



ARKANSAS JUDGES & LAWYERS
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
2022 REPORT

JLAP Committee

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A note from the Executive Director...

For the past several years, many efforts have been made to bring mental health and wellbeing to the forefront within the legal community. This year, like so many years, brought about many “firsts” for Arkansas JLAP. Our first year of Judicial Roundtables- confidential, group support led by retired judges. Our first Volunteer Retreat in which JLAP Volunteers received specialized training in mental health and wellbeing topics in order to provide peer support to attorneys and judges statewide. Our first Mental Health First Aid training for both law school faculties. The JourneyWELL Room- our first dedicated wellbeing space at the Arkansas Bar Conference. Here participants came together with JLAP staff and Volunteers to engage in wellbeing practices and learn how to care for themselves while lawyering in today’s turbulent world.

Throughout the many “firsts” of 2022, perhaps some of the most notable are in the numbers that represent the brave individuals who reached out for assistance. Such as, the 331 contacts to the JLAP office requesting some form of mental health support; the 48 contacts who noticed a peer struggling and reached out to JLAP to make a peer referral; the 74 attorneys, 8 judges, and 78 law students who received mental health treatment through JLAP. These “firsts” give us good indication of the continued need for mental health assistance throughout our state as well as solidifies the many efforts from the past, present, and future to engage our legal community in dialog and action planning around mental health and wellbeing.

As we continue to uphold our mission of protection, service, and education, I and the JLAP Staff would like to thank the many JLAP Volunteers. Your dedication to JLAP’s purpose allows Arkansas to have a thriving Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program. I am grateful for your service

As always, thank you to the Arkansas Supreme Court for the creation and maintenance of an amazing resource within the legal community that also protects the public at large. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve with you all.

–Jennifer Donaldson, LCSW, JLAP Executive Director

A letter from the JLAP Committee Chair

In 2022, JLAP received 331 contacts and served 171 clients, after receiving 272 contacts and serving 159 clients in 2021. As noted in JLAP's 2021 annual report, JLAP's clinicians and mental health professionals nationwide predicted that the challenges and difficulties associated with the pandemic would produce greater demand for mental health and substance abuse services across all populations. JLAP's increase in contacts and clients served in 2022 is consistent with JLAP's expectations about the demand and need for JLAP services in our time. We expect these numbers to continue to rise through 2023.

Perhaps the starkest trend revealed in 2022 is the sharp increase in law students served by JLAP—78 of JLAP's 2022 clients were law students, along with 74 attorneys, 8 judges, 8 family members, and 3 bar applicants. Despite the relatively smaller population, more law students received services from JLAP in 2022 than lawyers. Although this trend may or may not reveal stigmatic hesitance by attorneys, blocking them from seeking assistance when needed, it most definitely reveals something about aspiring attorneys in Arkansas. As JLAP Committee Chair, I have attended numerous well-being and outreach events at the Bowen law school, and I have personally observed a cultural shift that rejects the baseless stigmas associated with substance abuse and mental health concerns, among today's law students. We've known for years that baseless stigma is a barrier to mental health and well-being, especially among attorneys. It is wonderful to see today's law students reject that stigma. This is excellent news for the long-term mental health and well-being of the legal profession in Arkansas.

Another positive development in 2022 is the fact that JLAP served eight judges, among JLAP's 171 clients in 2022. This may not seem like a large number, but in many past years, zero judges sought assistance from JLAP—though we know there is a need on the bench, and JLAP has always confidentially served judges in Arkansas. In comparison with past trends, eight judges is a huge number that might indicate a cultural shift regarding stigma within the judiciary. Regardless of this possible indication, JLAP is grateful to have assisted eight judges in 2022, and we hope we continue to serve more judges in the future.

110 JLAP clients who received services in 2022 were provided referral grants to receive services from contract therapists around the state, while 61 JLAP clients received services directly from JLAP staff. This breakdown is important because it shows that JLAP is effectively and efficiently using

limited grant funding made available by the JLAP Foundation and through JLAP's budget, to meet JLAP's core mission of providing clinical services to Arkansas judges, lawyers, and law students. Additional geographic and sociodemographic trends in JLAP's 2022 data are contained in the annual report that follows.

Also in 2022, JLAP continued to administer the attorney well-being program for the Arkansas bench and bar, approved by the Supreme Court in 2021. JLAP staff, JLAP Committee and Foundation members, and JLAP volunteers dedicated their energy to several well-being programs and events in 2022. JLAP continued to offer an excellent and well-received CLE program in the Spring, and JLAP hosted multiple training and outreach events in 2022. At the JLAP Advocates Dinner November 2022, the JLAP Foundation honored Laura Laser, former JLAP Deputy Director, and attorney and former Circuit Judge Chris Palmer. JLAP was grateful for the attendance and support of numerous attorneys, judges, and members of the Arkansas Supreme Court at the 2022 Advocates Dinner.

