

Newly arriving migrant and asylum-seeking children (Newcomers)

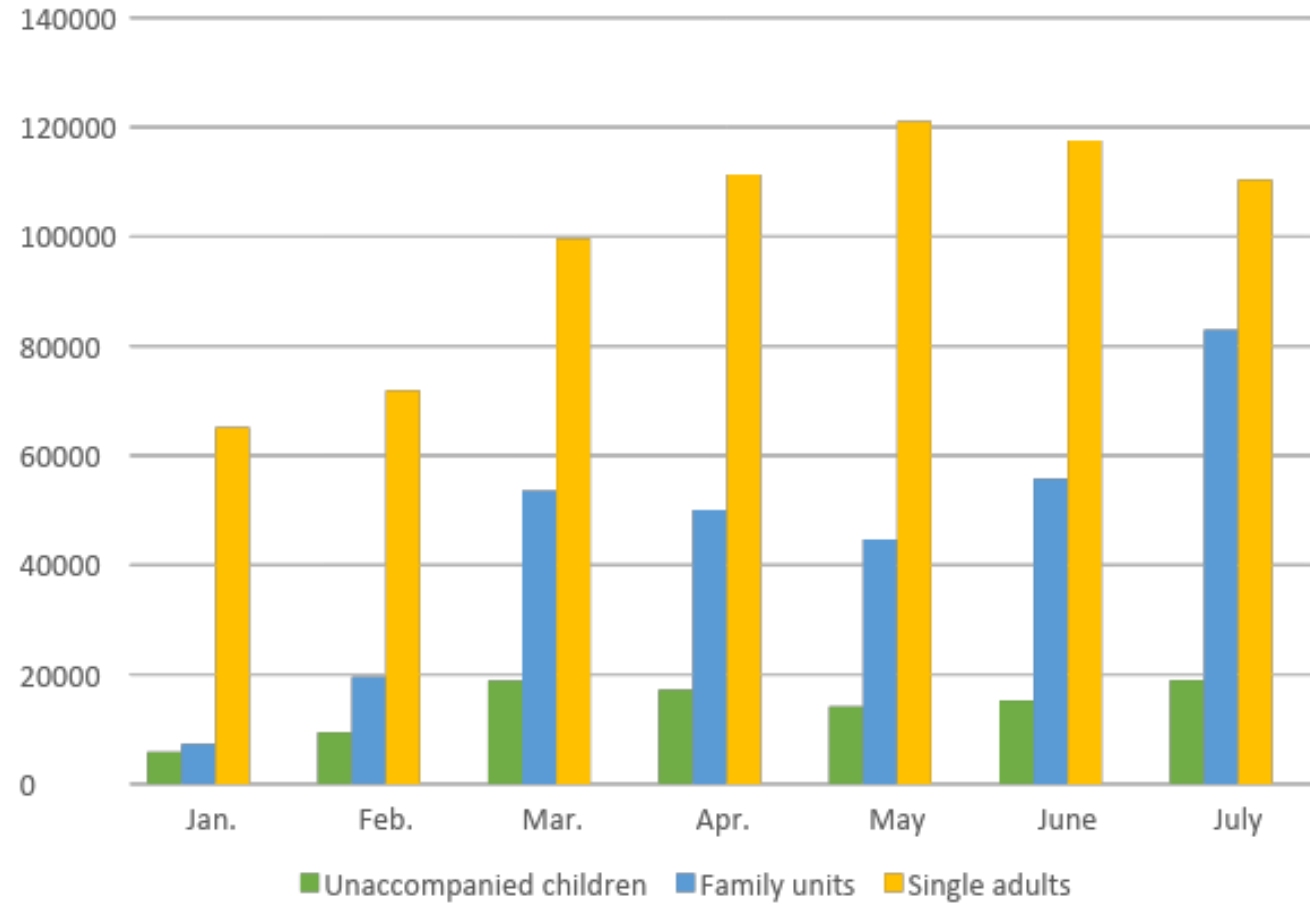
Montgomery County's Response

September 29, 2021

Situation update - national

- **Arrivals**: The U.S. is expecting a 20-year high in the number of unaccompanied migrant and asylum-seeking children approaching the border. These young people are fleeing high levels of violence, crime, natural disasters, food insecurity and poverty. The majority (90%) are seeking to unify with family members in the United States.
- **Numbers**: More than 99,400 unaccompanied children crossed the U.S.-Mexico border between January and July. In March, the number of unaccompanied child arrivals was the highest on record (18,877).
- **Demographics**: The majority of unaccompanied children are from Guatemala (48%), Honduras (25%) and El Salvador (14%). 72% are over 14 years old and 68% are boys. Many newly arriving children from Guatemala are Native American, not Hispanic/Latino. They speak indigenous languages (for example, Mam, K'iche', and Q'anjob'al) and many do not speak Spanish.
- **Not only unaccompanied children**: In addition to unaccompanied children, family units and single adults continue to approach the border in high numbers. Most continue to be pushed back under Title 42, although some families with children under age 7 have been allowed to enter the United States. Some children and adults cross the border undetected by immigration authorities and are not included in numbers reported by DHS/CBP or the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

