How Our Programs Have Responded During the COVID-19 Pandemic

GSS partnered with New York City’s most impacted communities.

Good Shepherd Services (GSS) partners with historically disinvested communities and builds upon their assets. During the COVID-19 pandemic, GSS staff mobilized as first responders to the emergent and shifting needs in our communities. These included requests for cash and food assistance, technology, and employment opportunities. We responded to 1,300 requests from families living in East New York and 642 requests from families in Jerome Park and its surrounding areas (see map).

Despite intensified systemic challenges, participants achieved substantive accomplishments.

GSS programs continued to support participants through internships and employment placements, educational enrollments and graduation, and certification completion. GSS served 3,236 active participants* during the COVID-19 pandemic and 62% (n=2,019) were able to persevere and work towards a life advancement outcome, 940 graduated from High School, and 673 had a secure income through employment or internships.

GSS programs adapted to meet changing community needs.

As the pandemic has persisted, basic need requests have grown, education support reached a high towards the end of the school year and early summer, and employment support requests have decreased.

**Basic Need Response**

Basic need requests significantly increased from 25% in March to 59% in August. A total of 2,051 responses were made for basic needs. In the summer, 66% of all individuals with a food injustice request were provided with an immediate food response such as a pantry bags, gift cards, or grocery and takeout deliveries.

**Education or Tech Response**

One quarter of all requests were to address Education and Technology challenges. A total of 2,630 responses were made for education needs and 1,263 for technology needs. On average, 35% of all tech responses assisted students navigating online platforms or assisted with homework or class assignments.

**Employment Response**

Employment requests were consistent at the start of the pandemic and decreased in the summer. As we know, unemployment remains at a record high and the decrease may reflect participants having been connected to resources. A total of 346 connections to internships and 218 connections to essential work opportunities were made. In March, 44% of support consisted of career coaching and after May 58% of support connected people to internship and work opportunities.

*Denominator: Youth Justice and Workforce (n=470), Supportive Housing (n=103), Education Programs: YABC, Transfer Schools, Lifelink (n=2,663)
Community-Based Program Highlights

Youth Justice
Participants were supported to remain on track and avoid justice involvement despite shifts in their routines and decreased protective factors (e.g., basic needs, school, work). 65% of all Youth Justice participants received support with technology.

AIM, Arches, Next Steps (n=99)
- Exiting Youth avoided justice involvement for 3+ months: 96%
- Received food resources (e.g., groceries): 81%

Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence (B.R.A.G.) (n=128)
In addition to their CURE Violence work, B.R.A.G. has supported community COVID-19 prevention & education efforts.

Supportive Housing
Chelsea Foyer (n=54) and MEHR (n=50 adults; 23 children) responded to social emotional, technology, and financial challenges. 88% of residents engaged in goal setting and 77% received mental health support from GSS Staff (e.g., social worker).

The Foyer offered rent forgiveness and supported stable housing attainment for all residents

MEHR leveraged partnerships to provide technology assistance to support resident’s education and connect to loved ones

Domestic Violence
Safe Homes (SH) focused on meeting basic needs and financial independence of residents while supporting non-resident growth. 92% had a counseling session and 77% of participants worked on a plan for their mental and physical safety.

Residents in Shelter (n=22 Adults; 26 Children)
100% received food resources
95% received financial resources (e.g., cash)

Non-residential Participants (n=64 adults)
13% 43% 35% 13%
% Participant Attended
1 Grp. 2-10 Grps. 11-20 Grps. 20+ Grps.

School-Based Programs (n=5,722)
In the YABC (n=1,747) & Transfer School (n=806), students with internships were more likely to have positive program exits than those without internships. To promote retention, graduation, and positive exits (e.g., employment) GSS staff in these programs and the Community Schools (n=3,169) provided continuous support to address the challenges that arose with the shift to remote learning.

School-based programs supported students and kept them informed

Participants received Academic Support (e.g., homework assistance)

Participants received Informational Outreach (e.g., schedule updates, food distributions)

LifeLink College Access & Success (n=1,084)
LifeLink provided financial and technical assistance for their participants transitioning from High School to College to support college enrollment and retention.

Over 127 Laptops & Chromebooks

Over $24,000 in gift card & checks

$30,000 Helping Hands Grant

Education

Workforce Development
Participants were encouraged to continue their career pursuits through virtual career coaching and employment focused assistance. 89% of all participants were provided with help with virtual career coaching and/or job readiness workshops.

B.R.A.G. has supported community COVID-19 prevention & education efforts.

Academic and Career Enrichment (ACE) (n=60)
ACE served 60 participants and responded to over 400 need requests. Education and Technology support were the most prominent responses.

"I did not feel like I had a family before, now I do." – SH Participant

"Good Shepard Services has been playing an integral role in my mental health and wellbeing. It was also very helpful to receive a Target Gift Card to assist with my son’s needs." – SH Participant

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