

Collaborating  
to Deliver  
Results

# THRIVENYC: PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH FOR ALL NEW YORKERS



## PARTNER AGENCIES & OFFICES

Launched by First Lady Chirlane McCray and Mayor Bill de Blasio in 2015, ThriveNYC closes critical gaps in mental healthcare and activates every part of City government to promote mental health for all New Yorkers. In Fiscal 2019 this work was consolidated under the management of the new Mayor's Office of ThriveNYC, which partners with 12 City agencies and hundreds of community-based partners to implement over 30 innovative programs that reach hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers every year. ThriveNYC's programs advance four goals:

- Promote mental health for the youngest New Yorkers
- Eliminate barriers to care
- Reach people with the highest need
- Strengthen crisis prevention and response

ThriveNYC brings mental health support to communities and locations where it never existed before. ThriveNYC does this by reaching people with the highest need – those with serious mental illness, those affected by trauma, and those living in historically underserved neighborhoods – and by breaking down barriers to care for all New Yorkers with free services in multiple languages, regardless of insurance or immigration status.

ThriveNYC's work prioritizes equity and inclusion and builds the evidence base for innovative approaches. ThriveNYC's programs are motivated by six foundational principles: change the culture; act early; close treatment gaps; partner with communities; use data better; and strengthen government's ability to lead.

To measure ThriveNYC's work, the City is using an approach similar to what is used in evaluating other large-scale public health strategies, such as efforts to reduce obesity or smoking-related fatalities. In the first few years of ThriveNYC, the City closely monitored implementation, tracking hundreds of metrics on the number of people reached by ThriveNYC's programs and the overall progress of implementation. In January 2020, ThriveNYC began publishing outcome data, a second phase of measurement that looks more closely at whether new programs are making an impact in the lives of those served. Outcome measures for ThriveNYC programs are published on ThriveNYC's website. Depending on how the data is collected for each measure, such as through an annual survey, regular client screening or observation, the data will be updated either quarterly, semi-annually or annually. ThriveNYC's approach to measurement also leverages the expertise of external researchers to conduct formal programmatic evaluations and to refine which long-term, population-level measures are appropriate to associate with ThriveNYC's work.

	ACS
	CUNY
	DFTA
	DHS
	DOC
	DOE
	DOHMH
	DVS
	DYCD
	H + H
	HRA
	NYPD

Mayor's  
Community  
Affairs Unit

Mayor's Office  
to End Domestic  
and Gender-  
Based Violence

Mayor's Office  
of Criminal  
Justice

Mayor's Office  
for Economic  
Opportunity

Mayor's Office  
of Operations

NYC Children's  
Cabinet

## PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH FOR THE YOUNGEST NEW YORKERS

Half of all lifetime mental health disorders appear before the age of 14. Grounded in research showing that early identification and treatment of mental health disorders can build positive mental health in the long-term, ThriveNYC supports several programs to promote the healthy development and lifelong resiliency of young New Yorkers.

Over the last several years, ThriveNYC has partnered with the Department of Education (DOE) to significantly enhance access to mental health support in the City's public schools. In Fiscal 2020, ThriveNYC partnered with DOE to offer onsite mental health support in high-need schools, including clinicians in 173 schools and onsite mental health clinics in 68 of those schools. ThriveNYC also supports training to help educators and caregivers better support the mental health needs of students, and consultants who build the capacity of school staff to meet the mental health needs of their school communities.

In the beginning of the 2019/2020 school year, the City launched a new partnership between ThriveNYC and DOE: School Response Clinicians, 85 new licensed clinical social workers who support students across the City. The social workers provide care in times of immediate emotional distress, intermediate onsite clinical counseling, and help students connect to long-term care if necessary.

## ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO CARE

One in five adults in New York City experiences a mental health disorder in any given year. Yet hundreds of thousands of individuals in need are not connected to care. For example, over half a million adult New Yorkers are estimated to have depression, yet in 2018 less than 40 percent reported receiving care for it. Barriers to care are diverse, ranging from a lack of nearby care options, to complicated healthcare systems, to insurance coverage, to language barriers.

