

# STARTING POINT

Behavioral Healthcare

*Healing Begins Here*

The Annual Report of  
Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare  
2016 - 2017



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Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that represents all areas of our community.

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## Mission

To promote emotional wellness through psychiatric, mental health and substance abuse services and community education and awareness.

## Message from the CEO



This year has been a busy and successful one for Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare. Our programs continue to expand the services we offer to the community, while our educational offerings spread the word about the importance of mental health and substance abuse disorder treatment.

This was our 25th year of serving the Northeast Florida community. The dedication and commitment of our board and staff members is exemplary. The growth and innovation we have achieved in this past year is directly connected to the spirit of dedication so visible among all the people of Starting Point.

A number of new programs have been launched this year, and we have expanded others. Our Mental Health First Aid classes have taught some 700 people how to identify and assist individuals with a mental health problem or crisis. Since becoming a certified MHFA trainer in 2014, Katrina Robinson-Wheeler has trained more than 1,500 people and is named among the Top 100 Trainers in the U.S. by the Mental Health First Aid National Council.

In this report, you will learn about our Care Coordination program, an innovative collaboration with Baptist Medical Center Nassau which identifies patients with both mental health and substance use problems in the Emergency Department. Starting Point was one of 21 agencies statewide chosen to participate in a learning Collaborative to build capacity to provide care coordination to high need individuals. This program has touched the lives of many people already, and we plan to expand it next year.

You will also learn about our Trauma Informed Care program and a highly effective Prevention program in local private schools that helps kids right on site.

In the future, Starting Point plans to expand its Domestic Violence and Parenting Programs, as well as programs focusing on helping new moms with post-partum depression. We will continue to advocate for mental health treatment and funding through education, training, and advocacy.

Starting Point is a non-profit organization and we rely on the generosity of our community to help support the programs we offer. This year, we provided more than \$376,000 in uncompensated care to people in our community. Donations from people and businesses in Northeast Florida help to cover those costs. I hope you will consider making a donation to help with these programs. You can use the donation envelope enclosed, or visit our website and donate online at [www.spbh.org](http://www.spbh.org).

Lauren Pagel, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer

## Message from the Board President



At the close of my first year as Board Chair at Starting Point, I am personally gratified to work with this dedicated team. From the CEO to the people at the front desk, every staff member is invested and involved in the treatment of our clients. They have proven to be very creative in finding innovative ways to help the people of our community.

Over the last year, Starting Point has provided services to 1,818 adults and 568 children in Northeast Florida. This represents over 86,000 clinical hours of service and more than 47,000 completed procedures during the year. We are truly touching many lives here at Starting Point.

One of the most important aspects of this organization is our efforts to collaborate with other organizations such as Baptist Health System, Barnabas, Micah's Place, NACDAC, Family Support Services and others. We work closely with law enforcement and the justice system to provide intervention and counseling. We collaborate with other mental health providers including, Clay Behavioral Health Center, Gateway , MHRC, and River Region Human Services to forge a community-wide net of services for all.

Our board is especially proud that our CEO, Dr. Laureen Pagel, was recently honored by the Florida Alcohol & Drug Abuse Association as Leader of the Year. The award is presented to an administrator who exemplifies the best in behavioral health prevention and treatment agency management, as well as contributions to voluntary organizations, civic affairs, FADAA and the community. We are very proud of Dr. Pagel and the many improvements and ideas she has implemented here over the last 20 years. We feel very blessed to have her as our leader.

As you look through this annual report, I encourage you to learn more about the many services we offer. We will continue to play a leadership role not only in Nassau County, but in advocating for mental health and addiction for all at the local, state and national levels. We appreciate your support in these endeavors.

Drue Ashwell, Chair, Board of Directors

## Care Coordinator Program



These issues prompted an innovative collaboration between Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare and Baptist Medical Center Nassau. Working together for more than six months, the two healthcare providers created the Care Coordination program, which identifies individuals who need additional care when they come to the Baptist Medical Center Nassau ED. With a mental health counselor from Starting Point working in the ED, patients with serious mental health or substance use issues can be quickly assessed and referred to a coordinated program of care that addresses their physical and mental health needs.

The goals of the program include not only improved care and outcomes for the clients, but also a reduction in the number of return visits to the ED. When the individual is part of an ongoing system of care, fewer return visits to the ED are needed.

Renda Cardenas is the Starting Point Care Coordinator in the ED. Working with Samantha Webb, a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist for Starting Point,

and the physicians and nurses of the ED, Cardenas has a unique opportunity to touch lives.

