



DATA



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

OUR PROGRAMS • OUR PEOPLE • OUR PARTNERS =
A HEALTHIER AND SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe that all children are good; and if given appropriate opportunities, they will become productive, contributing members of society. Since 1980, DATA has developed a range of prevention, intervention and treatment services designed to address the child as an integral part of his or her family and community. Our goal is to provide these children with the skills and competency necessary to achieve these positive outcomes.



A few words from the President & CEO JOHN FOWLER

Dear Friends and Family:

As we entered 2023, for many in our communities there was a sense of relief, a chance to get back to normal. Through it all, the amazing staff at DATA remained resolute and committed to doing our best to help our youth.

Unfortunately, the effects of the Pandemic are still having a devastating impact on our youth. Anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and suicide are at levels we have not seen before.

We are determined to do all we can to meet their needs and help them move forward.

We now have more than 70 full-time staff in schools in the five counties we serve. Our TASC program is fully functioning in the judicial system ensuring that behavioral problems are identified, and our youth are receiving the services they need.

Our non-residential, community-based services are helping children and families throughout the region. Our residential programs continue to save lives even as other programs across the state have been forced to shut down.

We continue to expand existing and new, evidence-based strategies to meet the ever-changing needs of the vulnerable youth in our communities.

Nothing has been more important in achieving our goals than the incredible staff of DATA. They have rallied to meet every challenge. They care deeply about the youth and families we serve. I never cease to be amazed at the degree of loyalty, dedication, and commitment that I witness every day. These individuals and teams are the true heroes of DATA.

Their work is inspiring. Those we serve, youth and families, become a part of DATA. We don't give up on them. I am enormously proud of our DATA family.

We are DATA.

Sincerely,



John Fowler, B.S., C.A.P., I.C.A.D.C.
President and CEO

P.S. We are proud to present the 2022 Annual Report in digital form. We hope you'll enjoy reading about the expansion of our Martin County Prevention Program, the 2021 Laurie Henry Award recipient - Kari Greer, a client success story, and a special story about a beloved DATA employee who has retired after 23 years. Though, if you prefer holding something in your hands, the annual report can easily be downloaded and printed out. Thank you and happy reading!

OUR MISSION

DATA provides effective quality programs for children, adolescents and their families experiencing behavioral health problems and/or juvenile delinquency. We provide services in Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee counties. We are committed to providing programs that foster the skills necessary for individuals to be responsible, productive members of their communities.





A message from our Board Chairman **JEFFREY WHITE**

Dear Friends, Supporters and Staff of DATA,

On March 11, 2020, the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) was officially declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. I am sure, like you, I thought this would be at most a couple weeks of annoying disruptions.

Little did we know the duration and devastating impact Covid-19 would have on each of us. And we still don't know with certainty what the lingering long-term health impact - both physical and mental - will be in the future.



However, what we've observed is the disproportionate adverse impact of Covid-19 on a vulnerable adolescent population. Children and adolescents may appear to be less at risk for severe Covid-19 symptoms, but the pandemic significantly disrupted their lives, resulting in a startling rise in mental health and substance use disorders.

That vulnerable population is at the core of DATA's existence.

Unstable learning environments, prolonged isolation, chronic unpredictability, housing insecurity, parental job loss, family deaths, and various other factors have led to adolescent burnout resulting in mental health conditions, anxiety, depression, increase in substance abuse, and suicide ideation.

And during that time, DATA's mission did not waiver, falter, or change for the lesser - it was enhanced. DATA was there, is here now, and will be there in the future for this vulnerable group.

This is not an easy job. I have great admiration for CEO John Fowler and senior management for charting the steady course. But more so for the incredible staff on the front lines; listening when no one else will, showing empathy in the face of adversity, and providing nonjudgmental guidance.

The staff at DATA, you are my heroes. You wake up every morning, get in your car, head off to work for something bigger than oneself - an opportunity to change families lives while encountering challenges, obstacles, and roadblocks. I am in awe.

On behalf of myself and the Board of Directors, I salute you for your resolute determination to DATA's philosophy, mission, and vision.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey White
Board Chairman

OUR VISION

We envision a community that instills the importance of education and respect for self, life and property, which empowers children and their families to reject drugs, violence and other criminal activity. DATA recognizes that substance use affects every aspect of an individual's life and that effective programming will foster self-reliance, social competence and abstinence from substance use.



We provide services in Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee counties.

OUR PROGRAMS

Since 2000, DATA has received seven consecutive, three-year accreditations from CARF International. All DATA programs are CARF accredited. Our programs include - Outpatient, Residential, School Based, and TASC (Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities).

OUR PEOPLE

For 40 years, DATA has been a refuge of hope for children and families. We've helped thousands of children avoid the lure of substance use, helped teens find the path to an addiction-free life, reunited families, and helped those struggling to overcome behavioral health problems - an issue that is paramount today. Substance abuse and behavioral issues often go hand in hand.

