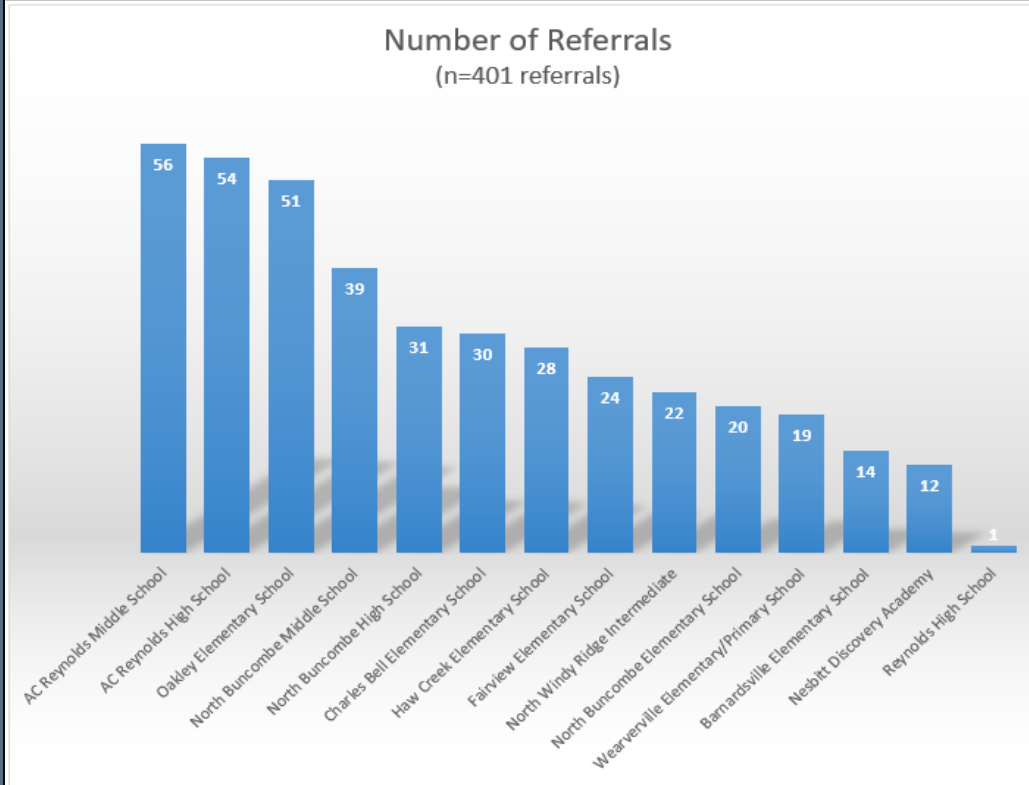


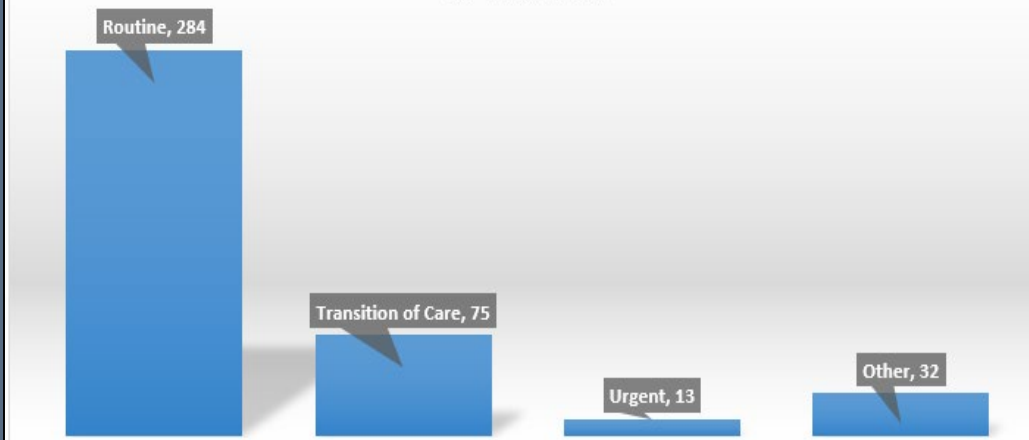
August 2020 – May 2021

How Much Did We Do?



