

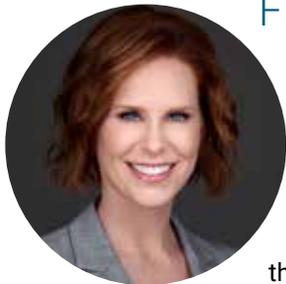


Ensuring Childhood Learning

IMPACT REPORT 2020-2021



Graduates from our Graduation Celebration in May



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Am I doing it right?” How many times have your children asked this over the years? How many times have you asked yourself this as parent? An employee? Or as someone trying something new for the first time?

“Doing it right” became more of a challenge in 2020 as the standards, recommendations, and rules seemed to constantly be shifting. As our call volume tripled (some months quintupling) and our clients’ needs were greater than ever, I quickly gave up on “doing it right” and decided to settle simply on “doing,” trusting that the rest would work itself out.

I had faith in you – our donors – who fiercely believe that the key to ensuring a continuous education for children lies in our mission to strengthen families. I had faith in our volunteers, who were determined to not let any family feel the effects of isolation and poverty any more than they already had. And I had faith in our staff, who worked tireless hours returning

calls, screening clients, and lifting our families out of the depths of despair.

While stability in housing and employment remain uncertain, one thing that IS certain is the need for RaiseUp Families in our community.

Our plan for this coming fiscal year is to double the number of families served and to maintain a laser focus on employment development and growth. When we combine budgeting & financial management with career & vocational improvement, the future for our families – and our community – is bright.

Thank you for the pivotal role you played in helping our families achieve new milestones this past year. Thank you for the love and support you showed them, our staff, and me. Thank you for answering “yes” when called upon to help raise up families in our community.

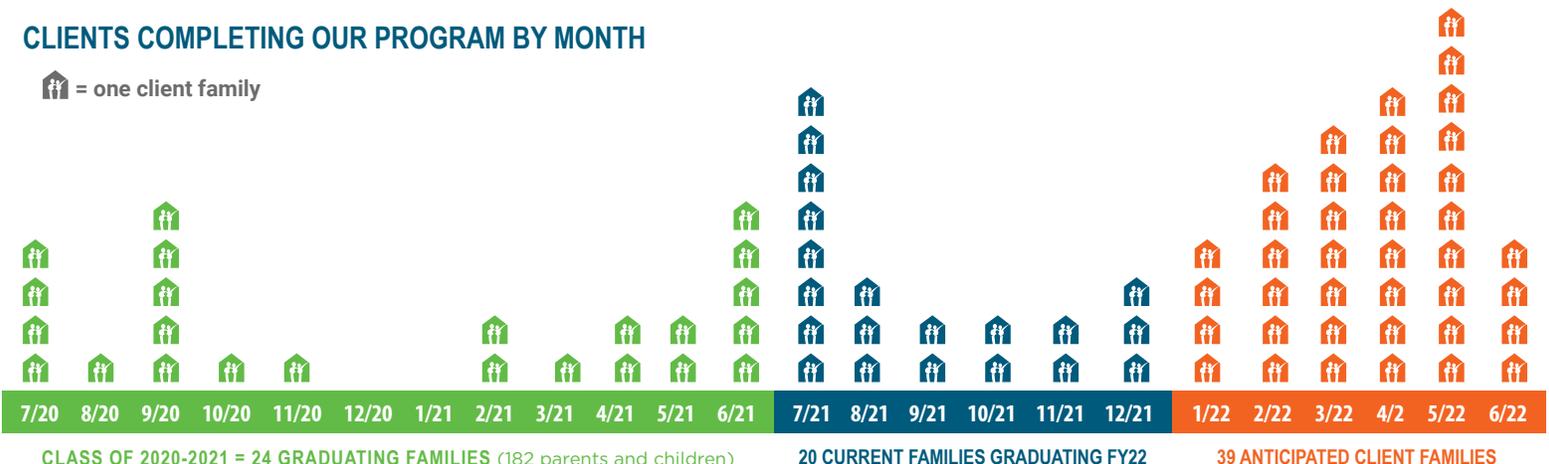
With thanks for all you do,

Angela Burgess
Executive Director

“As you read through our 2020-2021 Impact Report, I think you will find that – together – we not only “did it,” but we “did it right.”

CLIENTS COMPLETING OUR PROGRAM BY MONTH

= one client family



CLASS OF 2020-2021 = 24 GRADUATING FAMILIES (182 parents and children)

20 CURRENT FAMILIES GRADUATING FY22

39 ANTICIPATED CLIENT FAMILIES

THE VISION: Families across Greater Houston are stable, strong and their children are excelling in school.
OUR MISSION: RaiseUp Families provides extensive case management to strengthen families and ensure childhood learning.

