



2023 ANNUAL



REPORT

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IN 2023 AMI KIDS



4,570 YOUTH
ACROSS
50 UNIQUE PROGRAMS



200 COUNTIES
ACROSS
NINE STATES



Youth participated in over **857 service-learning opportunities**, totaling almost **7,000 hours** in experiential education.



The average length of engagement for youth in AMIkids programs was **146 days** or a little under five months.



A total of **755 middle school credits**, **1,463 high school credits (420.25 credits were retrieved)** and **23 college credits** were earned.



A total of **84 High School Diplomas or GEDs** were earned.



A total of **2,228 courses** were completed towards industry-recognized certifications, with **1,435 certifications** earned.



Youth reported significant increases in feeling connected to school, goal-setting skills, emotion regulation skills, and building positive relationships.

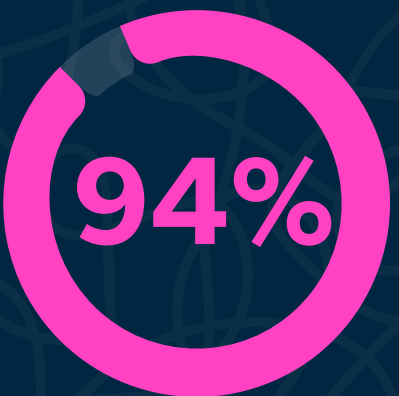




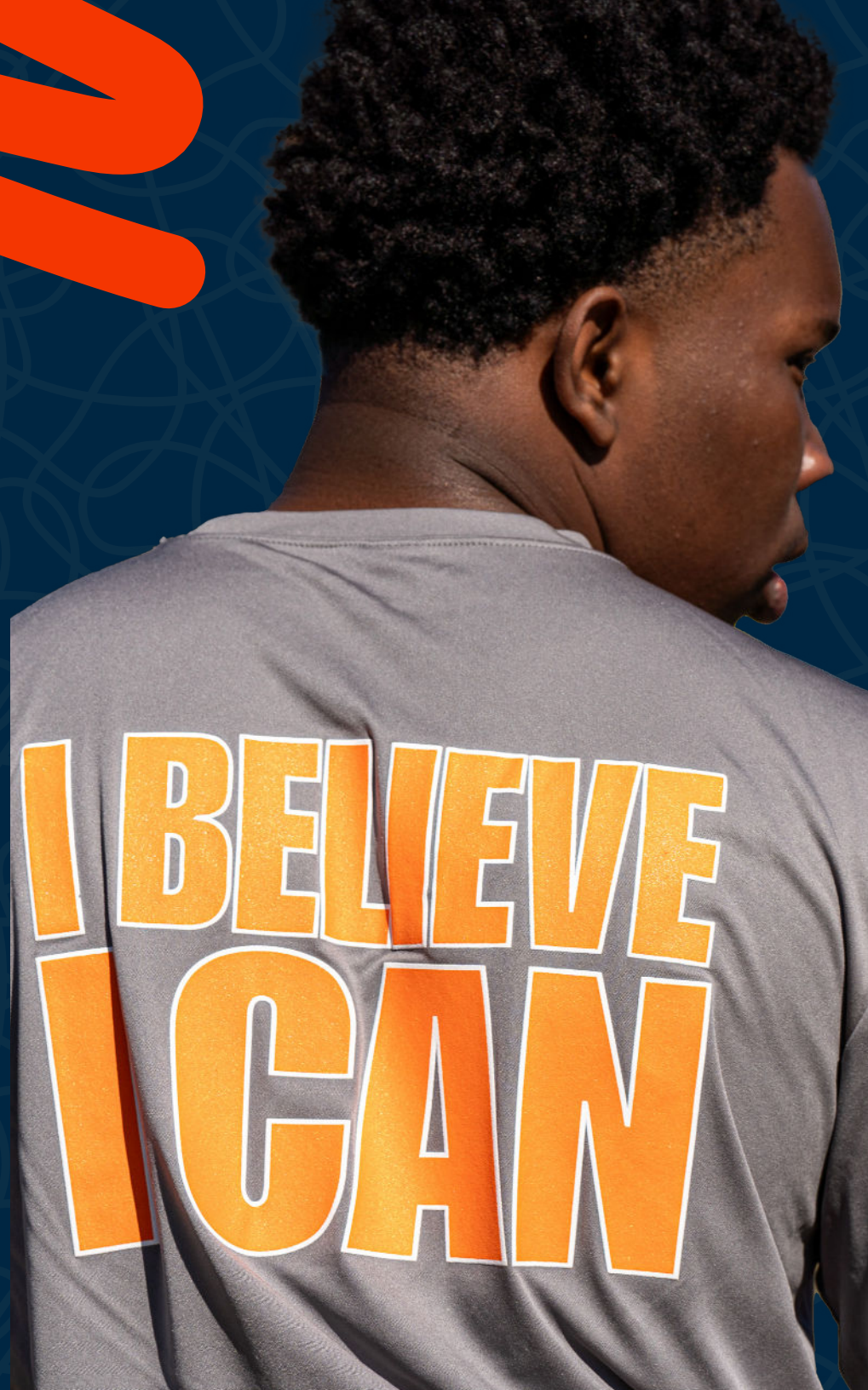
More than **one third** of our youth increased one or more grade levels.



Of the youth who exited a program in 2023, **76%** **completed the program** by successfully meeting their goals or completing the available programming.



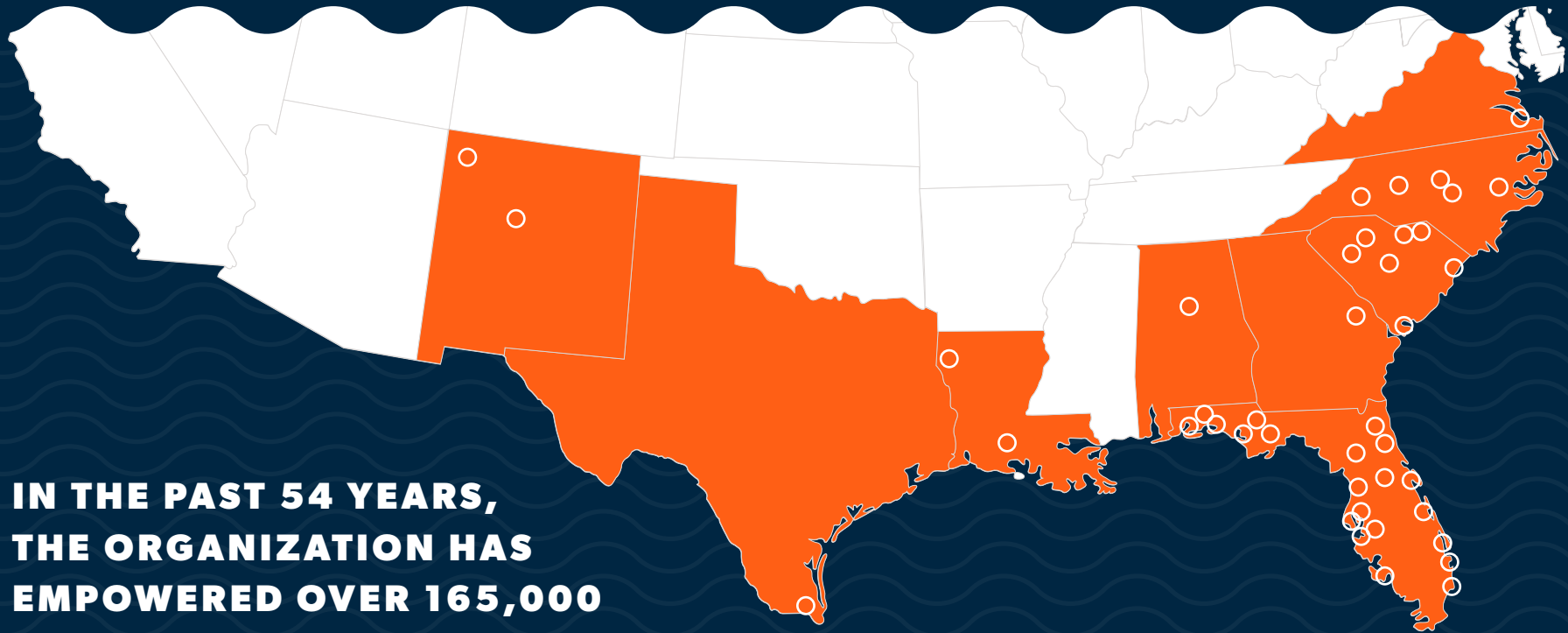
Nearly **94% of youth** utilized at least **one positive coping strategy** during a recent challenging situation.



AMIKIDS REACH

AMIkids is a national youth serving organization that provides individualized services to support youth from all backgrounds across 200 counties in nine states at 50 unique programs. Specifically, in calendar year 2023, AMIkids served youth in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.

Many of the youth served have been impacted by systems, and AMIkids introduces these young people to opportunities that help them thrive in their homes, schools, and communities. Service delivery ranges from prevention to day treatment to residential programming and is enhanced through experiential marine education opportunities – a hallmark of our programming since our founding.



**IN THE PAST 54 YEARS,
THE ORGANIZATION HAS
EMPOWERED OVER 165,000
YOUTH TO DISCOVER THEIR
TRUE POTENTIAL AND BECOME
CONFIDENT, SUCCESSFUL ADULTS.**

AMIKIDS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

AMIkids offers a wide range of programs and services across the South and Southeast designed to meet the specific needs of the youth and communities served. AMIkids programs and services can be categorized into three main categories: 1) **community-based programs** (offering daily services to youth and families, with youth returning home each day if programming takes place off site), 2) **residential programs** (youth may live at an AMIkids campus and receive services 24 hours a day, seven days a week), or 3) **service coordination**. AMIkids also offers enhancements to services in addition to their regular programming.



COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS

These include Juvenile Justice Day Treatment, Alternative Education (Charter, Infinity), After School, Delinquency Prevention, Family Services, and Pre-Apprenticeship programs, all of which are offered directly within the community.



Juvenile justice day treatment programs provide intensive supervision and programming for youth referred primarily due to delinquency. Behavior modification, education, and treatment services are provided five days per week, typically three to eight hours daily.

Alternative education (charter, infinity schools, school-within-a-school) programs are designed to help students who require additional support typically not available in traditional schools. Students in attendance benefit from academic remediation, positive behavioral skills development, and individualized attention to succeed. AMIkids Alternative Education programs include Infinity Schools, School-within-a-School, and Charter Schools, which operate according to the school district schedule.

Charter schools are public schools designed to offer students unique experiences centered around the ocean being the classroom. In addition to academic studies, students are exposed to multiple aspects of marine-focused careers, as they develop as future leaders and responsible stewards of our environment.

After school programs offer a variety of activities such as tutoring, career readiness, and technical training to students during after-school hours. AMIkids After School programs provide students with comprehensive programming and support services to engage youth in positive opportunities that prepare them for success.

Delinquency prevention programs provide gender-specific life management skills training, educational services, and youth development activities designed to prevent entry or further involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Family services programs provide home-based skills building and/or family counseling and intervention using evidence-based practices. Family services may include program models such as Functional Family Therapy, Wraparound Services, and the AMIkids Family Centric Model. Family Services programs last approximately two to six months.

Pre-apprenticeship (career exploration, workforce development) programs prepare students aged 16-24 for successful careers, offering industry training that is aligned with each community's needs for skilled workers. With a combination of academic, technical, and job readiness courses and individualized case management, AMIkids prepares and places students into higher education, jobs, and apprenticeships.

Outpatient treatment services include screening, crisis/risk assessment, comprehensive assessment with behavioral health diagnosis, case coordination, and/or counseling services including individual, family, and group therapy. These services may be provided in the home, community, and/or facility between one and three days weekly by clinical staff members.

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

These programs operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week, with youth residing on campus. Staff implement trauma-informed programming to help youth develop skills for successfully transitioning to community settings and/or the home environment.

Juvenile justice with or without mental health and/or substance use treatment programs provide 24-hour rehabilitative care for youth referred primarily due to delinquency. These programs may include treatment services for youth with mental health and/or substance abuse conditions.

Specialized therapeutic programs provide 24-hour psychotherapeutic rehabilitative care for youth with severe behavioral, psychological, or emotional problems. Services are provided by a multi-disciplinary treatment team including clinical staff members.

Child welfare group care programs provide a 24-hour group living setting for youth requiring a structured out-of-home care placement.



SERVICE COORDINATION

Currently, AMIkids provides regional service coordination for the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice as part of their transformation initiative. In our role as a service coordinator, we work with local or state agencies to develop and manage a continuum of community based and residential services from subcontracted direct service providers.

AMIkids program enhancements

These services may be provided as a standalone or supplementary program.

Mentoring

AMIkids provides on-site, supervised, individual and small group mentoring to help youth develop important life skills, gain exposure to new opportunities, develop meaningful relationships, and access a wide array of resources.

Career and technical education

Provided in two age-appropriate models:

- » *The AMIkids Career Exploration Model*, for ages 11-15, helps youth build self-awareness, learn about potential careers, and develop a plan for reaching future goals.
- » *The AMIkids Workforce Development Model*, for ages 16-24, utilizes a combination of school-based and work-based learning to help youth learn job readiness skills, earn industry-recognized certifications, and transition to the workforce.

AMIkids Family Centric Model (FCM)

Services include research informed skills training for families, provided in the home or community setting weekly. Services are designed to reduce anti-social behaviors of youth, improve psychosocial functioning of

youth, and improve family functioning.

Functional family therapy (FFT)

Services are provided in-home with youth and their family, for an average of 12-16 sessions over three to six months. Developed by FFT, LLC, FFT is a strengths-based and research driven model that reduces risk factors and increases protective factors for youth and families and their environment.

AMIkids WINGS

The program model is designed specifically for girls, and services include comprehensive care management, therapeutic support services, student-centered education, family engagement, skills building, and leadership development in a healing-centered environment.

Wraparound services

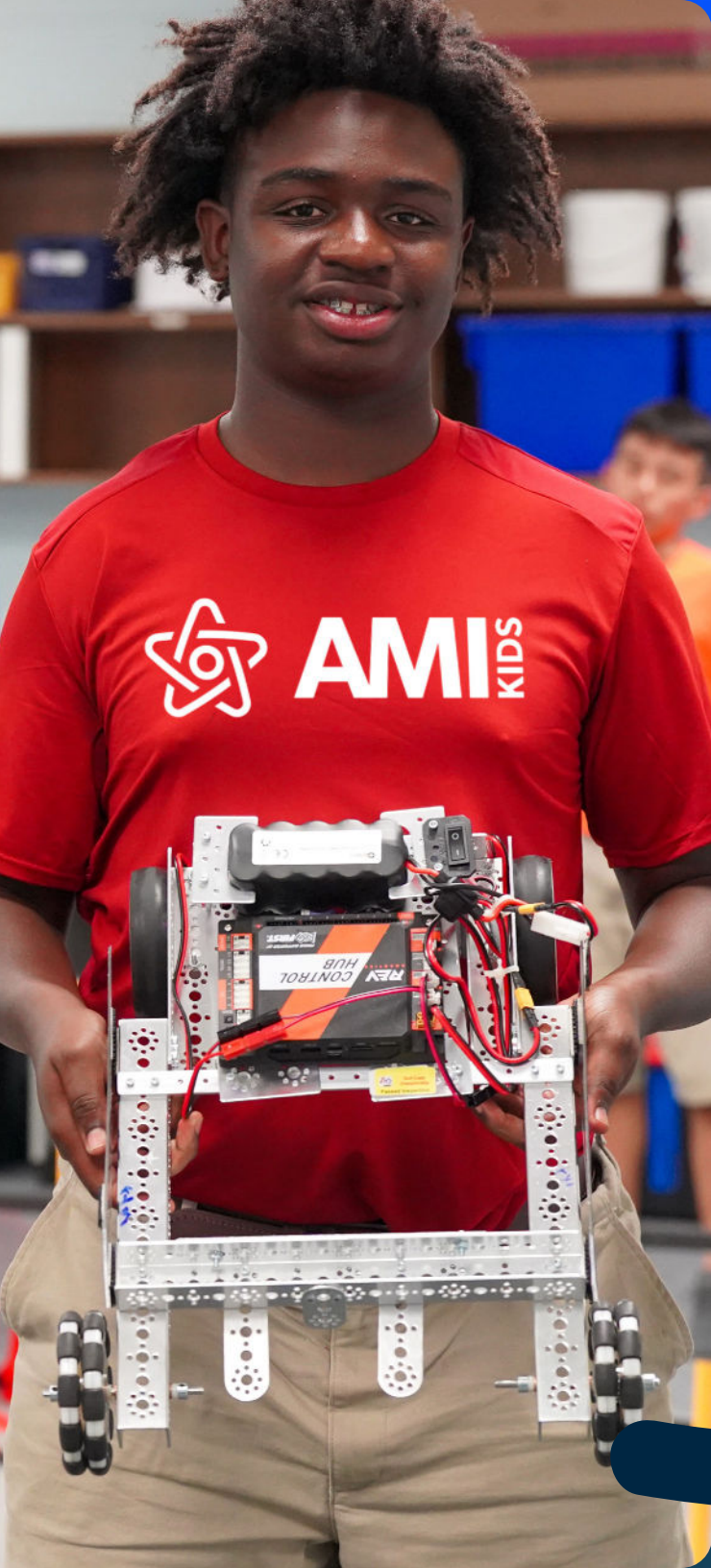
A comprehensive, family and youth-driven approach to managing service delivery options. Wraparound emphasizes the importance of keeping youth in their homes and communities and involves families working with a team of service providers to meet the child's specific needs.





ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS ABOUT AMIKIDS IS FAMILY. THEY ARE REALLY UNDERSTANDING, INSTEAD OF BEING DEMANDING, THEY HAVE A LOT OF PATIENCE, AND THEY ARE TRYING TO HELP YOU OUT.

-KADENCE, AMIKIDS STUDENT



AMIKIDS

PERSONAL GROWTH Model

NAVIGATING TOWARD SUCCESS

All AMIKids programs and services are rooted in the AMIKids Personal Growth Model™ (PGM). The PGM puts Kids First by drawing on decades of Positive Youth Development and Trauma-Responsive research and evidence-based practices. It is designed to target and reduce the risk factors that contribute to undesirable behavior and poor social functioning while reinforcing inherent strengths that promote self-sufficiency and overall well-being.

The PGM is a holistic, unified approach that consists of three parts to support youth navigating toward success: AMIKids Anchor, AMIKids Compass, and AMIKids Journey.

AMIKIDS JOURNEY

CORE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- 📍 TREATMENT
- 📍 EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- 📍 BEHAVIOR & SKILLS TRAINING

AMIKIDS ANCHOR

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

- ⦿ KIDS FIRST
- ⦿ SAFETY
- ⦿ FAMILY

AMIKIDS COMPASS

ELEMENTS OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- ✦ RELATIONSHIPS
- ✦ MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION
- ✦ COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- ✦ CHALLENGED & ENGAGED PROGRAMMING





AMIKIDS ANCHOR: FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The AMIkids Way is our Anchor. It consists of three anchoring principles: Kids First, Safety, and Family. Kids First puts the young person at the center of the program. It honors youth as the experts in their lives and ensures that all decisions are made in partnership with and in consideration of them, as well as building on their unique strengths. Both physical and emotional Safety provide the basis for a positive learning environment by supporting a place where youth feel welcome and included and where adults participate alongside youth to help them regulate their behavior and foster positive interactions. For a healthy, Family-like atmosphere to thrive at AMIkids, everyone is treated with high expectations, respect, and accountability.