“I am an advocate for the patient,” she said, “I look for how I can connect with them so their lives can be empowered and stabilized. The biggest thing is to be able to establish a rapport and true.

“After discharge, we follow up daily for 30 days,” Cardenas said. “There is a home visit within the first seven days.” Throughout the first month, contact is made by phone, text or additional visits. If clients need additional services, such as housing or food, they can make those referrals as well.

Webb, a former client of Starting Point, today uses her life experience to help others in the Care Coordination Program. “I help facilitate the treatment plan,” she said. “I can take someone to the doctor, pick them up, etc., and help them find the resources they need in our county.” She also makes home visits and contacts clients by phone or text. “Even after 30 days, I call to remind them about their appointments,” she says.

Lauren Pagel, CEO at Starting Point, said the team began planning in January and met weekly to determine how to implement the program. The group worked on merging the services in with the work flow of the ED.

“We were taking a care coordination model that exists on the medical side and applying it to behavioral health,” Pagel said. “The program is primarily for high need, high risk individuals with mental health or substance abuse disorders.”

## Care Coordinator (Cont.)

“I was very conscientious about working around (the physicians and nurses) and with them,” Cardenas said, noting that part of her preparation included going through the Baptist training and orientation processes.

Kellene Sauls is the Nurse Executive at Baptist Medical Center Nassau and was part of the Partnership Team that developed the program. Sauls says the program has resulted in improved patient care now that there are more resources available to them.

“Before, we were making the handoff (to a mental health provider) with a card,” Sauls said. “Now, it is a warm hand-off with Starting Point. There is face-to-face interaction that helps them to connect and stay connected.”

Sauls said the team studied data from both organizations for about a year to determine what the needs were. She said the results were “totally opposite” what they expected. “There was the expectation that (the need) would be for nights and weekends, but the data showed it is Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.”

The program is among the first in the state of Florida to feature a collaboration between the ED and a Behavioral Health Provider. A grant from the Baptist Foundation provided funding for the program to get off the ground.

“We want to make sure every patient at every point is touched every time,” Sauls said, adding that by collaborating with Starting Point, it allowed Baptist to expand its program. “We don’t have the resources to follow up with every patient who comes through the door of the ED.” Pagel agreed, adding “we follow up even if the client doesn’t initially take part in the program. We don’t like to take “no” for an answer. We are very successful.



## School Prevention Program Helping Kids and Teachers



Therapists know that intervening quickly when a child begins to show disruptive behaviors can prevent many problems later in life. Starting Point has a unique collaboration with local private schools to reach kids who are having trouble right where they are - in school.

Starting Point currently works with two private schools: Faith Christian Academy and

Sonshine Christian Academy. Counselors come to the schools a few days each week to provide individual counseling to children who are having behavioral problems.

“It might be an adjustment to a new move, bullying or home issues,” said Theresa Stover, the Supervisor of the program. “The goal is to prevent problems like substance abuse later.”

The program incorporates a software program called Ripple Effects that helps children work through their issues by helping them understand underlying risk factors and learn new behaviors. The prevention counselor customizes the program for the child based on his or her specific needs and the goals they are working toward. Studies have shown that using Ripple Effects can strengthen social-emotional skills such as increasing problem-solving skills and showing more empathy for others.

Starting Point has been offering the prevention program at Faith Christian Academy for about two years. The school provides the counselor a space where she can speak with children confidentially. Some sessions take place during PE class while others come after school. Parental permission is required and kids can be referred to the prevention program by a teacher, school administrator, or parent.

Faith Christian Principal Bryan Alvare’ is a big fan of the program, and says it not only helps the children in his school, but also the teachers.

“As a Christian school, we had a special set of needs for the parents and kids,” Alvare’ said, “and Starting Point has been very respectful and flexible. They have very much been willing to partner with me and the teachers to help a child.”

Alvare’ said the prevention program gives the school “more tools in the toolbox” to help both children and parents. “Up until three years ago, mental health wasn’t part of the educational picture,” he said. “As time passes, it plays a more strategic and important role. If certain needs aren’t met, it is impossible to teach them.”

The program allows the school to approach the child’s education in a more holistic way - body, mind, and spirit - he said. “Starting Point’s approach fits in with ours. It has helped build resiliency in kids, which is a huge skill to have. It is comforting to have that resource available.”

In addition to the prevention program, Alvare’ said teachers and administrators have taken the Youth Mental Health First Aid program. It provided “a ton of value to the school,” he said.

“Before, teachers would try to figure (the problem) out and if not, then send them to me,” the principal said. “It is a better school environment with these resources available. Sometimes kids need more than I can give them, both in terms of expertise and time.”

