



# Julian Place Annual Program Report

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Prepared for Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc.

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**GEO EDUCATION &  
RESEARCH** 

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update on the current status and outcomes of the Julian Place Program (the Program). Details on the implementation and in-depth background of Julian Place from planning to intake to program design can be found in the 2020 and 2021 reports<sup>1</sup> from Geo Education & Research (Geo) ([click here for 2021 report](#)).

During 2022, Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc. (AAF) provided housing and a supportive environment with wraparound services for 13 families previously at risk of homelessness. One of the 14 units of housing is occupied by the Resident Manager. As of the time of this report, one unit is unoccupied due to a family moving out. AAF provides this housing support in order to noticeably improve outcomes for all family members, and, most importantly for the future, to improve the educational outcomes of the children. The Program is a collaboration with Highland Elementary School (HES) in Lake Worth, Florida, a community highly impacted by poverty and housing instability. This report highlights the progress and accomplishments of the Program with a special emphasis on the achievement of the children served by the Program through December 2022.

## Background

Tropical Ridge, a neighborhood located in Lake Worth, Florida, has a high level of poverty and crime, and limited affordable housing. HES consistently serves one of the highest percentages of at-risk students in the School District of Palm Beach County, with 97% low income, 9% homeless, and 5% migrant students<sup>2</sup>. The high price and limited supply of affordable housing in the area are major barriers to the recovery and success of families experiencing homelessness.

## Julian Place Program

The Julian Place Program (the Program) is based on substantial research into the interrelationships between housing stability and attaining positive outcomes for adults and children. Families that are experiencing homeless or chronic housing instability often do not have sufficient capacity and resources to sustain employment and/or education and achieve high levels of personal development. The Program was specifically created to provide stable housing and support services to 14 families

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aafpb.org/wp-content/uploads/PDF-of-Julian-Place-2021-Annual-Report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://edudata.fl DOE.org/ReportCards/Schools.html?school=0671&district=50>

with students at HES experiencing homelessness. Unlike many other housing support programs, AAF allows the Program families to remain at Julian Place until their youngest child graduates from high school. They do not have to move out even if their income increases in the meantime. This “place-based” design allows families to remain at their home school and stay rooted in established social supports in the neighborhood in which they live. It allows them to envision a future of stability, not just a short-term reprieve from the constant search for housing.



Julian Place Design Plan



Exterior view of Julian Place

## Julian Place Objectives

Eight key objectives of the Program have been identified. Progress so far on each objective is detailed below.

### Objective 1: Secure Funding to Build Affordable Housing for Families with Students in Highland Elementary School

By the end of 2022, AAF raised \$6.6 million, built 14 fully furnished townhomes and related facilities in the Julian Place community, and secured funding to operate the Program through 2025. In June of 2020 they housed their first family and by the end of 2022, 14 families had been served. One unit was vacant at the time of this report due to a client's need to move to an alternative housing situation, and the 14th unit is currently reserved for a Resident Manager.

### Objective 2: Build Collaboration with Partners in the School, School District and Community Service Agencies

AAF partnered with a wide variety of agencies to plan and implement Julian Place. Partner educators and agencies now also provide services to Julian Place families.

Work on these tasks will influence outcomes relevant to several of the Program objectives. Most are underway and several are far along. AAF continues to seek new partnerships with organizations to provide adult education, financial literacy support, parenting classes, and vocational opportunities.

### Objective 3: Recruit and House Families

The goal of housing 14 families by August 2020 was not met due largely to the Covid-19 pandemic shutting down the school in the spring and thereby reducing access to school staff and potential families. However, as of the date of this report, 12 of the units at Julian Place are occupied, one unit is occupied by the Resident Manager, and, due to one family moving out, AAF is working with HES to house an additional family which they expect to accomplish by early 2023. AAF met its goal of 86% of Julian Place families remaining in their homes for at least one full year.

### Objective 4: Provide Opportunities and Support Family Personal Change and Development

Many opportunities are and will be available at Julian Place to support family personal change and development. The opportunities include equipping the Jayne and Tim Donahue Community Center to allow families to hold gatherings, work, study online, and attend support programs and classes.

AAF staff report that every Julian Place family participated in at least three support services in 2022, many taking advantages of as many programs, courses, and events as they could. All households participate in regular case management and budget counseling with the Julian Place Program Manager. In the last year, two-third of the families had at least one member engaged with the on-site mental health therapist.

### **Objective 5: Improve Student Outcomes**

Comparing students with similar demographic characteristics, Julian Place students outperformed their peers on academic and behavioral outcomes. On a state test, the Program students scored 11 percentile points higher in English Language Arts, and 17 percentile points higher in mathematics. The Program students also earned higher class grades and demonstrate no concerns in the areas of attendance and discipline. Parent surveys also show that parents feel their children are improving academically and in school behavior.

### **Objective 6: Improve Parent and Family Outcomes**

In addition to the progress of the families reported by AAF staff, based on survey data collected by Geo from the Program parents, it is clear that these families are experiencing powerful changes in their lives as a result of having stable housing, and more importantly, having the expectation that the housing and supportive services will continue.

### **Objective 7: Improve Community Outcomes**

Julian Place is designed to be a community of residents, not stand-alone housing units. AAF intends Julian Place to become a model for other housing and school programs to comprehensively address the needs of students and families experiencing housing insecurity. AAF staff report, however, that this goal has not been achieved to the extent anticipated. They have observed that the adult residents “. . . did not know their neighbors as well as they hoped perhaps due to families coming from traumatic, chaotic, or unstable living situations before moving into Julian Place.” Efforts to improve this outcome will be facilitated by a Community Development Coordinator, hired in October 2022, who will coordinate events, promote the use of outdoor green space, and facilitate client participation in community activities.

