

# Children's of Alabama Health Education & Safety Center 2021 Year End Report



Children's  
of Alabama®

# Health Education & Safety Center



**This year has been one of growth, one of change, and one of overcoming adversity.** We began the year working from home most days with our focus on program modification and planning to transform our face-to face programming into virtual presentations. We returned to the office full time in March and very soon after, we added a new member to our team secondary to the closing of the Patient Health and Safety Information (PHSI) office. With all the transformations going on within our department, we in turn acquired added responsibilities and programs. We spent months going back and forth on a department name that better defined who we are and what we do. What was formerly known as Alabama Safe Kids has been expanded and is now referred to as Children's of Alabama's Health Education and Safety Center.

# New Programs

With the addition of the **School Nurse Liaison** to our team, we were able to provide four CEU eligible nursing education workshops for school nurses statewide over the summer. Additionally, we hosted virtual workshops on g-tubes and trach tubes for hands-on clinical applications, and provided 50 different counties with a manikin for training purposes. We were also able to unite this program with another program in our department to provide a quarterly virtual presentation on AEDs which was presented by co-medical director of **Alabama LifeStart, Dr. Austin Kane**. The pre-registration for this session hit capacity so quickly that we opted to record the AED presentation and provide a second CEU session to further expand our reach across the state.

Providing this service to school nurses will further benefit our department by linking us with contacts at each of the schools whom can act as advocates for our other educational programs.

When PHSI closed and our department took over some of its programs, we decided to conduct a virtual **Safe Sitter course**. Not only did we want to see how well the attendees received the program, we also wanted to see if the added labor of providing this additional course could be absorbed by current staffing. We had seven pre-teen young women in attendance, all of whom were engaged and participated throughout the entirety of the three-hour class. Because of the success of this course, our hope is to continue providing this service in 2022, using school breaks as our target dates.

In addition, we have continued to work on the **Children's Injury Database (CID)** which has since provided enough data for us to begin piloting injury data analyses and composing data reports. The data obtained from this database allows us to identify the most prevalent injuries in specific geographic areas while also stimulating research. The CID has assisted in providing data for Dr. Kathy Monroe alongside some of her residents, thus allowing them to submit abstracts for presentations at various conferences throughout the United States.

Because we try to reach community members of all ages, we also wanted to offer safety education to our younger audience. To do that, we provided a puppet show for our 3 and 4-year-old early learning/**Head Start Programs**. We focused on education about bus safety, car seat safety, pedestrian safety, and wheeled sports safety. Surprisingly, by engaging with the audience throughout the show and presenting the material on an age-appropriate level, it kept the attention of the children despite being done virtually.





# Partnerships



Though this year has had its challenges, it has also had its gains, with one being the formation of several new partnerships. For example, we had the opportunity to team up with the Nascar Foundation in an event called **Speediatrics at the Talladega Super Speedway** leading up to race weekend. During this event, we provided bike helmets to every 3rd grader at Lincoln Elementary School and educated them on brain and spinal cord safety.

We also joined forces with **Safe Kids Worldwide** and their partner Mercedes-Benz to provide a pedestrian safety event for McAdory Elementary School called Winterfest. Mercedes-Benz utilized these events as a way for their employees to give back to the community. While at the school, we went to every pre-K through 2nd grade class to read Clifford Takes a Walk to the students. Each classroom was given both the book and a plush Clifford dog, each student was given a Clifford Takes a Walk book, and the pre-k and kindergarten students each received a plush Clifford dog to call their own.

Another new partnership is one that not only allows us to team up with outside institutions, but it has allowed us to merge two of our own programs into a new pilot program. We have been working with McAdory High School career tech students to bring the **Body Trek curriculum** to the feeder elementary

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schools students. To bring this vision to life, we have blended our Body Trek program with our Think First Alabama program to educate the high school students on various body functions and ways to keep the body safe. We have encouraged the students to utilize their skills and imaginations to come up with different ways to educate the younger children. To help prepare the high schoolers with the necessary skills to relate to the elementary students, we had Robert Barnes from the **Sunshine School** discuss how children of different ages have varying learning styles, as well as provide them with a sundry of methods that could be helpful in their developing and providing age-appropriate education. As part of the program, we also plan to provide educational and professional lunch and learn sessions for the career tech students to help in preparing them for the future.

