



THRU  
PROJECT  
FOSTERING HOPE AFTER FOSTER CARE



# IMPACT REPORT 2025

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2025, I am filled with immense gratitude for the progress we've made together and the lives we've impacted. This year has been a testament to the power of community, resilience, and unwavering dedication to our mission of empowering youth with a history of foster care to build independent, successful futures.

Through our programs and initiatives, we supported 361 youth, with 85% of participants over the age of 18. We expanded our reach through housing programs, enabling more college students to thrive academically and personally. I am proud to share that 30% of our youth are attending or have graduated from college, a remarkable achievement considering the challenges they face. Additionally, our employment-focused initiatives have led to a decrease in unemployment among participants, with 79% enrolled in school or career training.

Our Mentorship Program continues to be the cornerstone of THRU Project, with 196 youth matched with dedicated mentors who provided over 2,300 hours of guidance and support. This program exemplifies the transformative impact of consistent relationships with trusted adults, and we are grateful to our 192 volunteer mentors for their commitment to our youth.

We also made strides in addressing critical needs through initiatives like Pass to Success, Fostering Connections, and BreakTHRU. From providing transportation and cell phones to offering mental health support, these programs have empowered our youth to overcome barriers and achieve their goals. Our housing programs have been instrumental in providing stability, with 75 young adults housed and eight college graduates celebrating their achievements.

The Heart Gallery of South Central Texas continues to be a beacon of hope, connecting children to permanency and providing essential resources to partner organizations. This year, 56% of youth featured in the gallery exited to permanency, far surpassing the national average of 17%.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff, Board of Directors, community partners, volunteers, and the incredible young people we serve. Your support fuels our mission and inspires us to continue creating opportunities for those with lived experience in foster care to achieve their fullest potential. As we look ahead, we remain committed to expanding our programs, strengthening our partnerships, and ensuring that every young person we serve has the tools and support they need to thrive. Together, we are making a lasting impact and building brighter futures.

With gratitude,

Leonard B. Rodriguez  
Chief Executive Officer

# MISSION

To empower youth with a history of foster care to build independent, successful futures.

# VISION

THRU Project envisions a world where everyone with lived experience in foster care can achieve their fullest potential.

# FAIIR VALUES



We encounter adversity with courage, strength, and perseverance.



We are "all-in" for the mission and give our best effort to ensure the success of our clients, our programs, and the organization.



We provide equal access to services and opportunities for our clients and do not permit discrimination or intolerance.



We engage in strategic and creative thinking to ensure we are developing programs that will serve our clients well today and in the future.



We demonstrate professional courtesy, respect personal boundaries, and treat each other and our program participants with dignity.

# OUR IMPACT

In 2025, THRU Project provided support to 361 youth across its programs.

Approximately 85 percent of participants were over the age of 18, while most youth under 18 were served through the Heart Gallery. Expansion of our housing programs increased the number of college-enrolled participants we served. Consistent with the prior year, 30 percent of youth were attending college or had completed a postsecondary degree. Among participants outside of the Heart Gallery, 20 percent were enrolled in high school and preparing for college or vocational training.

Housing stability remained a key priority.

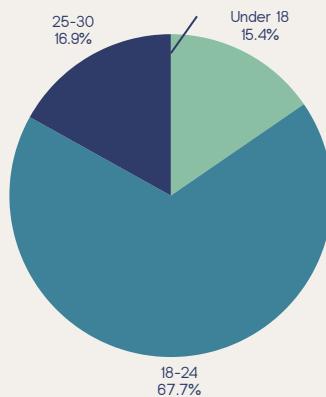
Thirteen percent of participants were not in permanent housing, while the remaining 87 percent resided in foster care placements, permanent housing, or THRU Project-supported housing.



Employment outcomes improved in 2025 as a result of workforce initiatives launched in 2024. These programs focused on job readiness, placement, and retention, contributing to a reduction in unemployment to 12 percent. Additionally, 79 percent of participants were enrolled in school or career training, many while working. Nationally, individuals with foster care experience face significant barriers to balancing education and employment.

