

HELPING FAMILIES INITIATIVE

Making Alabama's Education Laws Benefit Everyone

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Helping
Families
Initiative
Alabama
Legislative
Report
2025

District Attorney–
School–Community
Partnership

Presented to the
Alabama Legislature
& Governor –
September 30, 2025

Kentucky Chronic Absences

School Year	% Chronically Absent	Citation
2019-2020	Data not reported due to COVID-19	https://www.the74million.org/article/student-absenteeism-up-as-kentucky-schools-recover-from-some-hard-years/
2020-2021	Nearly 36%	https://www.future-ed.org/focus-areas/chronic-absenteeism/
2021-2022	25%	https://www.lpm.org/news/2023-10-17/ky-districts-say-pandemic-had-a-lasting-impact-on-student-attendance
2022-2023	30%	https://www.education.ky.gov/school/Documents/Attendance%20Matters%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf
2023-2024	28%	https://www.education.ky.gov/school/Documents/Chronic%20Absenteeism%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf
2024-2025	28% (early state reports, projection for future decline)	https://www.education.ky.gov/CommOfEd/StrategicPlan/Documents/2024-2029_Strategic_Plan_508.pdf

Executive Summary

HFI intervenes without arrest in the lives of at-risk children and families.

Addresses chronic absenteeism—
15% of students statewide, 20%
among low-income families.

2024–2025: 95,674 students served,
73,188 families, 162,714 parents
across 19 DAs & 44 systems.

Mobile County Case Study

Reinstatement of HFI led to an overall 3.15% attendance improvement (2023–2024) and an overall 4% reduction in (2024–2025).

50% reduction in truancy; 58% reduction in chronic absenteeism.

The Recovered Value over the two year period was \$64.4M that otherwise would have been wasted. The combined state and local cost was \$1.32M.

The Return on Investment was \$48.67 for every dollar spent.

Superintendent Threadgill and DA Blackwood attribute gains to HFI.

Authorization & Funding

Authorized under Alabama Code §16-28-1 et seq. (Mandatory School Attendance Act).

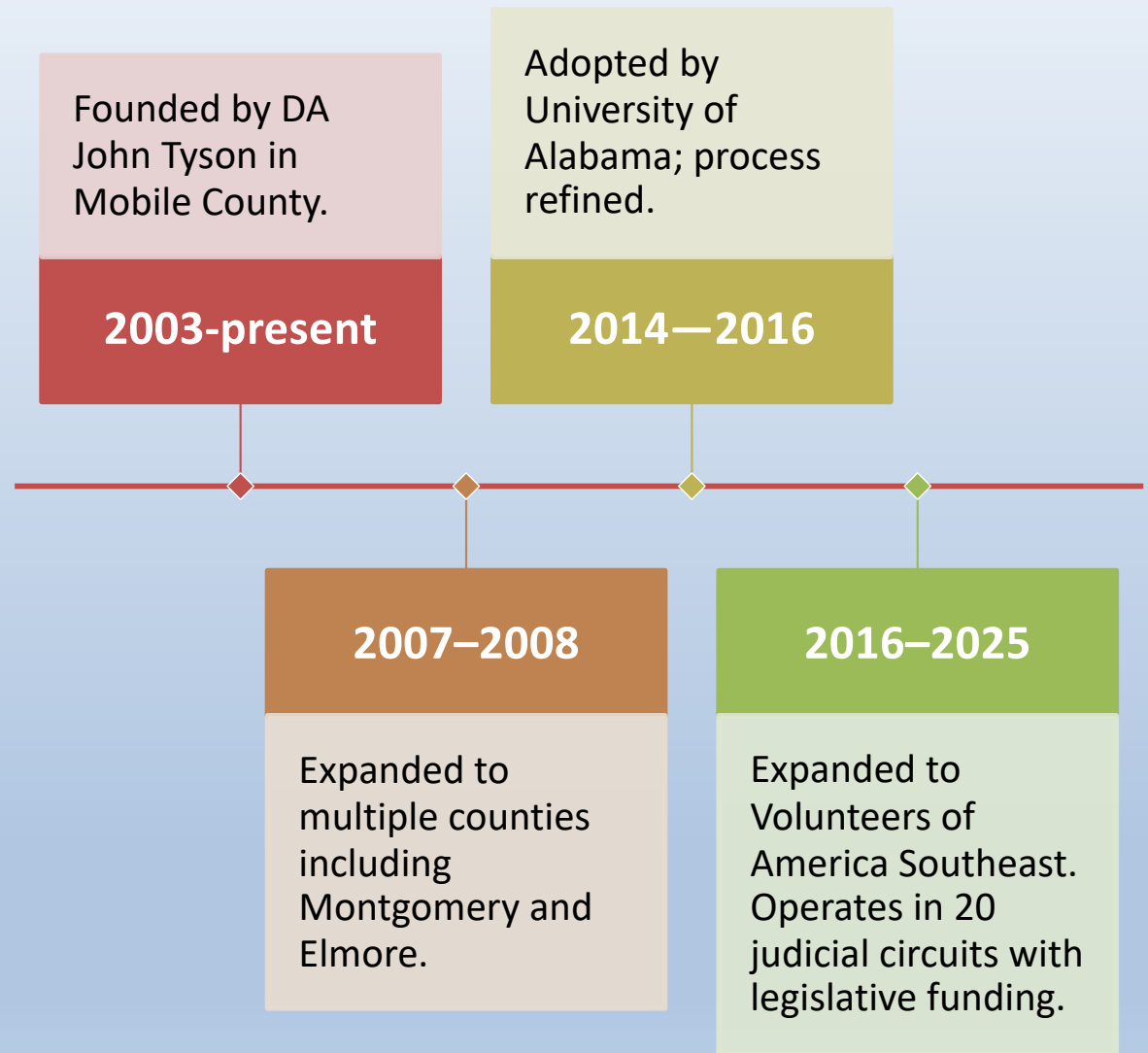
District Attorneys required to enforce attendance laws vigorously.

FY2025–2026

State appropriation: \$3.3M

Local & philanthropic funds match or exceed state funds.

History & Expansion



Today

As of October 1, Helping Families Initiative, Inc.
is an Alabama not-for-profit corporation.

2025



Program Process Overview

Triggering Event – unexcused absences or serious violations of the codes of student conduct.

Engagement – contact with families via DA office. Families are treated with dignity and respect

Case Officer & Assessment – evaluate needs via NC Family Assessment Scale.

Individualized Intervention Plan & Interagency Team – create tailored support plan.

Referrals – link families to counseling, social, and community services.

Follow-Up – monitor progress and outcomes.

Quantitative Results (2024–2025)

44 school systems across 19 circuits; 265,653 students (~36.5% of AL total).

95,674 students directly served; 73,188 families; 162,714 parents.

Student Absenteeism Wastes Tax Dollars

Comparing school years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, \$47.3M recovered educational value ; \$14.34 Return on \$3.3M State Investment.

Technology & Case Management

2023: Launched HFI Case Management Database.

Automates data exchange from Alabama Department of Education; reduces clerical work for case officers.

Ensures consistency, accountability, and real-time data tracking.

2025– 2026 Early Results

12,174 students served; 10,580 families; 15,497 parents.

4,468 warning letters; 988 assessment letters sent.

56 Individualized Intervention Plans; 69 students referred for services.

1,081 referral agencies active across 1,695 ZIP codes.

Key Takeaways

HFI is preventive—not punitive—keeping kids out of court.

Delivers measurable academic and financial benefits.

Builds safer schools and stronger communities.

Model for statewide replication and continued legislative support.

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