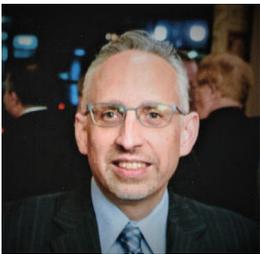




SUMMER 2021

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Greetings,

As we head into the summer months with our community opening back up, we are all looking forward to more in-person engagement and time outside. It is our hope that you have found several opportunities to take care of yourself and focus on your well-being. It is important to be good to ourselves in order to be good to others.

The Mental Health Center of Denver's [blog](#) is an excellent resource for articles on a myriad of topics related to well-being. As all of us - individually and together - are in the midst of dealing with post-pandemic anxiety and re-entering society, we have highlighted an article within this report that touches on this very subject in a helpful and reassuring way. Please feel free to share it with others you know.

It has been proven that sharing and giving to others increases our own well-being. You can help members of our community understand how to communicate and respond effectively to someone experiencing a mental health crisis by making a donation to support our Mental Health First Aid program. Together, we can provide Mental Health First Aid classes to all who are interested and make an important impact on improving our community's overall mental health and well-being. [Click here](#) to learn more about Mental Health First Aid and consider making a [gift](#) today.

Your thoughtfulness encourages us to think boldly in delivering innovative and compassionate care. In this Report to the Community, you will find our Impact Partners for 2020. These individuals and organizations helped Mental Health Center of Denver meet the needs of our community and provide care and education to more than 30,000 people last year. We are grateful for your continued partnership in our meaningful work.

Thank you for sharing in our mission to enrich lives and minds by focusing on strengths and well-being.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Edmonds".

Stephen Edmonds
Director of Philanthropy



Mental Health Center of Denver

Post-Pandemic Anxiety: How to Handle Re-entering Society

As more establishments open up to in-person operations, people might experience anxiety, or uneasiness, around the idea of being with others again in a post-pandemic world. For more than a year, the concept of being around people equaled danger – so how do we deal with the idea of in-person social interaction?

ANXIETY – WHAT IS IT?

Anxiety is a general feeling of dis-ease or worrying about the future. As people begin to enter the “new normal” of a post-pandemic life, some might feel like they are entering a foreign space. When the pandemic began, we went from our familiar lives to a foreign situation of isolation. It has been more than a year since the pandemic began, so now, social interaction might feel like the less-familiar, foreign environment, increasing our anxiety.

But, we have muscle memory.

“Muscle memory has to do with the duration of time in which we’ve experienced something,” said Jen Jackson, assistant program manager, licensed clinical social worker and licensed addiction counselor at the Mental Health Center of Denver.

And the good thing is, the duration of our time of ‘togetherness’ before the pandemic is longer than the duration of the pandemic itself. So, although entering a post-pandemic world might feel foreign at first, we can ease ourselves into it by taking small, baby steps.

HOW DO I COPE WITH BEING AROUND OTHER PEOPLE?

“Repetition and easing back into things may solve some discomfort,” Jen said. “What wouldn’t help is avoidance.”

For example, if your employer is returning to in-person operations, take it slow and start by simply visiting the office.

“Just go and see how it feels. Try it on,” Jen said. “Dipping a toe in and realizing the water isn’t that cold can help trigger that muscle memory. It helps you remember you’ve been there before and it’s safe.”

HOW DO I HANDLE THE UNKNOWN?

“A lot of anxiety comes from the unknown, which has been the hallmark of this pandemic,” said Cari Ladd, licensed clinical social worker at the Mental Health Center of Denver. “We can find comfort and decrease anxiety by going back to what we do know.”

Think about what you have done throughout the pandemic to keep yourself safe and focus on what is in your control. For example, you can wear a mask, wash your hands, meet people outdoors and get vaccinated. Utilize the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and [COVID-19 updates from the state of Colorado](#) to stay informed.

In addition, add some structure and predictability into your day.

“Scheduling lunch, a walk or an event you can look forward to creates predictability, which can decrease anxiety,” Cari said.

WE’RE IN THIS TOGETHER.

Anxiety skyrockets when you are the only one feeling that way. Discussing our anxiety around a post-pandemic world openly with friends, family and coworkers can help.

“No one is alone in this anxiety of the unknown. It’s a very normal thing to feel,” Jen said. “We might not know what it’s going to look like moving forward. But we can have faith that we’re in this together.”