OUR PARTNERS

Our success would not be realized without the support of local government and social service agencies, and our generous friends and donors who provide much-needed funding and gifts each year so that we may continue our mission.

PREVENTION



DATA's Prevention Program expands to help more students in Martin County

"I'm a firm believer that we never wind up anywhere by accident," says Karen Gitlin, DATA's Prevention Supervisor for Martin, Okeechobee, and St. Lucie counties. "We're always meant to be there."



For the 2022-23 school year, the schools where DATA is meant to be - quadrupled.

When DATA's School Based Prevention Program, Project SUCCESS, was introduced in Martin County three years ago, only two schools in Stuart participated.

Now, Stuart Middle School and Murray Middle School have been joined by six more -- Martin County High School, South Fork High School, and Anderson Middle School in Stuart, as well as Jensen Beach High School, Indiantown Middle School, and Hidden Oaks Middle School in Palm City.

That's eight schools now, but schools don't develop drug and alcohol problems, students do, and the number of boys and girls ages 12-18 whom DATA counselors can now reach in one-on-one meetings has quadrupled, too.

"Our funding lets us serve 55 clients in each school on a one-on-one basis," Gitlin says.

That means DATA's prevention program, which could reach 110 middle school students for personal counseling in 2019, now has the potential to help 440 boys and girls in both middle and high schools.

“We have an office in the schools,” Gitlin says, “so we become part of the school atmosphere, even though we’re an outside agency.”

Students and counselors find each other through a referral process. If a teacher notices a poor attendance pattern, family problems, signs of substance abuse or at-risk situations, they contact the school's DATA counselor, who then reaches out to the student's parents for permission to meet for an hour a week.

“We get few refusals from the parents,” Gitlin says. “Their main concern is if it’s going to be on their child’s school records. And no, it’s not. It’s confidential.”

With parental permission, the student meets with a DATA counselor during one of their elective classes. Mostly, the students talk, and the counselors listen. “I don't take sides,” Gitlin says, “but I'm going to let them talk, and I try to steer them toward coping skills. And don't think your straight-A honor students aren't in our office, too.”

In addition to the one-on-one sessions, DATA's Prevention Education Series brings counselors to the schools' Physical Education, Health, or Science classes for eight weekly presentations. That's another 280 students who hear DATA's message in each school - or 2,240 in all eight.

“We address issues like being an adolescent, social media, how to talk to your family, and changes,” Gitlin explains. “Not sexual changes, but the transition from middle school to high school.”

At the end of the series, all the students are surveyed for their reactions and asked if they would like to talk with a counselor privately. “About five in every class of 30 say yes,” Gitlin reports.

For the 2022-23 school year, Gitlin adds, students had one more factor adding stress and temptation to their lives.

COVID.

“A lot of these kids lost their socialization experience while the schools were closed,” she notes, “and that's when this age group is learning how to get along with others. They lost that.”

This past school year, Martin County students had even more challenges, and now DATA has more ways to help. “I'm so grateful for this expansion because it's going to open the door to more students we can reach,” Gitlin says, “and that's what we're all about - helping as many students as we can.”

A YOUNG CLIENT'S JOURNEY



“If I hadn’t been sent to DATA, I’d probably be dead by now.”

Elizabeth was 12 when she started smoking pot, 14 when she started dropping acid, 15 when she started snorting cocaine.

She was 16 in the fall of 2021 when the Palm Beach County Juvenile Drug Court sentenced her to DATA’s Walter D. Kelly Treatment Center.

“I had run away because I wasn’t getting along with my mother. I was crashing at my boyfriend’s house and when the police found me, I had all that stuff in my bag,” she recalls.

She also had enough money in that bag to add an “intent to distribute” charge to the possible felonies confronting her if she didn’t complete DATA’s four-to-six-month program to the court’s satisfaction.

“I was thinking I’d get house arrest,” she says, “or 21 days in juvenile detention, so when I found out I was coming to DATA I was really upset. My dealer was a tattoo artist shop, so I spent the last of my money on cocaine and Ecstasy.”

New residents at the Kelly Center usually arrive either compliant or confrontational.

"They're either on their best behavior or they're resistant," says Ariana Raub, the center's director of residential services. When Elizabeth arrived on Nov. 16, 2021, she was resistant. "I was crying a lot when I first got here," she says. "Being sober was so weird for me."

That's common.

"Somebody who's been high for so long and never felt an emotion for so long," Raub explains, "you take that drug away and they have no idea how to manage all this stuff that's coming up."

Elizabeth had a lot of stuff coming up. "My boyfriend hit me. He was younger, he was 15, but he hit me. It was mentally exhausting, and I did drugs to deal with that. He was cheating on me, too, and the drugs made me happy. They made me feel good."