AMIKIDS COMPASS: ELEMENTS OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Our guiding service orientation, or Compass, contains four key elements of positive youth development: Relationships, Meaningful Participation, Challenged & Engaged Programming, and Community Involvement. Our intentional focus on these elements in all settings promotes the development of healthy, productive, and civic-minded young people.

Bonding and healthy Relationships through high-quality peer-to-peer and youth-adult interactions support positive youth development. AMIkids builds trust by creating environments where youth and adults are honored and appreciated for who they are and when they feel able to bring their full selves to the community.

It is not enough for young people to attend a program; to make an actual difference, young people must be engaged. Meaningful Participation happens by encouraging leadership roles, fostering a sense of belonging so that youth feel comfortable sharing their ideas and welcoming the opinions of others, and promoting a youth-led approach.

AMIkids ensures Challenging & Engaging Programming through high-quality learning experiences that allow young people to apply what they learn to their understanding of themselves and the world they live in. This approach empowers them to grasp and master new and interesting concepts and skills.

Youth are also provided the opportunity for Community Involvement through service learning, experiential education opportunities, and community-based projects. These unique experiences move youth from their usual role of being helped to someone who can help others and affect change in their schools, neighborhoods, and communities.





AMIKIDS JOURNEY: CORE PROGRAMMING COMPONENTS OF THE PGM

One or more of three core programming components may make up a young person’s program Journey at AMIkids: Evidence-Based Treatment, Individualized Education & Workforce Development, and Behavior & Skills Training. This co-created, personalized journey honors each youth’s individuality by supporting their program goals and plans, recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all way to become a responsible and productive adult.



EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENT

The treatment component is individualized based on each youth’s assessments. Staff provide research-based mental health and/or substance abuse interventions (e.g., cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational enhancement therapy, Functional Family

Therapy, Motivational Interviewing) to youth, as well as their families. Youth may receive group services weekly or even daily, as well as individual and family sessions determined by the individualized treatment plan. All evidence-based treatment team

members are trained in the intervention provided and may include licensed mental health professionals or master-level counselors receiving clinical supervision.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The education component uses three primary methods to enhance learning: experiential education, project-based learning, and service learning. Students attend classes in an academic setting, and teachers use a rigorous curriculum designed to address the student’s individualized needs and diverse learning styles. Teachers implementing this component are certified and highly qualified based on state, local, and AMIkids requirements. What helps set AMIkids apart are “Challenge” events hosted each year. AMIkids Challenge Events motivate youth with rewards for top performers with once-in-a-

lifetime experiences like scuba diving, rappelling, or white-water rafting. Other events focus on tournaments, challenging youth both athletically and academically. When coupled with community-based learning opportunities like AMIkids Breaking Barriers and legislative days, and with hands-on educational experiences like floating classrooms, AMIkids educational experiences engage young people in programming that matters to them. Helping youth realize long-term success goes beyond what they learn in the classroom or one of our programs. At AMIkids, we believe that preparing

youth for their first jobs or even their careers is an integral component of effective and engaging programming. For younger youth participating in workforce development, the emphasis is on career exploration activities, resume writing, and the development of soft skills needed to work collaboratively in a work environment. Older youth work through the AMIkids Workforce Development Model, which includes both school-based and work-based training in career readiness, financial literacy, job placement, and the attainment of industry-recognized certifications or credentials.



BEHAVIOR AND SKILLS TRAINING

The behavior and skills training component is designed to develop or strengthen desired pro-social behaviors and eliminate or reduce antisocial behaviors through three techniques using positive reinforcement: a point card system, a token economy, and a rank system.



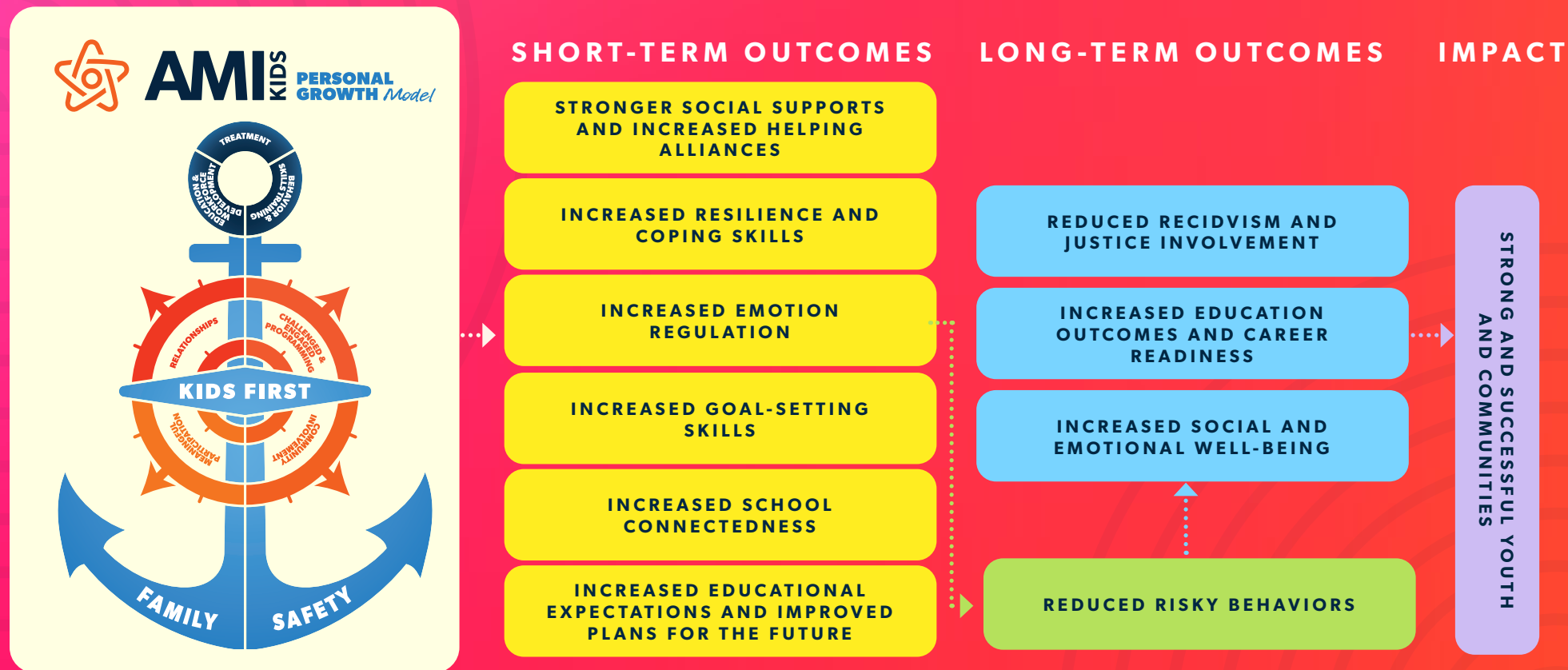
- **Rank system.** At AMIkids, youth progress through ranks by meeting behavior goals. They start at the lowest rank, set goals, and request advancement before a mentor team. Advancement is granted upon goal achievement, with new goals set for the next rank. Higher ranks earn increased responsibilities, leadership roles, and privileges. Graduation eligibility is attained at the highest rank.
- **Point card system.** Each youth has a card that lists individual behavioral goals, such as showing respect, being prepared and timely, or participating in class. Youth earn points on the card based on how well they are working towards each behavior goal. Teachers and staff provide feedback and point scores for the youth at the end of each class or activity throughout the day. At the end of each week, youth are awarded a color-coded card to indicate the number of points earned. Earning high marks on a point card directly relates to how quickly a youth may make progress in the rank system. Youth who earn high marks on their point card are rewarded with a Friday night pizza party, movie night, game night, or field trip such as bowling or fishing.
- **Token economy:** As youth display positive behaviors, teachers and staff reinforce those behaviors in real time by awarding tokens. At the end of a given week, youth may spend these tokens in a special “store” at the program. Items in the token store may include snacks, clothing, games, or other youth-identified items.



LOGIC MODEL AND THEORY OF CHANGE

AMIKids' Personal Growth Model™ is rooted in youth-centered, trauma-responsive care with an intentional focus on breaking barriers for youth success. Implementation of the PGM with strong fidelity to the model provides high-quality programming for youth and families and produces a variety of positive short and long-term outcomes.

When our professional team members deliver the model in a way that is consistent with our organizational values, youth learn to build strong relationships and skills needed to reduce risky behaviors and increase protective factors. Changes in protective and risk factors result in reduced recidivism and justice involvement, increased educational and career readiness, and increased social and emotional well-being – creating strong youth and communities.



MEASUREMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

AMIkids prides itself on being data-driven and research-based. AMIkids uses several assessment tools to measure risk and protective factors, substance use, mental health, trauma history, and educational attainment. Each tool is discussed further in the document alongside its data for calendar year 2023.

Youth data is collected and managed in two centralized, web-based data management systems: KIDS and LaurisOnline. The Kids Information Data System (KIDS) allows for tracking all youth program enrollments across the organization from intake to termination to follow-up. LaurisOnline is an electronic health record system used to enter and track mental health and behavioral data for the youth served. These systems work together to securely house real-time data and information on all of the youth served each year, tracking youth goals and outcomes and supporting overall organizational reporting.



EXTERNAL DATA VALIDATION AND REPORTING

AMIkids collects a wide range of data from youth and families. This data must be accurate and reliable as this information is not only used in daily service delivery, but also to inform a variety of stakeholders on program effectiveness and youth needs. In addition to AMIkids' regular internal data validation and auditing processes applied to organization-wide data, data integrity is validated monthly with external data sources (e.g., documentation and data from state agencies). Specifically for justice-involved youth served by AMIkids Florida programs, data is annually cross-checked and validated by comparing KIDS data and Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) data for the Department of Juvenile Justice Comprehensive Accountability Report (CAR).