Additionally, we teamed up with **Injury Free Coalition for Kids (IFCK)** through **National Injury Prevention Day (NIPD)** by assisting with staffing for the NIPD event, providing Child Safety Books for parents, and supplying age-appropriate incentives which included bike helmets, car safety hammers, wallet cards, etc. We also have plans to provide bike helmets and staff to support IFCK at an event at Glen Iris Elementary School, but unfortunately this event has been postponed until further notice secondary to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.





# Partnerships



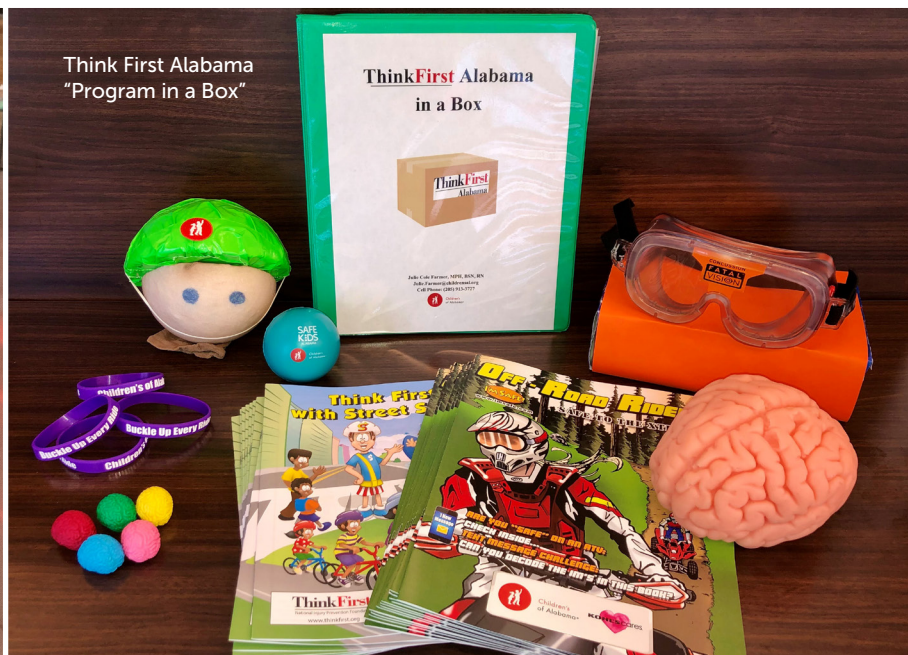
We have also continued to allocate resources to strengthen our relationship and increase our presence in Pickens County. To kick off the school year, several different organizations teamed up to coordinate **"Just Be Well Pickens County,"** a back to school rally with multiple vendors designed to promote health and safety in the community. Though we could not be present at the time of the event due to travel restrictions, we provided 60 booster seats as well as other incentives and educational materials for distribution. Prior to the event, we educated three health science teachers who assumed responsibility for educating caregivers before receiving their child's free booster seat. Not only was the focus of this event on promoting physical health, but there was an emphasis on mental and emotional health too. Because our department focuses primarily on physical health and safety, we took this opportunity to team up with both COA's CHIP Center and PIRC to bring other Children's services to West Alabama while also developing a relationship within our organization for future collaboration.

While fostering new partnerships during these unprecedented times has been essential, by reallocating funding from our long-standing partners, we have been able to further promote injury prevention in ways we previously did not have the financial means to support. For example, COVID-19 has allowed us to provide bike helmets for more events than normal through **ALDOT funding** that was originally

# Partnerships

specified for car seat activities, but is not currently being utilized for such due to the temporary halt in car seat programming. Given the travel restrictions, there were a couple of events we were not able to physically participate in. However, we responded to the ever-evolving situation by educating key personnel at these different organizations on how to properly fit bike helmets, and were then able to provide bike helmets for the event to be distributed by their own staff.

To combat our inability to go into schools due to COVID-19, **Think First Alabama** developed and implemented the **"Program in a Box."** Julie is collaborating with schools that have participated in her program throughout the years and providing them with teaching tools and other educational materials, such as concussion goggles, so that the program can go on despite visitor and travel restrictions. Included in the "box" is a step by step instruction manual that the teacher or coach uses as a guide to present the program him or herself to their students. The instruction manual was created to ensure the "Program in a Box" functions almost seamlessly so that the instructor understands every part of the curriculum, and no question is left unanswered. This type of program transition has proved to be a good resource for schools that do not have the capabilities to utilize zoom or any other virtual platforms.