During the first year of the School-Based Therapy (SBT) program, there were a total of 401 referrals from 14 Buncombe County schools from August 2020 to May 2021. The majority of referrals came from AC Reynolds Middle School followed closely by AC Reynolds High School.

Referral Service Type

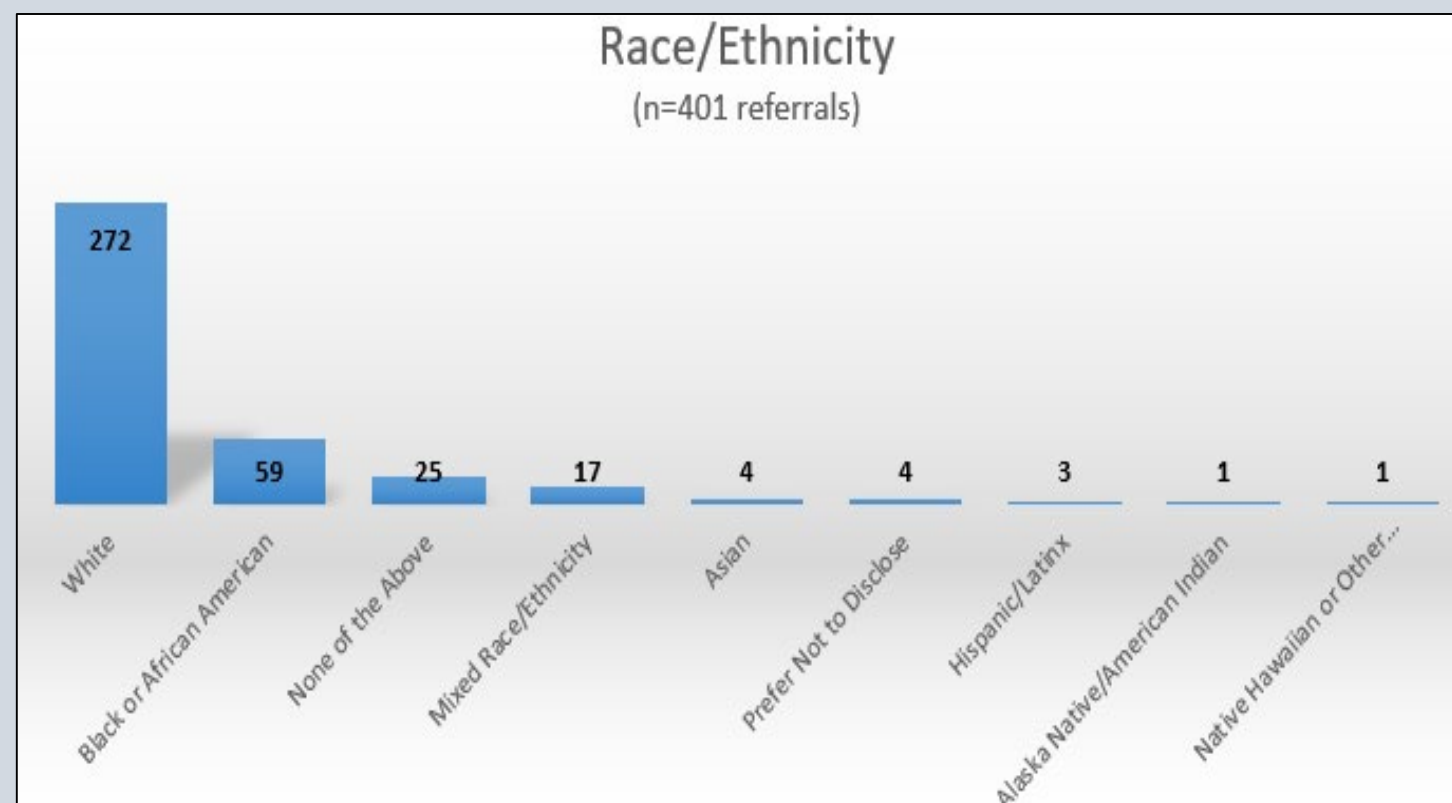


A majority of the referral service type were Routine appointments followed by Transition of Care appointments. There were a total of 307 appointments made, of those made, 288 patients attended their appointments. At the end of year one, there were 254 active clients from the SBT referral system.