External evaluation is also completed on an annual basis by the Policy Research Institute to independently evaluate AMIkids' effectiveness in reducing recidivism. This annual report, The AMIkids Annual Outputs and Outcomes Report, tracks any justice involvement for 12 months following a youth's release from the program and includes other juvenile justice-related measures such as demographics of youth served, arrest history, and successful program completion rates at each AMIkids program.

YOUTH SERVED IN 2023

In 2023, AMIkids served 4,570 youth in our 50 unique programs spanning across nine states. A total of 705 youths were served in our residential programs, 2,574 youths in our community-based programs, and 1,291 youths through service coordination. The average length of engagement for youth was 146 days or a little under 5 months.

STATE	# OF YOUTH SERVED
ALABAMA	43
FLORIDA	1,475
GEORGIA	42
LOUISIANA	640
NEW MEXICO	128
NORTH CAROLINA	379
SOUTH CAROLINA	563
TEXAS	8
VIRGINIA	1,291

AVERAGE LENGTH OF ENGAGEMENT BY PROGRAM TYPE

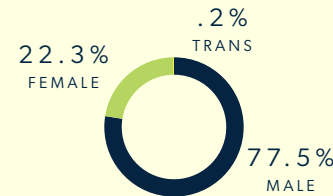
(IN DAYS)



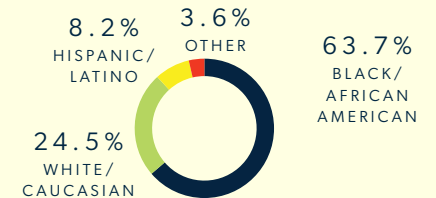
DEMOGRAPHICS

- » A majority of the youth served in 2023 were male (77.5%), 22.2% were female, and 7 youth identified as trans (<1%).
- » An estimated 63.7% of youth served were Black, 24.5% were White, 8% were Hispanic, and 2.3% were two or more races. Fewer than 1.2% identified as Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or another race (8 youth were Asian, 14 were American Indian or Alaskan Native, 5 were Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 12 listed "Other" as their race).
- » The average age of youth served in 2023 was 15.47 years old.
- » The largest age group of youth served in 2023 was youth ages 15-16 years old (37%), followed by 17-18-year-olds (27%), 13-14-year-olds (25%), 19 or older (5%), and 12 or under (5%).
- » A small portion of youth served youth had children (N= 39) or were expecting children (N = 23). About 2,549 (78%) youth received a free or reduced lunch from school – a proxy measure of poverty.

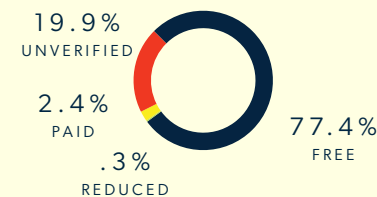
GENDER



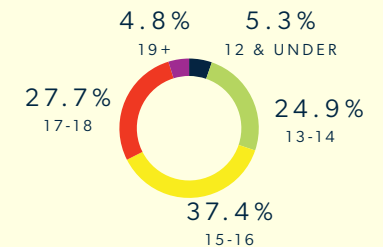
RACE/ETHNICITY



FREE/REDUCED LUNCH



AGE GROUPS



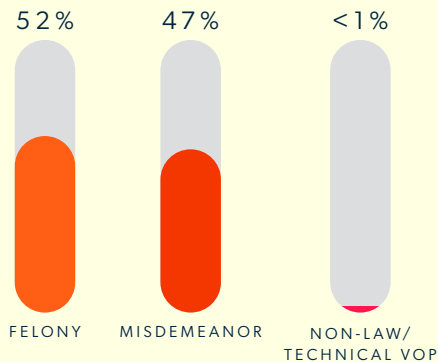
¹Demographics are based on the unduplicated youth served. There were 176 youth that had more than one program enrollment during 2022. Youth served through AMIkids Virginia Services were also excluded.

JUVENILE JUSTICE HISTORY

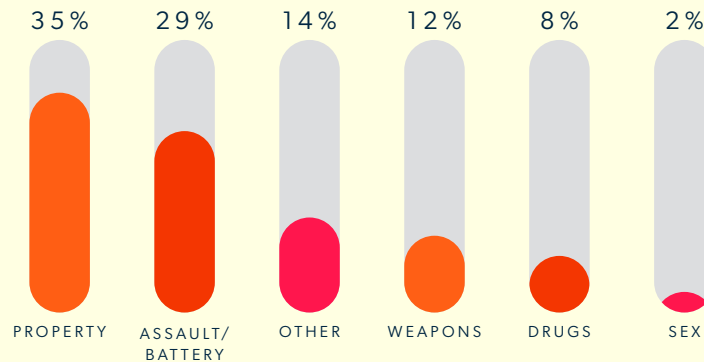
Youth face a multitude of situations that create challenges for future success, including family issues, negative peer influences, and engagement in criminal offenses. Some of the youth who enter AMIkids programs have a history of juvenile justice system involvement. The levels and types of offenses of such youth can be seen below:

- » Over half (56%) of youth who had been arrested prior to enrollment had felony charges. About 47% of youth who were arrested prior to enrollment had misdemeanor charges.
- » Almost one third (35%) of the youth who had been arrested prior to their program enrollment committed a property-related offense – this includes auto theft, unauthorized use of automobile, burglary, vandalism, or larceny.
- » The next most common crime was assault or battery (29%), followed by criminal mischief & disorderly conduct or truancy (other in graph, 14%), drug offenses (8%), possession of or concealed weapons (12%), and sex-related offenses (2%) (sexual battery, lewd and lascivious).

OFFENSE LEVEL



OFFENSE TYPE



TRAUMA HISTORY

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs, or Adverse Childhood Experiences, refers to difficult or traumatic experiences children face in their environment. These can include physical and emotional abuse, neglect, household or community violence, caregiver mental illness, or even racism. Experiencing many of these can cause toxic stress and lead to long-lasting wear and tear on the body and brain. Rresearch has shown that there is a correlation between children with ACEs and poor outcomes later in life. There is a spectrum of responses that can be taken to help youth recover from the trauma caused by ACEs and toxic stress, including therapeutic interventions, trauma-informed care, or practice, and fostering strong and responsive life relationships to help children and adults build core life skills to buffer the effects of toxic stress.

AMIkids has committed to moving beyond trauma-informed care to taking action with training staff on how to be trauma-responsive. To identify youth who may need additional support due to a history of trauma, the ACEs assessment is administered to all AMIkids youth.²

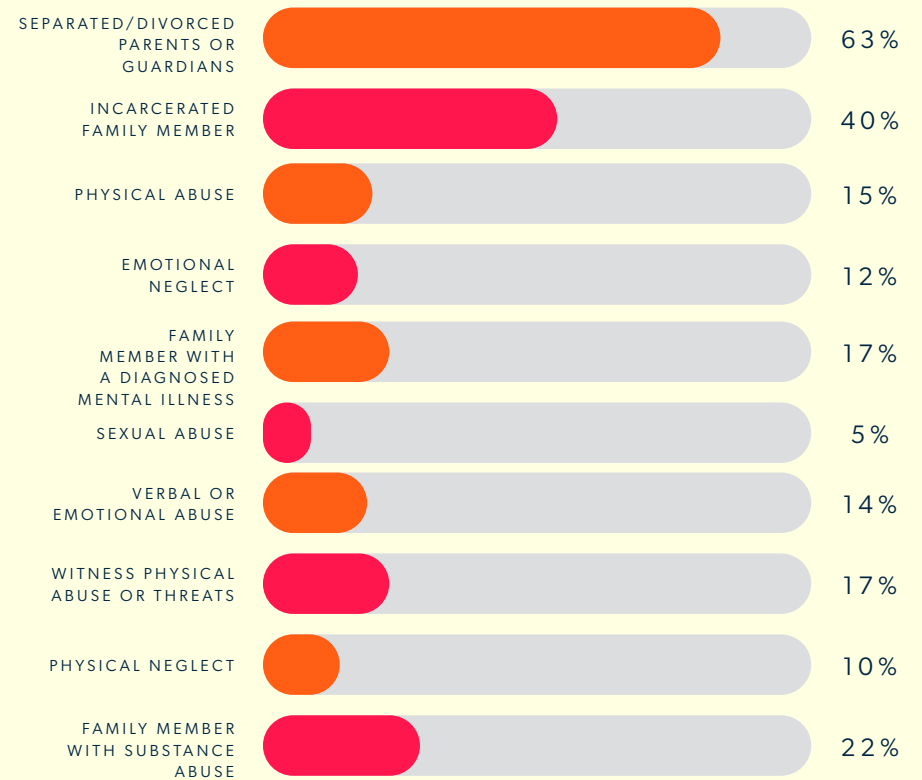
A majority of youth entering AMIkids programs have experienced some trauma with 79% reporting at least one ACE and a (29.7%) report experiencing three or more ACEs. Research shows that of individuals with a score of three or more, 36.2% have experienced depression in the past year, 21.5% have used illicit drugs, and 10.3% suffer from obesity.

Of those ACEs experienced by youth served by AMIkids, the types of traumas most often endorsed are around relationships, or more specifically, the loss of a relationship. An estimated 64% of youth reported that their parents/guardians were separated or divorced and 40% of youth reported living with a family member who served time in jail or prison.

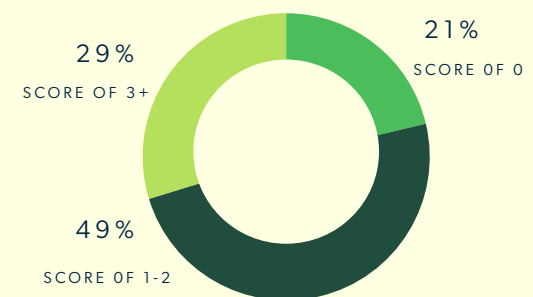
Supportive relationships are key for positive youth development. As such, AMIkids's PGM supports promoting a positive learning environment through peer-to-peer and youth-adult bonding. When youth build trusting relationships with staff and others, they experience increases in academic motivation, self-confidence, life skills, and leadership skills³ – all associated with long-term success.