U.S. Customs and Border Protection Southwest Border Encounters 2021



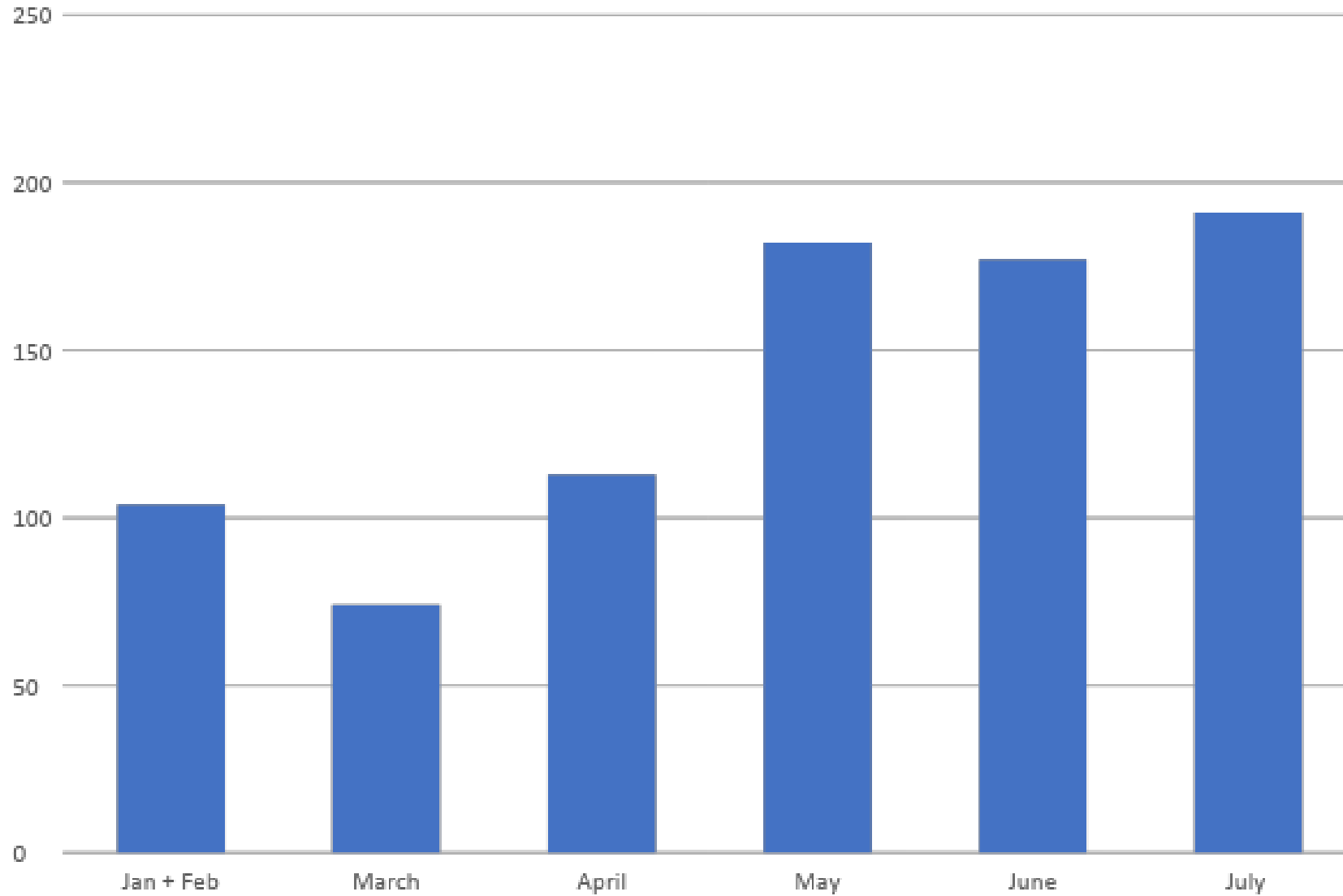
Situation update – Montgomery County

- Montgomery County is a primary destination for unaccompanied children seeking to unify with families/sponsors.
- Between 2014-2021, Montgomery County was the 11th highest receiving county in the nation.
- Release numbers from border facilities have been low because case management has not been in place. ORR is working to expedite the release process and numbers of children released are expected to increase in the coming weeks and months.
- According to ORR, 841 unaccompanied children have been released to sponsors in Montgomery County between January and July, with an increase of 191 children between June and July.
- In addition to unaccompanied children released to sponsors in Montgomery County, an unknown number of children are arriving with parents or other caregivers. There is no mechanism to track the numbers of migrants and asylum-seekers arriving in each state or county.