401 Referrals

- 307 Appointments Made
 - 288 Patients Attended Appointment
 - 254 Active Clients
- *Active clients are currently receiving behavioral health services

How Well Did We Do It?



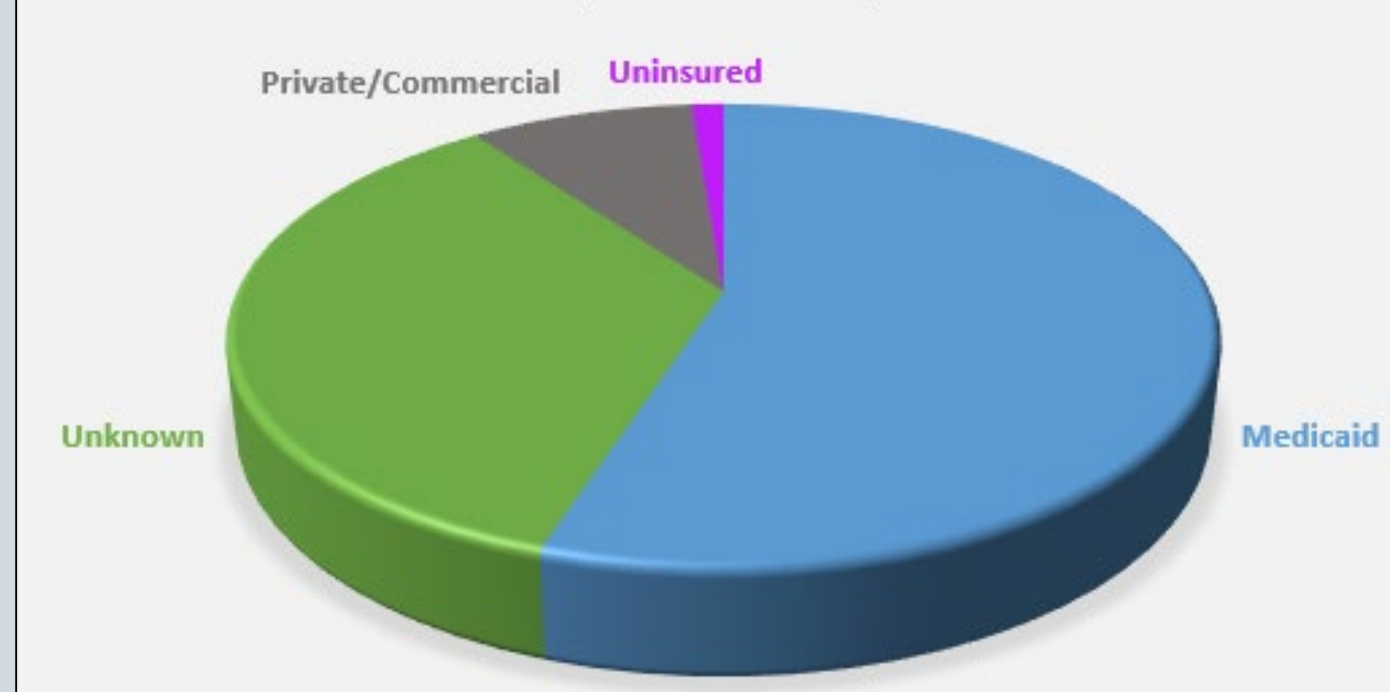
A large majority of the referrals made were patients whose race/ethnicity was reported as White followed by Black or African American. According to EdNC.org, the 2020-21 school year consisted of 22,298 enrolled students in Buncombe County. Approximately 67.7% were White, 7% were Black, 18.8% were Hispanic, and 4.5% were of two or more races. Asian, American Indian, and Pacific Islander were less than 2% each*. Of the referrals from the SBT program, we are seeing a representative proportion from White and Black or African American demographics however, we are not referring enough Hispanic/Latinx students from the SBT program when compared to the percentage of Hispanic/Latinx student population in Buncombe County schools. There could be possible discrepancies within the data of those who Prefer[red] Not to Disclose their race/ethnicity or reported as None of the Above.