ThriveNYC works to address these barriers and increase access to care in many ways. In Fiscal 2020, 11,725 community members and 5,951 City employees were trained in Mental Health First Aid, bringing the three-year total to 144,270, which is on track to meet the City's plan to train 250,000 New Yorkers by the end of 2021. Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-driven, free eight-hour training that helps people become more comfortable talking about mental health, listening to others, recognizing signs and symptoms of mental illness, and helping direct people in need to relevant services. Mental Health First Aid is conducted regularly in English, Mandarin, Spanish and other languages by request. There are also Mental Health First Aid classes specifically designed for veterans and their families, people who work with youth, and the LGBTQI+ community. The Department of Homeless Services has now mandated this training for all homeless shelter staff.

NYC Well is the City's comprehensive mental health helpline. Available by call, text or online chat, NYC Well provides a safe, easy way for New Yorkers to connect to care no matter where they are, what emotional state they are in, or what signs and symptoms they express. Trained counselors provide brief counseling, peer support, assistance navigating the mental healthcare system, and help setting appointments with mental healthcare providers. The service is free, confidential and has the capacity to respond in over 200 languages. NYC Well answered 84,822 calls, texts and chats from people seeking mental health support in Fiscal 2020, for a total of 768,154 since launching in 2016.

The Connections to Care (C2C) program is an innovative partnership between fourteen community-based organizations (CBOs), the Mayor's Office of ThriveNYC, the Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity, the Mayor's Fund and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Through C2C, CBOs work with mental health providers who train and coach CBO staff to screen their clients for mental health needs, offer direct support when appropriate, and link to local health providers for further care if needed. In Fiscal 2020, C2C trained 55 employees (for a total of 1,736 since 2016) from participating CBOs and reached over 3,434 people from all five boroughs (for a total of 38,268 since launch in 2016). This includes 334 participants who were referred to outside care, for a total of over 4,110 since launch.

## REACH PEOPLE WITH THE HIGHEST NEED

Many who are particularly vulnerable to mental illness—often those who have been exposed to trauma—are especially underserved. ThriveNYC implements programs that bring new, dedicated support to these individuals, with a current focus on victims of crime, families living in shelters, seniors, veterans, vulnerable young people and people living in historically underserved neighborhoods.

From 2016 to Fiscal 2020, the Crime Victim Assistance Program supported over 137,000 people, 21,662 of whom were served through the program in Fiscal 2020. Before the launch of ThriveNYC, many crime victims navigated the complicated landscape of the criminal justice and social service systems alone. Just three precincts had one onsite victim advocate to serve victims of domestic violence. Now, through ThriveNYC, victims of any kind of crime can be served by the Crime Victim Assistance Program, which operates in precincts and Housing Police Service Areas citywide. The program provides supportive counseling, connections to individual or group therapy and help navigating the legal and financial challenges that can emerge after a crime has occurred.

Older adults have high rates of late-onset mental health disorders, yet low rates of assessment and treatment. In Fiscal 2020, over 340 seniors struggling with mental health issues were treated by clinicians now onsite in 25 senior centers operated by the Department for the Aging (DFTA), with expansion to an additional 23 senior centers in FY20. Over 970 seniors have received both short-term and ongoing clinical treatment through this program in the last three years. Before ThriveNYC, many seniors went without ready access to mental health support. In order to help break down the stigma of seeking mental health services that some seniors feel, the clinicians offer a variety of engagement and support activities, which encourage the seniors to accept help. Of those seniors receiving clinical mental health treatment, 88 percent were treated on-site while the remaining 12 percent were either already in care elsewhere, referred for off-site services or refused care. Since launch, 52 percent of seniors suffering from depression who received onsite treatment have shown clinically significant improvement, according to regular client screenings conducted by clinicians.

In partnership with ThriveNYC, the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) has placed 329 licensed social workers in over 100 contracted shelters for families with children across the City. These clinicians served nearly 16,891 families in shelter since the inception of the program in 2016. Previously, families served by these shelters did not have ready access to dedicated social work staff specifically focused on providing social work services.

The Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) funds Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) residences and drop-in centers, which provide specialized services to vulnerable youth, including LGBTQI+ identifying youth. Since 2016, ThriveNYC has invested in DYCD's RHY programs to enhance mental health services offered to young people residing in more than 40 RHY residences and to young people seen in drop-in centers. Thus far, approximately 1,400 young people have been served by mental health professionals in Fiscal 2020, and more than 12,500 young people have been served since the program launched in 2016.