### **Objective 8: Design and Implement an Ongoing Program Evaluation Process to Track Changes in Youth and Families**

A Data Sharing Agreement with the District which is in effect through 2025, has been finalized and implemented and the first year of analysis of student outcomes has been completed (see results related to Objective 5). Geo will continue to track data for both types of evaluation for a total of five



years and provide comprehensive reporting. Data will come from parents, HES, the District, AAF staff, and others engaged with the families. Geo and AAF have developed data collection and analysis tools that will also support ongoing data-driven management and course correction decisions resulting from report findings.

It is essential to the success of any initiative to collect and analyze clear, objective, and comprehensive data to determine if the program is being implemented as intended (formative evaluation) and if it is achieving the desired outcomes (summative evaluation).

## CONCLUSION

**Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc. (AAF) is providing quality, affordable housing to families who were homeless or at risk of homelessness and who have children at Highland Elementary School and local secondary schools.** Additionally, it has implemented a comprehensive program to support these families with education, job skills training, and social services. It also has a robust system for data collection and analysis to support ongoing program improvement. Parent surveys detailed above indicate that AAF has identified that the families are benefiting from the project.

**AAF has increased support (including additional staffing for services) to provide the immediate help the families need and to link families with support services in the school and community.** Surveys of the parents in the fall of 2022 show they are taking advantage of these resources and greatly appreciate them.

**Based on data provided by the District, Program students outperform comparable students in their school on a range of academic and behavioral indicators.**

**An ongoing evaluation strategy and data collection and analysis tools are in place to monitor and evaluate the work as it continues.** Geo will continue to integrate additional data sources related to the Program outcomes into its evaluation strategy as they become available.

**Data collected to date indicate that Julian Place is succeeding or likely to succeed in all eight of its objectives.** Evidence for this conclusion is presented in detail above and summarized by objective in the executive summary.

## RECOMMENDATIONS BY GEO EDUCATION & RESEARCH

Geo has only a few additional recommendations at this point.

- **Use the District shared information to coordinate the services provided to students and families.** Now that the Data Sharing Agreement is in place with the District, it would be beneficial for AAF to work with the principal and teacher leaders (ideally including a teacher who has a Julian Place student) to develop a strategy for connecting with teachers on an ongoing basis to share information about the needs of individual students.
- **Develop a protocol whereby teachers can systematically provide periodic insights into how Julian Place students are progressing in the classroom beyond what they provide in report cards,** in collaboration with Geo, the District, HES administration and at least one HES teacher.
- **Develop a system whereby parents can easily access the information they feel they need,** perhaps through a physical or electronic bulletin board indexed to specific needs rather than by agency. Parents clearly expressed a desire for additional resources to continue their education and careers. AAF has established a wide range of partners for support in the areas of need for parents and other family members.
- **Continue to conduct periodic surveys of the parents to identify their support needs and gauge their progress in meeting personal goals and how the program is helping to meet those goals.**



Mural at Julian Place

## INTRODUCTION

In 2020 and again in 2021, Geo Education & Research (Geo) conducted an evaluation of Adopt-A-Family's (AAF) Julian Place Program (the Program) focusing on the following eight goals:

1. Secure funding to build affordable housing for families with students in Highland Elementary School;
2. Build collaboration with partners in the School, School District, and community service agencies;
3. Recruit and house families;
4. Provide opportunities and support family personal change and development;
5. Improve student outcomes;
6. Improve parent and family outcomes;
7. Improve community outcomes; and
8. Design and implement an ongoing program evaluation process to track changes in youth and families.

### ***The Adopt-A-Family Mission Statement***

*The mission of Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc. is to strengthen families with children in their efforts to achieve stability and self-sufficiency by providing access to all-encompassing services.*

In both of those evaluations, AAF was shown to have achieved high levels of success for the families in their care. However, in both of the evaluation reports, Geo could not provide information on Goal 5 because data on the academic achievement of the children in Julian Place were not available. In the fall of 2022, a data sharing agreement was reached with the School District of Palm Beach County (the District) and AAF allowing comparison of school data on the Julian Place students attending Highland Elementary School (HES), students participating in AAF's afterschool and out-of-school program Project Grow (PG), and an anonymous comparison group created by the District to match the demographic characteristics of the AAF students.

This report provides an update on all eight objectives with a special emphasis on the analysis of the achievement of the Program's children. In addition, it updates parent satisfaction data presented in the previous reports and draws conclusions and makes recommendations based on the progress of Julian Place since its beginning. (A separate report on the school outcomes of AAF's Project Grow, in which many Julian Place children participate, was submitted to AAF in December 2022.)

## The Local Situation

**The Tropical Ridge Neighborhood has a high level of poverty and crime and has limited affordable housing.** According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Lake Worth in 2022 was \$1,390<sup>3</sup>. Staff at AAF report that they cannot find unsubsidized two-bedroom units in the area for under \$2,000. This cost is out of reach for many families, even those with full-time, low-wage jobs. Palm Beach County ranks number two in Florida for children living in spaces not designed for human habitation<sup>4</sup>. According to the 2019 US Census update, 25% of the residents of Lake Worth were at or below the poverty line, and only 39% of residents who are younger than 65 had health insurance<sup>5</sup>. The crime rate is one of the highest in Florida (ranking 24th in reported crime out of 308 Florida cities in 2021<sup>6</sup>).