*Buncombe County Schools. (2021). Retrieved from EdNC.org: <https://www.ednc.org/district/buncombe/>

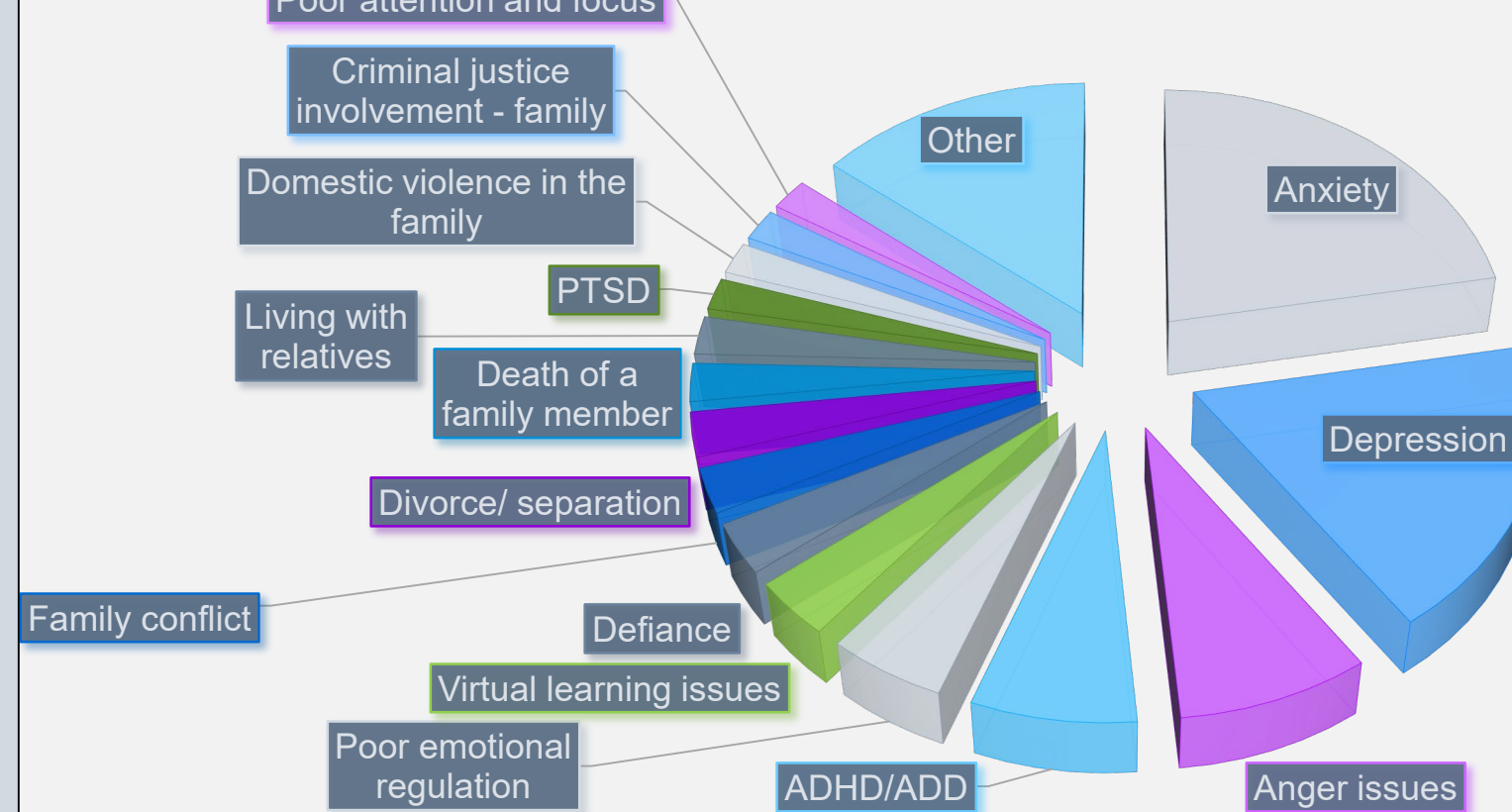
A large majority of referrals had Medicaid followed closely by Unknown insurance type. There was a small percentage of Uninsured referred students. According to the North Carolina Institute of Medicine (NCIOM), in 2018 approximately 5.2% of children under the age of 18 were uninsured in Buncombe County*. This calls into question whether we are reaching enough uninsured children through the SBT program in Buncombe County. It could be the case that of those in the Unknown category there are more students who are Uninsured, however it is equally likely they could have Medicaid or Private insurance.