As always, the JLAP Committee thanks the Arkansas Supreme Court for the Court's enduring support of JLAP, and for entrusting JLAP with its important missions concerning the mental health and well-being of judges, lawyers, and law students in Arkansas.

– Colin Jorgensen, JLAP Committee Chair

2022 Year in Review

January

Benton County Bar Association CLE

JLAP launches Judicial Roundtables-monthly confidential support meetings led by retired judges

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP staff and volunteers virtually attend annual Institute of Wellbeing In Law (IWIL) conference

JLAP staff attend Workplace Resilience And Wellbeing (WRAW) training

February

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP Volunteer Retreat and Training at Petit Jean State Park

March

JLAP Executive Director presents to DHHS attorneys

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP staff host student outreach event at U of A School of Law

JLAP Executive Director present to U of A law students

JLAP Committee and Foundation Quarterly Meetings

April

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP participates in Suicide Prevention Walk at UALR campus

JLAP Deputy Director speaks at Administrative Judges Conference

JLAP staff and volunteers participate in Stress Less Fest at Bowen School of Law

JLAP Executive Director presents at Arkansas Specialty Court Conference

JLAP Executive Director presents at District Judges Spring College in Rogers

JLAP staff host student wellbeing events at U of A School of Law

May

JLAP hosts Wellbeing Week in Law

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP Committee Chair speaks at Children in the Courts Conference

JLAP Executive Director speaks at AR Bar Debtor/Creditors Conference

June

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP Executive Director presents at AOC in house CLE

JLAP hosts 1st JourneyWell-Being room at the annual Arkansas Bar Association Conference in Hot Springs

JLAP Committee and Foundation Quarterly Meetings

July

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

August

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP Executive Director presents WRAW at District Clerks Conference

JLAP Deputy Director attends Accelerated Resolution Therapy training

September

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP staff attends Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing training

JLAP staff and volunteers attend the ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs annual conference in Washington, D.C.

JLAP hosts JourneyWell Fall Retreat in Little Rock

JLAP Committee and Foundation Quarterly Meetings

October

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP participates in Bowen Health Fair

JLAP participates in U of A School of Law Trans Health event

JLAP Deputy Director speaks at U of A School of Law BALSAs event

JLAP Executive Director presents at AR Legal Aid Conference in Lake Degrey

JLAP Executive Director presents WRAW at Fall Judicial College

JLAP offers Mental Health First Aid Training to U of A law school faculty/staff in Fayetteville

JLAP Deputy Director hosts lunch and learn with Bowen Student Veterans Organization