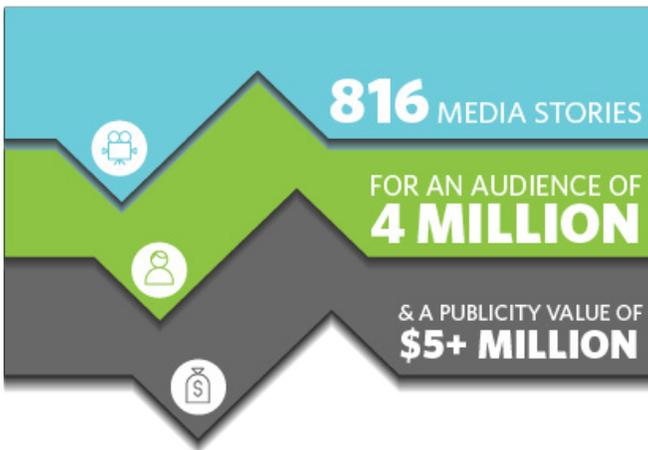
Are you a parent or caregiver? [Don’t miss our latest blog post on kids and post-pandemic anxiety.](#)



Public Safety Reimagined: STAR Program Producing Paradigm-Shift Results



In 11 months, **STAR** has been featured in:



The intent of STAR – Support Team Assisted Response – is to send the right response to people in crisis. The innovative program serves as an alternative option for low-risk and low-acuity 911 calls, many of which are related to substance use and mental health concerns. The STAR mobile unit consists of a paramedic from Denver Health and mental health clinician from the Mental Health Center of Denver who respond to calls that do not require a police presence.

WHEN THE STAR MOBILE UNIT ARRIVES, the individual in crisis can be assured that the interaction is grounded in a harm reduction, trauma-informed philosophy. The team, dressed in street clothes, provides direct clinical de-escalation, community service connections as well as on-demand resources such as water, food, clothing and basic living supports. While not all calls involve a diagnosable mental health condition, many individuals identify as experiencing symptoms of schizophrenia, bipolar and anxiety.

STAR ALSO HELPS the emergency response system handle the overwhelming number of 911 calls that don't require a police response. When STAR serves someone in crisis, it frees up police to handle a robbery or domestic violence incident.

LAUNCHED JUNE 1, 2020, STAR is a partnership between the Mental Health Center of Denver, Denver Health, Denver Police Department, Denver Department of Public Health and Environment as well as community stakeholders like Servicios de la Raza, Harm Reduction Action Center, Denver Justice Project, DASHR, and Caring4Denver.

THE PROGRAM IS PRODUCING PARADIGM SHIFT RESULTS. Over the past 11 months, STAR has successfully responded to 1,323 calls. Of those, there have been no arrests, no injuries and no need for police back up.

RECENTLY, STAR WAS REQUESTED BY DENVER POLICE to a convenience store where a woman was experiencing mental health symptoms and actively refusing to leave the establishment. The store asked that she be classified as a trespasser, but the Denver Police recognized that this was a mental health situation and not criminal in nature. STAR was requested on scene and was quickly able to build rapport with the woman. After a short time, she agreed to leave and asked to be transported to a local women's day shelter that frequently partners with STAR. During the transport, the woman asked for assistance activating her benefit card. The STAR team provided brief case management and activated the card so she could purchase food and other basic need items, which turned out to be the root cause of her issues with the convenience store interaction. The woman was connected to the day shelter where she could rest, shower and do her laundry. Mental health services were set up and housing support established prior to her leaving the shelter.

An Alternative to Jail & the Emergency Room, Behavioral Health Solutions Center Opened May 17



The Mental Health Center of Denver's newest, groundbreaking program, the Behavioral Health Solutions Center (BHSC), opened its doors on May 17, 2021. Operated by the Mental Health Center of Denver in partnership with the Denver Department of Public Health & Environment, the BHSC houses Denver's first multifunctional facility offering a three-tiered approach to help individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

PREVIOUSLY, FIRST RESPONDERS OFTEN HAD TO RELY on hospital emergency rooms or jails when handling behavioral health calls. Because the aptly named Solutions Center houses a full range of critical services under one roof, it takes the pressure off first responders to manage substance use or mental health crises in the field.

THE 28,741-SQUARE-FOOT BHSC, specifically designed to provide an emotionally and psychologically safe space, is located in Denver's Sun Valley neighborhood and offers three distinct services:

- **Drop-Off & Crisis Triage Center** - First responders can bring people experiencing a behavioral health crisis here for immediate care. Only first responders (law enforcement and fire department/EMT units) or designated mental health professionals can refer someone to the Solutions Center. Within 24 hours, each person we serve receives an individualized treatment plan or is transported to another appropriate location based on their needs.
- **16-bed Crisis Stabilization Clinic** - The clinic will accommodate voluntary stays for up to five days for people receiving medication, evaluation, and therapeutic services.
- **30-bed Transitional Shelter** - Transitional housing for up to 30 days for people recovering from a crisis. During this time, staff work to connect individuals to community resources to assist with their successful reintegration into the community, including transportation, housing, and ongoing care.

"DENVER CONTINUES TO INNOVATE with behavioral health solutions designed to get people the right care at the right time, care that has become even more urgent since the pandemic," said Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock. "One in six people experiences a mental health issue each year in Colorado, and the Solutions Center not only provides them with critical longer-term options for recovery through collaborative, unified services, but also serves to divert those in crisis away from unnecessary time in jail or on a psychiatric hold."