² Aggregate data is limited as behavioral health data began being tracked in Lauris in 2019 with a select number of programs. The strategic rollout of programs collecting data in Lauris continued throughout 2023.
³Gambone, M.A., Klem, A.M. & Connell, J.P. (2002). *Finding Out What Matters for Youth: Testing Key Links in a Community Action Framework for Youth Development*. Philadelphia: Youth Development Strategies, Inc., and Institute for Research and Reform in Education.

TYPES OF TRAUMA SELF-REPORTED BY YOUTH



ACES SCORES FOR YOUTH SERVED IN 2023



SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH

Youth are assessed upon enrollment in the program to understand any potential substance use and mental health disorders and needs. There are two different types of assessments: the Prevention Eligibility Assessment, which is used with youth entering a prevention program to assess need and risk level, and the Comprehensive Assessment, which is used with youth who may have higher needs and elevated risk factors.

Prevention eligibility assessment. The Prevention Eligibility Assessment is a tool Florida prevention programs use to assess risk factors for youth to evaluate whether youth would benefit from the prevention program. If the youth has three or more risk factors, they are deemed eligible for the program.

Only the following Florida programs are included in the results below: Clay, Duval, Gadsden, Manatee, and Tallahassee. Of the youth enrolled at these programs in 2023, 127 youth (38%) answered the following questions related to their risk factors:

9 IN 10 YOUTH HAVE FAMILY INSTABILITY OR CONFLICT



- » 42% of youth have influence of a family member with a criminal history.
- » 93% of youth have family instability or conflict.
- » 20% of youth have a parent with substance abuse problems.

7 IN 10 YOUTH HAVE SCHOOL-RELATED RISK FACTORS



- » 72% of youth who were assessed for prevention eligibility in 2023 were suspended or expelled from school within the last six months.
- » 72% of youth had failed one or more classes within the last six months.
- » 96% of youth claimed to have school instability or failure prior to their program enrollment, and 27% of youth had habitual truancy or class skipping within the last six months.
- » Almost one-fifth of the assessed youth (19%) had been formally diagnosed with a special education need or exceptionality.

1 IN 5 YOUTH HAVE UNMET PERSONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS



- » 23% of youth have ACEs related to their personal needs not being met (e.g. neglect or physical health problems) or negative experiences (e.g. abuse or violence).
- » 15% of youth struggle with mental health or substance use.
- » Yet, only 9% of the assessed youth have a mental health diagnosis.

SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH

Families serve as one of the most influential socializing forces in a person's life. Research has demonstrated that behavioral issues during childhood can predict subsequent delinquency and criminal behavior. Youth who are neglected by their parents or grow up in homes with instability or conflict are at the greatest risk of becoming delinquents. As illustrated, although our prevention youth may not have been flagged as at-risk or been involved in the justice system, the youth entering these types of programs experience several challenges and needs.

Comprehensive assessment

The Comprehensive Assessment is used to design treatment plans for youth in clinical services at AMIkids day treatment and residential programs who are referred by DJJ or other state systems. Mental health disorders are prevalent among youth involved in the juvenile justice system. A meta-analysis⁴ of studies examining sex and race differences in mental health symptoms proposed that up to 70% of youth in the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health problem. Additionally, mental health problems among adolescents are frequently linked to substance abuse, which is related to a higher risk of suicidal behavior.

The assessment evaluates the youth based on their family history, current behaviors, mental status, strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences. The qualified clinical team member then decides if clinical services are recommended based on the assessment results and then formulates a diagnosis and develops a treatment plan for the youth.

Types of diagnoses. Youth are given primary and secondary diagnoses based on their comprehensive assessment results.

The types of diagnoses are as follows:

- » Academic problems
- » Adjustment disorder
- » Antisocial behavior
- » Anxiety disorder
- » Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- » Bipolar disorder
- » Conduct disorder
- » Disruptive mood dysregulation disorder
- » Inadequate housing
- » Intermittent explosive disorder
- » Major depressive disorder
- » Parent/child relationship problems
- » Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- » Substance-abuse disorder (cannabis, alcohol, tobacco, or stimulants)
- » Victim of child sexual abuse or physical abuse



⁴ Vincent, G.M., Grisso, T., Terry, A. Banks, S. (2008). Sex and race differences in mental health symptoms in juvenile justice: The MAYSI-2 national meta-analysis. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 47 (3), 282-290.

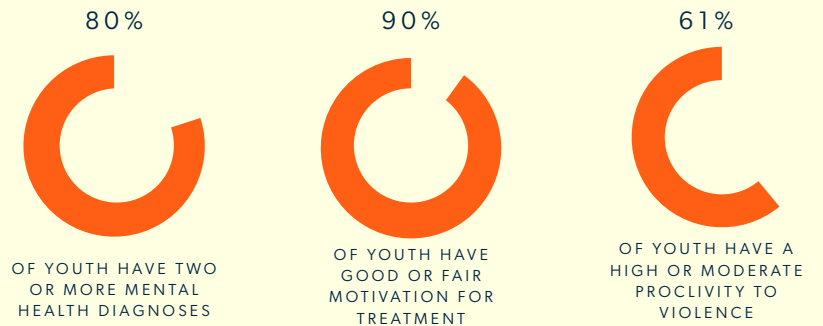
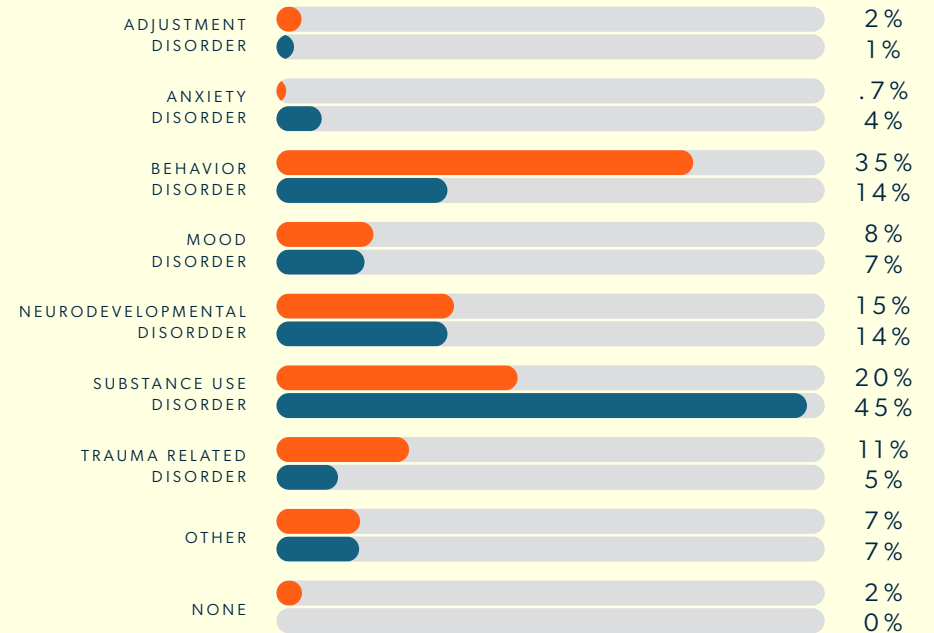
SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSES

Overall, the youth assessed reported high rates of substance use and mental health challenges:

- › An estimated 78% of the youth assessed using the Comprehensive Assessment reported that they use cannabis, 38% use alcohol, 38% use nicotine products, 4% use sedatives (barbiturates, narcotics, tranquilizers), 9% use hallucinogens and 5% use stimulants.
- › 80% of the youth had at least one mental health diagnosis, with behavior disorders being the top primary diagnosis (44%).
- › 48% of youth had substance abuse as a primary and/or secondary diagnosis.

DRUG TYPE	% OF YOUTH WHO USE SUBSTANCES
ALCOHOL	38%
CANNABIS	78%
HALLUCINOGENS	9%
INHALANTS	1%
NICOTINE	38%
STIMULANTS	5%
SEDATIVES	4%

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DIAGNOSES OF YOUTH %



RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Florida-Specific Assessments

There are three different assessments used in Florida-based programs to identify risk and protective factors for youth. Descriptions of each of these can be found with related data and findings accompanying them.

Prevention Assessment Tool (PAT)

The PAT assists prevention and civil citation programs in identifying areas of criminogenic need, developing an individualized intervention plan for the youth, and monitoring progress in reducing youth's risk factors. The philosophy behind PAT is that it enables staff to reduce the number of youth entering the juvenile justice system by encouraging positive changes in their behavior and attitudes. The PAT is broken down into 11 domains, which are listed below (Domain 2 is demographics and is omitted in the results):