At DATA, she and her therapist spent a lot of time talking about that boyfriend. She deserved better.

"I know that now," she says, "but I still loved him when I came here. He made it where I depended on him. He would threaten to kill himself if I left him."

Elizabeth came to DATA unsure what grade she was in at school. During the 2020-21 school year, a lot of students missed classes because of COVID, and she hadn't been attending regularly anyway. Her last official attendance was in 8th grade.

On April 21, 2022, she left the Kelly Center after five months. During her time there, she reached the 11th grade with five high school classes completed and a 2.4 GPA.

Elizabeth continues to work toward graduating high school, all while working as a full-time nanny. She moved back in with her mother and bought herself a 2010 BMW 381i.

On Halloween night, she found herself at a coffee shop with friends when someone offered them acid. She declined. "I feel like I have enough in me now not to be tempted," she says. "My boyfriend -- my ex-boyfriend -- still tries to text me." She changed her number.

What happened to Elizabeth during her time with DATA?

"I grew up," she says. "I'm a whole different person now, so it's hard to remember how I acted before. I just know everybody at DATA affected me in a different way, and if I hadn't been sent to DATA, I'd probably be dead by now."

DIRECTOR OF TREATMENT KARI GREER



“On both sides of the chair”

Kari Greer and Laurie Henry never met. Kari was still in her early 20s when DATA’s former Director of Quality Assurance succumbed to cancer on Sept. 1, 2005.

But 16 years after her death, Kari Greer was honored for exemplifying the same qualities that had made Laurie Henry such a wonderful asset to DATA’s mission, and such a loss.

Kari is 41 now, and recipient of the 2021 Laurie Henry Award because, like its namesake, she brings so much dedication, excellence, and humor to her work.

The award sits on a shelf in her office where Kari, who came to DATA as an outpatient therapist in 2015, now oversees the agency’s eight Palm Beach County therapists when she was promoted to its Director of Treatment.

“I’m still learning, and I’m open to any feedback I get,” she says. “There are things I still don’t know about the residential clients, so I visit the Walter D. Kelly Treatment Center twice a week.”

Her biggest surprise in the new position? She smiles. “They don’t prepare you enough for all the paperwork you have to do.” But no doubt she will learn.

You could say Kari has been preparing for this job, both personally and professionally, for a long time.

A California native who now lives in Lake Worth Beach, she earned her bachelor's degree in social work from Florida International University in 2004 and a master's the following year. In 2019, she became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker after completing 100 hours of supervision under a qualified supervisor. But now that she's managing others, she's intent on continuing to work with the five clients assigned to the Kelly Center by the county's drug court.

“I love working with the kids,” she says. “I have 12 years of sobriety myself, so substance abuse with adolescents is what drew me to this job.”

Because she wants DATA's clients to be honest with her, she is honest with them.

“I hit a spiritual bottom and it started to have consequences,” she says. “I lost my job. I was emotionally bankrupt. But I went to AA and got outpatient counseling. I've been on both sides of the chair.”

As a woman who's seen substance abuse from both sides now, what has she learned? What causes young people to fall victim to drugs and alcohol?

“There's some sort of systemic problem,” she says. “A lack of education, poverty, a problem with gangs.” She leaves her desk, crosses the room, and stands by her office door. “It's a combination of a predisposition,” she says, “and a trigger that flips the switch.” And she flips the light switch.

“Just say no is fine,” she says, “but you have to teach them how to say no, and that's by developing coping skills when you encounter your trigger.”

In her struggle, which meant driving home by a route that didn't pass her neighborhood liquor store. She learned she needed to find a substitute for drugs or alcohol when the trigger flipped

“We like to see our clients get off probation so they can return to positive activity,” she says, “but there has to be an internal rearrangement in yourself, so you can return to the world in a more positive way.”

If she could change one thing about the public's attitude toward substance abuse, Kari says, it would be to erase the stigma. “People think this is a personal failure,” she says. “It's not. It's a disease that can be treated.”

And the most important lesson she's learned from her time as both an abuser and a therapist?

“Never give up on a client,” she says. “DATA has supported me through some difficult situations in my life. I've had to deal with some mental health issues, but at DATA I've never been seen as less than.”

“If you're dedicated to DATA, DATA will be dedicated to you.”

BELOVED HR DIRECTOR RETIRES PENNY TABBERT



“When I came here, my goal was to get a job, but I got a family.”

When Penny Tabbert arrived to become DATA's Chief of Human Resources, she brought along a simple approach to hiring decisions. “I go with my gut,” she would tell you. “I can quickly tell if they want to join the family or just get a job.”

That was on Nov. 23, 1999, when DATA had 82 employees. Today, DATA has 167 employees, most of whom had to pass (The Penny Tabbert Gut Test), and the HR department has grown from a staff of one to three. However, on January 6, 2023, she was no longer one of them.