*“Since the completion of Julian Place, rents have continued to skyrocket, and the inventory of affordable housing has essentially disappeared.”*

~AAF Report to the Jim Moran Foundation

In the 2020-2021 school year (the most recent data available from the state<sup>7</sup>), there were 2,927 homeless students within the District. HES consistently ranks high on the State list of schools with the highest numbers of homeless students. At Highland, 97% of students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch due to the low income of their parents. Building on the current strong partnership with the school is critical to achieving a positive impact on the educational success of the students there.

*“The focus on education has become ingrained in the community at Julian Place in a way that is not apparent in other housing programs. Parents are more involved in their children’s academic development and are learning the importance of regular attendance, communicating with teachers, and advocating for their children. While Julian Place provides services for all members of the household, the undercurrent of educational progress has led to increased parental accountability and commitment.”*

~AAF Report to the Jim Moran Foundation

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html#year2022>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.palmbeachpost.com/story/lifestyle/2021/03/04/nonprofit-family-promise-aids-families-struggling-homelessness/6758599002/>

<sup>5</sup> 2020 census data for Lake Worth are not yet available.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.usa.com/rank/florida-state--crime-index--city-rank.htm>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7482/urlt/1920HLStudentCounts.pdf>

Forming a strong partnership with the school is critical for achieving a positive impact on the educational success of the students. HES serves 987 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The demographics<sup>8</sup> of the student population are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 | Highland Elementary School Demographics as of School Year 2022-2023**

Demographic Category	% of Population
Hispanic	72%
Black/African American	18%
Alaska Native/American Indian	4%
White	4%
Other/Mixed	2%
Economically Disadvantaged	97%
English Language Learners*	63%
Students with Disabilities	13%
Homeless	9%
Immigrant	5%

\* English Language Learners (ELL) are students who are learning English as a second language.

## OUTCOMES, RESULTS, AND BENEFITS

### Objective 1: Secure Funding to Build Affordable Housing for Families with Students in Highland Elementary School

#### Results

By the end of 2022, AAF raised \$6.6 million, built 14 fully furnished townhomes in the Julian Place community, and has secured funding to operate the Program through 2025. In June of 2020 AAF housed their first family and by the end of 2022, 14 families had been served, as of the time of this report, one unit was vacant due to a client’s need to move to an alternative housing situation, and the 14th unit is occupied by the Resident Manager.

<sup>8</sup> Source: Florida State Department of Education Report Card - <https://edstats.fldoe.org/SASPortal/main.do>

## Benefits

**Based on the belief that stable housing is a critical factor in the success of children and their families, securing the funding for completion of the housing units and program operations was the first and most important goal of this Program.** The completion of Julian Place provides the underpinning of all the other aspects of the Program, including academic support for the children, job and educational training for the adults, and the development of a nurturing and supportive community.

*“The community at large is committed to finding new solutions to the affordable housing crisis and educational achievement gap for low-income students.”*

~AAF Report to the Jim Moran Foundation

## Objective 2: Build Collaboration with Partners in the School, School District, and Community Service Agencies

### Results

**As reported in the 2020 and 2021 reports from Geo, AAF partnered with a wide variety of agencies to plan and implement the Project.** Significantly, these partners included civic and community leaders, educators, and agencies which now provide services to Julian Place families.

Many activities are required to mobilize, inform, and coordinate staff, services, and partners including:

- Develop/expand strategic partnerships;
- Raise and manage the funds to build and maintain housing and related facilities and activities;
- Develop and support effective staff and volunteers;
- Identify and engage families to participate in all aspects of the Program;
- Build referral networks among providers of social, educational, and economic services;
- Assist partners with self-assessment, program improvement, and cultural competency;
- Identify and address ongoing areas of need, gaps in service, and opportunities for collaboration and intervention;
- Educate community leaders and the public on support needs;
- Incorporate School and District data for ongoing planning and support;
- Share information, data, and lessons learned on program effectiveness;
- Implement best practices of family care and support; and
- Encourage continuous learning and program refinement.

Continued work on these tasks influences outcomes relevant to several Program objectives. Although providing program services had a slow start due to the Covid-19 pandemic, AAF has built partnerships with key agencies that are critical to the success of the enrolled families. Prior to building Julian Place, AAF already had a good working relationship with HES and some local service providers. In addition, AAF continues to seek new partnerships with organizations to provide adult education, financial literacy support, parenting classes, and vocational opportunities.

**The Julian Place Program Committee provided guidance in the development of the Program and its ongoing work.** Committee participants included:

- Adopt-A-Family CEO;
- School Board Member;
- Adopt-A-Family Director of Housing;
- School District McKinney-Vento Specialist;
- Adopt-A-Family Grants Manager;
- HES Principal;
- Julian Place Program Manager;
- Highland Elementary Parent Liaison and Volunteer Coordinator; and
- Project Manager.

**AAF partners with the following organizations and agencies that provide the listed supportive services:**

- AAF's Project Grow—Licensed afterschool and out-of-school program, located adjacent to Julian Place, for children attending kindergarten through fifth grade;
- AAF's Youth Success Program—Academic support, tutoring, and activities for AAF's middle and high school students, including guest speakers on topics including interview skills, money management, college prep, etc.
- AAF's Job Coaching Program—Vocational assessments and job coaching are provided to all residents who are interested in increasing their education, earning potential, and vocational satisfaction.
- BRIDGES at Highland—Classes including Triple P Parenting, early childhood development, and food/diaper assistance;
- The Early Learning Coalition—Palm Beach County's provider of subsidized childcare vouchers which will reduce or eliminate the cost to families to participate in Project Grow;
- Sweet Dream Makers—New beds and mattresses for Julian Place residents;
- We Believe Ministries—On-site mobile food pantry;
- University of Florida Extension Program—Nutrition classes and the provision of healthy food;

- The School District of Palm Beach County and HES—Various supports for low-income families, especially those experiencing homelessness; and
- PNC Bank—Financial literacy classes.