Alvare’ said teachers at Faith Christian Academy are seeing less disruption in the classroom, which enhances learning for every student. “When you are a small school and trying to attend to so many needs, you can only wear so many hats,” he said. “To have Starting Point’s support really does help.”

## Yolanda's Story

Life can be pretty bruising for a lot of people, but Yolanda recently suffered the most horrific experience any parent can imagine - the loss of a child. While she had been a client of Starting Point for a while, she had believed she could do it on her own. She ended up in the Baptist Medical Center Nassau Emergency Department after hearing voices and knowing she needed to get help. That was how she became part of the Care Coordination Program, a joint collaboration between Baptist and Starting Point.

"Renda came in and I know it was the Lord, because when she got in there, she knew what I was going through," Yolanda said. As the Care Coordinator for the program, Renda Cardenas often meets one-on-one with patients soon after they arrive in the ED.

"She is an amazing person," Yolanda says, "she inspires me. She does more listening than talking, and feels my pain."

The encounter was the first of a 30-day period of daily contacts that, as Yolanda put it, had Renda "blowing my phone up calling me."

"When she calls, I could be feeling bad, but by the time we are off the phone, it gets better. She is letting me know it's going to be all right and going to get better."

Cardenas says the most important part of her job is to build trust and rapport with the individual. She emphasizes that she, too, has had her share of problems. "Just because I'm standing here with a badge doesn't mean I don't have struggles of my own," she says.

"I have a sincere interest in the struggles of people I find that in helping them to heal, I heal and grow through their strengths," Cardenas says.

"My daughter was my best friend," Yolanda says, "It's so hard. But I am grateful that God put Renda in my path. She's been a blessing to me since day one. She's had such an impact on my life."

"We love Renda's love for the job," said Kellene Sauls, Nurse Executive at Baptist Medical Center Nassau. "Her passion is contagious and it makes a difference to every individual she touches."



## New Program Helps Kids Affected By Trauma

Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Health Therapy (TFCBT) is a new program launched at Starting Point this year. It focuses on children ages 3 to 18, and their caregivers, by helping them to overcome traumatic events.

Many children experience trauma including death of a family member, violence, abuse, accidents or other incidents that impact them psychologically. Through the TFCBT program, these children meet with specially-trained counselors somewhere between a dozen and 20 times to focus on normalizing their feelings and learning to cope with them. Counselors meet separately with parents or caregivers to help them understand what the child is feeling and how to cope with any behaviors resulting from the trauma.

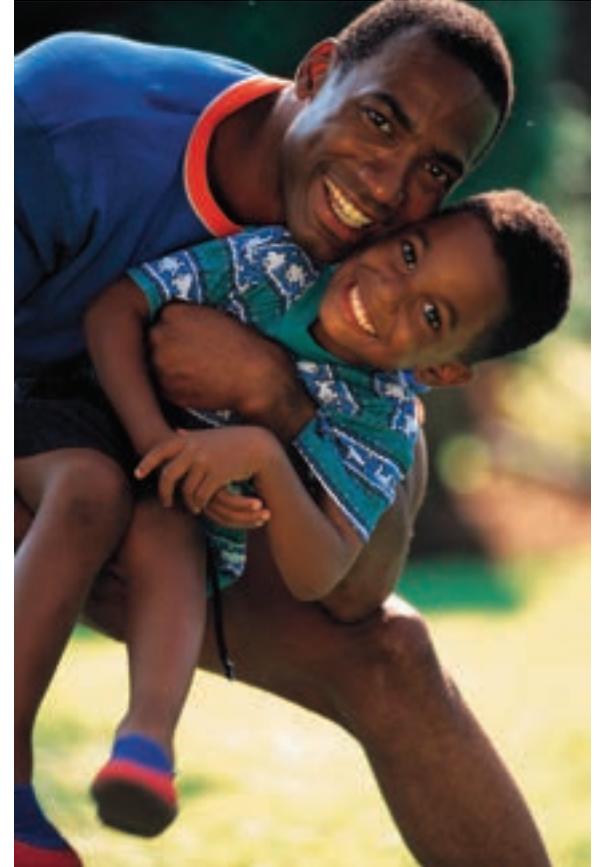
The end result of the therapy is a “Trauma Narrative,” a story about what happened put together by the child. Depending on the age of the child, this story might be in pictures, narrated verbally, or written. The narrative helps the child and the parent understand the before, during and after of the traumatic incident from the child’s point of view.

“The goal is to prevent kids from future issues like addiction. We deal with the feelings now so they don’t become a problem later.”