HANDUP PROGRAM

RaiseUp Families' core program is our HandUp program. When families experience financial hardship and are evicted from or forced to leave their homes, one of the unintended consequences is that children often end up changing schools mid-year or even miss large portions of school. Children from economically disadvantaged communities are 5 times more likely to drop out of school than their higher income peers.

Since 1994, our 9-month HandUp program has been successfully ensuring a continuous, uninterrupted school year for children by stabilizing families in housing.



TERRY

When our Executive Director's phone rang, the last thing she expected was to be listening to an apartment manager begging for her to accept a tenant into the RaiseUp Families program.

"I was shocked," said Angela, "that an apartment manager would be working this hard to help a tenant stay in her home. When I found out the tenant was more than five months behind on rent, I was even more shocked."

The apartment manager told Angela that Terry was the hardest working person she had ever known, and that someone just needed to give her the chance and show her how to get ahead. Willing to waive all late fees and be patient as we partnered with other rent relief programs to get Terry fully caught up on her rent, it was clear that Terry was meant to find RaiseUp Families.

"I had no idea there were programs like this out there. When I met Rose for the first time, I felt like I had finally come face to face with my Guardian Angel."

Like so many in our community, Terry had been laid off from her job due to Covid and exhausted her savings.

A single mother of 3, Terry fled Louisiana and an abusive relationship 9 years ago to give her children a better life. She also had family here she could rely on. Things were looking up for the family until her mother was diagnosed with Leukemia and her father with Lupus.

"I do whatever I can to care for my parents, and I did not want to burden them with my problems."

Terry embraced our HandUp program with gusto! She immediately joined our peer support groups and signed up for our parenting classes on day one. By the end of her first month, she was employed full-time and setting new goals.

"While in this program I got my tax preparers certification so that I can make some extra, seasonal money. I'm looking forward to continuing with RaiseUp Families in their Aftercare program to continue my career and savings goals. My next step is to repair my credit so that I can purchase a home. It's already on my vision board!"

Terry's children noticed the change in her as well. "Seeing my mom not so stressed out all the time is awesome. It makes me try harder in school and I feel like I can just be a kid," her daughter, Trinity, shared.

Terry's future is bright, and we cannot wait to see what she does next!



EMMANUEL AND MARIELA

Emanuel and Mariela are the loving parents of Emmanuel Jr. (15) and Briana (11). They always prided themselves on being able to provide for their family, but their circumstances changed drastically in 2020.

"I was laid off from my job," said Mariela, "and Emmanuel was moved to part-time work. Then we both got Covid and ended up being hospitalized. It took us two months to recover enough to be able to go back to work and, by that time, the bills were piling up."

Unable to pay their rent for the first time in their lives, the family did not know where to turn. Their apartment manager referred them to RaiseUp Families.

"We had no idea there were programs like RaiseUp Families out there. When we first met with Denise, we could not believe how kind and compassionate everyone was."

Thanks to our supporters, RaiseUp Families helped Emmanuel and Mariela get caught up financially. "It was a huge relief," Emmanuel said, "but we still had one, major problem."

After seeing his parents taken away in an ambulance and witnessing their severe illness, Emmanuel Jr. began his battle with depression and anxiety.

"He's such a good boy, he cares so much about everyone. It hurt him deeply to see us suffering," Mariela said. "The parenting classes, counseling, and peer support groups really helped us gain the skills we needed to be better parents for him. And the opportunities he had through RaiseUp Families have given him confidence and a renewed spirit."



Learn more about
Atlas Scholars

RaiseUp Families connected Emmanuel Jr. with Atlas Scholars and after a rigorous application process, he was accepted.

"The change in him is like night and day. He's very happy. Seeing the other kids have their goals written down has inspired him to have goals and work towards accomplishing those goals."

Emmanuel is not the only one who completed some new goals this year. Mariela also renewed her Vocational Nursing License this year and is back to work full-time.

"RaiseUp Families changed our lives – all of our lives. This change will impact future generations of Zapatas!"

AFTERCARE PROGRAM

Clients who successfully complete RaiseUp Families' intensive, HandUp program are invited to continue with us in AfterCare. Monthly monetary subsidies come to an end as families have stabilized and learned critical budgeting skills, and opportunities for growth and improvement continue for the next two years.

Families who demonstrate saving ability are enrolled in our Dollar-a-Day savings matching program with the potential of having up to \$1,200 in savings matched over their first year in AfterCare.

In addition, children are welcome and encouraged to participate in our enrichment programming throughout the year.



ISABEL

Isabel knew the moment she stepped through the door at RaiseUp Families that she would always remain a part of our family. A HandUp graduate from 6 years ago, the family stays in touch with us to this day because of the role RaiseUp Families played in their life.

