

[A place for New Orleans youth to get a helping hand](#)

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At the Drop-In Center, affiliated with the Tulane University Department of Pediatrics and located at 1461 N. Claiborne Ave., programs are expanding for homeless and underserved youth in New Orleans. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

New Orleans is a city of crawfish, jazz, festivals and sultry weather. Along with all its unique traits, however, the Crescent City has this in common with other major cities: There is a large youth population that is underserved and not receiving medical and social assistance. For nearly 25 years, New Orleans has had a place for these youth to come: [The Drop-in Center](#).

“The Drop-in Center is a place where homeless and at-risk youth can go to get off the streets; a place to call home for many who do not have another place to go,” says Joshua Beverly, senior program director of the center, which is affiliated with the Tulane University [Department of Pediatrics](#) in the [School of Medicine](#). While the Drop-In Center is an independent entity, Tulane provides fiduciary oversight for the organization.

The Drop-In Center provides health and social services to the youth of New Orleans, now with two locations: the Drop-in Clinic at the original site, 611 North Rampart St., and a Drop-in Center at 1461 N. Claiborne Ave.

“With this latest development, individuals will be able to come to the center grab a hot meal, put their clothing in the washing machine, take a shower, get tested for STDs/STIs [sexually transmitted diseases/sexually transmitted infections], check their email and watch TV all before their clothes finish in the dryer,” Beverly says.

The clinic, located inside Covenant House since Hurricane Katrina, serves infants, children and youth to the age of 24.

The center provides day services such as hot meals, showers and clothing, along with the opportunity to socialize, play games, watch TV and take part in a thriving community. Tulane students can volunteer at the center.

The center is constantly growing and implementing new programs, such as updated STD-testing technology. A long-term goal is to provide educational services.

“Every day the center is expanding,” Beverly says. “To keep up with the ever-changing population, we, as staff, have to make sure we stay hip to current trends.”

Claire Davenport is a first-year student at Tulane University, majoring in English and political science.

“At the Drop-In Center, we’ve eliminated barriers that many other youth organizations have, and our main goal is to assist and meet clients where they are.” —Joshua Beverly, senior program director