



## **THRIVING MIND** SOUTH FLORIDA®

*July 19, 2021*

### **Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment and Prevention Needs in South Florida**

Thriviving Mind South Florida supports the The Agape Network, an outstanding mental health and substance use treatment provider in Miami Dade County, and we share a goal to expand much-needed residential treatment capacity for our community.

As one of seven managing entities in Florida, Thriving Mind funds and oversees a safety net of services for uninsured individuals in poverty in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Thriving Mind manages \$90 million in contracts with 40 providers – including Agape -- using funding from the State of Florida Department of Children and Families. Additional funding to support innovative programs comes from state, county, federal and private sources like the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the National Institutes of Health. With administrative costs below 5%, Thriving Mind offers local, nimble and cost-effective healthcare solutions for a complex and costly population. The total operating budget for Thriving Mind the last fiscal year was over \$135 million.

Thriviving Mind has extensive relationships with complex organizations like the Miami-Dade Police Department and Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Mostly recently, we funded and coordinated efforts to provide crisis counseling to victims, families and first responders at the Surfside collapse, and, along with the Miami-Dade Police were recognized by the Council on State Governments as a National Law Enforcement Mental Health Learning Site.

#### **Unmet Needs**

Serious mental illnesses and substance use disorders are strongly associated with poverty. Miami-Dade and Monroe counties, with a known population of 2.8 million, has over 900,000 documented adults living at less than 200% of the federal poverty level. Well known rates of illness in this population translate to approximately 300,000 adults with serious mental illness and substance use disorder in South Florida. Of that 300,000 in need, about 50,000 annually receive services through the safety net system operated by Thriving Mind South Florida, but many still go underserved. Residential treatment is a particular shortage in our community with waitlists common. Critical needs include:

- Expand residential in-patient program capacity for mental health and substance use treatment in adults and youth
- Expand early intervention programs. Early intervention is highly effective in changing disease course and avoiding the likelihood of lifelong disability and/or incarceration. This approach remains under-funded and underutilized.

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