

February 2022

Workforce Connections

Monitoring Report



Prosperity Initiative

INSPIRING SUCCESS FROM CRADLE TO CAREER

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Benchmark Data Labs

About the Program

Career Learning Center of the Black Hills (CLCBH), a project of Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) received a grant from the John T. Vucurevich Foundation (JTVF) to increase the rate of adult education students entering into and succeeding in postsecondary education programs. This educational attainment ultimately leads to self-sufficient family wages and creates a workforce development pipeline to meet high-demand and high-wage jobs in the Rapid City area.

All students served will achieve/receive the following within a two-year period:

- High School Equivalency Diploma (GED)
- Intensive career counseling
- Workforce and soft skills training (10 hours)
- Financial literacy classes (8 hours)
- At least one college level credit or a pertinent, national industry-recognized credential



Career Learning Center
— of the Black Hills

Methodology

Benchmark Data Labs (Benchmark), the Prosperity Initiative (PI), and the John T. Vucurevich Foundation developed an internal monitoring system to help staff and funders better evaluate how program interventions impact clients. The new internal monitoring system worked in conjunction with the Community Care Link data system and was used to monitor and visualize client success as a result of the Workforce Connections (WC) program.

WC staff collects longitudinal client data across a number of indicators on the Crisis to Thrive Scale. Benchmark provides data collection and formatting support. Benchmark also provides verbal reports to WC staff and funders on a quarterly basis. This PowerPoint presents the first quarterly report for WC Staff and stakeholders.



Active Client Profile

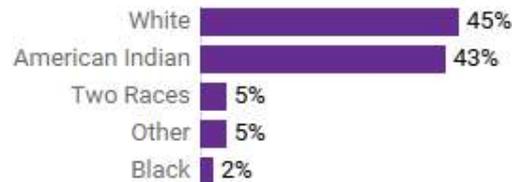
Workforce Connections served 42 diverse clients from September 2020 to December 2021.

These clients bring with them a diverse set of life experiences, personal strengths, and challenges. These clients, however, are united by low to no household incomes, not one being over \$37,000 annually.

Gender



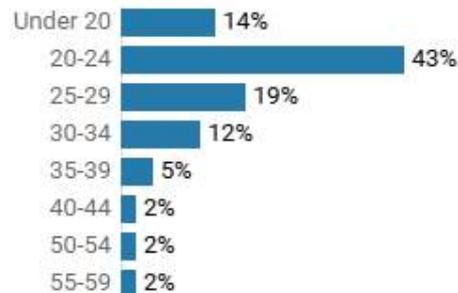
Race



Ethnicity



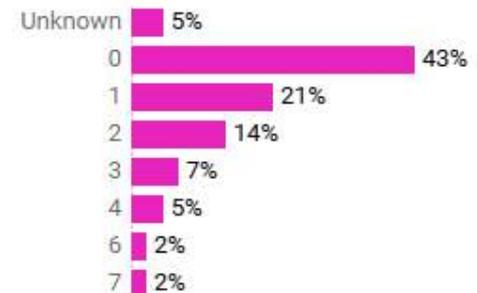
Age



Relationship Status



Children in Household

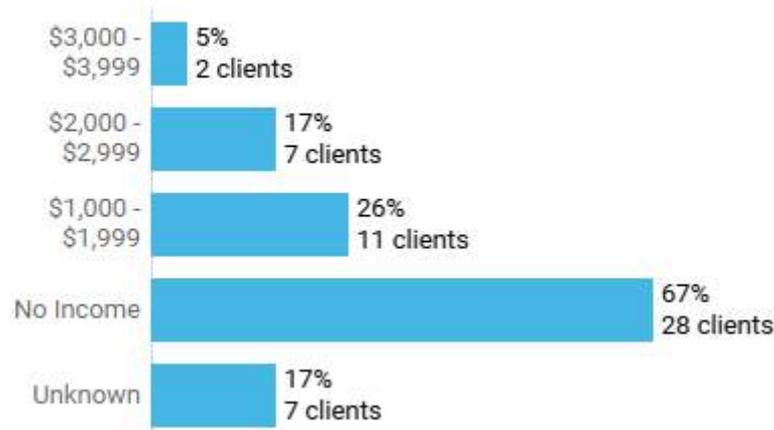


Income

A majority of clients did not have a monthly income when they entered the program.

