



# Impact Report

## 2021

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# A Note From Our CEO

Dear Friends,

This report is intended to provide you with snapshots that comprise a beautiful tapestry of impact made by our 200 ESL team members during 2021.

**All abilities, limitless possibilities.** This is our mantra. Our mission, values and beliefs drive the work we do to support over 8,600 participants and families across our communities.

In December 2020, Easterseals Louisiana was awarded a \$5 million dollar donation from Author and Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. This was the largest donation our 70 year history! Our organization was among 12 recipients in Louisiana and 384 entities selected from a pool of over 7500 Nationwide. In total, 22 Easterseals affiliates received Scott funding. This speaks volumes to the work we are doing in Louisiana and across the United States through our Easterseals network! This unexpected, unprecedented grant was even more impactful considering the lingering Covid environment and the strain being placed on healthcare and service systems.

In early 2021, we developed our plan for utilizing the Scott funds. This plan was created with feedback from our workforce and community stakeholders. What we developed included direct, immediate and long-term investments in our workforce related to retention and recruitment, short term spending and attention to targeted community needs, strengthening autism supports and services, and intentional strategic focus on long term planning to meet the changing needs of people with disabilities.

This impact report contains testimonials from participants and ESL team members and shares stories about the transformational work done in 2021. Some highlights include our SPARK fund, expansion of our Behavioral Health presence to South Louisiana, and our partnership with the Chartwell Consortium to advance autism supports.

At Easterseals Louisiana, we make a life of purpose and independence possible for our participants through our commitment to quality support, innovative service offerings, and continuous organizational evolution.

We hope you enjoy our 2021 Impact Report!

Sincerely,

Tracy Garner

Easterseals Louisiana President & CEO



# Theory of Impact

Easterseals Louisiana is a non-profit organization whose mission is to assist children and adults with physical and intellectual disabilities achieve independence. Making a life of purpose and independence possible for our participants through our commitment to quality support, transformational service offerings, and continuous organizational evolution.

Easterseals Louisiana is leading the way to full equity, inclusion, and access through life-changing disability and community services. For over 70 years, we have worked tirelessly with our partners to enhance quality of life and expand local access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. And we won't rest until every one of us is valued, respected, and accepted.

Through our national network of affiliates, Easterseals provides essential services and on-the-ground supports to more than 1.5 million people each year — from early childhood programs for the critical first five years, to autism services, to medical rehabilitation and employment programs, to veterans' services, and more. Our public education, policy, and advocacy initiatives positively shape perceptions and address the urgent and evolving needs of the one in four Americans living with disabilities today.

**Together, we're empowering people with disabilities, families and communities to be full and equal participants in society.**





# Board of Directors

## **Officers**

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Terry Snyder

## **In Memoriam**

Ronnie Kole (1931 - 2020)

Gardner Kole (1930 - 2020)

Thomas A. Tizzard III (1954 - 2021)

# Programs & Services

Leading the way to 100% equity, inclusion, and access  
by Enriching Education, Expanding Employment,  
Enhancing Health and Elevating Community

## **Enriching Education**

Programs designed to help children and adults learn—and often re-learn—basic functions, master skills needed to develop and thrive, and be sharp and active as they age.

## **Campership**

ESL Partners with Camp Able to provide funding for summer camp tuition for children and young adults with disabilities.

## **Phoenix Peer Support Center**

A day program which allows individuals who are experiencing mental health challenges to "drop in" to receive supports in a safe and welcoming environment. In addition to basic amenities such as meals and showers, participants are provided with a variety of supports including skill building, recovery support, and linkages to resources.

## **Expanding Employment**

A range of training, placement and related services that help people prepare for or re-enter the workforce.

## **Employment Resources and Referral**

Offers a range of resources that helps prepare individuals for the work force.



## **Enhancing Health**

Hands-on, comprehensive, vital therapies and services which ensure health and wellness so that children and adults can reach their full potential.

### **Support Coordination**

ESL's Support Coordinators not only help people with disabilities locate services and assistance, but play an active role in the coordination of services to ensure that each individual's needs are being met. The goals of support coordination are to foster independence and self-sufficiency, and ensure the participant's health, safety, and well-being in the least restrictive environment.

### **Family Service Coordination (FSC)**

The FSC role is to assist an eligible child (age 0-3) and their family in receiving rights, procedural safeguards, and services authorized in EarlySteps to overcome developmental disabilities.

### **EarlySteps System Point of Entry (SPOE)**

Identifies, evaluates, and supports infants and toddlers, ages birth to 3, who may have developmental delays.

### **Crisis Counseling**

We provide information, resources, and crisis counseling to people in need of relief of behavioral health challenges exacerbated by COVID-19.

### **Intensive Community Engagement (ICE)**

We provide housing and case management services to individuals and families that have mental illness or co-occurring disorders.

### **Mental Health Case Management**

Complex care coordination to support individuals with ongoing mental health needs. The program goal is to increase utilization of services and improve health.

