

## RESULTS INNOVATION LAB

### Program Summary

*Improving the Lives of Children, Youth & Families*

### The Results Innovation Lab

Using the strength of our network, in 2016 the Lutheran Services in America national network launched our Results Innovation Lab. Its bold “moonshot goal” is to dramatically change the trajectory of **20,000 vulnerable children** by 2024, and empower them to become healthy, productive and successful adults – regardless of where they were born, their parents’ income, their gender, the color of their skin, or their ZIP code.

This unique initiative empowers community-based providers to lead **collaborative efforts** with a wider variety of partners in their communities, eliminates silos too often found in standard practices of today’s service systems and programs, and activates all stakeholders toward this common moonshot goal.

#### Areas of Focus:

foster care | adoption  
counseling | safe housing  
health care | mental health care  
early childhood education  
alternatives to detention  
unaccompanied refugee minors

### Why is the Results Innovation Lab Needed?

- Only 55% of America’s youth in foster care graduate from high school by age 19.
- Twenty percent of youth aging out of foster care are instantly homeless, and just 3% graduate from college.
- Nationally, one in six children have a diagnosable mental health disorder, and 37% of students age 14 and older with a mental health condition drop out of school.
- About 15 million children live in families with incomes below the federal poverty threshold.

### Why Lutheran Services in America?

**Our children are our future.** We care passionately about working with children, youth and their families to help ensure young people can reach their full potential.

With more than 100 member organizations from our national network serving children, youth and families in 43 states, Lutheran Services in America plays a dominant role in child welfare issues and initiatives. On any given day, our network works with 12,000 children in foster care and over 40,000 children and families from coast to coast, striving to **strengthen families** to stay together or, if that isn’t possible, help ensure children and youth are connected to their communities, schools, jobs and families, and are able to lead safe, healthy and productive lives.



## How Does the Lab Work?

Using a **data-driven** approach – one which carefully studies outcomes and what those outcomes tell us, then folds those learnings into efforts to help children – has translated into on-the-ground efforts that successfully reach the most vulnerable populations first. We also utilize a population-based approach that looks at various factors affecting at-risk youth, including social determinants. How are poverty and transportation challenges directly affecting a child's health, for example, and what can be done to help address those factors affecting her life?

The Results Innovation Lab provides participants with the skills to foster stakeholder relationships, build trust, and incorporate a wide range of perspectives. The Lab focuses on the use of disaggregated data and collaborative efforts to identify key strategic efforts to change the conditions that are holding problems such as racial inequities in place. The combined efforts and perspectives of strategic partners – ranging from youth and families to school officials, health centers, police representatives and human services professionals – provide the impetus for meaningful change that continues today.

## How We Know the Lab is Working

Results of our network's efforts already indicate tremendous promise:

- Increased high school graduation rates for foster youth
- Over 700 youth of color in South Dakota avoided re-arrest
- Improved outcomes for youth of color exiting homeless youth programs in Minnesota
- 12.6% increase in permanency

To learn more about Lutheran Services in America's Results Innovation Lab, contact Sheila Weber at [sweber@lutheranservices.org](mailto:sweber@lutheranservices.org).