- Household incomes higher than \$3,000 were for intergenerational living situations.
- Households with incomes between \$2,000- 2,999 were all for clients who live with family or partners.

Monthly Income



Client Profile

Of the 42 clients served during this time period:



25 did not have a high school diploma



13 were first generation higher education students



10 did not have a computer at home



4 did not have internet at home



12 had felonies

Crisis to Thrive Scale

The Pathways to Prosperity Crisis to Thrive Matrix is an adapted version of the [2010 Snohomish County Self-Sufficiency Matrix](#). This scale was initially modified by Callie Tysdal of Benchmark Data Labs and Tracy Palecek for the Prosperity Initiative Client monitoring system. Further suggestions were incorporated from Lori Larson, Holly Mudlin, Megan Snyder, and Dominique Charlson.

Clients were ranked on a scale of 1 to 10 in 5 areas: childcare, education, employment, housing, and transportation. Each data point was supported further qualitative explanation of why the client was ranked thus. Client data was tracked each time a mentor interacted with the client.

The following is an analysis of clients served during their **first meeting** with their mentor. As the program monitoring continues, longitudinal comparisons will be made for each client.

Education

The following is the Crisis to Thrive scale for educational attainment. Mentors noted their client's status after each meeting and shared additional context in a comment section.

Scale	Rank	Explanation
In Crisis	1	Less than 8th grade education and/or limited reading/writing ability
	2	Less than 8th grade education, with ability to read/write
Vulnerable	3	Some high school, no GED
	4	Seeking GED or High School Diploma
Safe	5	High School Graduate or GED
	6	Basic Skills Training
Building Capacity	7	Currently attending college or certification program
	8	Completed associates degree, vocational training or certification
Empowered	9	Bachelor's Degree or high level vocational licensing (master plumber, electrician, Microsoft certified developer)
	10	Advanced degree or completed college and is employed in field of study

Education

The majority of clients lacked the necessary educational levels to earn a livable wage and secure benefits.

Educational attainment is a highly correlated to higher levels of income. Many WC clients sought higher levels of education required to secure more stable employment or pursue a career in their chosen field.

Education Crisis to Thrive Score



Education



2 out of every 3 clients did not graduate high school. The majority of these clients worked closely with mentors to get their GED or diploma.



Clients dropped out of high school for various reasons. They include to take care of siblings, poor grades, and mental health issues.



Mentors supported clients with over \$800 in education funding. This funding helped clients secure school supplies including books, laptops, and exam fees.

Employment

The following is the Crisis to Thrive scale for employment. Mentors noted their client's status after each meeting and shared additional context in a comment section.

Scale	Rank	Explanation
In Crisis	1	Unable to work
	2	Able to work but unemployed, lacks basis skills for desired field
Vulnerable	3	Unemployed but with work history and skills
	4	Employed part time or seasonal
Safe	5	Employed part time but looking for fulltime work
	6	Permanently employed but not sufficient hours, wage, or benefits
Building Capacity	7	Employed 32+ hours per week with adequate pay
	8	Employed 32+ hours per week with adequate pay and benefits
Empowered	9	Employed 32+ hours per week in field of choice, good pay, benefits, opportunities for advancement
	10	Employed 32+ hours per week in field of choice with benefits opportunities for advancement, stable employer

Employment

Most WC Clients were vulnerable or in crisis when it comes to employment.

Most clients previously held several retail or service jobs, most for less than a year.

Employment Crisis to Thrive Score



Employment



30 clients (71%) were unemployed. Many of these clients have some work experience but need extra support to maintain employment stability.



Only 6 clients held stable, full time jobs. It is unlikely for most clients to attain stable, well paid employment in a field of their choice without years of work on their educational attainment status.



Only 1 client had benefits through their job. Benefits provide employees long-term stability.

Transportation

The following is the Crisis to Thrive scale for transportation. Mentors noted their client's status after each meeting and shared additional context in a comment section.