She says parents can sometimes have a difficult time hearing about the trauma their child has experienced. The therapy and the narrative “prepares them and helps them know how to respond and comfort the child,” she said.

Stover is Nationally Certified for the program and there are currently four additional counselors at Starting Point that have been trained in using the therapy. The program was funded by a two-year grant from Lutheran Services Florida.

Most of the children in the program are referred by Family Support Services and the Department of Juvenile Justice in Nassau, but Starting Point also works with other child welfare agencies.



## Over 1,500 Northeast Florida Residents Received Mental Health First Aid Training through Starting Point

For nearly four years, Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare has offered training in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) to members of the community. In that time, we have trained more than 1,500 people to recognize mental health problems or a crisis and give them the tools and resources they need to help. This eight-hour class is evidence-based and offered around the world.

Katrina Robinson-Wheeler was certified as an MHFA trainer in 2014 and has specific training to teach classes for Adult, Youth, Public Safety, Higher Education, Rural, Older Adults and Veterans MHFA classes. Under the guidance of the Board of Directors, the MHFA program first sought to reach out to law enforcement officials, educators, healthcare providers and others who regularly come into contact with the public. As these classes continued, we have reached out to social service organizations, civic clubs, churches and members of the general public.

In the past year, funding from Baptist Health and Lutheran services Florida has enabled Starting Point to provide these classes at no charge. In addition, Baptist has undertaken an initiative to train nurses and other care providers at all of its hospitals throughout the First Coast. We are very pleased to collaborate with them on this important program.

The impact of MHFA training may be difficult to measure, but we have heard many individual stories from alumni who used the training to help a friend, family member, or neighbor who was in crisis. With the nationwide focus on the importance of Mental Health today, we believe there is no better time to make this training available to all.



## Joseph's Story

Joseph is one of those who has found stability in his life after the Care Coordination Program, but he admits that getting into it “took a little nudging.”

“He was a toughie,” agrees Renda Carenas, the Starting Point Care Coordinator for the program housed at Baptist Medical Center Nassau's Emergency Department.

Joseph has navigated through the mental health system for many years, and is no stranger to the ER. He's been “Baker-Acted\*” a number of times for psychosis and other issues. But the equilibrium he had found was jolted by the loss of his mother. The distressing and sudden loss created a psychological crisis for him.

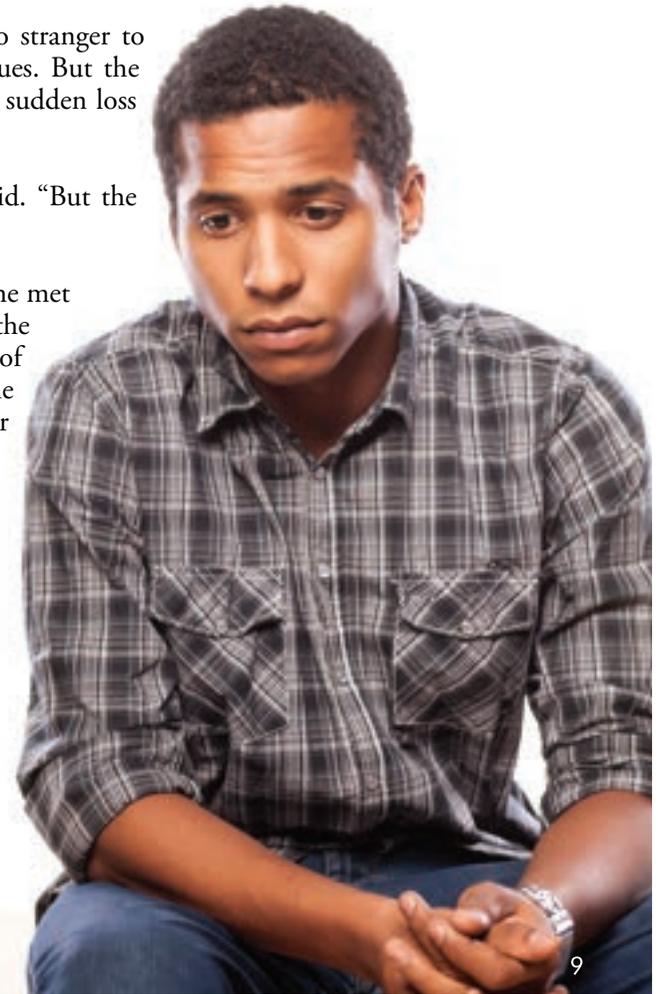
“It was already on the radar screen that I needed to get back into therapy,” he said. “But the abruptness of her death, I was driving myself bonkers.”

