



New Covid-19 Surge Calls for a Focus on What We Can Control

A surge in Covid-19 infections from the Delta variant are causing renewed anxiety, at a time many had hoped everyday life would return to something resembling normal.

While the majority of adults and teens in the Oak Park and River Forest area are vaccinated, conflicts arise when friends and family members make different choices about protective measures. Parents of children under 12 years old, who are still too young to be vaccinated, often feel the risk most acutely, according to Anu Spain, MS, LCSW.



"In families with young children going back to school face-to-face, there is anxiety because there is no hybrid option this year," she said. "Either children go back to in-person classes, or parents must home school their kids. If children have symptoms, they must quarantine at home, so they miss school. Unless someone can be at home with the child, parents must rearrange their own work. Families feel there are no good choices."

Thrive counselors urge individuals to focus on what they can control instead of things outside of their reach.

"I ask clients to consider options and focus on the decisions they can make," said Daisy Rios, LCPC, Clinical Manager of Youth Services. "What can you do? You can stay home or go and wear a mask, even if you are the ones standing out."

One client expressed frustration because the bride and groom at an upcoming wedding refused to be vaccinated or to ask guests to be vaccinated or masked. Faced with the option of missing an important family event, the client and his family decided to wear masks, even if they were the only ones masked.

"Most people want to follow the rules so that life can move forward," Daisy said. "They are getting vaccinated and wearing masks so they can do things they enjoy and see their friends."

Wheaton Franciscan Sisters Help Thrive Expand Care for Youth in a Time of Great Need

In an extraordinary alignment of mission and historic need, generous funding from the Wheaton Franciscan Sisters has enabled Thrive to expand its counseling staff serving youth.



The Roman Catholic Sisters, based in Wheaton, invited Thrive to apply for a grant in 2018. Since then, annual grants from the Wheaton Franciscans have enabled Thrive to grow their youth treatment program.

The strong youth treatment team was in place as the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the lives of children and teens. The Sisters' funding has also allowed Thrive to expand evening and weekend treatment hours to better serve children and families.

The Wheaton Franciscans previously owned Oak Park Hospital (now Rush Oak Park Hospital). A few years ago the sisters made the decision to withdraw from sponsorship of their corporate ministries in health care and housing for low income families and the elderly. This transition allowed them to offer support to organizations that were in alignment with their values of service to the poor.

Thrive Talk to Demystify Mental Health Care

A panel of experts will de-mystify the mental health care system in a Sept. 30 Thrive Talk titled *Where to Go When You Feel All is Lost: A Blueprint for Mental Health Care*.

The free discussion, from 7:30-8:30 p.m., features clinical psychologists Alexandra Luger, PsyD, Heidi Hamernik, PhD, and Daisy Rios, LCPC, Thrive's Clinical Manager of Youth Services.

Many people would benefit from mental health care at some point in their lives, but few know when to seek help, how to find the right care, and what to expect in treatment for themselves or a family member. The pandemic stresses have increased the need for care, while straining the network of providers.

"There is a lot of stigma and misunderstanding around what mental health care is," Luger said. "Someone may be struggling, but it is not a negative reflection on them as a person or as a parent. We all need help sometimes, especially in a global pandemic."

The panel will also discuss access to care, including insurance, waitlists, and tele-health. Join the conversation via Zoom by clicking the button below:

[Join Webinar](#)

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to help staff the Children's Clothing Room at the Economy Shop several times per month; proceeds from the room's sales support Thrive throughout the year. Thrive is grateful for the Shop's generous commitment to local non-profits. To volunteer, please contact Development Director Sarah Finnegan at sfinnegan@thrivecc.org.

Thrive Thanks Local Government and Civic Groups

Thrive is grateful for the support of these local governments and civic organizations:



OAK PARK-RIVER FOREST
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Your gift to Thrive helps ensure that the support of a mental health professional is within reach of all members of our community.

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