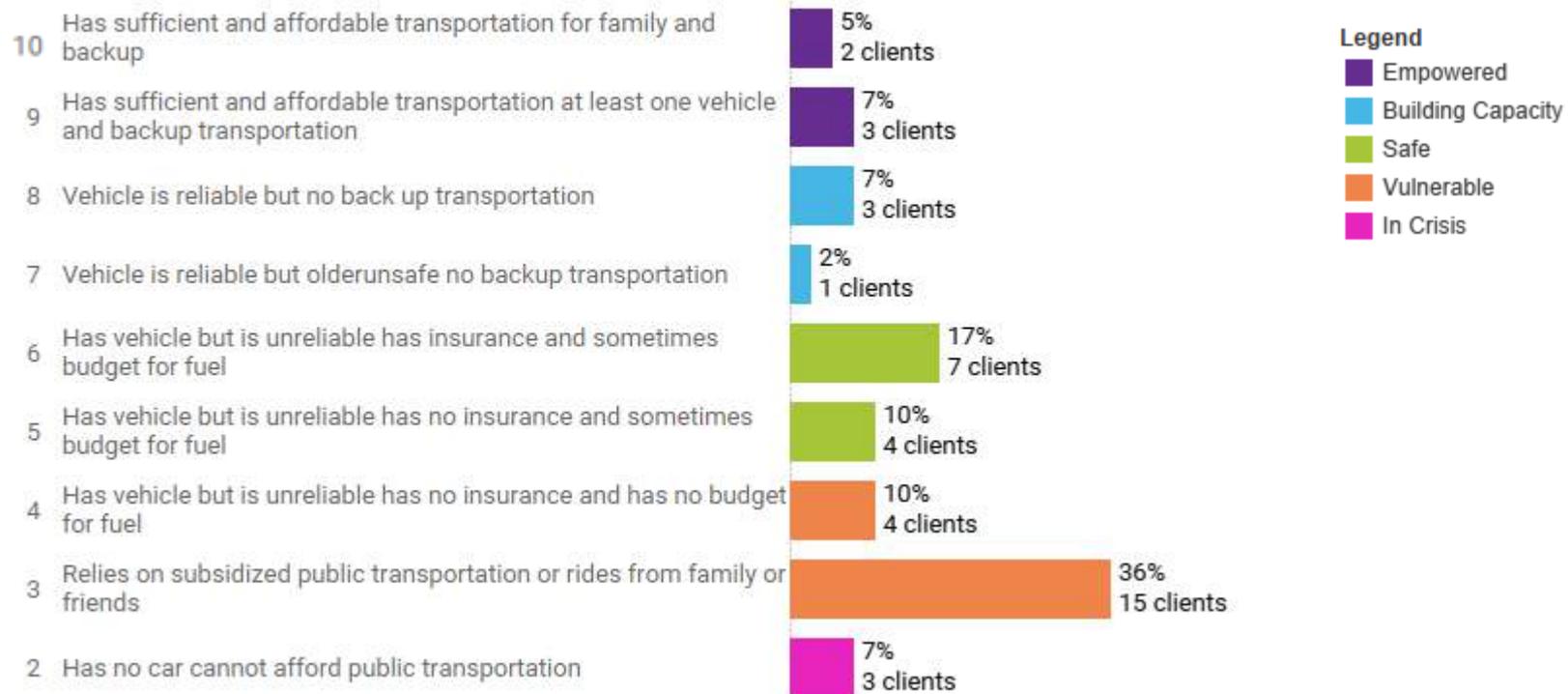
Scale	Rank	Explanation
In Crisis	1	Has no car, too far from public transportation/doesn't serve needed locations
	2	Has no car, cannot afford public transportation
Vulnerable	3	Relies on subsidized public transportation or rides from family or friends
	4	Has vehicle but is unreliable, has no insurance, and has no budget for fuel
Safe	5	Has vehicle but is unreliable, has no insurance, and sometimes budget for fuel
	6	Has vehicle but is unreliable, has insurance, and sometimes budget for fuel
Building Capacity	7	Vehicle is reliable but older/unsafe, no back-up transportation
	8	Vehicle is reliable, but no back up transportation
Empowered	9	Has sufficient and affordable transportation, at least one vehicle, and backup transportation
	10	Has sufficient and affordable transportation for family and backup

Transportation

The majority of clients did not have reliable personal transportation.

Public transportation is difficult to rely on in the Rapid City area. Those who depend on it face inadequate routes, limited hours, and long commutes.