JLAP staff and volunteers present to Bowen 1Ls

November

JLAP Executive Director presents to Walmart in Bentonville

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support groups

JLAP Foundation Annual Advocates Dinner in Little Rock

December

Judicial Roundtable

Lawyers Helping Lawyers online weekly support group

JLAP offers Mental Health First Aid Training to Bowen law school faculty/staff

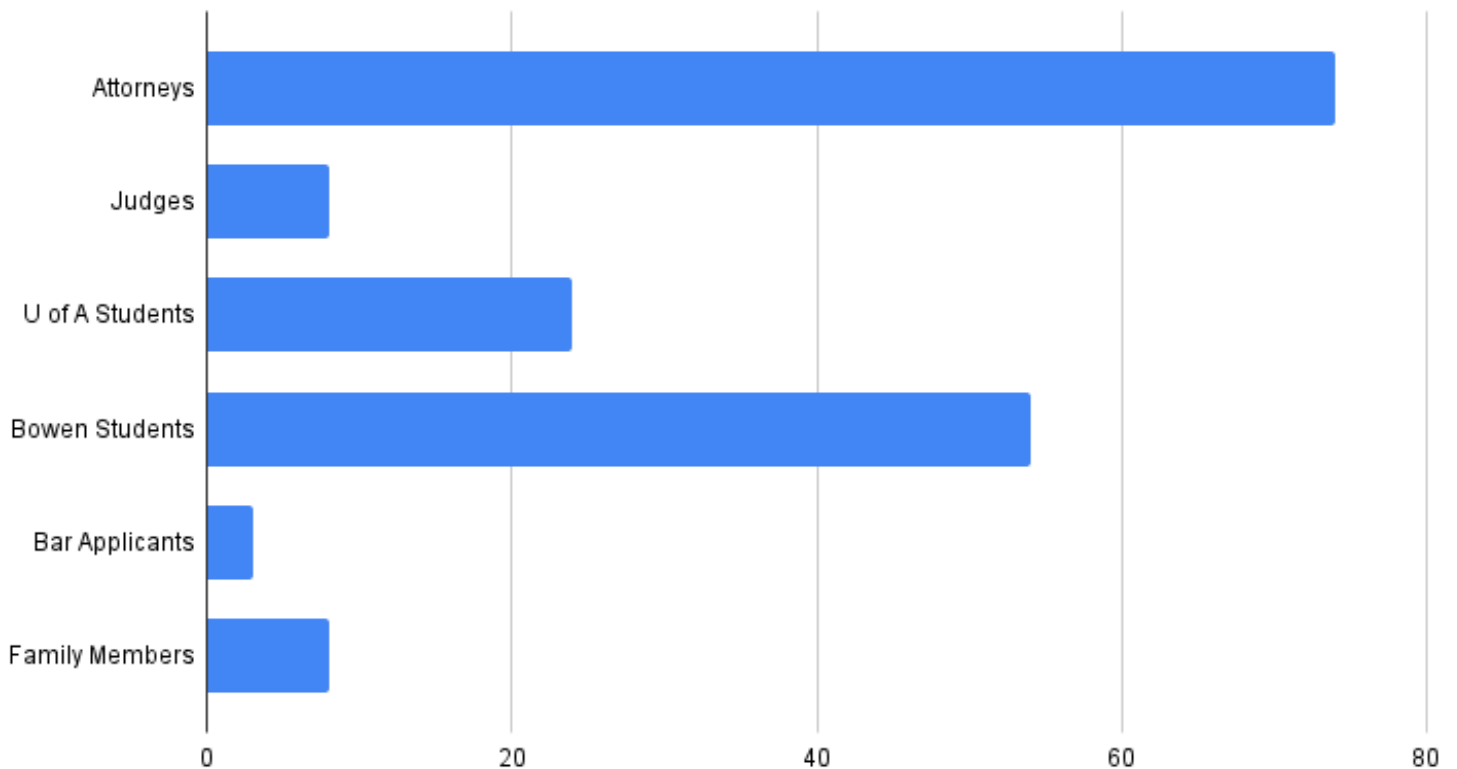
JLAP Committee and Foundation Quarterly Meetings

2022 Data

In 2022, JLAP received 331 contacts for assistance. JLAP staff engaged with 171 clients and assisted 160 individual contacts via referral, information call, or resource connection. At the end of 2022, 82 clients remained active with JLAP.

