

# 2025

## ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT


BUILDING  
**LIFE SKILLS**  
TODAY FOR A  
CONFIDENT  
TOMORROW



**Learn More or Contact Us:**

 [leadconfidently.org](https://leadconfidently.org)

 [hello@leadconfidently.org](mailto:hello@leadconfidently.org)

 122 Uptown Dr. Ste 204-17  
Bay City, MI 48708

# LETTER TO OUR COMMUNITY

THANK YOU



Dear Supporters, Partners, and Friends,

Lead's work focuses on something simple, but incredibly powerful: helping young people build confidence and practical life skills like communication, decision-making, emotional regulation, and resilience.

These skills are not "nice-to-have." They are protective factors. When a young person knows how to manage stress, speak up for themselves, navigate conflict, and set goals, they are better prepared for school, for work, and for life. Confidence becomes more than a feeling, it becomes a foundation.

In 2025, we continued strengthening that foundation across Michigan. Through school partnerships, youth-serving systems and community organizations we increased access to practical tools that meet youth and families where they are and help them take their next step forward.

On March 31, 2026, Founder Lisa Tarkington will complete her transition out of her staff leadership role into a board member role. Since founding the organization, formerly known as Self Love Beauty, Tarkington has guided Lead's evolution from a small community initiative into a statewide organization supporting thousands of individuals. The foundation she built remains strong.

Under Kelsey Snyder's continued leadership as Executive Director, Lead is now focused on the next phase: scaling impact and strengthening sustainability. This includes diversifying revenue, strengthening internal systems, and growing responsibly so Lead can deliver on its mission consistently and confidently.

To our donors, sponsors, grantors, and partners... thank you. Your investment is what makes this work possible. The heart of Lead is not an online platform, a strategic plan, or leadership transition.

It is a young person learning to believe in themselves.  
It is a family finding steadiness.  
It is a future shifting: one child, one family, one story at a time.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Maday".

Sarah Maday  
Board Chair

# Board Leadership & Strategic Direction



In 2025, Lead's Board of Directors did more than fulfill governance responsibilities, they helped shape our next chapter. Through thoughtful partnership and strategic vision, the Board worked alongside leadership to develop our 2026–2028 Strategic Plan. This plan reflects a year of refinement, focus, and forward momentum, ensuring that our growth is both intentional and sustainable.

We are deeply grateful to the members whose terms concluded in 2025. Your leadership guided Lead through a transformational year and positioned us for long-term impact.

## Thank You to 2025 Board Members Who Completed Their Terms



**Jon Lynch**  
Three Rivers Corporation



**Wendy Traschen**  
Outlyr



**Kayley Gordert**  
DuPont

## 2026 Board of Directors

In 2026, we welcome new members Jeff Hoekstra (Greenleaf Trust), Josh Faulk (Superior Insurance Group) and Stephanie Greene (Greater Michigan Construction Academy) whose expertise in finance, advocacy, and scaling strategy strengthens governance as we advance our 2026–2028 priorities.



**Sarah Maday**  
Board Chair  
Nexteer Automotive



**Stacey Gannon**  
Vice Chair  
Huntington Bank



**Laura Shepard**  
Secretary  
Dow Chemical Company



**Kelsey Schultz**  
Treasurer  
Yeo & Yeo



**Tyler Kirby**  
Tri-Star Trust



**Missie Frier**  
1st State Bank



**Jeff Wood**  
Merrill Lynch  
Wealth Management



**Cathy Geiger**  
ABC Greater  
Michigan Chapter



**Julia Kepler**  
Serendipity Road and  
Joyful Tantrum



**Jeff Hoekstra**  
Greenleaf Trust



**Josh Faulk**  
Superior Insurance  
Group



**Stephanie Greene**  
Greater Michigan  
Construction Academy

## 2026–2028 Strategic Objectives

Lead's Strategic Plan is guided by two core objectives shaping our work over the next three years:



### I. Program Impact & Expansion

*Strengthen and scale Lead's programs to impact more individuals across Michigan.*



### II. Financial & Organizational Sustainability

*Ensure Lead's long-term financial stability and organizational strength.*

The pages that follow highlight the measurable progress made in 2025 that advances these objectives.

Pages 4–6 share program outcomes and expansion milestones, and page 7 provides a financial overview reflecting disciplined stewardship and sustainability efforts.

2025 was a year of alignment through strengthening our programs, partnerships, leadership, and financial strategy.



