



## ABOUT OUR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKING GROUP:

With a grant from **Louisiana Blue Foundation**, **Bayou Community Foundation** (BCF) conducted a Community Needs Assessment in Fall 2023 to determine unmet humanitarian needs, gaps in human services provided and/or challenges residents face accessing services in Lafourche, Terrebonne and Grand Isle. **(REPORT AVAILABLE AT [www.BAYOUCF.org](http://www.BAYOUCF.org))**

The assessment engaged over 200 nonprofit, government, education, health care and public safety representatives, as well as residents, BCF donors and community partners through surveys, focus groups and interviews. BCF also resourced local, state and regional data to support the needs identified by local participants.

**Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder counseling and treatment were identified as high priority needs.** With thousands of residents still recovery from the disastrous impacts of COVID and Hurricane Ida, this finding was not a surprise.

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**“We’re in a mental health crisis. There are extreme waiting times for people in crisis to get help and residents are suffering trauma.” (Focus Group participant) The Bayou Region has 63.8 mental health providers for every 100,000 residents, much lower than the State at 138.5/100,000 and the Nation 126.0/100,000. (2023)**

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In response, Bayou Community Foundation has made Behavioral Health a programmatic priority, launching the **Bayou Region Behavioral Health Working Group** with local behavioral health providers, nonprofits and local residents in Spring 2024. A long-term goal of the Group is to build the number of providers in our region. Short-term goals include promotion of currently available resources to local residents and increasing awareness of those resources, such as the 988 help line and behavioral health “urgent care” centers in the region.

## WORKING GROUP INITIATIVES:

- Bayou Region Behavioral Health Summit / April 2024 – 100+ participants
- Behavioral Health Lunch & Learn with LA Office of Public Health / September 2024
- Roundtable Discussion on Crisis Care / January 2025 – 50 participants
- [BayouHelp.org](http://BayouHelp.org) online resource directory for Bayou Region - launching in spring 2025
- **988** Campaign to increase awareness of the help line – 2025
- “Map” of crisis and long-term services available in our area for navigating care
- Collaborating with Nicholls State University to develop degree programs and internships

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