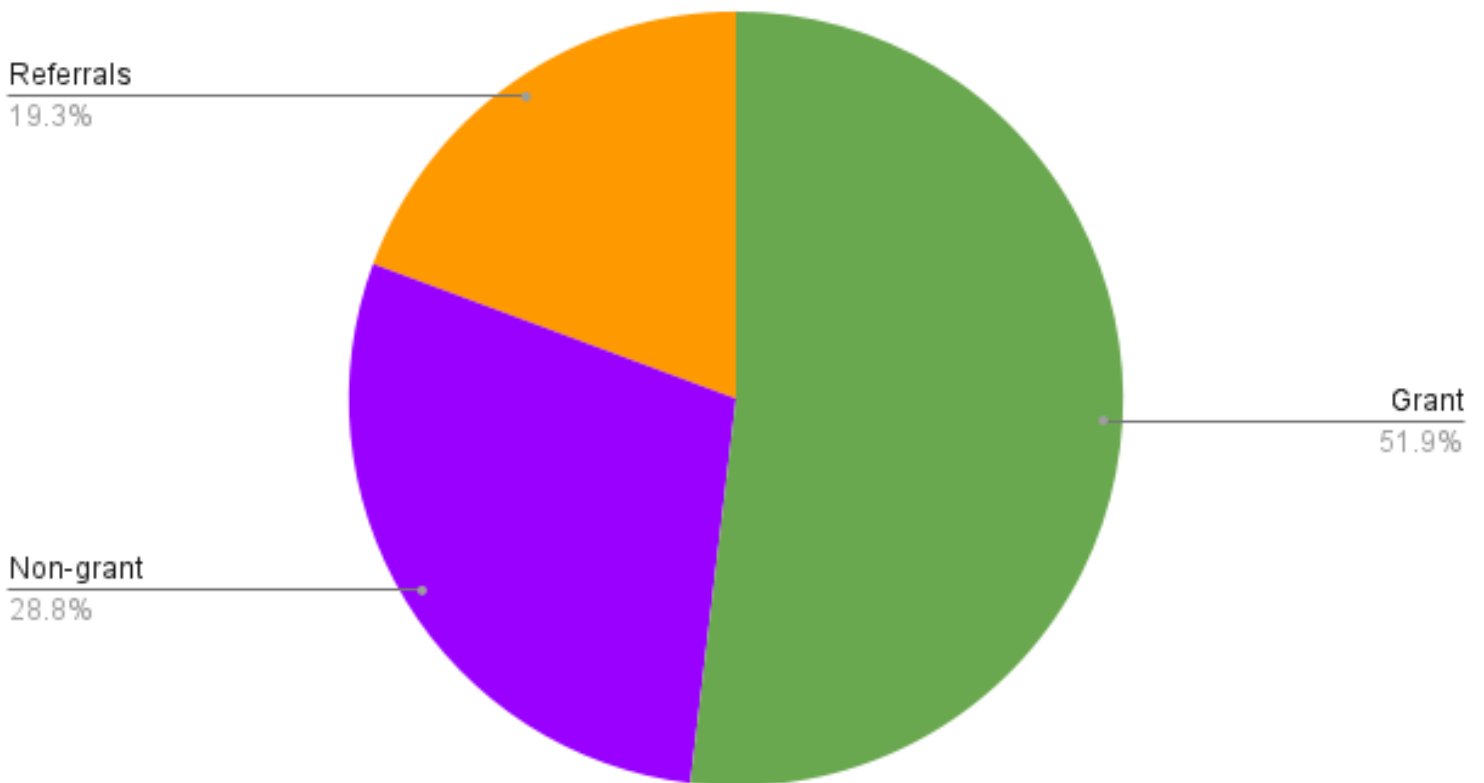
Of the 171 clients who received JLAP assistance in 2022, the breakdown is as follows: Attorneys (74); Bar Applicants (3); Bowen Students (54); Family Members (8); Judges (8); U of A Students (24).

Clients by Type



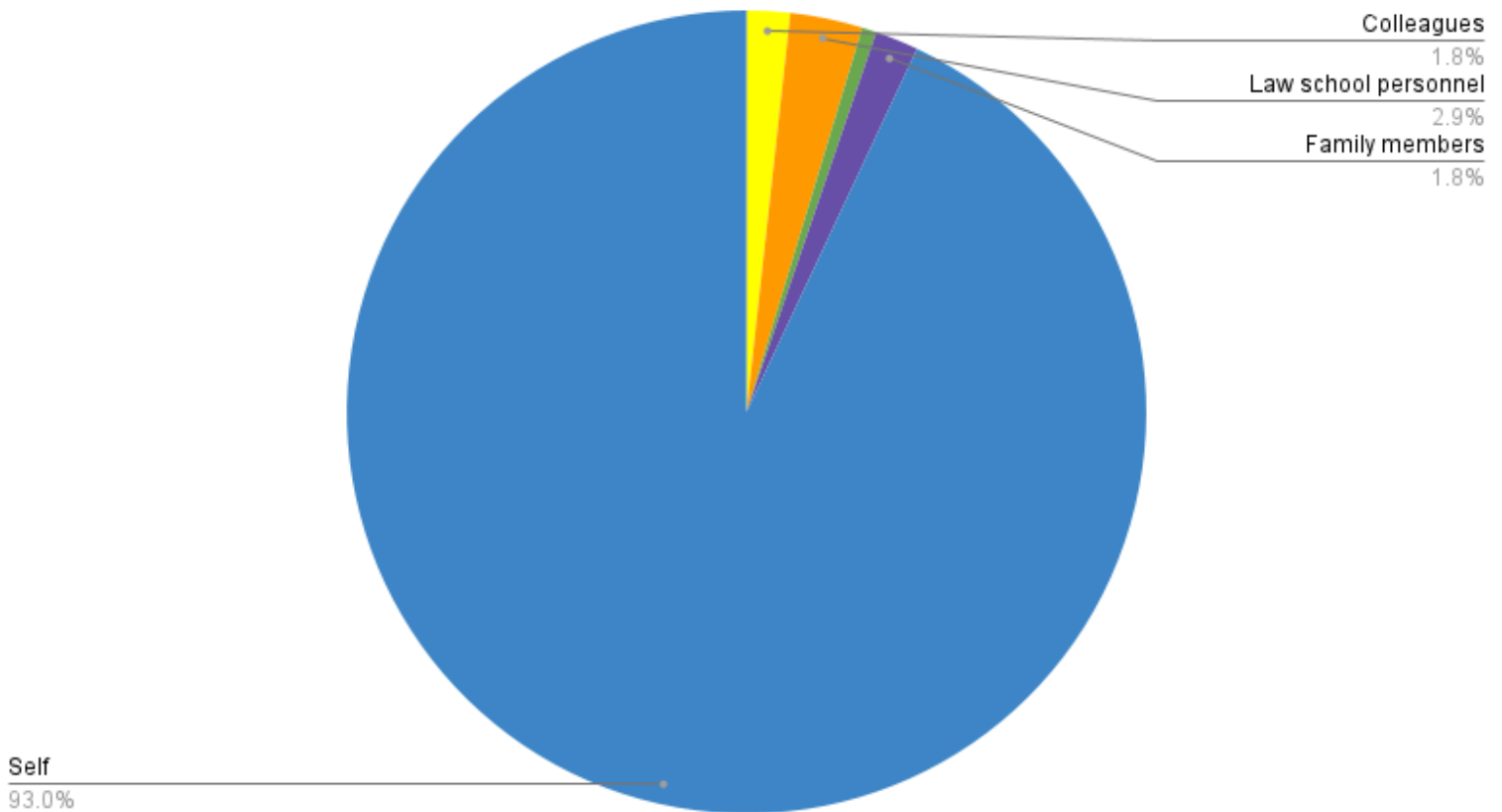
Of the 171 clients served, JLAP provided 110 clients with grants this year to help with their various mental health needs, at various levels of care. JLAP staff also provided in house outpatient therapy services to 61 clients and provided an out of network referral for 41 individuals. At the end of 2022, JLAP contracted with over 45 mental health providers throughout the state to provide mental health services to our legal community.