# Alabama LifeStart



AED Installation



Calhoun County AED  
School Certification

One program that we have recently acquired is the **Alabama LifeStart AED Program**. We have played a supporting role for this program by making calls to schools across the state to identify which schools still have AED's that were previously distributed to them by Children's of Alabama, while also updating each school's contact information to provide a more direct line of communication. We are currently in the process of creating a data sheet designating which school systems are already Heart Safe, want to become Heart Safe, or are a potential target at Dr. Kane's request.



# Child Passenger Safety & Teen Driving

In 2021, we provided two **Child Passenger Safety Technician certification courses** in person, as required. Our first course was taught at COA with the intent to increase inpatient staff with CPS knowledge and needed certification, while our second course was provided for the Trussville Fire Department. Each of these courses included a required community car seat check. The first check-up event was held at COA, and gave us the opportunity to support our inpatient COA staff by educating both the caregivers and staff concerning a patient with special transportation needs. During this event, we were also able to assist a second family whose children were discharged from COA by providing them with car seat education and installation for pre-term infants and siblings. The second car seat check was a community event held at a local church daycare. While at this check-up event, not only were we able to provide education to numerous families, we also assisted in the car seat installation for 23 different children, while simultaneously helping with the CPST recertification for the Mt. Brook Fire Department.

Furthermore, this year we also directed our focus to our teenage audience by modifying each of our programs to abide by recommended guidelines. To continue providing our **URKEYS2DRV program**, we employed a virtual model that allowed us to host six different URKEYS2DRV programs, some of which had more than one school in attendance. Though we were not able to be physically present, we also supported an in-person event at Sparkman High School in the Huntsville area by providing Mike Lutzenkirchen as a key note speaker and supplying incentives for each of the students. In terms of an in-person teen driving event, we participated in "All in Mt. Brook," an event held at Mt. Brook High School, where we utilized our **"To the ED and Beyond" session** with Adam Lansdon and the Mt. Brook Fire Department.

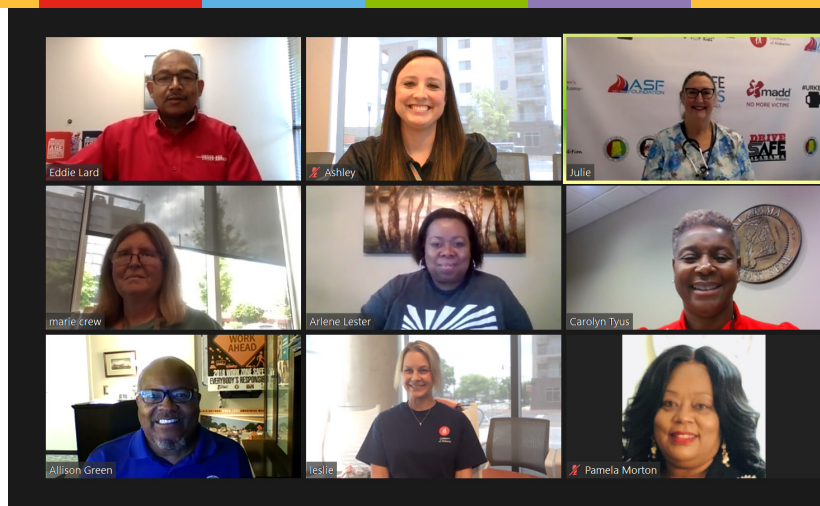


# Virtual Events

The virtual world has brought unique opportunities as well as challenges. Every virtual event has increased the amount of time our staff has needed for preparation and planning due to our having to coordinate schedules with multiple people in various departments/organizations, create PowerPoint slides and presentations, practice for each different presentation we provide, etc. To meet the demands brought about by transitioning to virtual platforms, one of my staff members has devoted a great deal of her time to being our point person to oversee the zoom sessions and manage the necessary technology behind the scenes. This employee also records the sessions/programs, and has since started editing the recordings so they can be utilized in the future, as needed. She recorded each of the school nurse workshops this summer, and they are now posted to [myschoolnurse.net](http://myschoolnurse.net). Because she is now editing these recordings too, this will provide us with quicker turnaround time for future use. While she is taking care of the technical aspects of each of these programs, the presenters and support staff are planning each of these events, coordinating with outside presenters/organizations, making reservations for a Zoom-capable room, communicating with schools, etc. Additionally, for most of our programs, we are shipping literature and various incentives to each organization or agency. This takes time to determine what and how much to send, along with the time necessary for packing and shipping to each destination. These added responsibilities are currently being absorbed by existing staff, but have significantly increased both the workload and time requirements needed to successfully execute these virtual presentations.