Unaccompanied children released to families/sponsors in our region

	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021 through July
Montgomery	1,168	214	841
Prince Georges	1,557	263	1,173
Fairfax	1,318	226	942
D.C.	322	48	209
	4,365	751	3,165

Unaccompanied children released to families/sponsors in Montgomery County in 2021



841 unaccompanied children were released to families/sponsors in Montgomery County between January – July 2021

Montgomery County Public Schools International Admissions and Enrollment

Month	Number of Student Intakes 2017–2018	Number of Student Intakes 2018–2019	Number of Student Intakes 2019–2020	Number of Student Intakes/Cleared 2020–2021	Number of ORRs (with sponsors) 2020–2021	Number of Student Intakes/Cleared 2021–2022	Number of ORRs (with sponsors) 2021–2022
July	366	271	515	1	0	88	5
August	869	748	1174	228	2	395	20
September	362	748	1104	186	4	412	35
October	213	430	571	78	5		
November	127	250	227	62	1		
December	155	210	211	56	0		
January	242	359	361	43	3		
February	186	342	228	82	6		
March	195	328	82	98	12		
April	198	349	5	97	5		
May	146	343	42	81	10		
June	156	240	10	74	10		
TOTAL	3215	4618	4530	1086	58	895	60

*MCPS does not collect data on students' country of origin. Students who arrived in the country unaccompanied and came through the ORR system are not obligated to show ORR documentation to MCPS. Therefore, the ORR numbers reported by MCPS may not be fully representative.

Montgomery County's Response



- On July 22nd, the Montgomery County Council's joint Health and Human Services and Education and Culture Committee approved a \$5.4 million supplemental funding request to support newly arriving migrant and asylum-seeking children, youth, and families.
- A video of the County Council session is accessible [here](#). Background documents shared with the joint Committee are [here](#). The appropriation is [here](#).
- DHHS is currently recruiting a Newcomer Coordinator.
- MCPS will soon be recruiting a Transition Counselor for Newcomers.
- The Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center will soon be recruiting a Legal Services Coordinator.

Interagency Implementation Plan

An interagency team comprised of county government and community stakeholders have worked together to develop an implementation plan. The plan includes the following action areas:

1. Communications
2. Navigation and case management (including health and mental health)
3. Education and school-based services
4. Legal services
5. Positive youth development and recreation
6. Anti-discrimination, public safety and trafficking prevention

1

COMMUNICATIONS

Our goal: Newcomers receive welcoming messages in their own languages with timely and accurate information to help them access education, social services, and other supports.



Use range of media strategies to reach Spanish- and Mayan-speaking newcomers and receiving communities county-wide, building on the success and lessons learned from Salud y Bienestar. **(Communications Shop)**

Promote the Spanish-language hotline **(301) 270-8432** linking to navigation and case management services. **(CASA)**



Promote the Spanish-language WhatsApp Group: **(240) 447-1862**. **(Office of Community Partnerships)**

Assess primary language preference and ensure Maya language access and cultural competency. **(DHHS, MCPS, Office of Community Partnerships)**



NAVIGATION, CASE MANAGEMENT, HEALTH & MENTAL HEALTH

Our goal: Coordinate and implement a culturally proficient system of engagement via a “Navigation Network”, a team of community- and school-based partners who work together to ensure newly arriving migrant and asylum-seeking children and families/sponsors are provided needed support services.