Transportation Crisis to Thrive Score



Transportation



Though the majority of clients have a car, many struggle to afford insurance, gas, and maintenance. Fuel cards were the most popular incentive for program participants. \$900 worth of fuel cards were distributed.



41% of clients rely on public transportation. This deeply impacts their ability to access childcare, employment, and educational opportunities.

Childcare

The following is the Crisis to Thrive scale for childcare. Mentors noted their client's status after each meeting and shared additional context in a comment section.

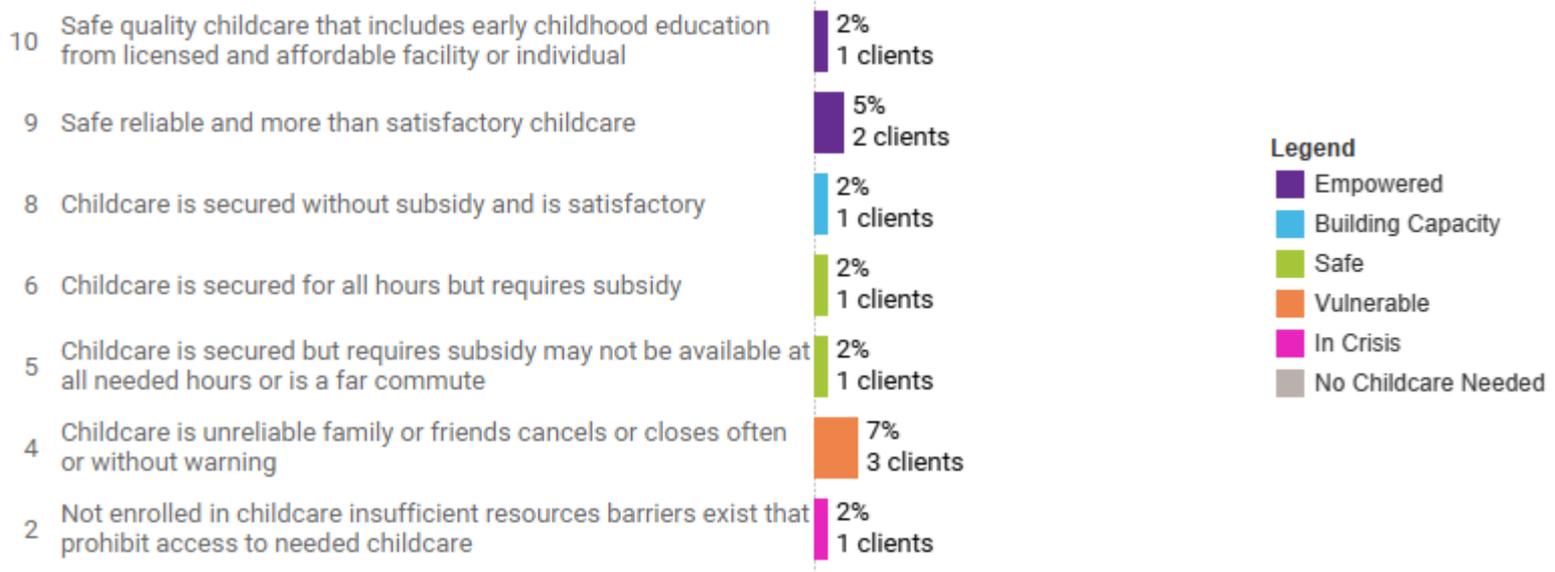
Scale	Rank	Explanation
In Crisis	1	Child is too young/ineligible for childcare
	2	Not enrolled in childcare, insufficient resources, barriers exist that prohibit access to needed childcare
Vulnerable	3	Qualifies for subsidized childcare but all spots are filled, no family or friends available
	4	Childcare is unreliable (family or friends) cancels or closes often or without warning
Safe	5	Childcare is secured but requires subsidy, may not be available at all needed hours or is a far commute
	6	Childcare is secured for all hours, but requires subsidy
Building Capacity	7	Childcare is secured without subsidy but is not satisfactory
	8	Childcare is secured without subsidy and is satisfactory
Empowered	9	Safe, reliable, and more than satisfactory childcare
	10	Safe, quality childcare that includes early childhood education from licensed and affordable facility or individual
Not applicable	11	This client does not have children
	12	This client had children but does not have custody at this time
	13	This client has children but they do not need childcare (child is old enough to take care of themselves)

Childcare

Only 23% of clients had childcare needs.