After months of anticipation, we were finally able to kick off the **NIH Virtual Car Seat Study**. We began providing appointments for the study in July, which is the second year of the study. However, we have had scattered interest from the community. One of the drawbacks we have is due to not being able to utilize our **Children's of Alabama Car Seat Program** to provide information to callers, as it is currently paused secondary to COVID-19. Not only that, because our car seat program is suspended, we also do not have an alternative covered site to use in the event of inclement weather.

Though we were not able to resume our car seat program this year, thanks to funding from various grants, we were able to provide 315 booster seats across the state. Staff members of the receiving organizations were given virtual education on the proper use of booster seats. They themselves then passed along their knowledge, as well as other educational materials and incentives supplied by our department, to the caregivers receiving the seats. In this way, even though our staff could not be present to distribute the booster seats, we were still able to provide this service to our community.



Coalition Team



# Communications & Media Outreach

One way we have dealt with the ever evolving virtual world is by the production of numerous educational videos, which would not have materialized if it weren't for both the funding from various grants and the effort from Denise McGill and her team. These videos have included Mike Lutzenkirchen, State Trooper Reginal King, Express Oil, and a URKEYS2DRV promo. We have also recorded two program videos, one for teen driving (To the ED and Beyond) and another for brain and spinal cord injury prevention (Think First Alabama). Not only are these videos used during our programming, they are also posted to our webpage for public viewing. Denise and her team have truly outdone themselves with the quality of these videos, and we look forward to using them throughout our programs for many years to come.

Though most of our programs have been impacted significantly over the last year, our presence in the media has not wavered. We have worked with Corporate Communications & Marketing to provide requested interviews for both television and print media outside our organization. For television, we have participated in a couple of larger, advertising-type interviews. One of the television productions was an interview that was done in partnership with UAB TRIP Lab and RPC to promote our virtual teen driving resources. A second television promotion consisted of both a URKEYS2DRV advertisement and an interview on teen driving that was aired on Channel 68 Thursday/Friday Night Lights alongside three other hospital-sponsored interviews. To expand our reach to adults with and around teenagers, we have also been advertising teen driving through a streaming service for Alabama high school sporting events. In terms of print media, we have articles published on AL.com, as well as StyleBlueprint. Within our organization, we have participated in Minute with Children's and other forms of media to provide injury prevention education. One of our highlighted productions was a video produced by Patrick Deavours and our staff regarding children and hot cars, illustrating how quickly the inside of a vehicle heats up relative to the outside temperature. It is imperative for us to continue reaching our target audiences and sharing our message despite our inability to physically be out in the communities. We are beyond grateful to Corporate Communications & Marketing for thinking of us and calling on us to provide educational content to a larger audience, as well as assisting us with various projects at our request.