Create Network



- Identify partners and points of entry
- Establish communication protocols
- Identify capacity, commitments & processes

Engagement & Navigation



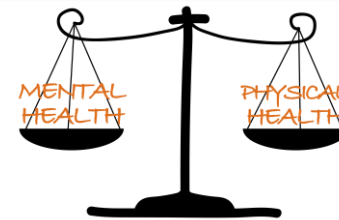
- Outreach
- Inform of community resources
- Referrals, direct assistance & warm hand-off

Case Management



- Includes comprehensive assessment
- Ongoing follow-up
- Ensure needs are met
- Engaging to children and families
- Assess for change in conditions

Wellness

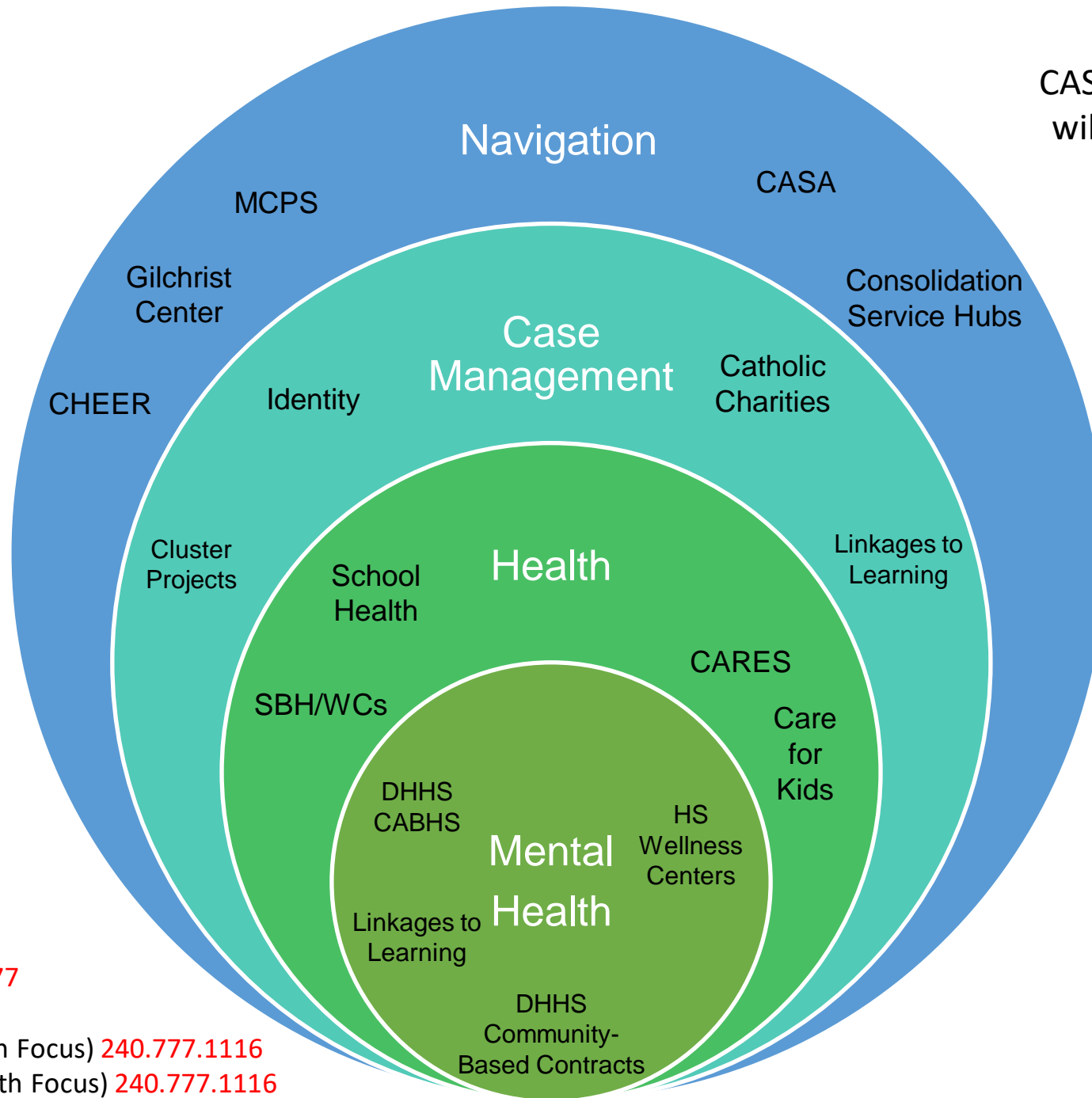


- Trauma-informed health & mental health
- On-site mental health support at METS schools whenever possible (if not in community)
- Therapeutic recreational support

Process & Systems Improvement



- Professional Development
- Document best practices
- Identify systems and policy barriers
- Reallocate and/or request new resources as needed



CASA Hotline **(301) 270-8432**
will link to initial navigation
services.

