



## YOUTH & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER



# Shelby County Youth & Family Resource Center



“*Connecting Youth to  
Community, Not  
Systems.*”

### Memphis, TN

Situated within the Memphis, TN area, the Shelby County Youth and Family Resource Center (YFRC) works in partnership with youth and their families to identify strengths, assess needs, and address areas of concern.

The center facilitates connections to tailored services, supports, and community resources. It collaborates with community partners to promote the effective utilization of existing resources for the betterment of youth, families, and community.

**VISION:** “We envision a Shelby County where youth and their families are empowered to overcome challenges and to build a future in which they will thrive, grow, and explore opportunities in life.”

**VALUES:** *Connection:* linking youth and their families with community resources to diminish their involvement in the youth justice system. By facilitating these connections, the center aims to provide proactive support and prevent further entanglement in legal processes.

*Collaboration:* partnering with various community agencies to address the unique needs of youth and their families. Through these partnerships, tailored services and interventions can be better provided to meet individualized

needs, fostering a more comprehensive and effective support system.

*Community:* the center's commitment to building a supportive environment where youth and their families can flourish and thrive. By creating a nurturing and inclusive atmosphere, the center endeavors to empower individuals to reach their full potential and actively contribute to their communities.

*Equity:* crucial in ensuring fair treatment for all, respecting everyone's needs, culture, and background.

*Empathy:* integral to the center's approach, as it engages with every youth and their family with compassion and non-judgment, upholding the dignity and self-worth of each person.

# The Impact of the YFRC

Around 90% of youth felt the Youth & Family Resource Center took their feelings seriously and the staff listened to them.

Most referrals to the YFRC, or 91% of youth, were by law enforcement. The Memphis Police Department and the YFRC have an agreement that allows for certain charges to be referred to the YFRC at the officer’s discretion. MPD officers have a referral form that they provide to the youth and their family which explains the program and that a referral to the YFRC has been made. This allows for a pathway to divert youth from the justice system while working to engage them in needed services and additional support. Additionally, officers are also able to refer families in a preventative manner.

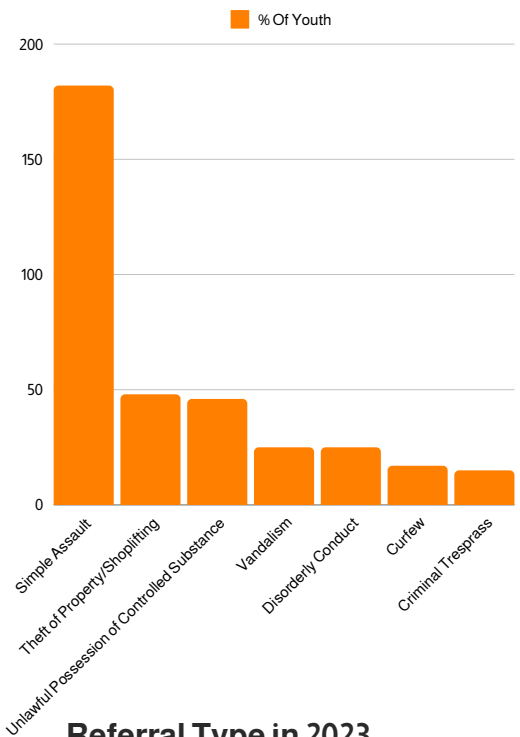
A total of 434 unique youth were referred to the center in FY23 (see chart on bottom right). Other youth were referred by concerned parents, school officials, and other sources

Most youth referred to the YFRC in FY23 appeared for an appointment with their caregiver. A total of 59% of all youth referred, engaged with the YFRC process. Forty-one percent of youth referred did not engage.

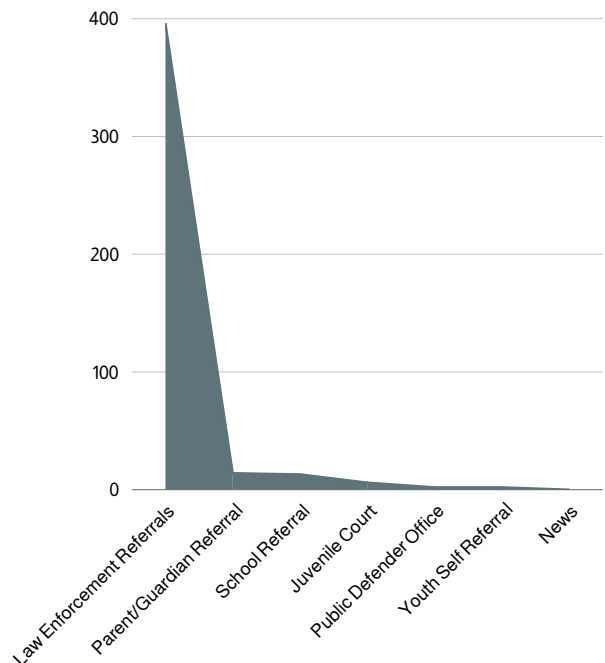
In 2023, youth screened showed the most need in the areas such as *school behavior, legal system involvement, decision making, anger control, school achievement, antisocial behavior, attention/concentration, impulsivity/ hyperactivity, school attendance, adjustment to trauma, depression, substance abuse, and depression.*

The YFRC relies on **community-based organizations** to meet the needs of youth and families. Once the screening and assessment is completed, referrals to community-based organizations are made that **align with the needs, strengths, and interests of youth and families.** Referrals were made to various organizations, including the Raleigh Community Center, Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks Job Corps Center, Dress for Success, Eternal Bread Ministry, Compass Intervention, Boys and Girls Club, Agape Child and Family Services, Child Advocacy Center, Girls Inc, and MIFA.

Nearly half (46%) of all youth referred by law enforcement were involved in a simple assault incident.



Referral Type in 2023



# Feedback from Youth & Caregivers



“I really think this is a great thing for our kids. I don't believe one mistake should discourage them for life.” - Caregiver

“They were very welcoming, made me comfortable enough to talk about personal things & were considerate about my feelings.” - Youth

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\*Screenings with youth and caregivers often reveal opportunities for YFRC staff to step into action and connect them to crucial services. Names in these stories are changed to protect confidentiality.\*

“A school fight brought Luke to the YFRC, where he disclosed that neither parent was in his life due to incarceration and mental health struggles. Luke lives with his 4 siblings and his oldest college-aged sibling serves as the sole caretaker. Our youth advocate partnered with Luke and his older sibling to determine their financial, emotional, and social needs and the resources that might be helpful for them. Then YFRC linked them with mental health counseling, mentoring, and ongoing financial support—connections to their community so the entire family can thrive.”

“When YFRC reached out to Jade's mom, she was willing to come in for the screening, but there was a major barrier – she was currently living in her car with her four children. Our youth advocate realized that no meaningful work regarding Jade's legal issue could be done until the family's basic housing needs were met. This began several months of support and advocacy with various community systems and resources to get this family safely housed. “

“Ty was referred to the YFRC after a charge of criminal trespassing. Ty shared that his father passed away three years ago and that he was still coping with that loss. As with all of our youth, Ty also has lots of strengths – he loves to play basketball and is already a member of two community leagues; he attends school regularly and makes decent grades. Ty and his mom have a positive relationship and he has other male role models in his life. Our youth advocate spent time with Ty and his mom highlighting those strengths and exploring ways to build on them – one being increasing their communication of their shared experience of grief.”

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