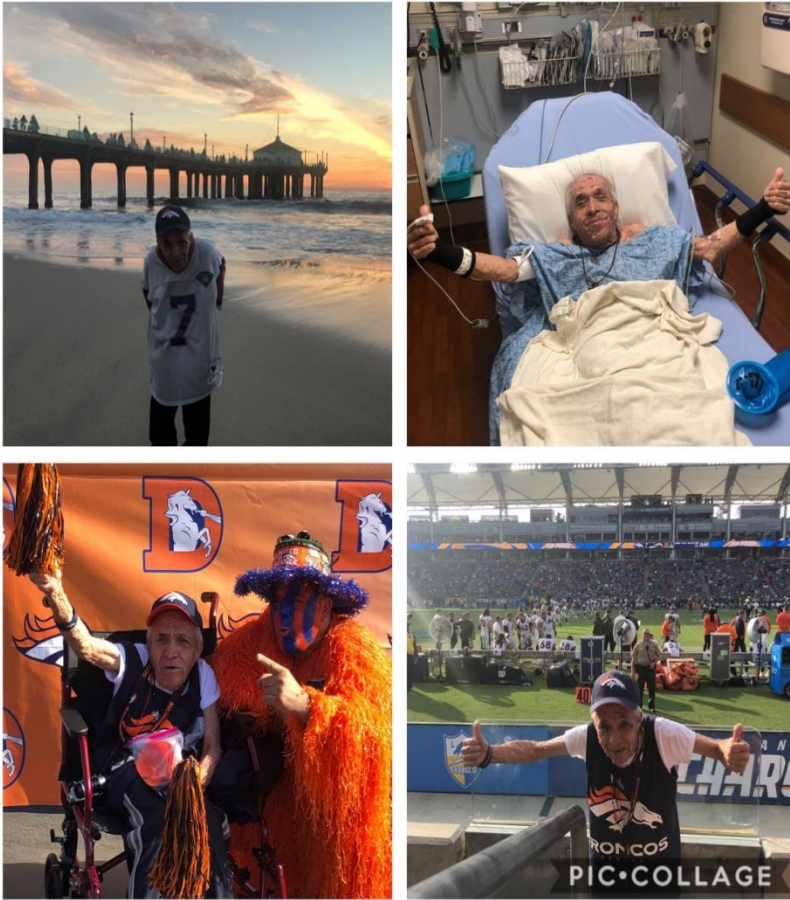
- Clients have visited a place they have not been before and would not be able to without this service (increase in experience).
- Clients met new people or reconnected with family (increased socialization and increased natural supports).
- Clients reported a decrease in overall stress after trip.
- Awareness of the I/DD population increased.
- Respite was available for the caregiver and client.

Stellar Care Vacations

Jake is known in downtown Denver as the Bronco Man, due to the fact that he pushes a Bronco-themed shopping cart while dressed head to toe in Denver Broncos Gear. At an information session, Kelly was able to speak to Jake one-on-one and learning that his life-long dream was to see the Denver Broncos play a football game. Kelly also learned he had never been on a vacation or travelled in any way. In addition to Jake being born with disabilities, as a young child he was hit by a car, which added further complications to his disabilities. As Jake got older he began to self-medicate as a way of dealing with both the physical and emotional pain, which resulted in many years of addiction. Jake's care team as well as many natural supports were thrilled for Jake's vacation as it would occur exactly one year after becoming sober.

We planned a customized dream vacation for Jake to Los Angeles California. His first-ever vacation included his first airplane flight, first trip to the beach, and of course the HIGH-LIGHT was attending the Denver Broncos game against the LA Chargers! On this trip in particular we realized the advantage of our one-on-one travel support business model. Jake unexpectedly became ill the day before the BIG game resulting in an emergency room visit. Jake needed one-to-one care after his visit to the hospital. This all resulted in watching the Denver Broncos win the next day and an over-all successful vacation!

-Kelly Jacobson
Stellar Care Vacations



The Wayfaring Band

The Wayfaring Band program offers emphasis on community-building, skill-development and place-based adventures. Using a person-centered approach to foster a culture of mutual aid, The Wayfaring Band designs group travel that generates opportunities for all program participants to make meaningful contributions to the community. In the second half of 2018, The Wayfaring Band served 18 Denver participants with I/DD and achieved the following outcomes:

- 86 percent of trip survey responses indicate they strongly agree or agree they have increased daily-living skills, including food-preparation, cleaning, organizing, money-management, time-management and healthy choices.
- 100 percent of survey respondents agree or strongly agree that the itinerary was exciting and original.
- 86 percent of survey respondents strongly agree they have an increased sense of belonging. One parent/caregiver respondent said: “I was lucky enough to watch an end of trip ceremony in which each band member spoke of what they enjoyed about the trip and the who they had met and a positive of that individual. This has led to my son making new friends—very cool!”
- 71 percent of survey respondents strongly agree they have an increase in health and wellbeing, including self-care and personal safety.
- 100 percent of survey respondents **strongly agree** that since joining the Wayfaring Band community, they (or their Band Member, if completed by a caregiver), have noticed an *increase in confidence* and that they have noticed an *increase in social skills*.