Client Funding



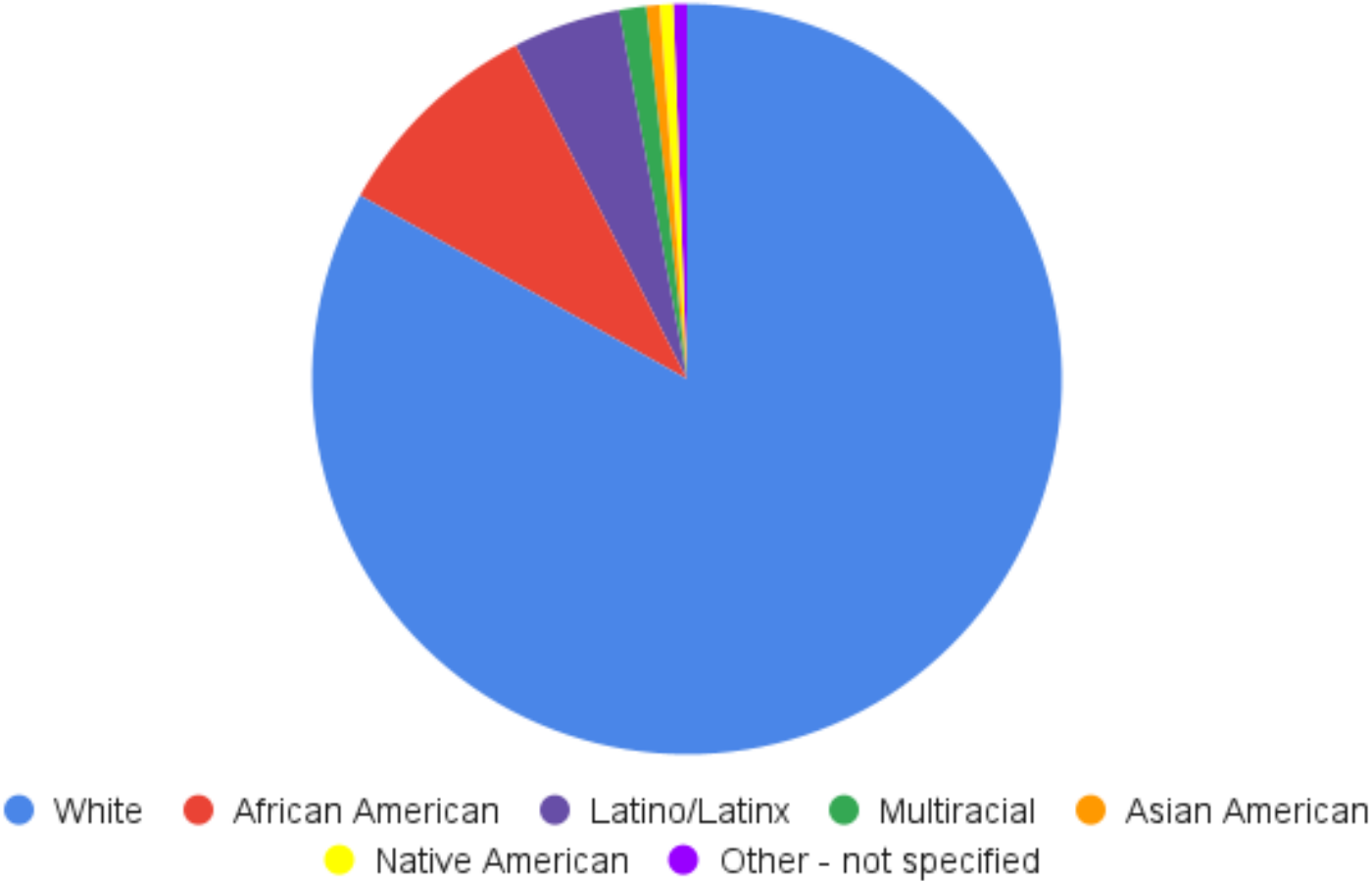
This year JLAP received more contacts via our confidential portal on the JLAP website, www.arjlap.org. JLAP used community outreach efforts to increase awareness of services through CLEs, social media campaigns, and word of mouth by volunteers and former clients. The primary referral method to JLAP continues to be self referral with other referral sources including employers, law schools, and colleagues.