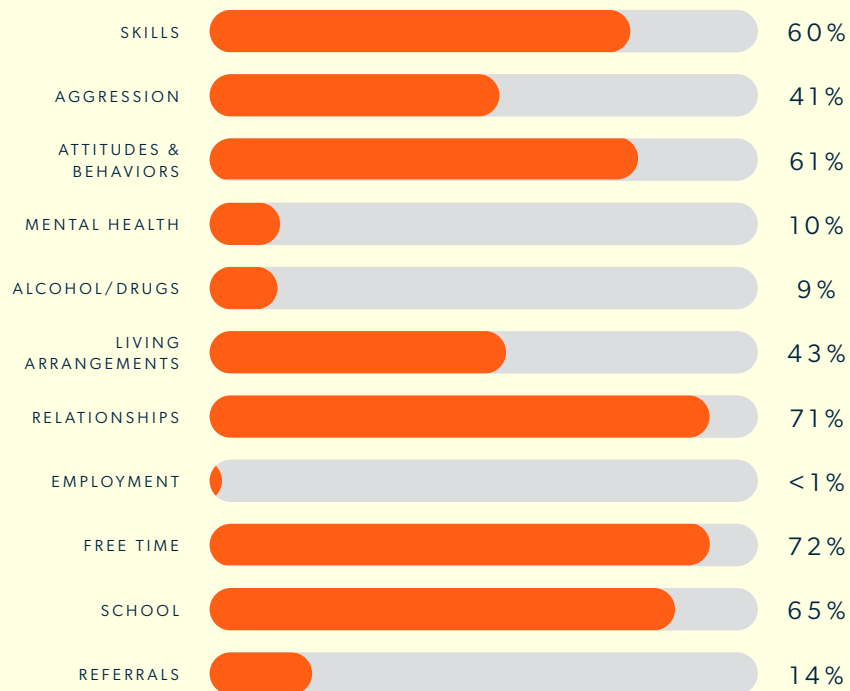


- DOMAIN 1** Referrals – record of referrals resulting in diversion, adjudication withheld, adjudication, or deferred prosecution
- DOMAIN 3** School – special needs, current status, conduct, attendance, performance, and suspensions or expulsions
- DOMAIN 4** Use of Free Time – types of structured recreational activities in which youth currently participate
- DOMAIN 5** Employment – current employment status
- DOMAIN 6** Relationships – current friends youth spends time with, currently admires anti-social peers, current resistance to anti-social influence
- DOMAIN 7** Family/Living Arrangement – imprisonment history of those living in household, problem history with parents or siblings, current living situation, level of household conflict, parental authority and control
- DOMAIN 8** Alcohol and Drugs – youth's alcohol and drug usage, current or prior participation in drug & alcohol treatment program
- DOMAIN 9** Mental Health – history of violence or physical abuse, being a victim of sexual abuse/rape or neglect, suicidal ideation, current suicidal risks, and mental health problems currently interfere with working with the youth
- DOMAIN 10** Attitudes/Behaviors – impulsive, feelings for victim of criminal behavior, respect for authority figures
- DOMAIN 11** Aggression – hostile interpretations, belief in fighting or physical aggression, evidence of non-criminal history violence
- DOMAIN 12** Skills – consequential thinking, goal setting, problem-solving, dealing with people/difficult situations, control of impulsive behaviors or aggression)



YOUTH NEED FACTORS BY DOMAIN

(AVERAGE % OF YOUTH)



The top needs identified using the PAT align with the findings from the ACEs scores – most of our youth have a need for positive relationships and a supportive, engaging environment. These unmet needs often manifest as aggressive attitudes and behaviors, as seen in the chart above.

Community Assessment Tool (CAT)

The CAT is a pre-screening assessment that assesses risk level scores measuring a juvenile’s risk of re-offending and provides information that can be used by juvenile probation officers, youth, and families to collaboratively develop the Youth-Empowered Success (YES) Plan, which includes individual goals and action steps. CAT data is only provided at the individual level; therefore, no summary data is available.

Residential Assessment for Youth (RAY)

The RAY is a research-based assessment specially designed for the residential setting. Program staff utilize the RAY instrument to identify a youth’s criminogenic needs and to address the youth’s risk and protective factors, ultimately reducing the youth’s risk to reoffend. RAY data is only provided at the individual level; therefore, no summary data is available.

Non-Florida Assessments

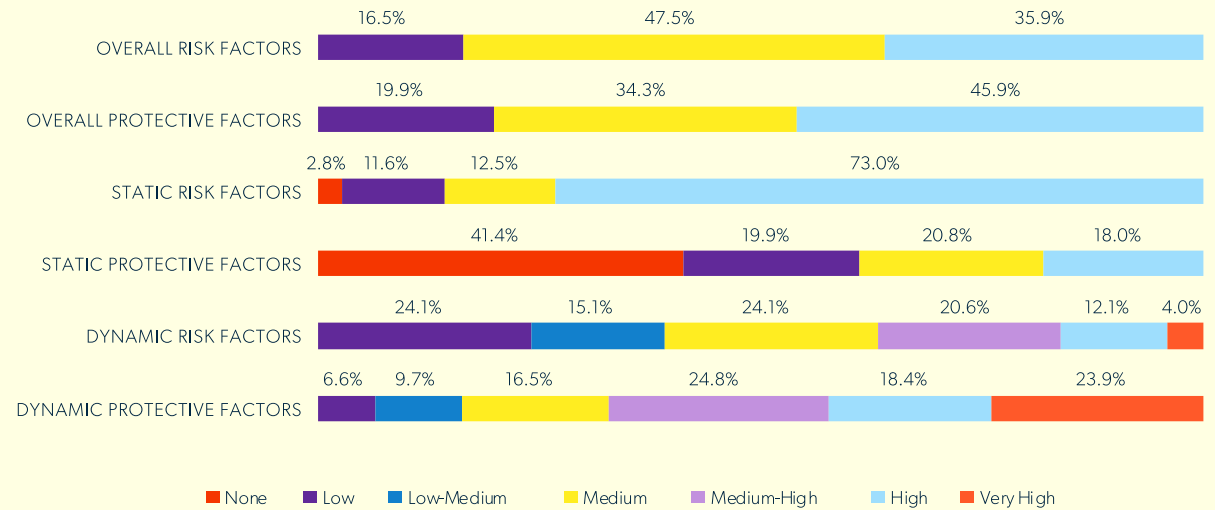
For programs outside of Florida, the assessment of choice to measure risk and protective factors with AMIkids youth is the YASI.

Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI)

The YASI is an assessment tool that measures risk, needs, and protective factors in at-risk and juvenile justice-involved youth. Youth are assessed when they enter the program and reassessed at 90 days or six months and again at discharge. Findings from the baseline YASI are used to understand the strengths and needs of youth to improve case management and treatment planning.

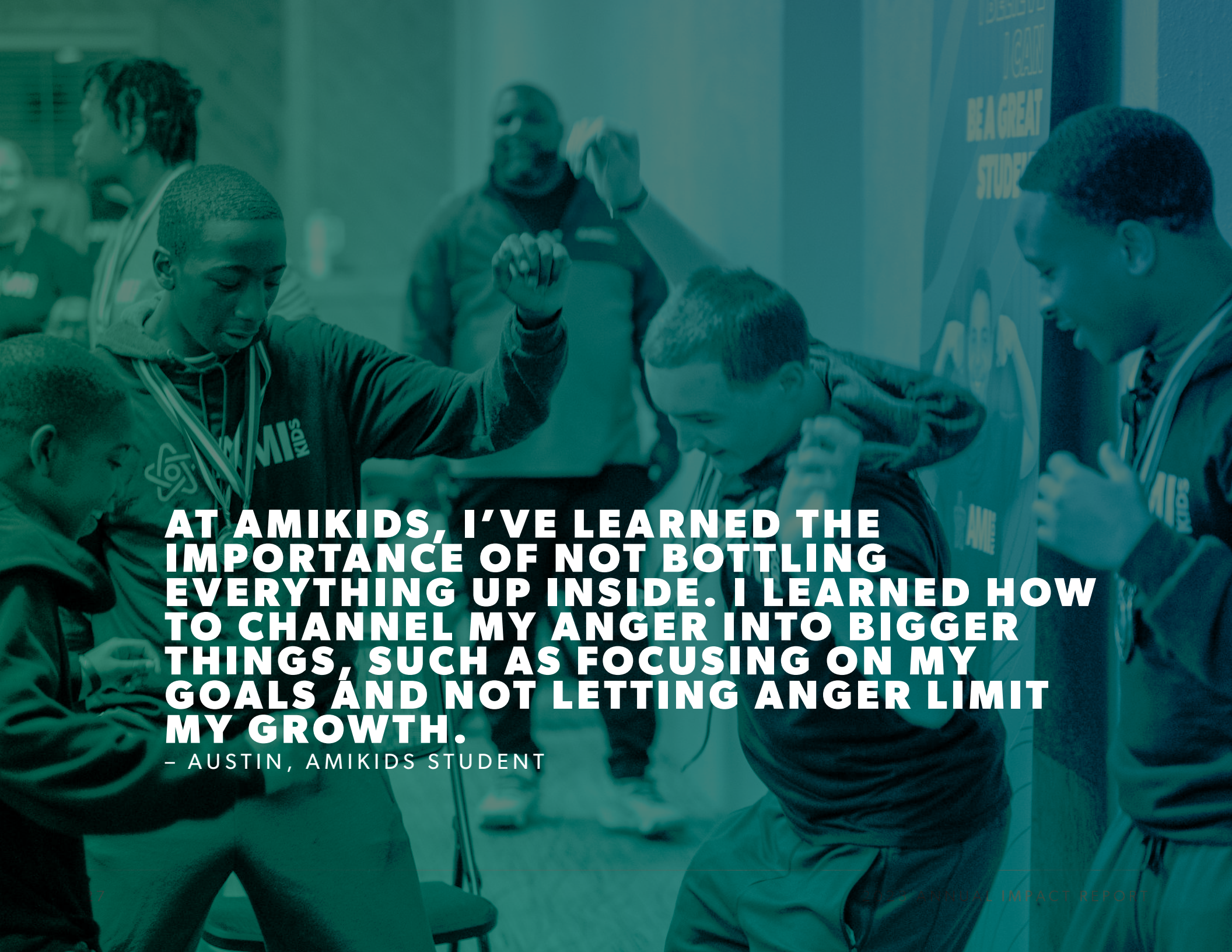
In 2023, the YASI was used in Louisiana, New Mexico, and South Carolina. Baseline findings from 2023 indicate that overall, youth entering these programs have high risk factors that could lead to future delinquency and entering or re-entering the justice system. Of the 423 youth who completed a full assessment, more than a third (36%) have high risk factors while a little under half (46%) have high protective factors. Of note, a majority of youth (73%) had high levels of static risk factors, or risk factors that cannot be changed. This result is expected given that these particular programs' primary source of youth referrals are from the juvenile justice system and have a history of justice involvement, engaging in risky behaviors, or violence. However, it is important to understand that about 84% of youth have medium to very high dynamic protective factors, or factors that can be positively impacted through effective programming.