During this contract period, in addition to working towards its long-term outcomes while travelling, The Wayfaring Band was honored to have received the 2018 Mayor’s Diversity and Inclusion Award from the Denver City and County Commission on People with Disabilities. "Diversity, inclusion and equity aren’t just buzz words in Denver. For us, these are our values, and the individuals we’re honoring are

proof that we will continue to work together against hate and that we will not allow it to divide us or our city,” Mayor Hancock said. “Today more than ever, we need individuals and organizations to stand up and express our values with their actions. I couldn’t be prouder to recognize these ten honorees, because they exemplify Denver’s commitment to working together to keep our city a place where our values are celebrated and extended to every resident and neighborhood.” The Wayfaring Band received the award to honor the important work the organization does to increase equity and inclusion among neurodiverse populations in Denver.

In the second half of 2018, The Wayfaring Band wrote and recorded the majority of the episodes for its podcast Everybody In. As explained in the Quarter 3 report, the podcast is co-hosted by The Wayfaring Band Executive Director, Andrea Moore, and Faith Vidrine – who is a longtime Band Member with The Wayfaring Band. Watching Faith grow into being a spectacular podcast host was a highlight during Quarter four. As more and more episodes were recorded, Faith became increasingly more comfortable in the studio and with the process of interviewing and recording episodes of the podcast. Further, Everybody In became a clear example of how The Wayfaring Band approaches and implements mutual aid. During each episode, both Andrea and Faith experienced times when the other co-host was required to step in to help “connect the dots” either for podcast participants or for the other host.

The Wayfaring Band

Jenny joined The Band in March 2015 and has traveled extensively with The Wayfaring Band since then. During Quarter 3, Jenny joined The Wayfaring Band on its trip to Telluride—but this time as a Leadership Fellow. Since 2015, Jenny’s ability to self-advocate, to express her own agency and to help other people in the I/DD community has increased significantly. As a Leadership Fellow in Telluride, Jenny had increased responsibility, including monitoring the safety of fellow Travelers and participating in the full Leadership Curriculum. Jenny’s story is emblematic of the goal of The Wayfaring Band—increasing the self-sufficiency, independent living skills and confidence of participants

—Andrea Moore
The Wayfaring Band

Priority: System Gaps

Mill levy-funded services to address system gaps comprise 23 percent of the total expenses for this reporting period. When an individual needs more care and support than is reimbursed through current funding programs, mill levy funding is used to address system gaps and program service limitations of other funding sources, such as Medicaid and state-funded services. In some cases, these gaps may be within the I/DD system; in other cases, the gaps are between this and other systems, such as mental health, foster care and homelessness. By far, the service deemed to be the most important from area stakeholders is respite care. During this reporting period, over \$1.5 million in respite funds was distributed.

Significant literature demonstrates the positive effects that respite care brings to the life of a caregiver. Over time, without relief and assistance, caregiving can take a mental and physical toll. The Family Caregiver Alliance reports that 40 percent to 70 percent of caregivers show clinically significant

symptoms of depression. The Center on Aging Society adds that one in 10 family caregivers report that their responsibilities have caused their physical health to worsen¹⁰.

RMHS Initiatives

There are several initiatives administered by RMHS to meet the various priority areas, which include:

Family Autism Resources (Training and Support)

RMHS provides diagnostic evaluations for children in order to assess and potentially give a diagnosis of autism. After the diagnosis is given, parents oftentimes want to research autism and look for ways to support their children. This often leads to internet searches that result in an overwhelming amount of, and sometimes inaccurate, information. The Family Autism Resources are now given out at the time of diagnosis to help with emotional support, trouble-shooting advice, support organizations, care tips, potential problem management, family and sibling discussions, and the definition of autism. The family then has access to appropriate tools and simple behavior techniques to use immediately and increase positive behaviors. During 2018, 64 families received resources through this program. Satisfaction surveys are sent to families after the receipt of the resources, but the return rate for the surveys remains low.