Administrators in the District and at HES have shown their support for the Program by providing access to staff and resources and by agreeing to share District achievement data with AAF and Geo.

*“Staff from Highland Elementary provided invaluable advice and guidance to Adopt-A-Family. Their insight and understanding of the challenges impacting the target population enabled the agency to design elements of the program that were well suited to the families we aimed to serve.”*

~AAF Grants and Communications Manager

## Benefits

**It appears that the resources and partnerships needed to support the Program families are solidly in place and providing the resources that will enable the families to thrive.** Although AAF provides stable housing to the Julian Place families, it will take the continued support of a large and diverse team to assure that the families succeed.

## Objective 3: Recruit and House Families

### Results

**Overall, AAF met its goal of 86% of Julian Place families remaining in their homes for at least one full year.**

As of the date of this report, 12 of the units at Julian Place are occupied by families and AAF is working with HES to house a new family which they expect to accomplish by early 2023. The goal of housing 14 families by August 2020 was not met due largely to the Covid-19 pandemic shutting down the school in the spring and thereby reducing access to school staff and potential clients. As noted above, since Julian Place opened, two families have moved out. One family was relocated after six months due to safety concerns, and one family exited the program two weeks before reaching the one-year mark to move into a larger unit with her significant other. Since the inception of the program, 14 families have been served.



The 14th unit is occupied by an on-site Resident Manager and her family. The Resident Manager serves as an after-hours contact person, supervises the use of the agency's playground, supports client events, and contributes to the safety and cleanliness of the property.

Rents are a very reasonable \$600 -\$750 per month depending on unit size. By comparison, the HUD fair market rent for housing in the same ZIP code for 2022 was \$1,390 for a two-bedroom home<sup>9</sup>.

## Benefits

**Now that the families are becoming stable in their new homes, the adults are clearly focused on their employment and skill development, and the children are able to concentrate more fully on their studies.** The Covid-19 pandemic had a substantial negative effect on children nationwide<sup>10</sup>, weakening their social skills and connections to their community and schools. Housing stability and a sense of normality for the children served by the Program will help them to establish a circle of friends and supportive adults in school and in the community. This should contribute to their sense of well-being and stability, both of which are strong contributors to long-term success. The ongoing evaluation of the Program will continue to include these indicators to determine the extent to which the desired outcomes are being achieved.

## *Demographics of Julian Place Families as of December 2022*

As of December 2022, Julian Place residents have the following characteristics:

- Seven single adult families;
- Five two adult families;
- Seven families have two children;
- Five families have three children;
- Children average age is 9 years;
- Children age range is 6 months to 18 years old; and
- All school-aged children attend school (see Table 2 for details).

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html#year2022>

**Table 2 | Children Served the Program by Grade Level**

Grade	Number of Children Served
Kindergarten	1
1	4
2	3
3	3
4	2
5	3
6	2
7	1
8	1
10	1
12	2
Graduated last school year	1

## Objective 4: Provide Opportunities and Support Family Personal Change and Development

Many opportunities are and will be available at Julian Place to support family personal change and development. This includes the adjacent Jayne and Tim Donahue Community Center to allow families to hold gatherings, work, study online, and attend support programs and classes.

AAF has identified the following means to support the Program families.

### ***Provide Opportunities for Growth***

- Provide and support pro-social activities
- Develop assessment and referral process to link parents and youth to services and activities
- Link participants to community partners who provide education, jobs training, and employment
- A job coaching program available to all residents
- Empower parents and families to identify and address collective problems and opportunities
- Provide a Youth Success Coach to build rapport with a trusted adult with whom youth can speak to about challenges they face as teenagers

### **Support Personal Change and Development**

- Parenting training
- Financial literacy classes
- Tutoring and mentoring to students
- Academic advising with parents for their student(s)
- Mental health counseling for family members
- Case management services on-site and at school with interactions among teachers, parents, and students

### **Promote Community Engagement**

- Implement activities that increase neighborhood cohesiveness
- Recognize and celebrate individual and collective successes

## **Results**

**AAF staff report that every Julian Place family participated in at least three support services in 2022, with many taking advantages of as many programs, courses, and events as they could.**

All households participate in regular case management and budget counseling with the Julian Place Program Manager. In the last year, two-thirds of the families had at least one member engaged with the agency's on-site mental health therapist.

*"Families attended school meetings and school workshops. If a family did not attend for whatever reason the school and Program Manager communicated throughout the year and in turn the Program Manager spoke to the family directly, and education on the importance of school involvement was provided. Many of the adults focused on their own academic goals such as registering for GED or college as well as trade programs. Some adults even found better paying jobs and reported more job satisfaction."*

~AAF Director of Housing

AAF staff report that due to the current economic situation, many families continue to struggle in the area of finances. To address this, in addition to the programs offered to families by AAF or their partners, Julian Place families can take advantage of Early Learning Coalition (ELC) vouchers, which enable families to access free or reduced-cost afterschool and summer camp allowing parents to work or go to school.

Many opportunities are and will be available at Julian Place to support family personal change and development. The opportunities include equipping the Jayne and Tim Donahue Community Center to allow families to hold gatherings, work, study online, and attend support programs and classes.