*North Carolina Health Profile Buncombe County. (n.d.). Retrieved from North Carolina Institute of Medicine: <https://nciom.org/counties/buncombe-county/>

INSURANCE TYPE

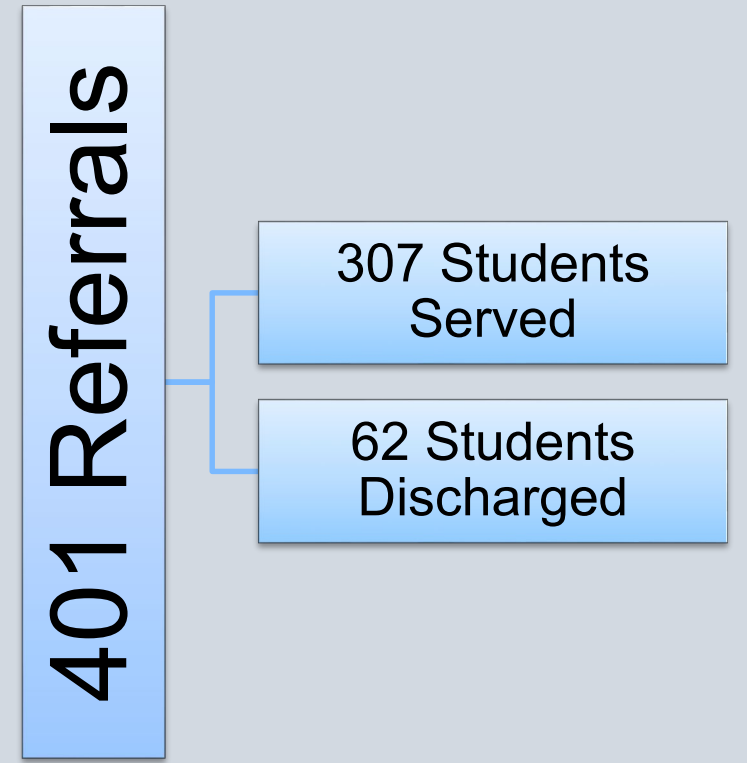


PRIMARY NEED



An assortment of primary needs were reported, with Anxiety (22%) as the most reported followed by Depression (18%) and Anger Issues (8%). The Other category was used to condense a wide-range of primary needs and includes homeless, suicidal ideation of a family member, history of sexual and physical abuse, school attendance issues, foster care, suicidal ideation, recent suicide attempt, self-esteem/body image issues, substance use (self or exposure), Autism, self harm, DSS custody, chronic lying, and self criminal justice involvement. Given that this only shows reported primary needs, this only gives part of the bigger picture of adolescent/child needs for mental health services. Future evaluation of the SBT program may consider tracking mental health prevalence and mental health outcomes more robustly. There is a lack of information on current mental health status among Buncombe County students as evidenced by the Buncombe County Schools Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health Plan* which has an action item listed for identifying mental health issues among students.

Is Anyone Better Off?



Of the 401 referrals made from the SBT program, 307 students were served through the MAHEC Center for Psychiatry and Mental Wellness and 62 students were discharged during year one of the program. The first year of the SBT program was concentrated in the North Buncombe and Reynolds school districts of Buncombe County Schools with 12 school-based therapists and one SBT Manager. Actively the program is expanding to Asheville City Schools and has plans to expand to surrounding counties in the Western North Carolina (WNC) region.

Conclusion

The SBT program had numerous successes throughout year one of implementation. Licensed child therapists were hired and placed in schools throughout Buncombe County with the hope that therapists in schools could help direct students to mental health care services. This hope has been validated as evidenced by this evaluation of the program after year one. There is now a direct linkage from K-12 schools to mental health services at MAHEC for students in need. Whether students need medication management, behavioral therapy, or other psychiatric/psychologic services there is now a pathway towards accessing services in a region where historically mental health services are sparse and challenging to access for various reasons. The success of this program will only expand services further and help more students across WNC. The program is actively expanding its' reach into Asheville City Schools, McDowell County, and Clay County. Continually evaluating students' mental health needs will be vital in assuring the community that our program is benefitting our youngest community members. Recommendations for the program include investigating prevalence of mental health disorders among students, reaching more Hispanic/Latinx-identifying students, and engaging more uninsured youth in mental health care.