Collaborative Positive Behavioral Support (Behavioral Health/Mental Health/Dental/Medical)

A 2014 statewide analysis of the gaps in services for individuals with dual diagnoses of I/DD and mental health/behavioral health disorders concluded that Colorado has a severely limited capacity to provide crisis intervention and stabilization services for this population, limited access to mental health providers with knowledge and skills to work with the population, and little to no follow-up post-crisis services. The analysis provided recommendations to include people with I/DD in the vision of fully integrated systems for primary health care, specialty care, behavioral health and dental care, with person-centered care plans that include access to appropriate supports and care coordination. This model does not currently exist in Denver. Most individuals with I/DD receive their care in segmented systems and continue to have limited access to providers with expertise in meeting their needs. This project aims to integrate all aspects of health into care plans for people with complex needs to help them improve their quality of life and reduce the burden on emergency care.

In 2017, RMHS began identifying gaps in services for this population specific to Denver. We are actively involving a variety of providers in the community, including psychologists, psychiatrists, physicians, nurses, social workers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, behavior analysts, case workers, DHS and the Colorado Department and Health Care Policy and Financing, as well as host-home, day treatment and residential treatment providers. Several common themes have emerged. These themes aligned closely with the findings of the dual-diagnosis “gap analysis” of 2014. Our findings found five primary goals of the Collaborative Positive Behavioral Support (CPBS) program, all with the underlying goal of ensuring access to quality and appropriate care for individuals with dual diagnoses. Project plans are now being developed for each of the five identified primary goals:

4. Intersystem care coordination
5. Crisis planning
6. Training and ongoing support
7. Integrated medical and behavioral health care
8. Functional behavior assessments

¹⁰ <http://www.comfortkeepers.com/home/info-center/respite-care/importance-of-respite-relief-for-family-caregivers>

In 2018, RMHS focused on goal # 2, crisis planning. We are collaborating with researchers at JFK Partners on a research project which evaluates the efficacy of proactive crisis prevention plans for individuals with I/DD and behavioral health challenges and their caregivers. One of our RMHS staff was trained on the protocol and added to the JFK IRB approval. She is now working with our staff in Service Coordination and other relevant programs to identify potential participants in crisis prevention planning to engage them in the project.

Play & Learn Library (Client Education/Increasing Independence)

RMHS maintains an inventory of therapeutic equipment for therapists to borrow to support their therapy work with children. This enables therapists and families to have the opportunity to try equipment and ensure it works for individuals before purchasing the items themselves. In the first half of 2018, 235 items were loaned to clinicians to use in their therapy work with children. Not only has there been an increase in accessing items in 2018, but positive feedback from clinicians on this resource has increased as well. In surveying the therapists who have been using the equipment, RMHS has received the following positive feedback:

- On a scale of one to five (strongly disagree to strongly agree), therapists averaged the following ratings:
 - Did the item help improve the child's skills? Average score: 4.5
 - Will you access the Play & Learn Library again in the future? Average score: 4.9

Mill Levy Service Plans – Adults (System Gaps)

Beginning in August 2017, adults accepting services who reside in Denver can access additional services through the RMHS Service Plan process. RMHS introduced this option for customers in the following waiver programs: HCBS-DD (Comp), Supported Living Services (SLS) and Children's Extensive Services (CES). When state funds for SLS are exhausted, individuals in state SLS are also able to access these additional services. Individuals are now able to add additional services with mill levy funding in the following categories:

- Behavioral services
- Day habilitation (specialized habilitation, supported community connections, community connector)
- Mentorship
- Respite services
- Supported employment
- Transportation
- Personal Care
- Residential habilitation

RMHS has invited all PASAs providing one or more of the above services to Denver residents to contract with us to provide additional services with mill levy funds. The program currently has 62 contracted providers.

Mill Levy Service Plans – Ages 0-3 (System Gaps)

Beginning in February 2018, children accepting services in the EI program who reside in Denver could now access a menu of items that are identified needs not currently offered through the EI program. Much like the mill levy service plan project initiated in August 2017 for individuals accepting waiver services, RMHS has begun piloting the service plan approach for children in the EI program. The concept is to build into service plans any needed services and resources not available through EI funding. EI uses a combination of public and private insurance, along with state general fund dollars, to address the developmental needs of children birth to age 3. Service coordinators conduct assessments during the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meeting, process individual requests and listen to stakeholder feedback. Families receive access to services at the time of the

child's six-month IFSP and will work with their primary providers to ensure services and supports address the child's developmental and basic needs.

From July to December 2018, 857 mill levy service plans were completed for children in services with EI. Seventy-two percent of the families had an identified need and the remaining 28 percent opted out of the services. Twenty percent of families indicated that the family's resources fully met the child's needs. One percent indicated that the option was not listed on the menu. The remaining 7 percent listed another reason for opting out. The needs identified through these menus is varied across services. Service plan offerings, all based on the needs of the family, available through the EI Unmet Needs project include:

- Music classes: 140 families benefited
- Environmental enrichment: 341 families benefitted
- Home safety items: 130 families benefited
- Toddler beds or cribs: 72 families benefited
- Access to a parenting app with tips and activities to guide parents in promoting their child's development in a variety of areas. (Additional information about this resource can be found at www.playfullyapp.com/about-playfully): 47 families benefited
- Social and Recreational Passes: numbers included earlier in report

In addition, RMHS is gathering feedback from families at the time of the IFSP meeting on the need for respite providers, and we are working on building a provider base for this service.