Referral Source



In 2022, clients receiving services continued to increase and diversify with 9.4% African American, 4.7% Hispanic/Latino, and 1% Asian American, Native American, & Bi/Multiracial client base. The majority of clients served remains overwhelmingly Caucasian (83.6%). JLAP recognizes the need to increase community outreach to marginalized communities in efforts to raise awareness of JLAP services and resources.

Client Race/Ethnicity

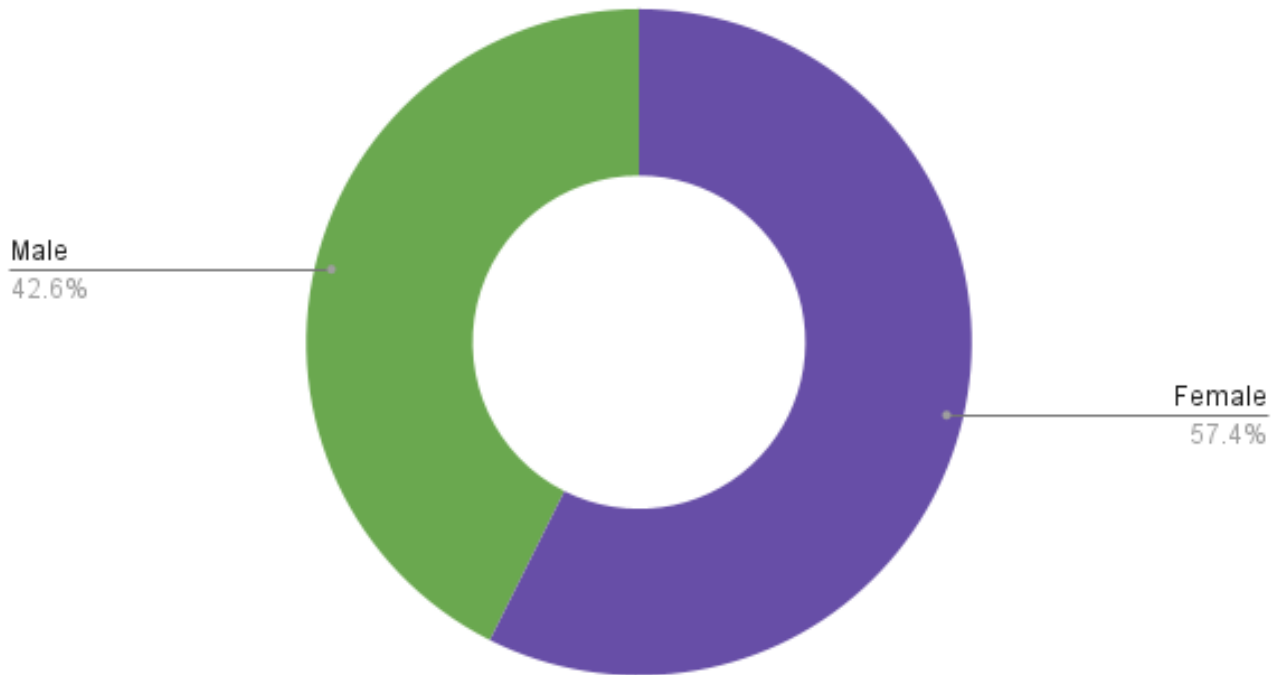


JLAP served more female clients than male clients in 2022.