*“All resident families have opted to participate in support services that they would not have had access to or the bandwidth to pursue without the stability and security of Julian Place.”*

~AAF Grants and Communications Manager

## Results

In the fall of 2022, adult residents at Julian Place were asked to participate in a survey to determine how the Program is going for them and their family so far. At least one of the adults from each of the families responded. Some of the parents filled out the answers themselves; some were conducted as interviews by Julian Place staff if the participants were not comfortable writing in English. This survey is designed to be repeated every six months throughout the evaluation of the Program. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3 | Results of Julian Place Fall 2022 Parent Questionnaire**

Since we moved into Julian Place ...	Don't Know (No rating)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Mean Rating
I have received a lot of the help my family needed.					3	11	4.8
I am better able to support my child.				1	4	9	4.6
I have been better able to focus on our future.				1	4	9	4.6
I am more involved in my child's education.				1	5	8	4.5
I have better access to				1	6	7	4.4

Since we moved into Julian Place ...	Don't Know (No rating)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Mean Rating
community resources.							
My child behaves better in school.				3	3	8	4.4
My child behaves better at home.				3	5	6	4.2
My child has learned more in school (or online).				4	4	6	4.1
AAF and staff at school are working together for my child.					7	7	4.5
The AAF staff understand what support my family needs.				1	5	8	4.5
I am improving my parenting skills.				2	4	8	4.4
I am improving my work skills.					6	8	4.6
I am improving my communication skills.				1	9	4	4.2
Working on our Family Success Plan is helpful.				1	5	8	4.5
Being encouraged to meet my personal, economic, and					4	10	4.7

Since we moved into Julian Place ...	Don't Know (No rating)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Mean Rating
educational goals is helpful.							
I feel like I am part of the Julian Place community.				1	4	9	4.6

**Parent Comments**

The last four questions on the survey were open-ended. The parent responses are reported verbatim below. The comments in quotes were transcribed by staff. Not all respondents answered all the questions.

**What are the most important changes you have seen in yourself or your child since coming to Julian Place?**

- I am happier, relieved. I am attending college. Created my cleaning business. I'm a single mom in recovery - working with my kids to do better for us.
- We were able to go back to school. I completed my GED and my wife is attending college. We have quality time.
- I have stability. I have support.
- I'm more relaxed, not feeling like a burden to other people. My kids love their own space, we have a home. We are comfortable.
- I am focused on what I need to do for my kids and for myself. I am focused on the education of my kids and for me since I'm preparing for the GED test. Kids are listening and following the rules.
- We have more time to share with each other, since we now have privacy. I'm more careful and maintain everything organized. We are happy and safe.
- We have more time for ourselves. We have privacy and now we are able to share as a family.
- I am more happy than sad, instead of more sad than happy. My kids are happier [and] flourishing at school. [They are] more calm, and they are closer to each other.
- I have more time to spend with my children - quality time. Affordable rent. Socialization.
- I have better understanding of my kids' education. I have better communication with my kids.

- I am more confident, able to achieve my goals. My kids are happier, more expressive with space to enjoy themselves.
- I feel better. Before it was hard to provide and help my family. Rent is affordable. We now live under the same roof as a family and are not separated.
- We have a better life. We are not struggling financially, and we are living under one roof and not separated, residing with different family members.
- I am happier; my kids are happier. They have their own space. Before coming to JP, I was feeling miserable.

**Which community resources are the most helpful to you so far?**

- The rent is affordable; JP has a healthy environment; safe. Project Grow, case management, job coach.
- Therapy services; case management; assistance by Bryan the job coach; external rental assistance.
- Community Action and St. Vincent DePaul Case Management.
- External - Rent assistance by Our Florida when I needed.
- Internal - Case management - suggestions
- I am grateful for Project Grow.
- Food banks; donations from the agency.
- We liked the community meeting and the Breast Cancer Awareness presentation.
- Internal services: Project Grow; therapy services; Ms. Michelle (youth coach); Mr. Bryan (job coach); and you (Thelma) with case management.
- External: Resources.
- Internal resources: ELC referrals
- Project Grow.
- Internal - Therapy, Project Grow.
- External - Rental assistance - Our Florida.
- Internal: Therapy, job coach.
- External: Community Action.
- JP has been a good place for my family.
- Case management; resources provided; ELC.
- Internal: Case management; Project Grow; Job Coach.
- External: Our Florida rental assistance when I went under surgery.

**What suggestions do you have to help us improve our support to Julian Place families?**

- Continue with the program.
- As a single mom, I would like to have help for my teenage son. Positive male mentor.

- To have access to storage.
- Comfortable with the support.
- I like the community meeting. I attended the Breast Cancer Awareness, and the information was important for me.
- Continue helping us.
- To continue, don't change.
- Better landscaping.
- No suggestions at this time.
- Presentation on how to improve skills for an interview.
- Continue with groups – activities for the kids.
- To continue with group sessions. I would like a presentation on safety/security alarm/CPR.
- For Project Grow to provide services to toddlers.