OVERALL FULL YASI ASSESSMENT RESULTS (N=423)



Examination of the specific types of risk factors show a large proportion of youth with medium to high levels of dynamic risks around substance use (47%), needs in community or peer relationships (62%), and skills (66%). Static risks show a little over half of youth having a high risk associated with their legal history (55%) and violent history (57%).

The highest endorsed protective factor was in employment/free time, with over two-thirds (68%) of youth scoring high for engaging in positive, structured extracurricular activities or being employed. The bulk of youth scored much lower around other areas that serve as protective factors such as family, school, community/peers, and behavior and attitudes – indicating areas of need for support or change.



AT AMIKIDS, I'VE LEARNED THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT BOTTLING EVERYTHING UP INSIDE. I LEARNED HOW TO CHANNEL MY ANGER INTO BIGGER THINGS, SUCH AS FOCUSING ON MY GOALS AND NOT LETTING ANGER LIMIT MY GROWTH.

– AUSTIN, AMIKIDS STUDENT

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES FOR 2023

Through the AMIkids PGM™ and individualized care planning, AMIkids positively impacts education and career readiness, social and emotional well-being, and behavior by increasing skills, building relationships, increasing protective factors, and decreasing risk factors – all of which contribute to successful program completion and brighter futures.

AMIkids Youth Outcomes Survey (AYOS) measures the short-term outcomes that lead to long-term success such as increased school connectedness, educational expectations, emotion regulation, goal setting, coping skills, and helping alliances. This survey consists of externally validated scales and is administered at enrollment, quarterly, and prior to leaving the program to assess the impact of the program over time. Pre-survey scores (enrollment) versus post-survey scores (most recent administration of the survey during 2023) are included in this year's outcomes.

EDUCATION

AMIkids' educational services focus on improving student engagement and increasing academic functioning. We work collaboratively with local school districts and/or the Department of Juvenile Justice to meet state educational standards. Many of the youth served by AMIkids have experienced challenges in the traditional public-school system and need individualized support to reengage them in their schoolwork to meet their educational goals.

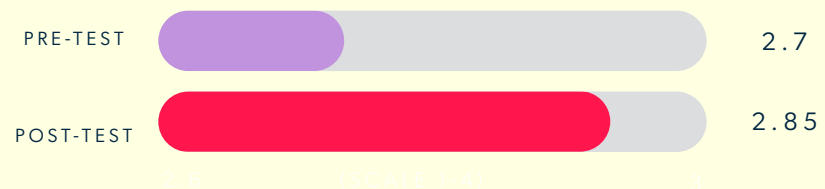
Service Learning and Experiential Education

A hallmark of AMIkids programming is experiential education or service-learning opportunities. These engaging activities include AMIkids events such as Legislative Day or the Presidential Dive Trip, as well as community service, civic engagement, and marine education. In 2023, youth participated in 857 service-learning opportunities, totaling nearly 7,000 hours in experiential education!

School Connectedness⁵

This measure assesses a youth's level of engagement and attachment to school. School connectedness is associated with school achievement, health, and reductions in delinquency. In 2023, AMIkids youth reported a significant increase in feeling connected to and engaged in school from pre- (2.70) to post-survey (2.85) ($p < .01$).

SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS PRE VS. POST MEAN SCORES

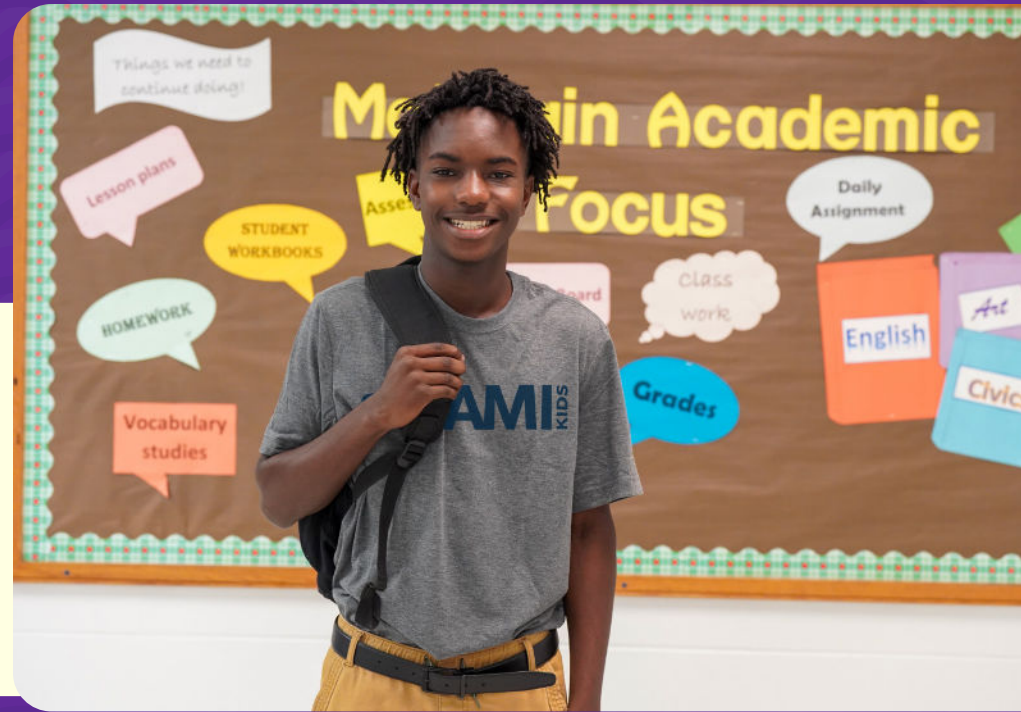
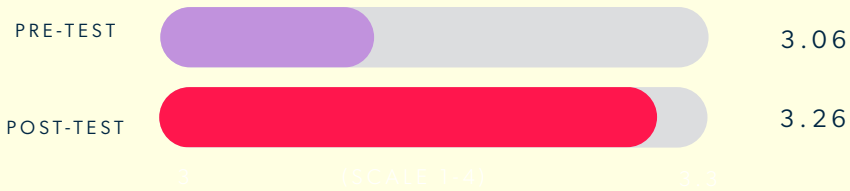


⁵ Adapted from Karcher's Hemmingway Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (2011).

Goal Setting⁶

This measure evaluates a youth's ability to set and pursue goals – a skill central to positive youth development, reduced behavioral problems, and future success. AMIkids youth reported a significant increase in goal-setting skills from pre- (3.06) to post-survey (3.26) ($p < .01$).

GOAL SETTING PRE VS. POST MEAN SCORES



Educational Expectations

This measure consists of several standardized questions around a youth's plans to graduate high school, go to college, and plans right after high school. Educational expectations have been linked to academic performance and future educational attainment. Youth who have completed at least one post-survey showed a positive outlook on their future education and life goals:

- » Over 94% of AMIkids youth think they will finish high school or earn their GED
- » Nearly 74% of AMIkids youth plan on going to college at some point
- » About 91% of youth had education or career plans for their first year after high school
- » Of those youth with plans for their first year after completing high school or earning their GED:
 - * 80% plan to get a job and work
 - * 49% plan to go to college
 - * 40% plan to go to a technical school or community college for a special trade
 - * 24% plan to participate in an apprenticeship or internship
 - * 18% plan to join the military

As a result of improved skills and attitudes related to educational and career goals, AMIkids youth achieved a number of positive outcomes in 2023:

- » On average, youth entered AMIkids programs at a ninth-grade level (with the average youth age at 15 years old). Over a third of our youth (40%) increased one or more grade levels during their time at AMIkids in 2023.
- » A total of 84 youth earned their high school diploma or GED in 2023 while at an AMIkids program. In addition, 755 middle school credits, 1,463 high school credits (420.25 credits were retrieved) and 23 college credits were earned in 2023 through our program before returning to their neighborhood schools to earn their degrees.

STAR Assessments

All of our youth take Renaissance STAR assessments upon 10 days of enrollment and are re-tested monthly throughout the course of their program, and upon termination. STAR assessments are computer-adaptive tests (CATs) that are used to screen students for their reading and math literacy levels. This helps us place students into appropriate courses and allows us to monitor their growth and progress throughout the program.

- » More than half (51.3%) of youth tested in 2023 had gains in STAR math and/or reading scores.

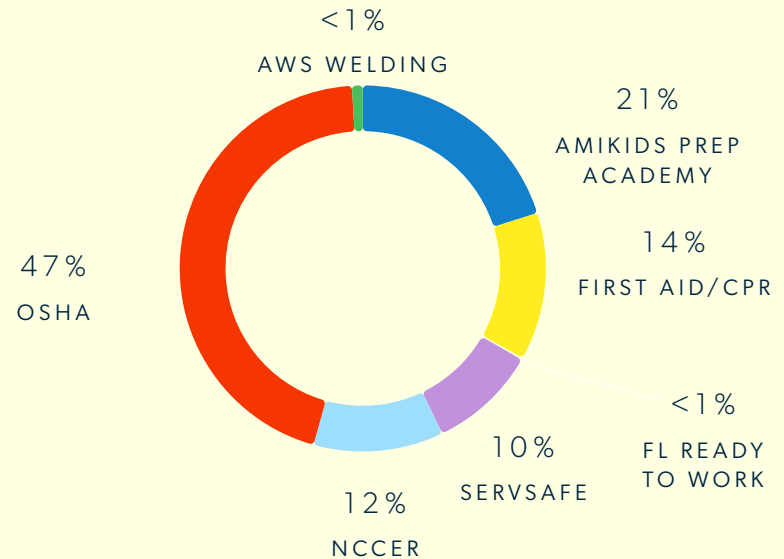


Career Readiness

AMIKids offers workforce development programs and career readiness services as add-ons to our standard programs. Workforce development programming provides training opportunities and other related services that will help prepare our youth for the workforce. In 2023, we served 1,149 youth in our workforce development programs.