Fearing he had overdosed, Joseph was transported to the Baptist Nassau ER, where he met with Renda, who he described as “easy and approachable.” With her help, he entered the Care Coordination program after receiving a new diagnosis and medications. As part of the program, he has regular follow up care from members of the team through home visits and phone calls. Today, he has resumed weekly therapy sessions as well as regular treatment with Starting Point's psychiatrist.

Joseph said he felt safe in the Care Coordination program, and that it was truly designed to help him.

“If you're hurting, this is definitely safe help,” he said.

*\*The Baker Act permits an individual to be involuntarily hospitalized under certain conditions.*



## Our Services

### Mental Health Services

Our mental health services are under the direction of a board-certified psychiatrist and reflect the latest approaches to care and treatment for mental illness. We offer both individual and group therapy programs, Art Therapy, and an active community outreach program.

#### **Psychiatric Care**

Psychiatric care is provided by board-certified psychiatrists, and nurse practitioners who treat clients with emotional, behavioral or mental health disorders. Many of these disorders can be treated with a combination of therapy and medication.

Outpatient psychiatric care allows clients to remain in their homes and communities while receiving the ongoing care and treatment they need. Through the use of our case managers, we offer clients assistance locating other community resources.

#### **Individual and Family Therapy**

Our counseling programs are provided by either Licensed Mental Health Counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Registered Counselor Interns or Certified Addiction Professionals. Both group and individual therapy programs are available for adults, teens and children. There are specific therapy programs for:

- Women's Empowerment
- Anger Management
- Positive Parenting
- Living Well
- Mental Health Court
- Co-Occurring Disorders

#### **Emergency Services**

Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare has a Behavioral Health Professional on call around the clock. If you have an emergency, please call our 24-hour hotline at (904) 225-8280.

### Substance Abuse Services

It is common for individuals coping with mental health issues to also become dependent upon drugs or alcohol, which is called a "Co-Occurring Disorder." Addiction to prescription drugs like pain killers (opioids) is becoming more common and Starting Point has created a specific detox and treatment program to address the medical and psychological needs that arise from these addictions.

#### **Medication-Assisted Treatment**

The MAT program provides a medically-managed approach to recovering from addiction to opiates or alcohol. A number of medications, including Suboxone and Vivitrol, have been approved for treatment during the detoxification stage of recovery from addictive pain killers and alcohol. Starting Point administers and monitors these medications following a comprehensive history and physical. Treatment is accompanied by individual counseling and support groups.

## Our Services (cont.)

### **Group Therapy and Support**

Starting Point offers a number of outpatient groups that focus on substance abuse disorders, including a program targeted for those who have been arrested for DUI.

### **Programs for Children & Teens**

Our Substance Abuse and Recovery program helps teens prevent relapse by learning to recognize problem situations and avoid them. Our Working Recovery program includes topics such as helping adolescents identify problem situations that occur in their daily lives. The concepts of relapse, substance use triggers, high risk situations, relapse prevention, and developing a “recovery image” are introduced.

Other programs for youth include:

- In-Home Child Program
- Responsible Thinking
- Anger Management
- Education & Prevention Programs
- Emotional Management

### **Women’s Substance Abuse Program**

This program joins efforts with individuals, the agency and the community to help women break the bonds of alcohol or drug abuse. It is free for pregnant women. Women with dependent children and women attempting to regain custody of their children also receive free services. Our program offers help for chemical dependence, mental health and more.

### **Drop-In Centers**

Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare offers two Drop-In Centers that provide mental health counseling and other support services for individuals transitioning back into the community.

The centers, located in Hilliard and Fernandina Beach, offer individuals an opportunity for socializing and networking that addresses the isolation felt by many, especially those in mental health recovery. It is open to all mental health consumers. No admission or membership fee is charged. The Centers are called “Our Place” because the clients who attend the centers take ownership of the facilities and for supporting each other in their recovery process. Our Place in Fernandina Beach was recently relocated and opened at its new location last June.

## Annual Golf Tournament Brings Puts The “Fun” In “Fundraising”

This year’s 6th Annual Golf Tournament delighted participants with its spectacular course, fellowship and, of course, fun. With over 75 players plus others who came just to enjoy the BBQ and Silent Auction, the crowd was gifted with a beautiful day at Amelia National Golf & Country Club. Funds raised by the annual golf tournament are used to support programs for adults, children, and teens including community education, uncompensated care, and community out-reach. We are deeply grateful to all of our sponsors, players and donors who made our event possible.