After 23 years and two months, Penny retired, on the same day her husband, Jerry, left Sikorsky Aircraft after 40 years. She looks back with satisfaction.

“We have our ducks in a row in the HR department,” she says, “so I feel like I’m leaving it in good condition. This is not just a place with a mission, it’s also a well-run organization, and both the mission and the efficiency complement each other. I don’t do treatment, but I know I’m helping those who do.”

One of the department’s strengths, she believes, is an open-door policy. “Employees know that when they have an issue, they can come to me,” she says, adding, “and things come up all the time.”

Does her time at DATA feel like nearly a quarter century?

“Some days it feels much longer,” she says with a smile, “and some days it doesn’t feel that long at all. But it was never boring, that’s for sure.”

Between them, she and Jerry have three stepdaughters, two stepsons, 10 grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, and a son of their own.

A native of Michigan, they live in Stuart. "I love where I live," she says, "and I'm staying here, so I've told John Fowler I'll come back temporarily if they need me to help out."

But first, the couple will climb into their GMC truck with the 31-foot Airstream trailer and take their act on the road. "We're going to drive up to Michigan and go around the Upper Peninsula and back down through Wisconsin," she says. "We've already been to the Grand Teton, Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, and I want to see all of them."

When she looks ahead, Penny sees the Grand Canyon, Yosemite, Wyoming, Idaho and Niagara Falls in her future. And when she looks back, she gets satisfaction in a job well done, at an organization she respects.

**"I'll miss the people here the most," she says.
"When I came here, my goal was to get a job,
but I got a family."**



**OUR
TEAM**

DATA is proud to honor and recognize the following employees for their years of service. We are thankful every day for having such an extraordinary group of individuals committed to providing the most compassionate behavioral health services to children, adolescents, and their families in the five-county area we serve. Your dedication is our success.

THANK YOU!

YEARS OF SERVICE

20

Years of Service

**Karen Gitlin
Vanderville Hines**

15

Years of Service

Mary Wilkerson

5

Years of Service

**Julienne Beebe
Elizabeth Martin
Crissheila Panaligan
Alicia Theus**

1

Year of Service

**Kedisha Blackwood
Alexis Brand
Tameka Brown
Andricia Caldwell
Herna Estimable
Jadelyn Hamilton
Ketura Hedden
Abigail Hennessey
Robbin Jackman
Georgia Koudellou
Wilfrid Lazarre
Marlon Madison
Steven Milton
Joan Morgan
Linda Pervenecki
Ronnie Rainey
Raquel Rojas
Youlanda Thompson**

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Norman C. Hayslip (1916-2004)
Walter D. Kelly (1927-1996)

President and CEO

John Fowler, B.S., C.A.P., I.C.A.D.C.

OUR PARTNERS

Thank you to the following local government and social service agencies who continue to provide funding for our Walter D. Kelly and Norman C. Hayslip Treatment Centers, Outpatient Centers, and School Based Intervention programs.



Town of Palm Beach
United Way



United Way of
Indian River County

OUR GENEROUS DONOR & FRIENDS

We extend a heartfelt thank you to our Friends and Donors, who generously contribute each year to help us bring these much-needed services to so many young children and teens in the five-county area we serve daily.

- **Angela Alonso**
- **Anonymous**
- **Cheryl K. Crowley**
- **Michael Drew, Big Dog Holdings**
- **Gary Frechette**
- **The Hayslip Family**
- **Adrienne Hunecke**
- **Jennifer Hunecke**
- **The family of Lynn and Walter Kelly**
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- **St. Lucie County Public Schools**
- **St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office**
- **Mark Taplett**
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- **WPBF 25 News**

FINANCIALS

Annual Operating Performance Year Ending June 30, 2022

INCOME

Grants/Contracts	\$ 8,301,826
United Way Grants/Contributions	\$ 267,658
Fees, Insurance & Medicaid	\$ 146,965
In-Kind	\$ 493,260
Investment Income	\$ 502
TOTAL INCOME	\$9,210,211

EXPENSES

Program Services

Residential	\$ 2,765,297
Outpatient	\$ 732,473
School Based Treatment & Outreach	\$ 1,539,291
Prevention	\$ 1,599,479
TASC (Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities)	\$ 669,277
Behavioral/Mental Health Services for Students	\$ 780,822
Medical Services	\$ 10,988
Incidentals	\$ 1,868
Subtotal Program Services	\$ 8,099,495
Supporting Services	\$ 1,075,807
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 9,175,302
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$34,909

ANNUAL REPORT PRODUCED BY:

EDITOR:

Cheryl Crowley

FEATURE STORY WRITER:

Ron Hayes

DESIGN:

Jupiter Website Design



Behavioral Health Services
for Children and Families

www.drugabusetreatment.org



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