Clients spanned the childcare spectrum, with some needing substantial assistance getting childcare and others who have their children enrolled in high quality childcare.

Childcare Crisis to Thrive Score



77% of clients did not need child care. 55% did not have children, 17% had children but did not have custody of them, and 5% had children that were too old to need child care.

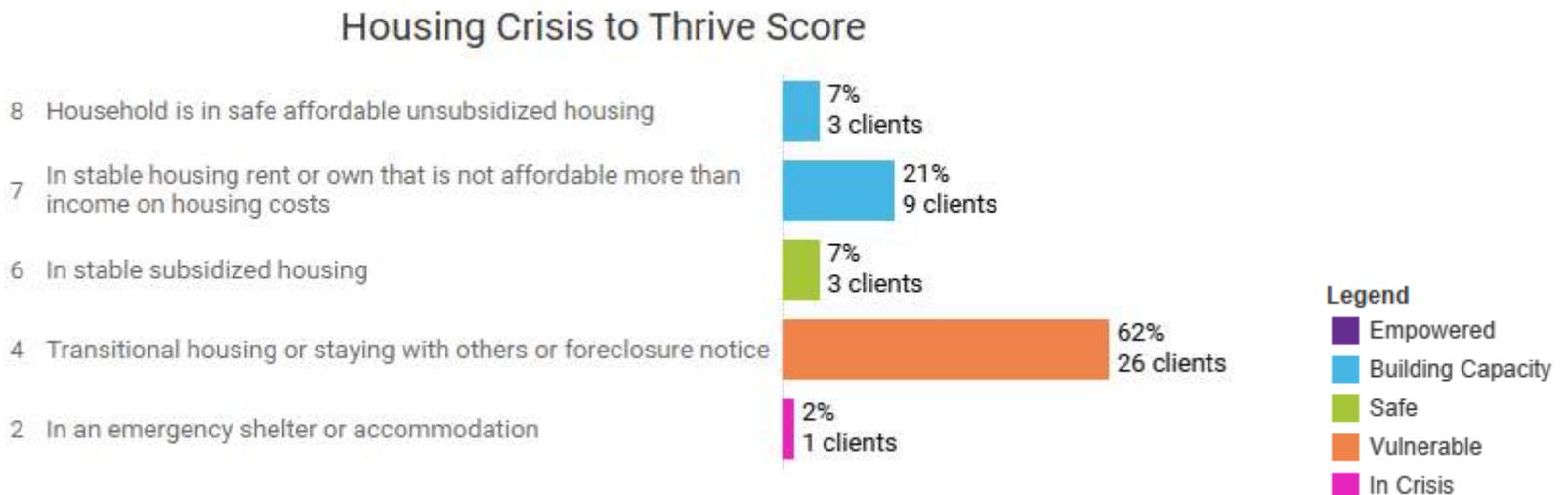
Housing

The following is the Crisis to Thrive scale for housing. Mentors noted their client's status after each meeting and shared additional context in a comment section.

Scale	Rank	Explanation
In Crisis	1	Literally homeless, without a roof over their head
	2	In an emergency shelter or accommodation
Vulnerable	3	Legal threat of eviction or immediate foreclosure
	4	Transitional housing, or staying with others, or foreclosure notice
Safe	5	Receiving temporary rent/mortgage subsidy or has received one in the past 3 months
	6	In stable, subsidized housing
Building Capacity	7	In stable housing (rent or own) that is not affordable (more than 30% income on housing costs)
	8	Household is in safe, affordable, unsubsidized housing
Empowered	9	Household is in safe, affordable, unsubsidized housing of choice
	10	Household is safe, affordable, and paid off

Housing

Though most clients were in some form of housing, the majority are living in transitional housing. Most clients live in intergenerational housing with extended family including aunts, uncles, grandparents, and siblings.



Housing



64% of clients were homeless. The majority of these clients lived in transitional or emergency housing.