Appendix B: Demographics

Graph 5
Age Ranges of Denver Clients
Served by RMHS in 2018

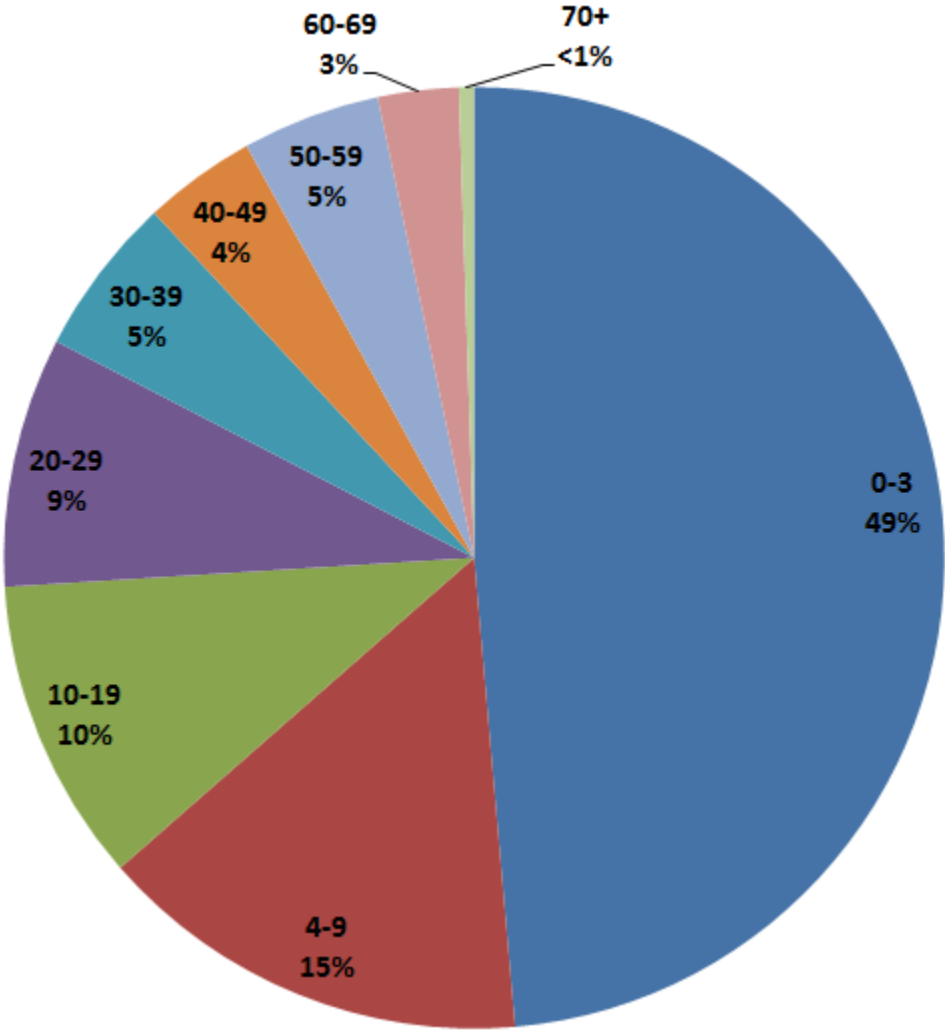


Table 5
Reported Ethnicities of Denver Clients
Served by RMHS in 2018

Ethnicity	% of individuals
White/Caucasian	42.93%
Hispanic/Latino	33.86%
African American or Black	12.33%
Asian	2.55%
Hispanic/Latino and White/Caucasian	2.19%
Unknown/Not Reported	1.78%
African American or Black and White/Caucasian	1.00%
6 or fewer reporting specific ethnicity	0.90%
Asian and White/Caucasian	0.77%
African American or Black and Hispanic/Latino	0.61%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.61%
3 or more ethnicities reported	0.45%
Grand Total	100.00%

Table 6
Primary Languages of Denver Clients
Served by RMHS in 2018

Primary Language	% of individuals
English	77.31%
Spanish	19.11%
Other	1.39%
Arabic	0.74%
Amharic	0.29%
ASL	0.26%
Somali	0.19%
Nepali	0.19%
Vietnamese	0.16%
Russian	0.13%
Burmese	0.13%
French	0.10%
Grand Total	100.00%