To enhance mental health support for veterans, ThriveNYC partners with the Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) to implement new, dedicated outreach teams that work directly with veterans, as well as their families and caretakers, to connect them to a range of community-based services as they transition home. The number of successful connections to care through this program increased significantly in the first four months of Fiscal 2020 compared to the same reporting period in Fiscal 2019. The increase can be attributed to adding VetsConnectNYC to the program, a technology platform that provides DVS with an increased capacity to reach and serve veterans, service members, and their families. The increase in connections is also attributable to DVS' targeted outreach strategy to support the FairFares program, which provides discounted NYC Metrocards to eligible low-income New Yorkers. During this reporting period, DVS coordinators engaged over 700 student veterans for pre-qualification for FairFares, successfully enrolling about half of those engaged.

About 30 percent of the total population of New York City (around 2.6 million people) lives in federally-designated mental health professional shortage areas. In 2016, ThriveNYC launched the Mental Health Service Corps, a workforce development program that builds a diverse generation of behavioral health leaders, equipped to integrate behavioral health into a variety of settings including primary care, women's health, pediatrics and other non-behavioral health care settings serving high-need New Yorkers and neighborhoods. Since launching in 2016, this program has been managed by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and operated by the City University of New York; 8,735 people were served through this program in Fiscal 2020. On January 1, 2020, NYC Health + Hospitals began overseeing

a redesigned Mental Health Service Corps, which supervises early-career mental health clinicians in behavioral health and primary care settings sites across the Health + Hospitals system. Seventy-six percent of service locations in this program are located in federally-designated mental health professional shortage areas.

## STRENGTHEN CRISIS PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

To prevent crises and help New Yorkers with serious mental health needs stay in their communities, ThriveNYC works with many agencies to ensure those with serious needs can access and stay connected to treatment.

In the last three years, Co-Response Teams, a collaboration between the New York City Police Department and the DOHMH, have assisted more than 1,300 people across the City, 193 of whom were served in Fiscal 2020. ThriveNYC provides programmatic oversight of this program and funds it in entirety. Each team includes two police officers and one behavioral health professional. Teams are available 16 hours a day, seven days a week to assist people with mental illness and substance use disorders who may be at an elevated risk of harm to themselves or others. Since their launch, these teams have had over 3,500 face-to-face encounters with New Yorkers. Co-Response Teams connect or re-connect clients to care or another stabilizing support, including medical, mental health, legal, housing and other social and clinical services. These teams aim to reduce client interactions with law enforcement and create greater stability in clients' lives.

ThriveNYC also partners with DOHMH to implement several new mobile treatment team models. As one example, ThriveNYC fills a critical gap in care—substance misuse expertise and treatment support—on the City's Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams, which provide intensive, mobile mental health treatment and rehabilitation services to New Yorkers with serious mental illnesses. Before ThriveNYC, none of the City's ACT teams had expertise to assess clients with substance use needs, even though approximately 43 percent of hospitalizations for a psychiatric condition also involved an individual with a co-occurring substance use disorder. Now, through ThriveNYC, 40 of the City's ACT teams have dedicated Substance Use Specialists. These teams have the capacity to serve 2,720 individuals at a time.

ThriveNYC also worked with DOHMH to create five Forensic ACT (FACT) teams, which provide the same intensive mental health treatment and rehabilitation services as ACT teams, and also include additional staff focused on those with current or recent justice system involvement. ThriveNYC provides programmatic oversight of FACT teams, which currently have the capacity to serve 340 individuals with current or recent justice system involvement at a time.

ThriveNYC also funded the creation of Intensive Mobile Treatment (IMT) teams operated by DOHMH, which provide a uniquely flexible model of mental health treatment and intensive support to adults with mental illness and/or substance use disorders, homelessness and/or transience and escalating behaviors. IMT teams include mental health, substance use, and peer specialists who help individuals maintain a treatment plan and facilitate connection to housing and additional supportive services. ThriveNYC provides programmatic oversight of IMT teams, which currently have the capacity to serve up to 189 individuals at a time.

Collectively, mobile treatment teams in NYC have a capacity to serve over 4,000 clients a year. Due to the unique needs of each client, the duration of service for each client served by a team can vary.

