



HOPE RESILIENCE RECOVERY

Thrive community support is more essential than ever

Donors, big and small, step up to help



When the coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation of Thrive Counseling Center's Spring Benefit, generous donors stepped up to help bridge the fundraising loss. These supporters include foundations, corporate, and government funders, as well as many individuals.

Gabriella Mizgala, 24, is one of them. After Gabby received a federal stimulus check, the 7th grade math teacher multiplied the impact of the cash by donating to agencies serving those hard-hit by the virus.

"I chose to donate to Thrive because I think everyone should be able to access the mental health services they need, especially during the current pandemic," said Gabby, who

grew up in River Forest and teaches in Chicago. "I thought, I am super fortunate to have my job and be in a position to help people who need it more."

As an essential service provider, Thrive has remained open throughout the Illinois Stay-At-Home Order, conducting therapy via video, and maintaining crisis intervention and other services.

Thrive is extremely grateful for the support and commitment of generous donors who make the agency's work in the Oak Park and River Forest community possible throughout the year.

Several hundred individual donors have inspired Thrive staff and clients with their generosity, in addition to many corporate and other organizational funders including:

Affetto & Co.; Amity; Balasa, Dinverno, Foltz, LLC; Conniff Law Offices; Chicago COVID-19 Response Fund; The Economy Shop; Good Heart Work Smart Foundation; Illinois Department of Human Services; Intrado Foundation; Oak Park Community Mental Health Board; Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation; Village of Oak Park Community Development Block Grant Program; Oak Park Police Department; Ralston Massage and Bodywork, Inc.; River Forest Police Department; River Forest Township; and Tucker-Ellis, LLP.

Free Check-In Line offers connection and calm

Thrive's free Check-In Line offers therapists to support individuals struggling with the disruption, stress, and anxiety that has hit everyone in the coronavirus pandemic.

Community members can call **708-383-7500, ext. 8**, to talk to a therapist or to leave a message that will be returned within the next business day.

The coronavirus has stolen a sense of control for many individuals, who may live with fear of

exposure to the illness, isolation, financial insecurity, lack of childcare, and sometimes, added conflict at home. Family members also may disagree over when it is safe to leave the house, where they can safely go, and which outings are essential.

“We are a resource to help people cope with whatever they are facing,” said Kristen Keleher, Thrive Manager of Community Engagement. “They might just need someone to help them process and talk through what is happening. It’s not uncommon to find it hard to concentrate or focus on anything else. Anxiety also has a physical component, and you might feel shortness of breath, which exacerbates the fear you may be ill. We can offer a grounding exercises to reduce anxiety and help to develop a plan for rest, relaxation, and self-care.”

These stresses can be overwhelming to the healthiest of individuals. Those with pre-existing physical or emotional problems are especially vulnerable, and can be referred for follow-up care with Thrive counselors or other providers.

“For a person with health problems and depression, it can help to talk about loss of control, and to grieve what they have lost in terms of independence,” Kristen said. “We can also identify things they do have control over, and talk about coping skills.”

Thrive’s Check-In Line, which started in March, is now part of the statewide Call4Calm program. Calls with a Thrive counselor typically last between 30 and 40 minutes, and are free to all.

You're invited to Thrive's Community Town Hall

Join in Thrive’s Zoom Town Hall, offered each Thursday, to foster an online community to share stories, concerns, and inspiration in these unprecedented times. The next Town Hall will be from **1 p.m. to 2 p.m.** on Thursday, **May 7**.

“We truly had the opportunity to give and receive in the call,” said community residents Kathy and Tom H., who attended an April Town Hall. “We viewed this as an important offering that others may benefit from as well.”

Recent meetings have gathered dozens of ordinary community members to share ideas that nurture hope, as well as to voice uncertainties about changes that may be long-lasting. Attendees also have shared ideas for meaningful volunteer and work opportunities, the need for choices and compassion, and recognition of our strengths.

The Zoom meeting can be accessed via computer, tablet, or smart phone using the free Zoom app. To join the meeting through Zoom, use [this link](#) The Meeting ID is 259 788 564 Or join via iPhone one-tap: +13126266799 or 259788564# US (Chicago)

Thrive understands the role of community in our ability to stay emotionally healthy. Join in the weekly gathering to share and engage in ways that provide inspiration and concrete ideas for living more calmly and creatively during this uncertain time.



Thrive Talk on Anxiety in Children and Teens May 7

Dr. Heidi Hamernik, a clinical psychologist, will offer strategies to recognize, prevent and treat anxiety in children and youth in a virtual Thrive Talk from 7-8 p.m. on Thursday, May 7. Dr. Hamernik specializes in working with children, adolescents, and their families.

There will be a special focus on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, what is normal during development, and when is professional help is needed. Learn what factors contribute to anxiety and what you can do to help.

Join this interactive presentation via Zoom, a free app that can be downloaded to computers, pads, and smart phones. To join the meeting through Zoom, use [this link](#) The Web ID is 919 5140 3119

Thrive is THE Oak Park and River Forest Community Mental Health Center



DONATE NOW

Thrive Counseling Center offers crisis intervention, psychiatric treatment, individual and group therapy, and an array of wellness programs

Contact Thrive at 708-383-7500 or visit www.thrivecc.org