- » A total of 2,228 courses were completed towards industry-recognized certifications, with 952 certifications earned in 2023.
- » Of the certifications, there were
 - * 200 AMIKids Prep Academy (workforce readiness) certificates (21%),
 - * 130 First Aid/CPR certificates (13.6%),
 - * 18 Florida Ready to Work certificates (<1%),
 - * 83 ServSafe Food Handler certificates
 - * 11 ServSafe Manager certificates (10% combined),
 - * 116 NCCER Core Construction certificates,
 - * 11 AWS Gas, Metal, Art Welding Certification
 - * 344 OSHA 10-hour Construction, 36 OSHA 30, and 65 OSHA Forklift Operator (60% combined).
 - * 165 job placements were made in 2023, with an average hourly wage of \$14.74.

CERTIFICATIONS





SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

The AMIkids Way and PGM™ are rooted in positive youth development approaches that promote a safe, trauma-responsive environment for team members to teach youth how to overcome stressful situations and build healthy, supportive relationships. Developing skills, identifying coping strategies, and learning how to build and maintain relationships are essential for lifelong social and emotional wellness.

Resilience and Coping Skills⁷

This scale assesses the use of both positive (adaptive) and negative (maladaptive) coping strategies (14 total), including how much each strategy has helped during recent stressful situations (1 being “not at all” and 3 being “a lot”). Increased use of positive coping skills (e.g., “reaching out to others to find a solution to a problem”) is directly related to a higher likelihood of navigating challenging situations successfully and improved resilience. In 2023, AMIkids youth reported increased use of positive coping strategies from pre- to post-survey and found them more effective during the most recent use. Nearly 94% of youth reported using at least one positive coping skill during a recent challenge.

Youth continued to engage in the use of negative coping strategies from pre- to post-survey; however, the slight increase from pre- to post-survey was insignificant. When they engaged in maladaptive coping behaviors, they did not find them more helpful. The top three negative coping strategies used by youth were: 1) “I wished I could make things different”, 2) “I wished the problem had never happened”, and 3) “I stayed by myself.”

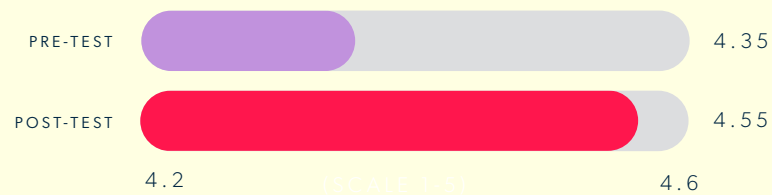
MEASURE	AVERAGE PRE-SCORE (RANGE)	AVERAGE POST-SCORE (RANGE)
COPING STRATEGIES (TOTAL SUM - #)	3.25 (0-4)	3.34 (0-4)
COPING STRATEGIES (EFFECTIVENESS)	2.31 (1-3)	2.32 (1-3)
MALADAPTIVE STRATEGIES (TOTAL SUM - #)	6.62 (0-10)	6.82 (0-10)
MALADAPTIVE STRATEGIES (EFFECTIVENESS)	2.03 (1-3)	2.03 (1-3)



Helping Alliances⁸

This scale measures the strength of the bonds developed between youth and AMIkids team members. The presence of strong social supports acts as a protective factor and is linked to increased social and emotional wellbeing. In 2023, AMIkids youth experienced a significant increase in feeling positively connected to AMIkids team members (4.35 to 4.55, $p < .01$).

HELPING ALLIANCES PRE VS. POST MEAN SCORES



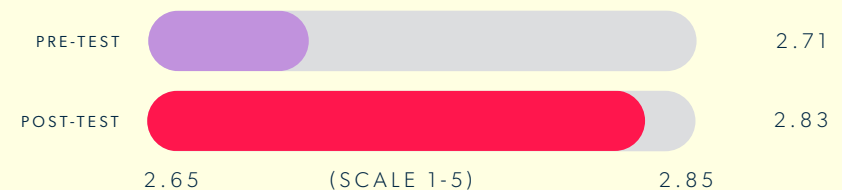
BEHAVIOR AND SKILLS

As one of the three critical components of the AMIkids PGM™, positive reinforcement techniques are used to help youth develop and strengthen prosocial behaviors and learn how to manage their emotional and physical responses to difficult situations or as a result of trauma.

Emotion Regulation⁹

This scale influences physical and mental health and is associated with greater social competence, school performance, and positive well-being. Emotion regulation is a skill that can be learned and is beneficial to successful one-on-one relationships with family, peers, and other adults. In 2023, AMIkids youth reported significantly higher levels of emotion regulation from pre- (2.71) to post-survey (2.83; $p < .01$).

EMOTIONAL REGULATION PRE VS. POST MEAN SCORES



⁸ Adapted from Helping Alliance Questionnaire (HAQ=II) (Luborsky et al., 1996).

⁹ Adapted from the Middle School Youth Survey, originally from Prior et al. (2000).

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Comparison of the baseline risk and protective factor assessments to the most recent reassessment in 2023 indicates:

- › 87% of youth maintained¹⁰ or significantly increased their protective factors.
- › About 42% of youth decreased their risk factors (6% higher than 2022 outcomes).

Successful Completions.

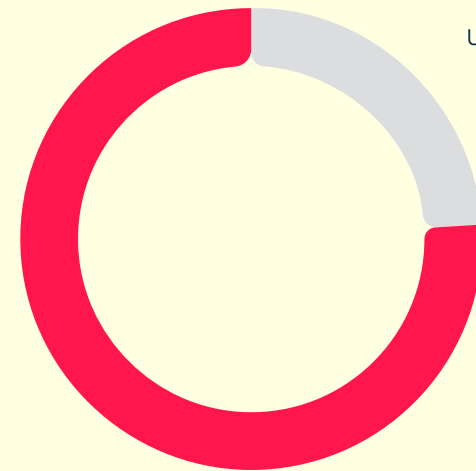
Engagement, increased skills, and reduced risk factors most often lead to successful program completion.

- › Approximately 76% of youth completed the program by successfully meeting their goals or completing the available programming.
- › About 24% of youth did not successfully complete their program – this includes youth getting a new law violation, youth running away or absconding, violation of program requirements, or violation of probation.
- › In 2023, there were 512 program terminations that were considered “neutral” and excluded from the program completion calculations (18% of terms). Neutral reasons include program enrollments terminated within 10 days, changes in contract/end of the semester, or a youth who returned a second time within a short period of time (second program enrollment is assessed for successful or unsuccessful program completion).



PROGRAM COMPLETIONS

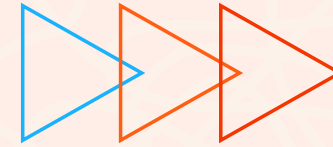
76%
COMPLETED
PROGRAM



24%
UNSUCCESSFUL/
VIOLATION

¹⁰ Maintenance is included as a positive outcome as youth typically would experience a decline in these areas without support from the programs.

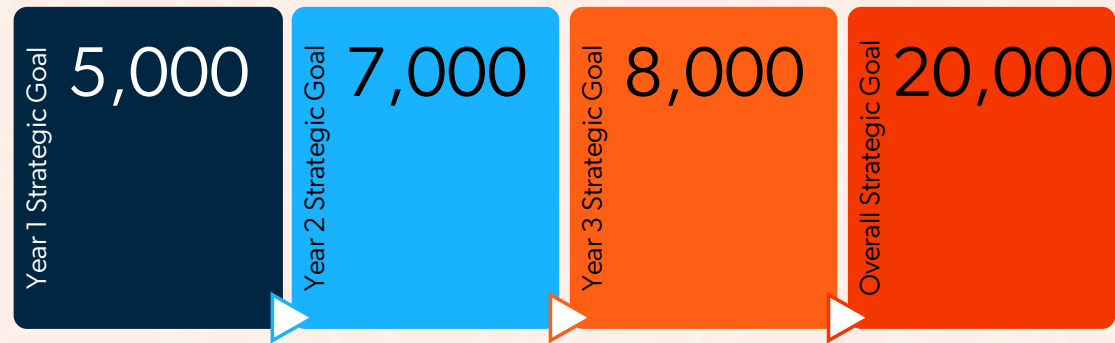
FUTURE DIRECTION



In 2023, AMIkids activated its 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, propelling us forward on our mission to solidify our position as one of the leading youth empowerment agencies in the nation. Our three-year vision is to positively impact more lives using four strategic goals to chart our course:

- » 1) Diversify Funding
- » 2) Retain Staff
- » 3) Enhance Individual Learning and Skill Development
- » 4) Expand Programming to Address Community Needs and Service Gaps

Specifically, AMIkids will help 20,000 youth and families realize their full potential through innovative programming and partnerships.



In year one, we served 4,570 youth and families, bringing us to a notable achievement of reaching 91.4% of our goal. Over 56% of the youth served were from the community as opposed to referrals from the juvenile justice system – a shift from our roots of serving mostly justice-impacted youth in the past. AMIkids is prepared to respond to this evolving landscape by implementing new strategies on how to engage more youth and families from the community to increase our reach and exceed our strategic goals.

To learn more about our Strategic Plan, please visit <http://www.amikids.org/about-ami-kids/2023-2025-strategic-plan>.



**BECAUSE OF AMIKIDS, I BELIEVE I CAN
ACHIEVE WHAT I WANT IN LIFE – THEY
SHOWED ME THAT SUCCESS IS POSSIBLE.**

– ROBERT, AMIKIDS STUDENT

Limitations. In 2023, AMIKids focused on evaluating data quality and consistency in standardized data collection processes across programs. Quarterly data quality assessments have indicated an increase in the adoption of shared measurement tools; however, data available for this report is limited due to the ongoing implementation phase. Change management efforts alongside increased data resources and training continue to be a priority.

If you would like to learn more about the information in this report, please contact Dr. Jessica Mitchell at jnm@amikids.org.



Empowering young people to discover their true potential.

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