



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Mental Health and Trauma Awareness during a Pandemic

**Pensacola, Fla. (May 3, 2021)** – Pandemic stress has been difficult for everyone. During Mental Health and Trauma Awareness Month, Lakeview Center wants the community to know that several programs and services are in place to help guide the well-being of our community in a positive direction. Leaders share a few of the highly utilized services last year:



Our Mobile Response Team (MRT) responded to more than 2,300 calls across Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties to help people experiencing behavioral health crises. That number is even more compelling when you consider Florida MRTs were only signed into effect by Governor Scott in 2019. We are available 24/7 to meet people where they are or over the phone if that's preferred. We work with our local partners like schools, law enforcement and emergency rooms to be there for people during traumatic events. – Carolyn Shearman, Lakeview Center Director of Emergency Services



During times of uncertainty and stress, you must find a way to be there for your community. Mental illness and addiction don't pause for a pandemic, in fact, they can worsen. In 2020, we closely followed CDC safety protocols to prevent any interruptions in residential recovery programs. Those clients safely completed their treatments and transitioned back into the community. We also quickly pivoted to a virtual and phone environment for other services and provided more than 88,000 telehealth appointments. We continue to provide telehealth service. – Shawn Salamida, Lakeview Center President of Behavioral Health Services



Through this pandemic, youth and children have managed complex issues in the home and in educational settings. Abuse and neglect can happen in any family when parents lose jobs and begin to struggle for basic necessities, but it places children at increased risk for behavioral health disorders, learning deficits and physical problems. In 2020, statistics showed that suicide ideation was significantly higher among young people ages 18 to 24. We collaborate with doctors, teachers, nurses, social workers, faith-based leaders and law enforcement officers to promote trauma-informed care to help prevent tragedy and ensure physical, psychological and emotional safety. – Edna Williams, Lakeview Center Director of Children's Services

For more information about behavioral health services, visit [eLakeviewCenter.org](http://eLakeviewCenter.org) or call our main number at 850.469.3500.

#### CONTACT BELOW IS FOR MEDIA USE ONLY

For more information about this press release or to schedule an interview, please contact Tish Pennewill at 850.469.3621 or [Tish.Pennewill@bhcpns.org](mailto:Tish.Pennewill@bhcpns.org).

*About Lakeview Center, Inc. Behavioral Health*

*The Mission of Lakeview Behavioral Health is to help people throughout life's journey. We specialize in providing effective, research-based services for children and adults with mental illnesses, drug and alcohol dependencies, and intellectual disabilities. Our services range from inpatient and residential treatment to outpatient counseling, psychiatry, case management, day treatment, and round-the-clock support for those with serious mental illnesses. Additionally, Lakeview Behavioral Health provides specialized trauma services, medication-assisted treatment for opiate dependency, and medically supervised drug and alcohol detoxification. In all, Lakeview Behavioral Health offers more than 60 programs and services for people in the northwest Florida area. To learn more, go online to [eLakeviewCenter.org](http://eLakeviewCenter.org).*

*Lakeview Center Inc. • Behavioral Health • Vocational Services • Child Protective Services*