## **Elevating Community**

Programs for children, adults, and caregivers to live, relax, connect, and thrive within their communities. These programs strengthen the local community overall and encourages individual engagement and participation in their local communities.

### **Exit 318: Re-Entry**

Via a partnership with Goodwill Industries, we provide case management and housing assistance for people exiting the penal system. Goodwill provides employment readiness and placement services.

### **Pathways to Independence: Rapid Re-Housing**

We provide time-limited (up to 24 months) case management and rental assistance to people with mental health conditions who are episodically or chronically unhoused. We utilize a Housing First approach, which dictates that housing is quickly provided without pre-conditions.

### **811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA)**

We provide affordable rental housing with intensive case management services to people with complex health needs.

### **Mid-City Transitional Housing**

Located in Shreveport, LA this is a housing option for people who are episodically or chronically unhoused where they can stay up to 2 years. We provide intensive case management and serve as a pipeline to more permanent housing via Permanent Supportive Housing vouchers that are available in the community.

### **PATH**

Our team proactively engages with those currently experiencing homelessness through street outreach providing needed supplies such as food, blankets, hygiene supplies, etc. We also work to link those individuals with housing options if it is the participant's desire.

### **Regency Inn Transitional Living**

Located in Monroe, LA, this program is a housing first option for unhoused individuals who also need mental health supports. In addition to a safe housing option, this program provides intensive case management with the goal of transition into permanent housing.

### **Permanent Supportive Housing**

Housing, case management, and financial assistance for things such as rent and utilities are provided for people who have been episodically or chronically unhoused.

# Impact By The Numbers

**8,651** participants were directly served by ESL in 2021.

**3,971** additional family members and caregivers were supported by ESL services.

Our youngest participant served in 2021 was just **4 weeks old**.

**10,300** telehealth visits for home and community based waiver services.

**6** new programs were launched to better serve our community.

**78,975** meals provided to our participants.

Our oldest participant served in 2021 was **101 years old**.

**2,075** items and activities were sent in Camp-in-a-box to **83** campers.





# Easterseals Louisiana Spark Fund

In December 2020, Easterseals Louisiana received a \$5 Million donation from Author and Philanthropist, MacKenzie Scott - the largest one time gift in our organization's 70 year history. With this gift came the great responsibility to make sure these funds would be put to work to create real impact in communities across Louisiana.

Our Spark Fund, which we launched in April 2021, is designed to put the power in the hands of our team members who work in our communities and directly fund the initiatives they identify would have a lasting impact. In June 2021, Easterseals Louisiana funded 6 projects with a total of \$54,000 into initiatives and projects that will support our communities like we never have before. Today, Team Members across the state work hard to put these initiatives into action and help us continue to expand our mission.

## **The Sparrow Project**

The Sparrow Project aims to provide low-income participants of ESL housing programs in Region 7 with beds, bedding, pots and pans, plates, bowls, utensils, and two weeks of food on their first night in their new home.

## **The Hope Squad**

Hope Squad is a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program. It strives to create a safe school environment, promote connectedness, support anti-bullying, encourage mental wellness, reduce mental health stigma and prevent substance misuse.

## **The Baby Seals Book Club**

The Baby Seals Book Club is a traveling book club program for two-year-olds in daycare and early learning centers in Regions 1, 6, and 8 where ESL EarlyStep SPOE Intake Coordinators host monthly read-alongs and provide books to families who might not otherwise seek or be able to afford them.

## **Personal Care Bags & Homeless Outreach**

This initiative provides personal care backpacks for those who are experiencing homelessness in Alexandria and the surrounding areas. Our team members also passed out water bottles and guided individuals to resources that may be helpful to them.

## **Personal Care Bags & Senior Assistance**

This project provides personal care bags for our elderly participants who are in need of items such as diapers, personal hygiene items and more.

## **The Phoenix Peer Center Garden & Beautification Project**

In partnership with the local community, ESL's Phoenix Peer Center in Monroe, LA has established a community garden where participants and neighbors alike can engage in building a sustaining a garden. This includes the addition a number of garden boxes, a gazebo, light posts, benches and grills so enhance the community experience and create an environment where all feel welcome.

# Our 2021 Impact & Accomplishments



98.5% of participants say they are likely to recommend ESL services to people they know.

95.5% of participants say they are satisfied with their experience with ESL.

99.2% of team members said ESL went above and beyond as an employer responding to COVID-19.

91.0% of funds expended were used for direct services in communities across Louisiana.

0% of individuals in ESL residential programs were diagnosed with COVID-19.



## Celebrations of Success

“

I assisted a participant with finding a provider that could assist her with addiction. After struggling with addiction for several years, she has now been sober for 6 months!

- Nicolette Blood  
Shreveport Behavioral Health  
Supervisor

”

“

One of my participants, age 101 is living in the community with her family and receiving services.

- Michelle Williams  
Covington Support  
Coordinator

”

“

One of my participants just started high school. She let me know during our meeting last week she is attending the homecoming dance with a date. She hadn't told her mom she had a date yet, so everyone was surprised during the meeting.