**Is there is anything else you would like to tell us about the Program?**

- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Julian Place has created a big difference in our lives. We have a steady place to live with no need to constantly move.
- Thank you.
- Grateful that (staff) care for the clients.
- I am grateful for me and my family. My kid is so happy.
- The apartment is comfortable - its home. They have privacy, [it] is spacious.
- AAF/Julian Place have the best interest for me and my family. You guys have my back – Heaven Saints. I no longer feel that I am alone.
- Due to an accident that D had at work last year, we are able to pay the affordable rent. I am grateful for the suggestions and the support.
- Keep up the good job. Don't lose Ms. Thelma. Thank you.
- I am grateful. I appreciate all the services. Thank you.
- Before Julian Place, I had to go constantly to cash & check places in order to provide for my family. We are safe, happy, and with the opportunity to be safe and go forward with our lives. Thank you.
- Thanks to Julian Place we are together and able to save money since the rent is affordable. It has been great for our family.
- Thank you. I feel welcome and supported.



*“The housing stability provided by Julian Place gives families the capacity and bandwidth to focus on pursuing their goals and improving their family’s long-term trajectory.”*

~AAF Report to the Jim Moran Foundation

**The 14 parents interviewed showed very high levels of satisfaction with all of the program elements as shown by high mean scores on all of the rating questions (above four on the five point scale).** The comments show the depth of their satisfaction and appreciation for the services and program staff. These ratings are consistent with the high ratings the parents gave the Program after the first and second years of implementation.

## Benefits

Now that the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions are substantially eased, the parents are increasing their participation in the activities above, allowing them to focus more on employment and skill development. Families that had been experiencing housing instability and inconsistent access to resources and support are now able to establish new norms of stability and consistency in their personal and professional lives.

## Objective 5: Improve Student Outcomes

It is a fundamental part of the design of Julian Place that the children of these families will find improved success in school in both academic and non-academic outcomes.

Success in school is a multi-faceted outcome, but all of the indicators of success are built into the Program. For example, regular school attendance leads to better academic performance, but the reverse is also true. Students who experience success in their schoolwork are reinforced to work and study hard and are more likely to enjoy and therefore make the effort to attend school.

AAF expects children living at Julian Place will find improved success in school in both academic and non-academic outcomes, anticipating growth in the following areas:

- Improved school attendance;
- Improved access to educational services, if needed;
- Improved engagement in extra-curricular activities;
- Improved performance in school learning;
- Improved test scores;
- Improved percent advancement to next grade;

- Improved likelihood of graduation from high school and enrollment in post-secondary education; and
- Improved social skills.

In the spring of 2021, discussions with the District began on allowing AAF and Geo to access data on the achievement of Program students and comparable students not in the Program. Due to a variety of factors, the agreement was not concluded until the fall of 2022. Obtaining parent consent to share their student's data with AAF and Geo was essential to this work. The Program staff contacted all of the parents of current Program students and had them complete the District's data sharing consent form in their native language. These forms were then forwarded to the District. In total, data from 20 Program students were retrieved from the District—13 elementary, 3 middle school, and 4 high school students. Although this is too small a number to be able to demonstrate any statistical significance, the results shown below do point to overall trends in the achievement of the students.

The data from the District address the question: How do the children served by the Program compare to comparable students at Highland Elementary School in terms of their academic achievement?

In order to create a meaningful comparison group, the students were matched with students in the District by gender, race/ethnicity, eligibility for free and reduced-cost lunch, and participation in special programs. The majority of the younger Julian Place students attend HES which is their neighborhood school, so the comparison group was composed of the other Highland students sharing the same demographic characteristics.

A roster of the students was transmitted to the District, and staff performed a match on the characteristics listed above to create an anonymous group of comparable students. The data returned did not have any student names but indicated for each record if the student was in the Program or the comparison group. Subsequently, the District compiled the necessary data from their records and sent them to Geo for analysis. The following section provides the results of those analyses.

## Academic Results

### **Assessment Scores**

The District provided the following academic data for the Program students and the comparison group for the fall reporting period of school year 2022-2023.

The **Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST)** test is administered to all public school students in Florida in grades 3-8. Scores are reported in percentiles along with an indicator of the

student being on track for that time of year. The 50<sup>th</sup> percentile is the average performance of students in Florida.

**TABLE 4 | FAST Scores Fall 2022: English Language Arts**

	Julian Place	Comparison Group
Average Percentile	31	20
Percent on Track	43	26

**TABLE 5 | FAST Scores Fall 2022: Math**

	Julian Place	Comparison Group
Average Percentile	37	20
Percent on Track	43	33

**i-READY:** In addition to the FAST test, all elementary school students in the District take the i-Ready diagnostic assessment. The 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on i-Ready is the average performance of students in a national sample.

**TABLE 6 | i-READY Scores Fall 2022**

Average Percentile	Julian Place	Comparison Group
Reading	42	31
Math	33	29

Although the average percentile scores are low, this masks the wide range of performance in both groups, from single digits to scores in the 90's. Among the Program students, 4 out of 11 in reading, and 2 out of 10 in math scored at the 50th percentile or better.

**On both the state and district assessments, Program students outperformed the comparison group.** Considering that Julian Place is designed to support students who are in need of additional help with their learning, this is a very positive outcome.

### Course Grades

The district reported fall 2022 grades for the Program students and other HES comparison students in English Language Arts and Math. **In general, larger percentages of Program students perform better than those in the comparison group, especially in ELA.** See Tables 7 and 8.

