

Sunnybrook Exceeds State and National Benchmarks in Preparing Foster Care Graduates for Life

Sunnybrook is pleased to announce the results of its first impact survey, with results that exceed state and national foster care benchmarks.

RIDGELAND, MS, U.S.A., June 5, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- After shifting its focus from young foster children to transitional-age teens and young adults in 2019, [Sunnybrook](https://www.sunnybrookms.org) is pleased to announce the results of its first impact survey, with results that exceed state and national foster care benchmarks.

According to the survey, which was completed by recent program alumni and current residents earlier this year, Sunnybrook's mission of holistic foster care delivers the following impact:

Youth Employment: Defined as employment participation rates between the ages of 16-19.
National General Population: 37%
National Foster Care: 14%
Sunnybrook: 77%

Financial Literacy Training: Defined as learning and practicing budgeting, managing and paying off debts, and understanding credit and investment products.

Mississippi Foster Care: 22% get 5 hours of training
Sunnybrook: 66% get at least 40 hours of training

Driver's License/Permit: Self-transportation is an essential aspect of lifetime earnings, with a report by the Brookings Institution showing that nearly 70% of jobs in the U.S. are not reachable



Sunnybrook's beautiful suburban campus in Ridgeland, MS, is dotted with homes for the transitional living youth and young adults

within a 90-minute public transportation ride.

National General Population at age 18: 60%

National Foster Care: 5%

Sunnybrook: 50% (which includes ineligible 15-year-olds)

Employment Six Months After Exit: Defined as a part-time or full-time job.

Mississippi Foster Care: 64%

Sunnybrook: 100%

Measurable Skills Gained: Defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.

National Foster Care: 50%

Sunnybrook: 100%



Sunnybrook is thrilled to announce the 60th anniversary of its founding, a milestone that marks six decades of providing safe and nurturing homes for foster children and their families.

“

Sunnybrook was founded in 1963 to serve the greatest needs of the foster care community. After 60 years of impact and evolution, we still embrace solving the complex challenges of the moment.”

Executive Director Dr. Myrle Grate

“Behind these numbers are real kids with stories of struggle that most people couldn’t imagine. It’s validating to witness the impact of our ministry changing their lives,” Sunnybrook Executive Director Dr. Myrle [Grate](#) explained. “The prospects for someone aging out of the foster care system are not good. We’re giving our residents a foundation of faith and knowledge to unlock a fulfilling future.”

According to the Children’s Bureau, approximately 80% of foster care kids have significant mental health issues, approximately fourfold higher than their peers.

Sunnybrook services extend beyond lodging and food, creating a unique ecosystem that includes mental health counseling, individual and team skills building, and emphasizing education, faith and employability.

The ratio of staff to residents is kept intentionally high to ensure high-touch stability and support for any of the unique challenges that come with a foster upbringing.

"The overwhelming majority of Sunnybrook residents arrive without basic documentation, like birth certificates or Social Security cards, which are needed to drive and get a job," Grate explained. "This simple roadblock can perpetuate a cycle of dependency and rates of teen pregnancy, addiction, incarceration and early death that are dramatically higher than their peers."

He continued: "Our Sunnybrook staff have the expertise and knowledge, plus the drive to track down paperwork within various bureaucracies, opening doors that otherwise may have remained shut."

"I wish they could start more [transitional living](#) facilities across the state of Mississippi because what they have there is incredible," CASA of North Mississippi Executive Director Erin Smith, said about Sunnybrook during her Mississippi Senate testimony in 2022. "They have moved from what they used to do many years ago into teaching these kids to live independently."

Operational costs are high for doing things the right way but are made possible through a combination of state funding and generous private donations. Increased financial support would empower Sunnybrook to hire more houseparents and staff, and welcome additional residents into its Ridgeland campus.

"We couldn't deliver this impact without the support of the entire Sunnybrook family, from donors and volunteers to staff, to businesses that employ our residents, and other creative partnerships," Grate continued. "After six decades in operations, we're very proud of the stable, Christian, family environment we've built to uplift society's most vulnerable members."

In addition to transitional living services, Sunnybrook also engages directly with foster families, including its signature respite care initiative at the pastoral Sunset Hill Estate.

Beyond residential services, Sunnybrook champions education, proudly advocating for state legislators to create the FAITH Scholarship Program, which offers \$1 million in college scholarships for graduates of the foster system.

Sunnybrook recently announced a collaboration with Southern Christian Services and Mississippians Against Human Trafficking to create Mississippi's only safe home for adolescent



Sunnybrook Children's Home has served Mississippi for six decades, giving foster kids and their families reason for hope and a strong Christian foundation.

survivors of human trafficking. The new safe home protects young survivors at an undisclosed location for up to two years, providing evidenced-based therapeutic services and specified support.

“Sunnybrook was founded in 1963 to serve the greatest needs of the foster care community,” Grate said. “After 60 years of impact and evolution, we still embrace solving the complex challenges of the moment.”

For more information on Sunnybrook, or to make a donation, please visit Sunnybrookms.org.

More About Sunnybrook: Children and youth have called Sunnybrook “home” for 60 years. In order to respond to the growing disparity between foster youth and other young people, Sunnybrook launched its Transitional Living Program in the fall of 2020. We are dedicated to expanding our services to meet the needs of society. Sunnybrook is licensed by the State of Mississippi to provide residential care for older youth who are capable of functioning in a family environment as part of the community.

Media Contact:

Brian Tinsman
H2D Strategies
+1 302-542-3580
[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)
[Twitter](#)
[LinkedIn](#)
[Instagram](#)
[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/637750595>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.