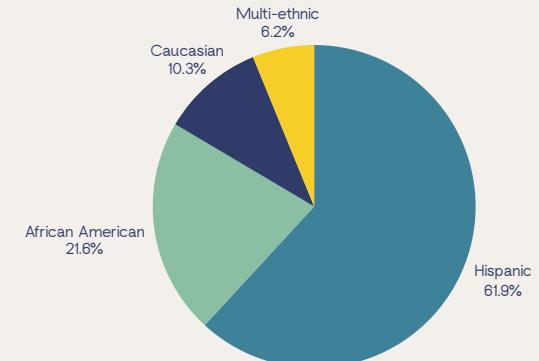
Former foster youth are more likely to work while enrolled in school and less likely to complete postsecondary education compared to their peers, largely due to financial necessity and limited support systems. Against this national context, THRU Project's outcomes demonstrate measurable progress in supporting youth to remain engaged in both education and employment despite systemic challenges.

Ages of all clients served in 2025.



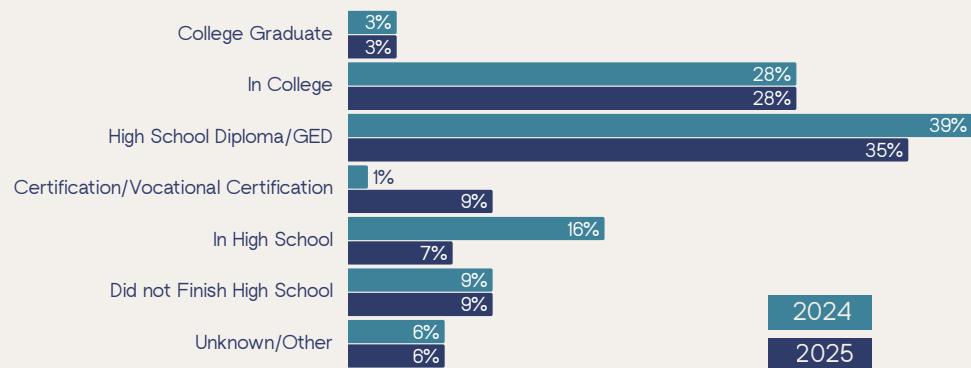
Exclusive of Heart Gallery participants

Ethnicities of all clients served in 2025.



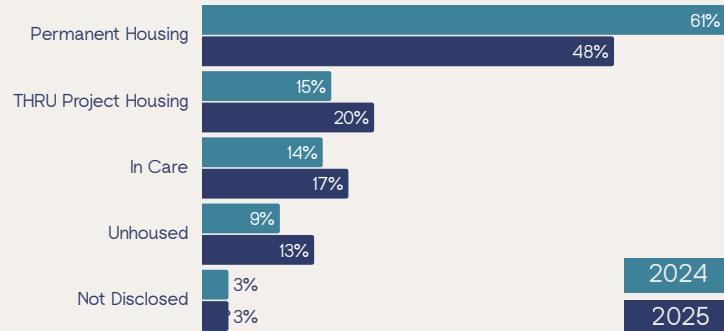
Exclusive of Heart Gallery participants

## Highest Level of Education

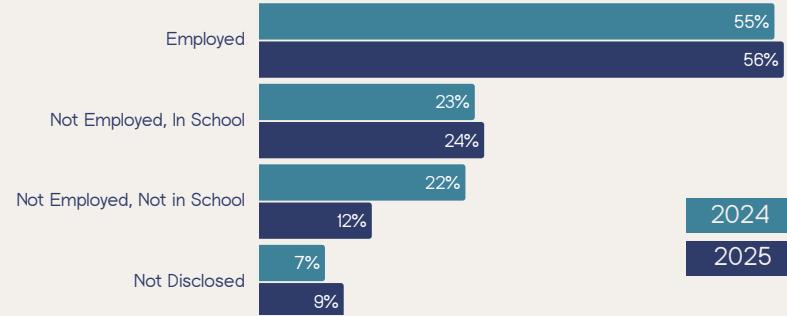


Note: Heart Gallery youth (41 youth) are not included in this data.

## Housing Status



## Employment Status (18+)





As a funded partner within the Heart Galleries of Texas network, the Heart Gallery of South Central Texas coordinates regional efforts across Region 8, serving a 28-county area.

Through strategic partnerships and close collaboration with the child welfare system, we function as a gateway to permanency for children listed in the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE).

Our work also includes providing community education on foster care and adoption, equipping partner organizations with critical resources, and strengthening our reach and long-term sustainability to ensure the continued success and impact of this initiative.