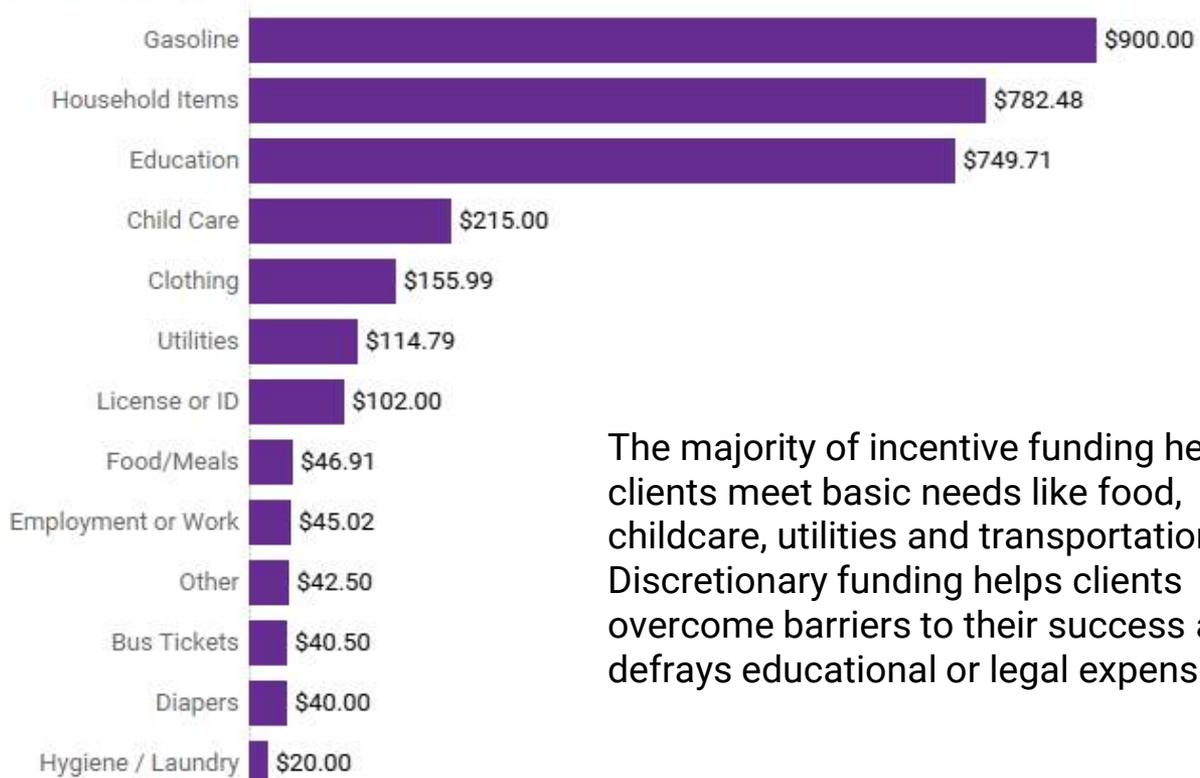


Only 3 clients (7%) were in housing they could afford on their own. This trend is likely symptomatic of the local low-wage economy and the local housing market that studies have shown does not have enough affordable housing for all income levels.

Incentive Funding

Mentors distributed \$3,255 to 23 different clients. This funding is provided as both incentive funding and discretionary funding.

Incentive Funding



The majority of incentive funding helps clients meet basic needs like food, childcare, utilities and transportation. Discretionary funding helps clients overcome barriers to their success and defrays educational or legal expenses

Educational Goals

32 clients had educational goals. Mentors provided needed support, cheerleading, and accountability to help them meet their personal goals.

- **24** Earned their GED
- **4** earned their high school diploma
- **12** applied for college
- **4** completed their FAFSA
- **2** Applied for Scholarships

Employment Goals

22 clients had employment goals. These goals often build upon the educational successes the client has while in the program

- **17** Built a resume
- **15** Completed a Career Assessment
- Intended careers include:
 - Firefighting
 - Dental Assisting
 - Nursing
 - Cosmetology
 - Drug and Alcohol Counseling
 - Auto mechanics
 - Housekeeping
 - Paramedic
 - Electrician

Other Goals

17 clients had other goals. These goals help clients obtain further stability in their home life or better equip them for the workforce.

Other goals include

- Obtain driver's license
- Obtain housing
- Pardon on drug charge
- Understand criminal record
- Obtain daycare or daycare assistance
- Obtain custody of children
- Obtain Service dog
- Complete Recovery program

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