# Looking Ahead



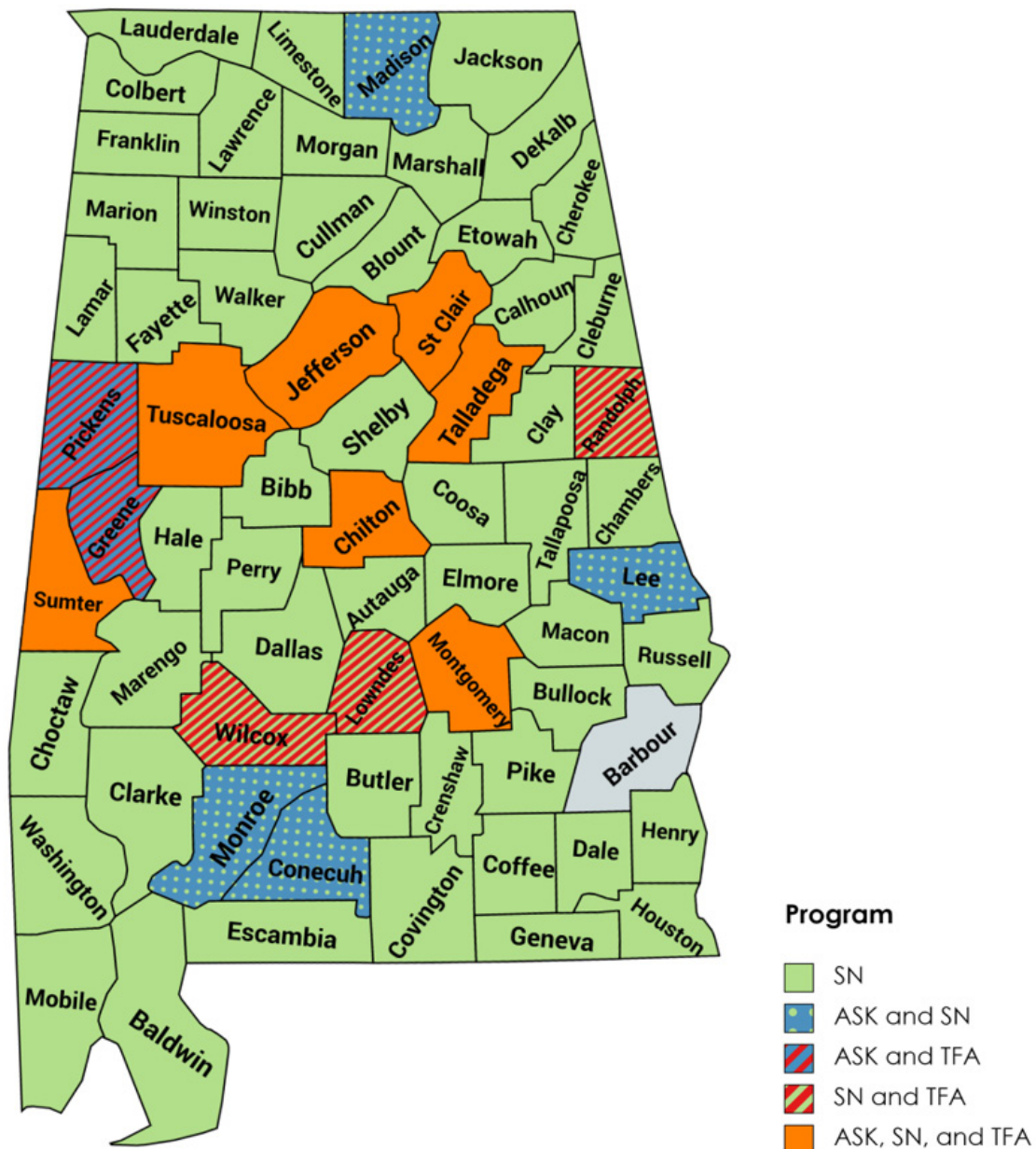
To sum it up, in 2021, our department provided education for more than 6,600 children and 1,300 adults across 66 different counties within the state. Though these numbers may not be comparable to numbers from previous years, it was a noteworthy success due to our having to pivot to virtual programming and other unconventional methods to reach the community. The map shown below depicts each county we have reached this year despite the ongoing pandemic, and is color coordinated to illustrate which of our programs made this impact: Alabama Safe Kids (ASK), School Nurse (SN), and/or Think First Alabama (TFA). Alabama Safe Kids activities include events related to car seat safety, teen driving, pedestrian safety, etc. Think First Alabama events are primarily brain and spinal cord injury prevention and teen driving, and School Nurse programming consists of school nurse workshops and webinars.

Moving forward, our focus for 2022 will continue to be prioritizing all grant requirements. To do this, our strategy is two-fold. First, we want to continuously improve the quality of our current programs where needed. Second, we hope to be able to utilize data from the CID and other resources to identify new areas of injury prevention that are essential based on community needs. Our ultimate goal is to build on our new virtual programs while also returning to community in-person events and activities as allowed by COVID-19. We look forward to strengthening current relationships with both our new and existing partnerships when possible, as well as identifying new partners and opportunities along the way. Though we were thrown into the virtual world without warning, we recognize that it is here to stay, and are grateful for it because it will allow us to further expand our reach into communities we have not previously had a strong presence in. While this has been a trying year full of unknowns, we have learned a lot not only about the future of our programs and how they will function, but we have also learned a lot about each other, and truly have a better understanding of what teamwork really is.

We would like to give a special thank you to ALDOT, State Farm, Kohl's Cares, ADPH, NIH (Children's National/UAB), North East Alabama Community Foundation, Caring Foundation, the Alabama Civil Justice Foundation, and all our other partner agencies. Our programs and activities would not be possible without the support and generosity of our faithful sponsors.



# Looking Ahead





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