**56%**  
of youth featured exited  
to permanency  
\*17% national average

**120**  
youth featured in  
our Heart Gallery  
\*87 state average #

**224**  
galleries featured  
across Region 8  
\*last year 49

**\$290K**  
awarded to partner agencies to launch  
post-permanency support programs.

### Post-Permanency Support Program Agencies:

- Artvango Therapy Center
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- SJRC | Belong
- Roy Maas Youth Alternatives
- Divinity Family Services



Heart Gallery pop-up display  
at the 2025 International  
Anesthesiology Conference

# MENTORSHIP

The Mentorship Program is the foundation of THRU Project. Established in 2011 as a grassroots organization, THRU Project began with a single program focused on providing mentorship to young adults transitioning out of the foster care system.

What began with only a small number of participants has expanded significantly over time, demonstrating the transformative impact that consistent support, guidance, and relationships with trusted adults can have on the lives of young people.



**196**

youth were matched with caring mentors in 2025



**84** new mentees joined in 2025

**2.5** years is the average match length



Our mentors are the cornerstone of this program, offering continuous support to the youth with whom they're matched. In 2025, we had 192 dedicated volunteer mentors participate in the program. This represents an 83% increase since 2024 thanks to the 2,304 hours of mentoring youth with backgrounds in foster care. The success of this program is possible through their dedication to our mission.



THRU Project hosts Life Skills Workshops all year round. These sessions provide essential skills for successfully navigating adulthood. Community partners, who are specialists in the relevant topics, share their knowledge with young participants.



## FEATURED PARTNERS:

Credit Human

San Antonio Apartment Association

Cafe College

Healthy Futures of Texas

Doin Well

COSA Mobile Fit

Ecumenical Center

Alamo Colleges

St. Mary's Law School

Restore Education

North Star Mall

Teens Day SA



17  
THRUtalks in 2025

## FEATURED SUBJECTS:

Renter's Rights & Leasing

Applying for College

Budgeting

Accessing Community Resources

Career Opportunities

Mental & Physical Wellness



# PASS TO SUCCESS

We offer youth six-month VIA bus passes to assist with transportation needs. Additionally, we provide Uber rides for youth to reach any events related to the THRU Project.



47

youth received bus passes



720

Uber rideshares provided to youth



## FOSTERING CONNECTIONS

Through a partnership with community partner T-Mobile, we provide youth with cell phones at no cost to them. For many participants, this device is their sole means of accessing the internet and maintaining connections with friends, family, and community resources.



38

youth received cell phones

93%

of users say having a cell phone helps maintain relationships



Four out of five young people with a history of foster care are diagnosed with serious mental health conditions, compared to one in five in the general population. Through BreakTHRU, youth receive no-cost access to occupational therapy, individual counseling, and peer support groups. Participants report improved overall well-being and a stronger ability to set and accomplish personal goals.



**49**

**unique individuals were served by BreakTHRU.**

**“Before THRU Project, I felt like I was carrying everything on my own. The support groups showed me I wasn’t alone, and it helped me open up, heal, and feel more confident in myself.”**

**Jace, Support Group Participant**

**397**

TALK THERAPY SESSIONS

**78**

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SESSIONS

**40**

SUPPORT GROUPS

# HOUSING

THRU Project offers 3 different housing programs: Supervised Independent Living (SIL), College Housing, and Vocational Housing. THRU Project covers rent and provides furnishings while young adults focus on their education and employment. Housing participants receive ongoing support from their Housing Resource Coordinators.



Young adults were housed  
in our housing programs

**2.9**

Average GPA among  
college students housed



**8**

COLLEGE GRADUATES



**"I've finally been able to balance my life in a way that makes me happy. 2025 was amazing; I received my BA in Criminal Justice, started my master's degree program, and I got engaged!"**

**-Sophie, College Housing Participant**

By providing the necessity of stable housing, our participants are able to thrive in higher education, while combating the national statistic where only 3% will complete college. As they continue to persevere and achieve, THRU Project continues to expand our housing programs to meet the needs of our participants.



We are deeply grateful to our dedicated staff, Board of Directors, community partners, and volunteers, and especially to the remarkable young people we serve. Their passion, trust, and collaboration are at the heart of our work and make our mission possible.