### Sponsors

ACT Solutions, Inc.  
Baptist Medical Center Nassau  
Dominion Diagnostics  
FPU  
Journey Church  
Montoya & Associates/Retirement Solutions  
Morgan Stanley Wealth Management  
Non Profit Insurance Trust  
Science First  
Gateway Community Services

### Hole Sponsors

Amelia Coastal Realty  
Ashwell Architect  
Askesis Development Group  
Charles Schwab  
Deppe Communications  
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Principles Consulting Group  
Tom McKenna

### Donations

Jeanne Dolan  
Joan Donaldson  
Robert Stormoen  
Amelia National Golf Club  
Amelia River Cruises  
Amelia Tavern  
Anytime Fitness  
Bar Zin  
Bradford Portrait  
CA Nails  
Caio Restaurant  
Carmike Cinemas  
Crab Trap  
Dome Healing Center  
Don Patron  
Fantastic Fudge  
Four Seasons Bistro  
Horizons Restaurant  
Jacksonville Symphony  
Junior’s Seafood  
Magna’s Salon  
Marina Restaurant  
MHRRG  
Negley  
NY Nails  
Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery  
S & J Liquors  
Salty Pelican  
Sandy Bottoms  
Sonya’s Oil & Filter  
Starbucks  
The Surf Restaurant



## Financials

Starting Point receives funds to pay for its services from several sources:

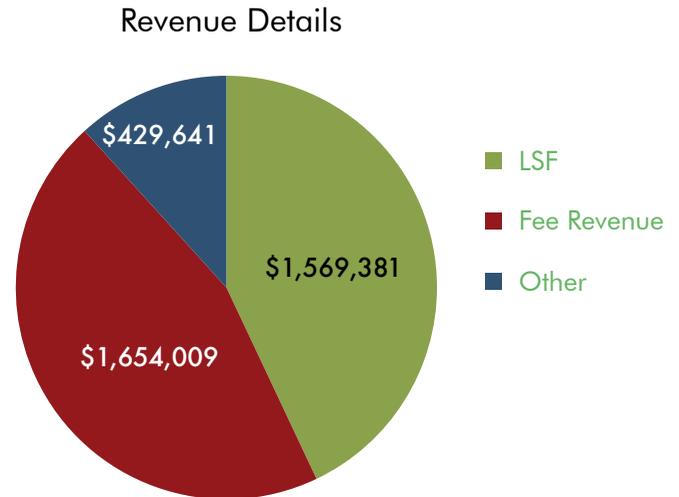
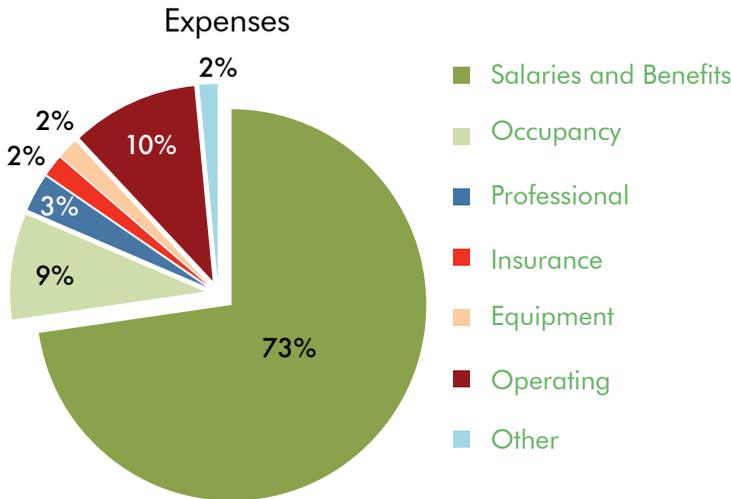
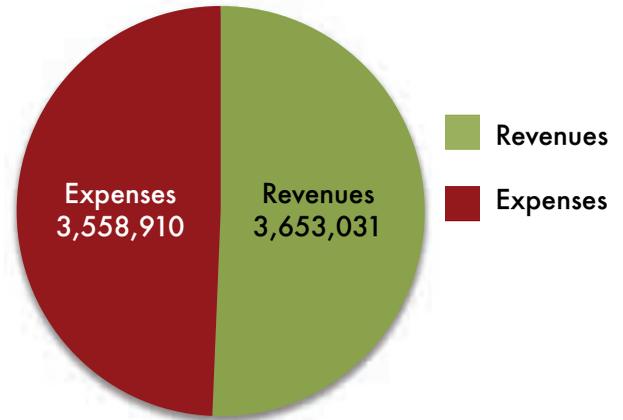
- Private Insurance
- Medicare & Medicaid
- Public & Private Grants
- Client Out-of-Pocket Payments

Starting Point has been the designated safety net provider of mental health and substance abuse services for all of Nassau County since 1992. Currently, we receive about 7% of our current budget from the Nassau Board of County Commissioners in a match program. This match allows us to keep our co-pays very low for those who can afford to pay and to deliver services at no cost for children, adults and families who have no other means to pay for their care.