In October 2019, the City announced a new \$37 million annual investment to close critical gaps in care for New Yorkers with serious mental illness. The new programs announced will be overseen by the Mayor's Office of ThriveNYC and implemented by DOHMH and NYPD. To reduce mental health crises that result in 911 calls, \$23 million of the annual investment will support teams of mental health responders who will intervene before crises, respond to urgent situations and stabilize people in the weeks following a crisis. To ensure those with the most serious needs stay connected to treatment, the new investment also included \$14 million to expand intensive, ongoing mobile treatment for New Yorkers with serious mental illness.

SELECTED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	Actual		4-month Actual		Target	
	FY18	FY19	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21
<b>Promote mental health for the youngest New Yorkers</b>						
Schools with access to ThriveNYC-funded on-site clinical mental health services (with DOE/DOHMH)	129	173	173	173	173	173
Mental health workshops and trainings conducted for teachers, school staff, mental health professionals, families and students (with DOE and DOHMH) <small>*Includes Community Schools, Prevention and Intervention Program, School Mental Health Consultants, Social Emotional Learning (Pre-K, Trauma Smart), Youth Mental Health First Aid.</small>	6,512	9,151	1,871	1,381	7,057	7,057
<b>Eliminate barriers to care</b>						
People who live or work in NYC trained in Mental Health First Aid (with DOHMH)	48,988	53,186	17,152	17,676	53,000	54,000
Supportive connections provided by NYC Well, a behavioral health helpline (with DOHMH)	256,600	274,400	86,700	84,800	233,000	264,000
Individuals who received mental health support through Connections to Care (with OEO)	12,080	14,901	3,874	3,434	10,900	7,267
<b>Reach people with the highest need</b>						
Individuals who, after reporting a crime, received support to deal with the emotional, physical and financial aftermath of crime through the Crime Victim Assistance Program (with NYPD)	40,410	59,008	20,956	21,662	55,000	55,000
Requests from veterans, family members and caregivers that resulted in a successful connection to care, services or resources (with DVS)	282	293	170	607	285	285
Young people who received mental health support in a city-funded residential program or drop-in center serving runaway and homeless youth (with DYCD)	2,802	2,569	1,177	1,440	2,800	2,800
Percentage of families living in shelter who received biopsychosocial screenings from mental health clinicians (with DHS)	36%	66%	58%	78%	80%	80%
Individuals who received clinical services from Mental Health Service Corps behavioral health clinicians (with DOHMH)	24,432	28,361	6,691	8,735	15,433	16,560
<b>Strengthen crisis prevention and response</b>						
Individuals who received services from long-term mobile community-based treatment providers (with DOHMH) <small>*includes ACT, FACT, and IMT Teams</small>	N/A	4,979	3,992	4,143	*	*
New individuals engaged by a Co-Response Team (with DOHMH and NYPD)	280	681	125	250	400	400

## NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- The indicator ‘Mental health workshops and trainings conducted for teachers, school staff, mental health professionals, families and students’ covers several ThriveNYC programs, including Social-Emotional Learning Support for Pre-K Students, Families and Programs, Trauma Smart: Trauma-Informed Care Training for EarlyLearn Classroom Staff, Clinicians in High-Needs Schools, School Mental Health Consultants: School Capacity Building and Technical Assistance, and Youth Mental Health First Aid, all of which are available to hundreds of schools and/or communities citywide. Trainings provided through the Early Childhood Mental Health network have been removed from this indicator.
- The data were corrected for the indicator ‘People who live or work in NYC trained in Mental Health First Aid’ from the FY19 MMR to reflect updates due to data reporting lag and reconciliation. Targets were also amended to incorporate training planned through 2021.
- The Fiscal Year 2019 data for the indicator ‘Individuals who received mental health support through Connections to Care’ has been revised to be more accurate after a number of C2C providers made updates to past data reporting.
- In FY18, DHS was in the process of onboarding mental health clinicians to conduct screenings in family shelters.
- Under DOHMH management, the Mental Health Service Corps successfully served 11,293 individuals between July 1 and December 31, 2019. As of January 1, 2020 this program is now managed and operated by Health + Hospitals.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information on items referenced in the narrative, go to:

- ThriveNYC News  
<https://thrivenyc.cityofnewyork.us/news/>