- Holly Kliebert  
Covington Support  
Coordinator

”

“ My participant with Cerebral Palsy sat up, unassisted, for 40 minutes during our quarterly visit. She was so proud to achieve this goal in front of her team and we were happy to cheer her on. This was the first time she tested how long she could sit up alone and it was such an honor that she chose to include her provider and myself in this special moment.

- Meghan Foret

Thibodaux Support Coordinator

“ There are two days that really excite me about my job. The first one is when I'm able to see the joy and peace of mind come to a participant who has been homeless for months or years, know that for the first time in a long time, they have a place to call home and safe place to sleep. The second most exciting day I get to experience with my participants is when I'm able to say to them, 'You don't need me anymore', and in their heart they know it's true.

- Jason Seaux

Shreveport Behavioral Health Supervisor

“ A participant of mine was able to move out into an apartment of his own for the first time. Every month he loves to video call with me and show me how he's keeping his apartment clean. This participant and I graduated high school together so being able to be in contact at least once a month is very special!

- Peyton Britt

Shreveport Support  
Coordinator



# Expansion of Behavioral Health Services

For over 15 years ESL has offered high quality behavioral health supports to individuals with disabilities. In 2021 we were excited to expand these supports to three new regions of the state: Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and the North Shore.

In Baton Rouge and New Orleans we launched rapid re-housing in partnership with the Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless and Unity of Greater New Orleans, respectively. This program provides time-limited case management and rental assistance to individuals with mental health diagnoses who are episodically or chronically experiencing homelessness. A Housing First approach is used which dictates that housing is quickly provided without precondition.

On the North Shore we have partnered with Florida Parishes Human Services Authority to embed mental health case managers in their health clinics. These locations provide services from screening and assessment to therapy and medication management. ESL case managers work with clients to ensure they have the tools necessary to be successful in their treatment.



# Participant Praise

“ My services with children's choice are great! I have the best coordinator. She is very accurate and she cares about her participants care. ”

“ The staff are expedient and they work well in unity. They care for our wellbeing as well as safety and livelihood. I am pleased with this program. ”

“ Everyone at Easterseals has been caring, kind, professional and they clearly care about our little girl! ”

“ The program does great work in helping parents and children. The staff are supportive, and take care of the "red tape" seamlessly in the background allowing parents to deal with the challenges of parenting a child with developmental delays and navigating the system. ”

“ The kindness and willingness to help from all the staff who work here are great, and not to forget the coffee as well! ”

“ We can't speak highly enough of our Support Coordinator, Holly Kliebert! She is always available, keeping in touch with us, gives excellent assistance & help and we would be lost without her and am so grateful for all she has done for our son and our family! ”



# Easterseals Louisiana Chartwell Center



As a part of planning to utilize the funds from our transformational MacKenzie Scott grant, we surveyed our team and community about unmet needs for individuals with disabilities in our state. One of the most identified needs was enhanced services for individuals with Autism.

This launched a multi-month study to learn where we could make a difference. We learned about the continuum of care, and it became evident that there are many different types of providers offering a variety of interventions, but not many offering those services across multiple age groups. In our research, we encountered the Chartwell Center in New Orleans who, for more than 20 years, has provided supports to individuals with autism from preschool to young adulthood.

Chartwell is dedicated to empowering individuals with autism and their families. From their origins as a small school, they have grown from a single classroom to their current state of the art campus in the heart of New Orleans. To fulfill its mission, Chartwell employs a number of research-based “best” practices, including Applied Behavior Analysis, Community-Based Instruction, and Arts Integration. They also focus heavily on students’ overall health and wellbeing, doing everything from yoga and exercise to gardening and play.

As it just so happened, Chartwell was searching to partner with an organization that shares its mission, vision, core beliefs, and values. Over the last year we have been working together to explore a merger of our organizations and the Board of Directors of both entities approved just this in September effective in January 2022!

ESL is excited for the opportunity to be able to offer Autism supports with such a well respected partner and also bring our expertise to Chartwell Center. It is our vision to offer families of Chartwell additional supports for their children as well as assist in navigating the landscape of services provided by others in the region. We also look forward to a day where we can expand this model into other areas of the state.

# Fiscal Year 2020 - 2021



## Public Support & Revenue

Program Service Fees	\$ 6,175,159
Contributions/Grants	\$ 10,940,699
Special Events & Charitable Gaming	\$ 527,198
Investments	\$ 448,075
Miscellaneous	\$ 235,987

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**Total Support Revenue** **\$ 18,327,118**

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## Expenditures

Direct Services	\$ 8,985,204
Management & General	\$ 1,266,543
Special Events & Charitable Gaming	\$ 525,288
Support to National Programs	\$ 50,617

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**Total Expenditures** **\$ 10,726,418**

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Follow our impact all year long @EastersealsLouisiana

For more information,  
please call 504 - 523 - 7325,  
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