In 2014, Isabel's household income was slowly being cut, and eventually stopped altogether. "We had been talking to our apartment manager who said he was willing to work with us, but in the end, they not only went back on their word to accept a lower rent payment until I could secure employment, but they also charged additional fees."

To make matters worse, Isabel could not afford the registration sticker for her car and the apartment manager had it towed.

"I didn't know what we were going to do. It seemed hopeless."

Isabel reached out to Memorial Assistance Ministries for help, and they referred her to RaiseUp Families. "At first I was intimidated by Miss Denise and how serious she was. Then I realized that she was taking my situation seriously, that she was taking me seriously."

RaiseUp Families worked with the apartment manager to waive her late fees and get the family caught up on rent. From there, we began the work of getting Isabel's car back and teaching her the critical skills she needed to move forward.

"I couldn't believe how helpful everyone was and felt blessed to have found an organization like this that cared about me and my family."

Today, Isabel's family is thriving. She has been with the same employer for over five years and enjoys watching her girls participate in activities like cheerleading, boxing, and karate. Her oldest daughter, Alyssa, will be attending YES PREP as a freshman this fall and is already a volunteer with RaiseUp Families.

"Holly and Denise changed our lives for the better, and I just want to give back however I can and help other kids, like me," Alyssa said.



GRADUATION CELEBRATION

2021



On May 18, 2021, friends, donors, volunteers, staff, and our families came together to celebrate our 2021 HandUp program graduates.

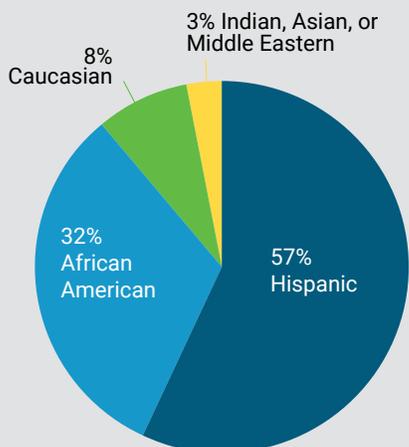
Just over 2 years since RaiseUp Families gathered as a community in support of our life-changing work, the day was buzzing with excitement and anticipation as our graduates took the stage at The Rustic Post Oak.

We came full circle on *JOURNEY*, which launched in October 2020, as we followed a new client, Stephanie through her 9 month "journey" in our program. Stephanie was our keynote speaker for the day's festivities and her courage was inspiring.

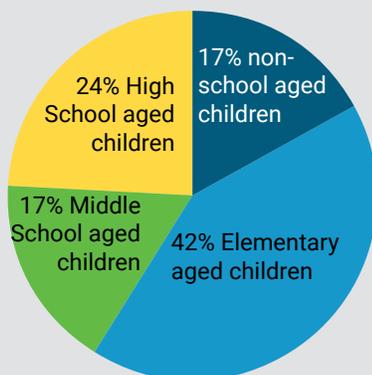


In case you missed it, scan the QR code to watch the 25-minute program. You'll hear from our clients – firsthand – just how your support of RaiseUp Families changed their lives!



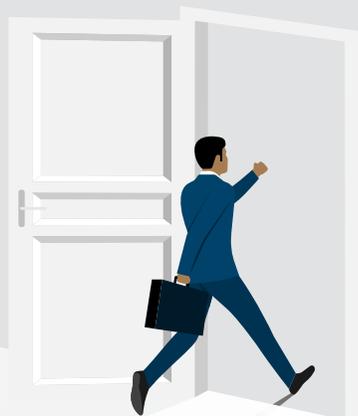


44 Families Served



Services provided

- 59% with transportation
- 35% with furnishings
- 66% with peer group counseling
- 42% with repairing their credit



Clients Graduating in FY 2020-2021

- 79% graduation rate from our HandUp program
- Average income increase: 40%
- 50% of families had full time employment when entering our program and 9 months later, 79% had full time employment

156 adults & 244 children

benefited from at least one program or service with RaiseUp Families last year



CHILDREN'S INVOLVEMENT

- 10 children attended Camp Allen
- On average, 24 children attended our Summer Day Camp daily
- 25 children received at least 2 books through our Summer Reading Program with snacks
- 70 Backpacks with school supplies were given out

OUR LONG-TERM IMPACT



75% of clients in our AfterCare program feel life is better since graduating from the HandUp program.



100% still employed full-time with 70% experiencing a raise or promotion in their career one year post-graduation



100% still employed with 40% experiencing a raise or promotion in their career two years post-graduation



100% of families remained in housing one year post-graduation



90% remained in their same housing two years post-graduation