## Who We Serve

**2,416**

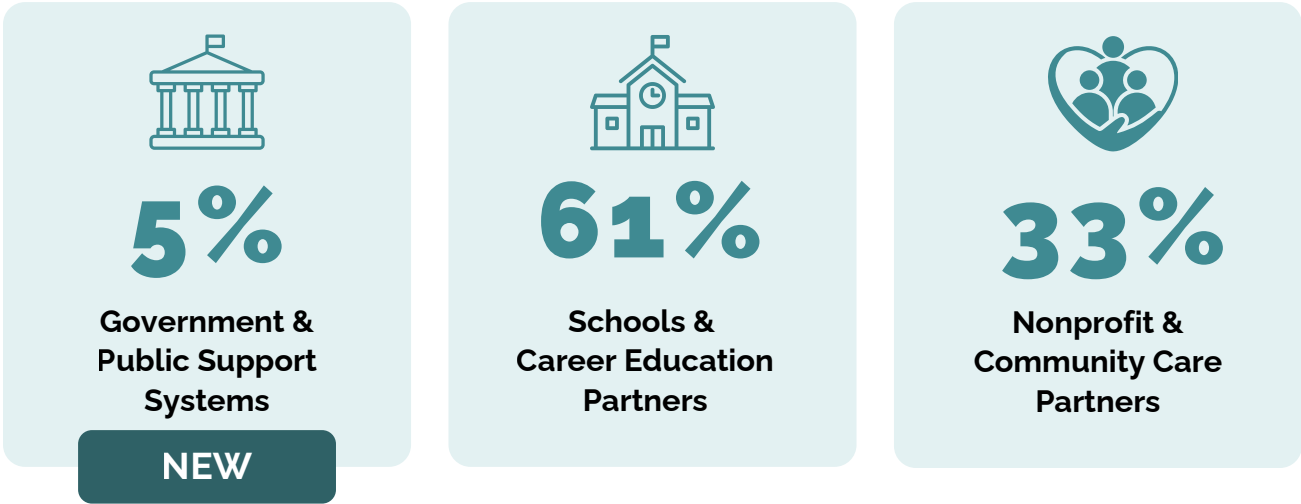
individuals served in 2025 through Lead's workshops, workbooks and online platform

## Where We Serve

Lead integrates into existing systems where youth and families are already receiving support.

Rather than creating separate programming, we collaborate across schools, public agencies, and community organizations to embed practical skill-building where it's needed most.

**Here's how our 2025 impact was distributed across these three focus areas:**



For five years, Lead has worked alongside the juvenile justice system throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region, supporting court-involved youth with soft skill development.

In 2025, we expanded into a new area of public system support through a partnership with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services in Gladwin County, establishing a scalable model for broader statewide government integration in 2026. More on this partnership is shared on page 6.

## Measurable Skill Development

In 2025, participants demonstrated measurable growth across three core skill areas. Using structured pre and post program assessments, we track shifts in confidence, mindset, and goal clarity to ensure our curriculum is producing meaningful, sustained outcomes.



### Overcoming Doubt and Building Confidence

*Challenging limiting beliefs and building self-trust*

**55%**

increased belief in their ability to overcome limiting thoughts

#### Skills Developed

- ✓ Positive affirmations
- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Overcoming self-doubt

Thank YOU for SUPPORTING lead within at our School. You gave us the opportunity to learn a lot about self confidence with our ADVISORY CLASS. Through the Program I learned to say more affirmations to myself. I TRULY APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT and the impact it has had on me and my classmates.

### Mastering Your Mindset and Daily Habits

*Changing how you think, so you can change what you do*

**71%**

gained a stronger growth mindset

#### Skills Developed

- ✓ Tools to manage stress
- ✓ Habit stacking
- ✓ Alignment strategies

I learned to do better with bad habits and create good habits and stick with my goals. I learned how to go from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset my favorite part was working on fixing my mindset. I learned how to express myself and my favorite part of this workshop was learning what self-awareness and self-care is.

- Juvenile Justice Student

### Clarity in Purpose and Goal Setting

*Clarifying what matters so you can take meaningful next steps*

**53%**

gained confidence in their ability to choose their future

#### Skills Developed

- ✓ Self-reflection exercises
- ✓ Setting SMART goals
- ✓ Craft purpose statement

Dear supporters of lead within my name is Brianna I'm a freshman you guys have helped me self improve and to set goals for myself I appreciate it very much thank you for your hard work put into this program ♡

## Gladwin County



## CASE STUDY

### Key Use Cases

Instead of adding another appointment or requirement, Lead integrates directly into existing services offering support stability, accountability, and long-term outcomes.

**In 2025, Lead supported over 50 Gladwin youth and families across the following service areas:**

#### 20% - Ongoing CPS Cases

Caseworkers assign topics aligned with immediate family needs and court-ordered service plans, reinforcing skill-building between visits.

#### 10% - Foster Care

Shared topic completion builds consistent language and expectations within court-involved families working toward reunification.

#### 6% - Foster Parent Support

Modules strengthen communication, attachment, and can count toward required foster parent training hours.