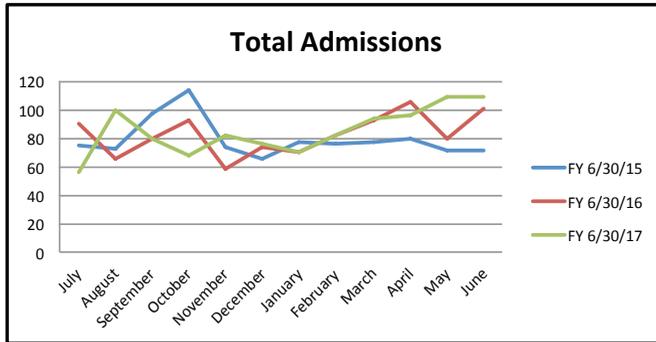
Despite the payment sources available to us, we still provided more than \$376,000 in uncompensated (charity) care last year. It has always been our policy to treat everyone in need, regardless of their payment status. Those additional funds are provided through donations from businesses and individuals in the community, as well as public and private grants.

Starting Point is invested in our community. We own all three of our buildings, three company vans and our company car.

FY2016

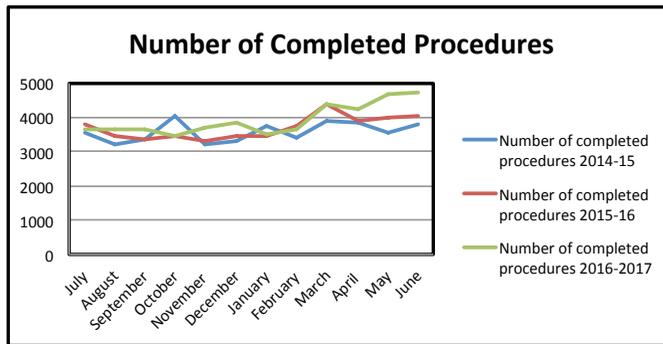


## Admissions



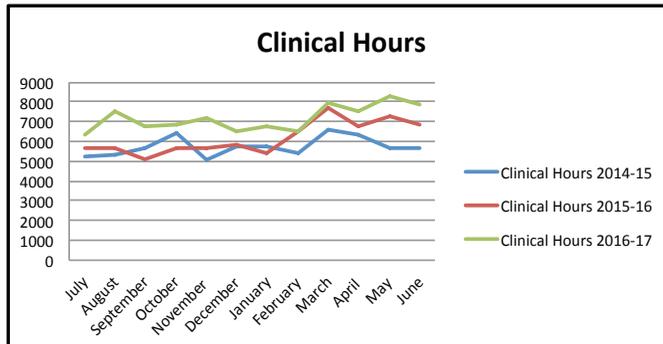
July	56
August	99
September	80
October	68
November	82
December	76
January	70
February	82
March	94
April	96
May	109
June	109

## Procedures



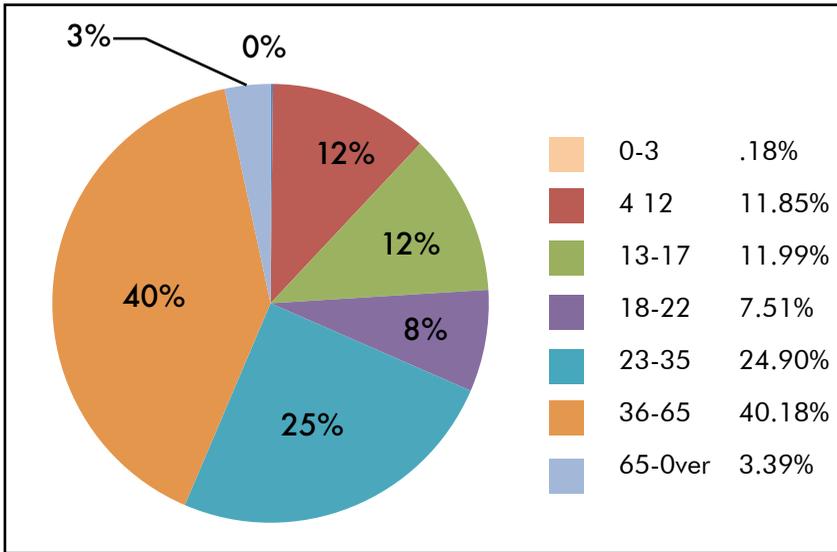
July	3669
August	3641
September	3649
October	3459
November	3722
December	3856
January	3513
February	3670
March	4403
April	4244
May	4666
June	4711