At the elementary level, students are not given A-F letter grades. The grading scale is:

- **EX** - Exemplary - Demonstrates broad in-depth skill/concept development that most often exceeds "grade level standards"
- **PR** - Proficient - Demonstrates skill/concept development that meets grade level standards
- **AP** - Approaching - Demonstrates skill/concept development that is beginning to meet grade level standards
- **ND** - Needs Development - Demonstrates skill/concept that is significantly below grade level standards

**TABLE 7 | Elementary Grades: ELA**

Grade	Julian Place #	Julian Place %	Comparison Group #	Comparison Group %
EX	0		0	
PR	2	15%	102	12%
AP	7	54%	280	33%
ND	2	15%	456	54%
Missing	2	15%	2	0.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>840</b>	

**TABLE 8 | Elementary Grades: Math**

Grade	Julian Place #	Julian Place %	Comparison Group #	Comparison Group %
EX	0		1	0.1%
PR	2	15%	158	19%
AP	6	46%	331	39%
ND	3	23%	349	42%
Missing	2	15%	1	0.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>840</b>	

At the middle and high schools, the traditional A-F system is used. There are no comparative data since the comparison group was only elementary students. In Table 9, English grades are reported for 10 students, but math scores for only 7 students. **In ELA, half are doing very well and half are average. In math, four are doing very well, two others are average, and one is failing.**

**TABLE 9 | Julian Place Secondary Grades**

Grade	Percent of Students with Each Grade	
	ELA	Math
A	50%	57%
B	0%	0%
C	50%	29%
D	0%	0%
F	0%	14%

## Non-Academic Results

### *Attendance and Suspensions*

In addition to the test scores, the District supplied data on attendance and suspensions for the Program students and the HES comparison group.

**TABLE 10 | Average Daily Attendance Fall 2022**

Julian Place	Comparison Group
93%	93%

Program Students maintain the same high level of attendance as the comparison group.

**Additionally, of the 17 students for whom information was available, 12 (71%) achieved the AAF goal of 90% attendance.** Although Julian Place did not meet the desired goal, the percentage of students attending at least 90% of the time grew from 50% to 71% between December of 2021 and December of 2022. AAF reports that the Julian Place Program Manager will continue to work with parents to make school attendance a top family priority.

### **Suspensions**

In addition to the test scores, the District supplied data on suspensions for Julian Place students and the Highland comparison group. The numbers are too small for a statistical comparison, but only one Julian Place student had been suspended, so clearly this is not currently a matter for concern.

### **Grade Promotion**

AAF reports that based on a review of student report cards, as of the end of the 2021-2022 school year, **all 24 of the eligible children were promoted to the next grade level, exceeding AAF's goal of 93%.**

### **Summary of Results**

**In comparison with students with similar demographic characteristics, Julian Place students outperformed their peers on academic and behavioral outcomes.** On the state test, the Program students scored 11 percentile points higher in English Language Arts, and 17 percentile points higher in mathematics. On the District i-Ready test, the Program students scored 11 percentile points higher in reading, and 4 percentile points higher in mathematics. The Program students also earned higher class grades and showed no concerns in the areas of attendance and discipline. Parent surveys show that parents feel their children are improving academically and in school behavior.

In addition to experiencing progress in school, the Julian Place students are also benefiting from use of the computer facilities at the on-site Jayne and Tim Donahue Community Center. Nearly half of the Julian Place children participate in Project Grow, AAF's adjacent afterschool program, which a separate evaluation has shown to be effective in promoting learning and social-emotional development. The parent surveys also show that parents feel their children are improving academically and in school behavior. In addition, the separate analysis of Project Grow students showed that participants tend to graduate at rates higher than the District average.

### **Objective 6: Improve Parent and Family Outcomes**

As articulated in the Julian Place Logic Model, the following parent and family outcomes are key factors to the success of this program.

- Improved parenting skills to support children's educational, social, and emotional needs
- Improved parent engagement with school
- Improved ability of parents to prepare children for school (e.g., fed, be on-time, homework completed)
- Improved ability of families to cope with obstacles to progress
- Improved access to stable, suitable, safe housing with facilities to support healthy family life

- Improved stress management
- Improved opportunity for employment
- Improved financial literacy knowledge and use of financial support advisors
- Improved income from earned and unearned sources
- Improved sense of life improvement and movement toward self-sufficiency and resiliency

## Results

**Based on interview and survey data collected by Geo from the Program parents, the families are already reporting progress in these areas and have expectations for even more growth.**

In addition to the survey responses reported above, when asked, “What are the most important changes have you seen in yourself or your child since coming to Julian Place?”, parents responded:

- We spend more time together and are much more productive;
- My child is more responsible by having her own room;
- More structure, support, guidance, and just help;
- We are happy;
- [My] three kids have more space at home; this has made them happier;
- My anger has died down. My kids are happy and learning well;
- The children are happier, and I have been able to have some more savings;
- Our budgeting has improved;
- She [the daughter] is now setting goals and is preparing to start school in the fall;
- I have more independence [comment from AAF Staff therapy notes]; and
- [My child] is getting more help and the Program Manager is involved in IEP meetings.

**In written feedback from the AAF management team (in the boxed quotes throughout this report), staff members reported feeling very satisfied with the progress of Julian Place so far.** The team cited clients having safe, affordable housing; children getting the support they need; and positive and productive partnerships with HES and community partners. They report that they are meeting their goals for student success and family growth.

*“Julian Place . . . offers families stability and multiple supports that enable families to improve their quality of life as well as supports each family to achieve their housing and personal goals.”*

~AAF Director of Housing

Clearly these families are experiencing powerful changes in their lives as a result of having stable housing, and more importantly, having the expectation that the housing and supportive services will

continue indefinitely. These outcomes reflect the priorities the parents cited in other questions on the survey, and as such this should encourage them to pursue their goals for their families.