Subcommittee Co-Chairs:

Fresia Guzman, Identity **240.449.6977**

Monica Martin, DHHS **240.777.1792**

Tara Clemons, DHHS (Somatic Health Focus) **240.777.1116**

Regina Morales, DHHS (Mental Health Focus) **240.777.1116**

3 EDUCATION AND SCHOOL-BASED SERVICES



Our goal: Create an environment for newcomer students and families that is welcoming, and where their social emotional needs and trauma are addressed, so that they are available to learn and engage in the community.

- **International Enrollment Process** – Timely, welcoming and culturally sensitive enrollment in home school. (*International Admissions & Enrollment*)
- **Newcomer Orientation Plan** serving to make children feel welcome, make new friends, feel safe, included and able to navigate & learn in their new environment. (*Home Schools, Professional learning around best practices & newcomer curriculum.*)
- **Professional Learning for all Stakeholders** focused on what brings children to the U.S., what happens when they get here, and how do they end up in our classrooms? What type of education, if any, do they receive in ORR custody and how can we support these students when they enroll in our schools? (*Immigrant Connections*)
- **Access to English Language Development and grade level content curriculum** Newcomer students will access education that builds on their unique strengths and supports their development in ways that enables them to reach their full potential. Newcomers who need to develop English proficiency will receive instruction that addresses the simultaneous development of English proficiency and grade-level concepts and skills. (*Office of Elementary & Secondary Curriculum & Instruction*)
- **Community Building and Peer Engagement** (*Wrap around services, Peer Ambassador Program, Identity, CASA, Oyéme, Gilchrist Center, Linkages to Learning, Cultura Cura*)

Our goal: Provide comprehensive legal screenings, services and representation for unaccompanied children, families and/or sponsors through support to legal immigration service providers.



Hire a legal services coordinator, housed at the Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center, to coordinate referrals, liaise with legal service providers, and develop/implement a public-private partnership to increase funding for legal immigration services.

Increase the capacity of legal service providers, all of which are currently at capacity. The County currently funds 4 legal service providers that provide both legal screenings and direct legal representation to people in deportation and removal proceedings at a total cost of \$670,000. In July, the County Council appropriated an additional \$250,000 to increase legal service providers' capacity. These funds will be programmed through Gilchrist/Office of Community Partnerships.



Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center: (240) 777- 4940

Ayuda, CASA, Catholic Charities, HIAS, Luminous, KIND

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT & RECREATION

Our goal: Strengthen protective factors for newcomer children, youth and families.

- Increase the capacity of family reunification support programs. **(Identity)**
- Convene youth leadership conferences for newcomers. **(DHHS/PYD/MCPS + community partners)**
- Extend the hours at 5 high school Wellness Centers to facilitate targeted services and programs for newcomers, including behavioral health and family reunification support, legal orientation, and resource workshops. **(DHHS/PYD + partners)**
- Expand Imagination Stage's Oyéme program in MCPS (reaching 6 schools/360 students). Oyéme uses evidence-based and culturally-sensitive arts programming to address trauma, build resilience, and support community. **(Imagination Stage + MCPS)**
- Increase the capacity of the Street Outreach Network (SON) **(DHHS/PYD + MCPS)**
- Expand Soccer4Change to include a middle school league – 6 boys and 4 girls teams, reaching 120 youth. **(MCDR)**



Our goal: Prevent and respond to public safety risk factors for newcomer children, youth and families.



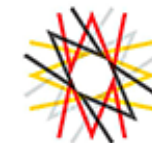
Establish an interagency group to meet on a monthly basis to identify gaps or emerging needs for newcomer children or youth that are vulnerable to crime victimization.

This group provided general capacity-building training for MCPS and MCPD school security staff prior to schools reopening in August 2021.

DHHS/PYD, Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee, MCPD Community Outreach, MCPS School Security, States Attorney's Office, and Identity

Meet with trafficking prevention providers, assess needs, design and implement human trafficking prevention/screening training for all stakeholders.

Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee and SAFE Center



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
SAFE CENTER
FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS
EMPOWERING THE STATE

SUPPORT, ADVOCACY, FREEDOM, AND EMPOWERMENT CENTER

KEY CONTACTS

DHHS Lead	<i>(Until DHHS Newcomer Coordinator hired)</i> Monica Martin , Administrator, Child/Adolescent School & Community-Based Services, Monica.Martin@montgomerycountymd.gov
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Sub-committee chairs	
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Navigation, case management, health and mental health	Fresia Guzman , Identity, fguzman@identity-youth.org <i>(Until DHHS Newcomer Coordinator hired)</i> Monica Martin , Administrator, Child/Adolescent School & Community-Based Services, Monica.Martin@montgomerycountymd.gov
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