#### 30% - Michigan Youth Opportunity Initiative

Supporting youth in foster care, Lead strengthens confidence, decision-making, and goal setting as they prepare for adulthood.

#### 29% - Directors, Supervisors & Caseworkers

Staff were trained in Lead's framework to reinforce Developmental Asset growth within service plans.

“

*Lead has been an amazing service for our families. In a small county we are often limited on what resources we have to provide to our families. Lead has been a service that we can offer to our families that helps them personally. Lead is about self growth and personal development. Lead has helped those we work with break the cycle, the bad habits, and just building the personal skills to move forward in a positive way. Gladwin DHHS is very thankful to be able to provide this beneficial service for our families.*

- Mary Rynearson  
Children's Services Supervisor

”

lead

### Service Referrals



48%

services court-ordered

52%

voluntary services

### Engagement

50%

completion rate  
among closed cases

*30% of cases have closed, 70% remain open*

### Early Indicators of Ownership

*One mother assigned three required topics as part of court-ordered service plan went on to complete ten topics.*

*One father began the program while incarcerated and requested additional materials upon release to continue the program independently.*

When participants exceed requirements in high-stress environments, it signals more than compliance.

**It signals ownership.**

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2025

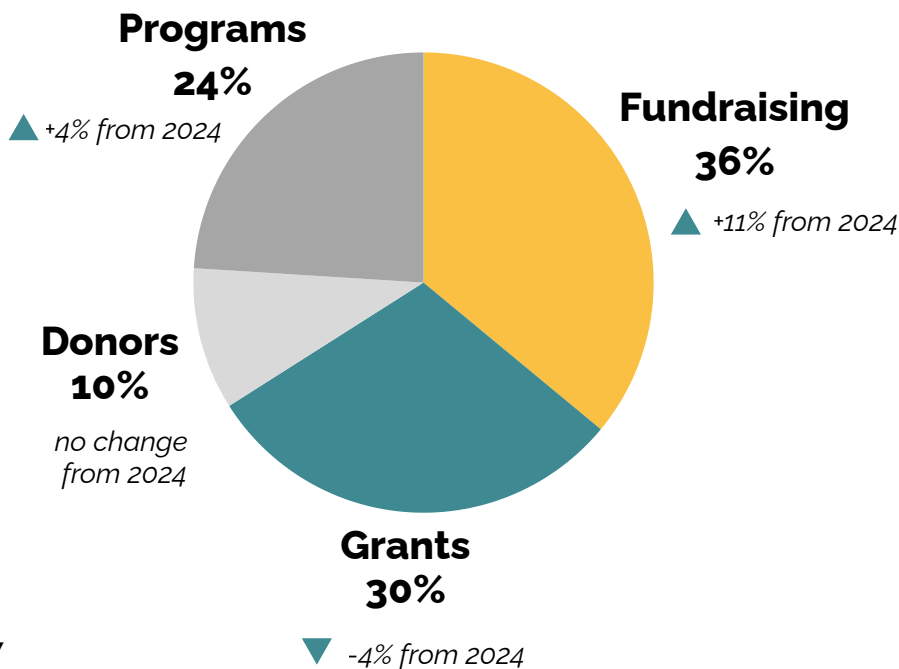
## Financial Sustainability & Strategic Growth

In 2025, Lead strengthened its financial foundation while laying the groundwork for the priorities outlined in our 2026–2028 Strategic Plan.

The year reflects intentional growth in program-based and contract revenue, particularly through public system partnerships and fee-based programming. While grant funding continues to support innovation, our long-term objective is a more balanced and sustainable revenue mix.

These shifts represent early progress toward our goal of achieving a 60% earned revenue and 40% philanthropy mix by 2028.

Increases in earned revenue and fundraising demonstrate strong community investment in this direction and position Lead for scalable expansion across schools and public systems.



2026-2028

## Financial Priorities

### Diversify Revenue

Increase earned program and contract revenue to achieve a 60% earned / 40% philanthropy revenue mix by 2028.

### Strengthen Public System Partnerships

Expand county-level integration to scale program delivery across the state of Michigan.

### Ensure Financial Transparency & Stewardship

Maintain strong internal controls and accountability across staff and board of directors.

### Build Capacity for Growth

Invest in infrastructure and systems that support scalable expansion and impact.

**Together, these financial shifts ensure Lead can scale responsibly while maintaining strong stewardship and measurable impact.**

# THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SUPPORTERS

Thank you to the incredible foundations and organizations whose generous support made our programs possible this year

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| St. Johns Episcopal Church Endowment       | MyMichigan Health                 |
| Rollin M Gerstacker Foundation             | Bay Area Community Foundation     |
| Dow Championship                           | Frankenmuth Credit Union          |
| Russell and Maxine Smith Family Foundation | Saginaw Area Community Foundation |
| Harvey Randall Wickes Foundation           | Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church |