## Benefits

While stable housing is key to improving student outcomes, family stability is based on steady income from fulfilling employment, good parenting skills, and a positive connection with the community in one's neighborhood and with society at large. Through training provided by AAF staff and community partners, the adults in Julian Place families should be able to improve and/or solidify their skills in these areas and experience a broader range of potential areas of growth.

## Objective 7: Improve Community Outcomes

### Results

**Although Julian Place is designed to be a community of residents, not just stand-alone housing units. AAF's intends for residents to form a mutually supportive community in which members share resources information to enrich each other's lives. However, AAF staff reported that this goal has not been achieved to the extent anticipated.** As observed by the AAF Grants and Communication Manager, residents "...did not know their neighbors as well as they hoped. Many families come from traumatic, chaotic, or unstable living situations before moving into Julian Place, and they are not used to building relationships with neighbors."

Ideally and with the continued support from AAF staff, the families residing in Julian Place eventually will form a mutually supportive community in which members share resources and information to enrich each other's lives.

Efforts to improve this outcome will be facilitated by a Community Development Coordinator, hired in October 2022, to coordinate events, promote the use of outdoor green space, and facilitate client participation in community activities such as sports and the arts. The Community Development Coordinator has also started a Resident Council and is working with all AAF programs to improve the experiences of residents.

### Benefits

It is likely that at some point there will be mobility within the Julian Place families, with some choosing to move out and others moving in. Support from the continuing families can be very helpful to the new families, orientating them to the resources and expectations of the Program and housing community and providing a new set of friends for their children.



Ongoing evaluations by Geo will determine if, in fact, families show increased connection with other participants in the Program by such activities as: sharing career and job information; exchanging ideas for extended learning opportunities for both children and adults; sharing skills possessed by individuals with others; being supportive during difficult situations; providing mutual childcare; and so forth.

## Objective 8: Design and Implement an Ongoing Program Evaluation Process to Track Changes in Youth and Families

### Results and Benefits

**Now that the Data Sharing Agreement is in place, Geo and AAF have developed data collection and analysis tools that will also support ongoing data-driven management and course correction decisions as a result of report findings.** Geo will continue to track data for evaluation for a total of five years and provide comprehensive reporting. Data will come from parents, HES, the District, AAF staff, and others engaged with the families. It is essential to the success of any initiative to collect and analyze clear, objective, and comprehensive data to determine if the program is being implemented as intended (formative evaluation) and if it is achieving the desired outcomes (summative evaluation).

## CONCLUSION

**In 2022, Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc. (AAF) provided quality, affordable housing to 13 families who were homeless or at risk of homelessness and who have children at Highland Elementary School and local secondary schools.** Additionally, it has implemented a comprehensive program to support these families with education, job skills training, and social services. It also has a robust system for data collection and analysis to support ongoing program improvement. Parent surveys detailed above indicate that AAF has identified that the families are benefiting from the project.

**AAF has increased support (including additional staffing for services) to provide the immediate help the families need and to link families with support services in the school and community.** Surveys of the parents in the fall of 2022 show they are taking advantage of these resources and greatly appreciate them.

**Based on data provided by the District, Program students outperform comparable students in their school on a range of academic and behavioral indicators.**

**An ongoing evaluation strategy and data collection and analysis tools are in place to monitor and evaluate the work as it continues.** Geo will continue to integrate additional data sources related to the Program outcomes into its evaluation strategy as they become available.

**Data collected to date indicate that Julian Place is succeeding or likely to succeed in all eight of its objectives.** Evidence for this conclusion is presented in detail above and summarized by objective in the executive summary.

*“Adopt-A-Family envisioned Julian Place would become a special community of families who would support each other as they pursue stability and improved academic outcomes for their children, and the agency is proud to report that Julian Place has become just that.”*

~AAF Grants and Communications Manager

## RECOMMENDATIONS BY GEO EDUCATION & RESEARCH

Geo has only a few additional recommendations at this point.

- **Use the District shared information to coordinate the services provided to students and families.** Now that the Data Sharing Agreement is in place with the District, it would be beneficial for AAF to work with the principal and teacher leaders (ideally including a teacher who has a Julian Place student) to develop a strategy for connecting with teachers on an ongoing basis to share information about the needs of individual students.
- **Develop a protocol whereby teachers can systematically provide periodic insights into how Julian Place students are progressing in the classroom beyond what they provide in report cards,** in collaboration with Geo, the District, HES administration and at least one HES teacher.
- **Develop a system whereby parents can easily access the information they feel they need,** perhaps through a physical or electronic bulletin board indexed to specific needs rather than by agency. Parents clearly expressed a desire for additional resources to continue their education and careers. AAF has established a wide range of partners for support in the areas of need for parents and other family members.
- **Continue to conduct periodic surveys of the parents to identify their support needs and gauge their progress in meeting personal goals and how the program is helping to meet those goals.**

### **Geo Education & Research**

Geo Education & Research is an evaluation and research firm working nationally and internationally to help organizations measure and increase their success. It serves nonprofit organizations, Tribes, all levels of government, schools, school districts, foundations and business clients. Its services include:

- Developing theory of change and logic models to help organizations identify their intended outcomes in ways that are meaningful and measurable;
- Creating and managing evaluation plans with appropriate strategies, tools, and methods;
- Collecting, managing, analyzing and reporting on data to help clients use data for program improvement and reporting;
- Creating strategic plans, educational programs and community development projects;
- Training people in evaluation;
- Developing, hosting and managing online databases for ongoing program management and evaluation needs to make it easier and cheaper to collect, store, analyze, use, and report data as it is collected; and
- Meeting high industry standards in the management of personal data and in engaging clients with cultural competency.







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