## Clinical Hours

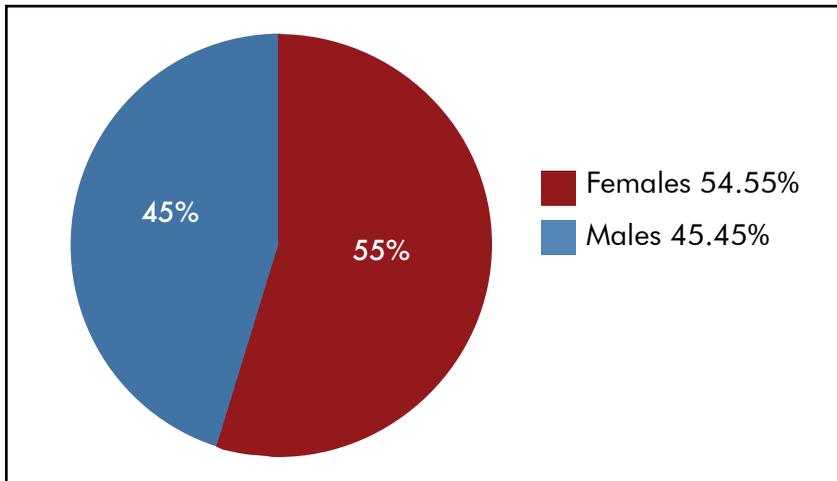


July	6338
August	7521
September	6730
October	6865
November	7205
December	6541
January	6729
February	6491
March	7975
April	7558
May	8266
June	7876

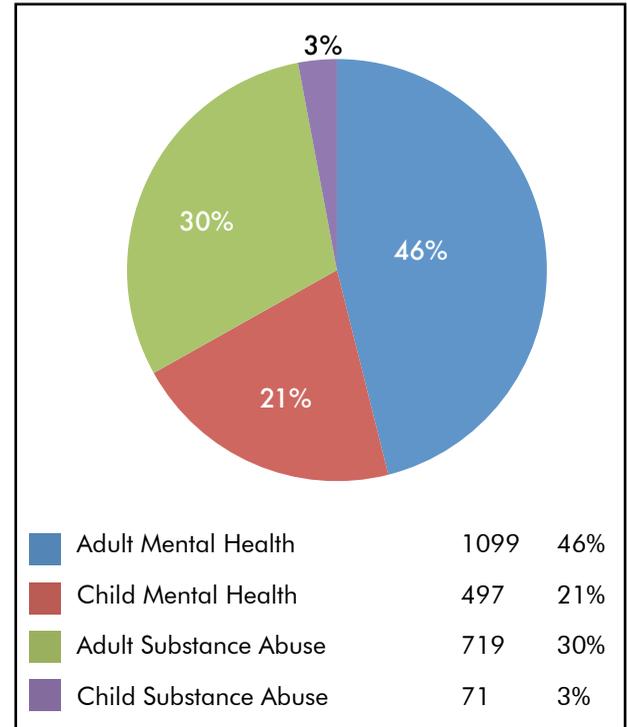
Clients Served By Age



Clients Served by Gender



Clients Served



# Community Partners



*Dayspring Village Inc.*



## Donors and Community Partners

Mr. Kenneth McGruther

Ms. Christine Winckler

Mr. John Holbrook

Ms. Mary Keegen

Newcomers Club of Amelia Island

Mr. & Mrs. John Lohr

The Campana Family (Mr. & Mrs. Campana)

Mr. & Mrs. Andy Watson

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Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare is an equal opportunity and drug-free workplace and prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, veterans status, or other legally protected status. Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare employs only U.S. citizens and lawfully authorized aliens who can provide evidence of their identity and employment eligibility as required by federal law.

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation, you should contact the office of our ADA Coordinator, 463142 SR 200, Yulee, FL 32097; VOICE (904) 225-8280, ext. 448; FAX (904) 225-9125 or E-mail [adacoordinator@spbh.org](mailto:adacoordinator@spbh.org).

# STARTING POINT

Behavioral Healthcare

*Healing Begins Here*

24/7 Emergency  
(904) 225-8280

Pre-registration hours are from 1-4 Monday - Friday

463142 State Road 200  
Yulee, Florida 32097

371015 Eastwood Road, Hilliard, FL 32046  
(904) 845-4033

2201 Sadler Road, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034  
(904) 491-2009



Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.