(Male 42.6%; Female 57.4%)

Sex representation shows a 5.2% increase in female contacts to JLAP. (52.2% in 2021; 57.4% in 2022) JLAP recognizes a need for more gender inclusivity in community outreach efforts.

Client by Identified Sex



JLAP offers services statewide, yet a large concentration of services are provided in Central and Northwest Arkansas. With increased community outreach and telehealth continuing to be a preferred source for many services, JLAP hopes to see an increase in service awareness and utilization in all areas of the state.

Location of clients served:

Central AR: 115

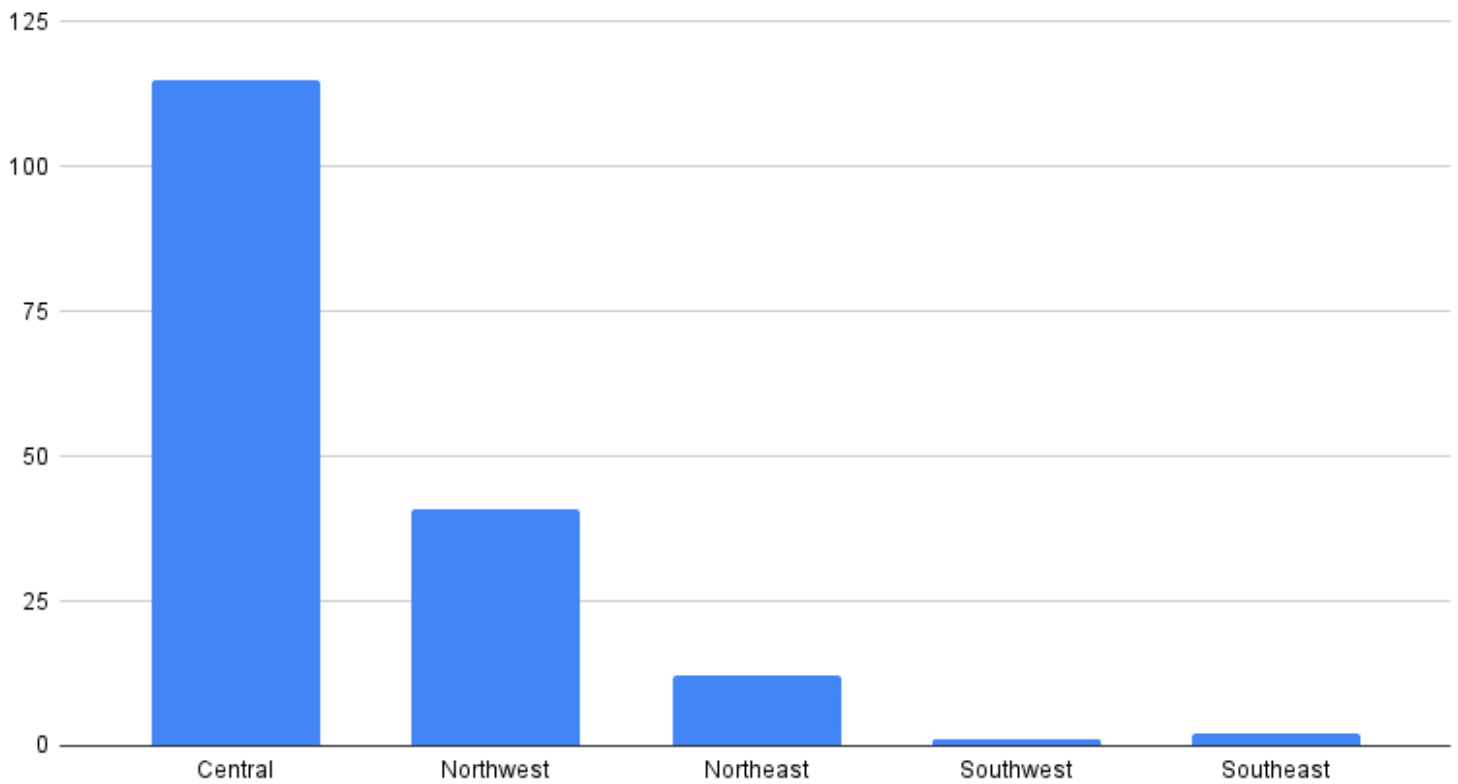
NWA: 41

NEA: 12

SWA: 1

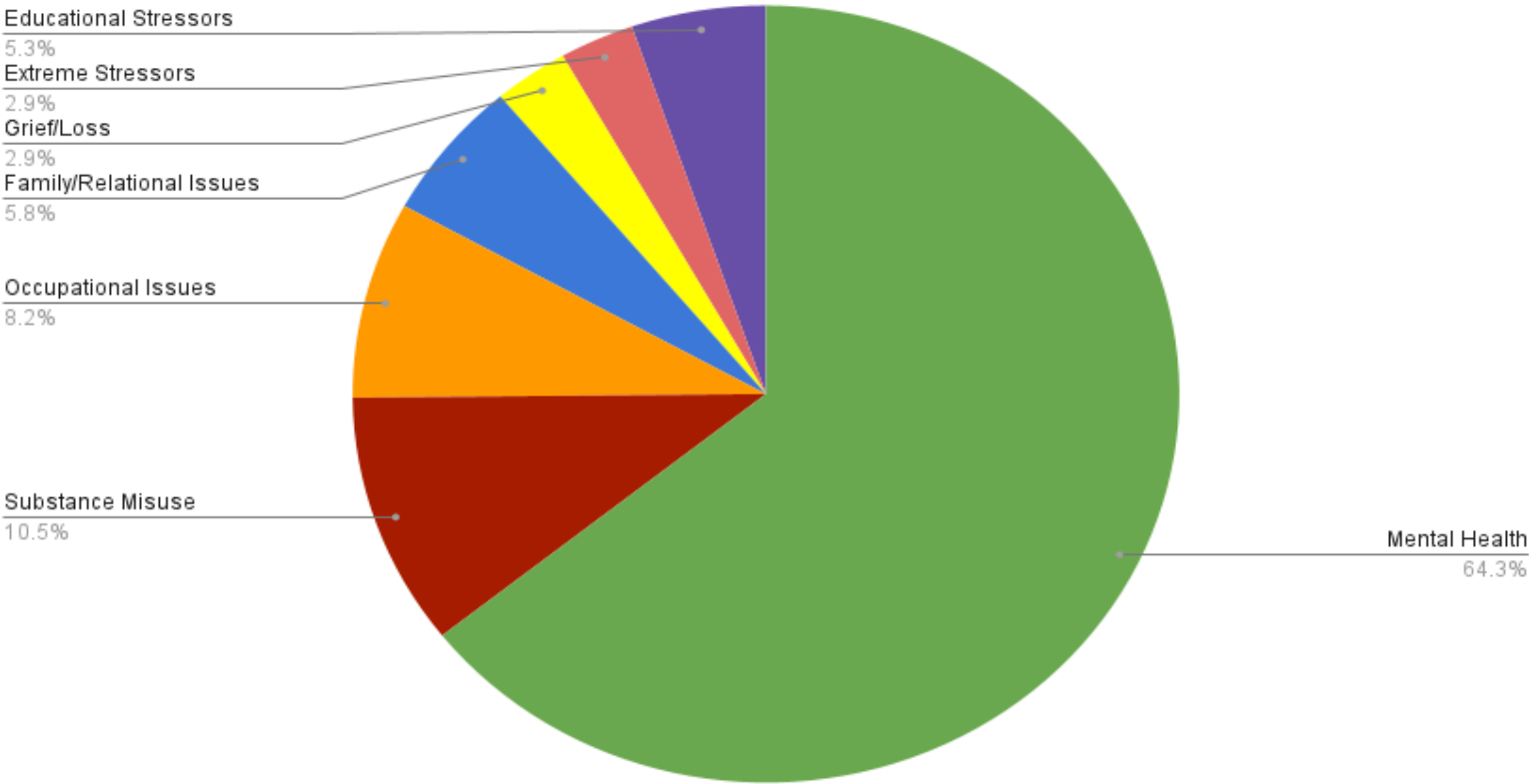
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Client Location



This table represents the primary, self reported issue of the individual requesting JLAP services. Mental Health Concerns increased to 64.3% of client issues this year in comparison to 53.4% in 2021. Self reported anxiety, mood instability, vicarious and personal trauma, aging related issues, and neurodiversity inquiries all contribute to this category. Occupational Issues increased from 6.1% last year to 8.2% this year while Educational and Family Stressors see a decrease. (7.5% to 5.3%; 7.5% to 5.8%) Substance use/misuse continues to rank secondary to underlying mental health issues. In 2022 JLAP received a significant decrease in substance abuse reporting from 19.3% of 2021 clients to 10.5% of 2022 clients. While noting this decrease, JLAP also received several requests for crisis intervention as well as residential treatment placement assistance relating to substance and/or alcohol use.

Presenting Reason for Contact



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