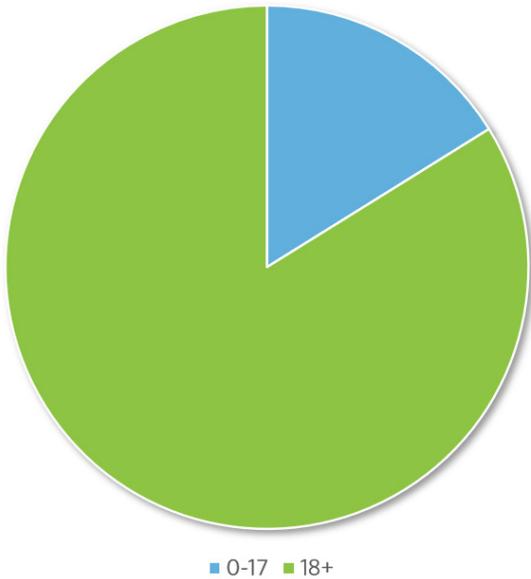
THE SOLUTIONS CENTER IS OPEN 24/7 and staffed by 59 clinicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, peer support specialists, residential counselors, and support staff. The building includes reception and common areas, laundry rooms, 46 bedrooms, multiple nurse stations, restrooms and showers, private meeting rooms, medical and mental health exam spaces, a kitchen and dining area, a fitness room, administrative support areas and a 21,500-square-foot, fenced and locked courtyard complete with a basketball court.

"STABILIZATION AFTER A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS can take time and coordination of care," said Marissa VanDover, who oversees the Solutions Center as Mental Health Center of Denver's Associate Director of Crisis Services. "Instead of referrals across the metro area, the Solutions Center makes referrals just down the hall to help keep people on the path to recovery beyond their time here, through assistance in transitioning back to the community. Our hope is for this to become a national model!"

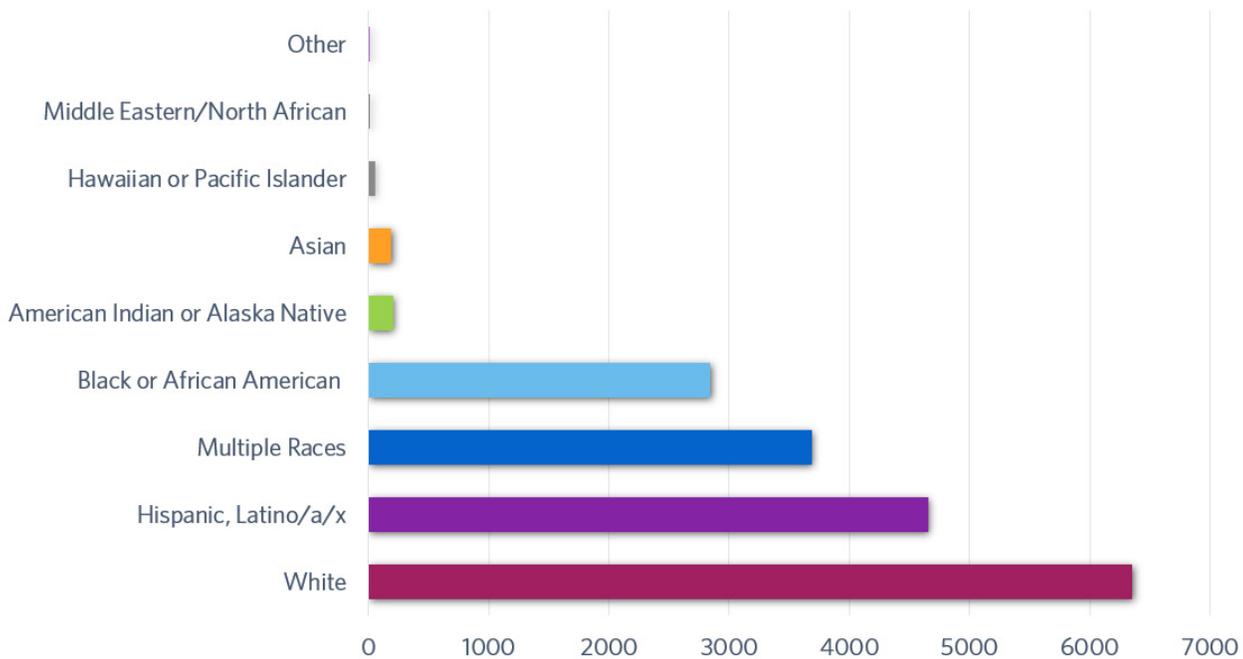
Demographics of People We Serve | July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

In fiscal year 2020, the Mental Health Center of Denver provided treatment and prevention services to 20,881 unique individuals. In addition, we provided 45,922 consultation and outreach services, and community education/trainings to 12,121 community members.

AGE



RACE* & ETHNICITY**

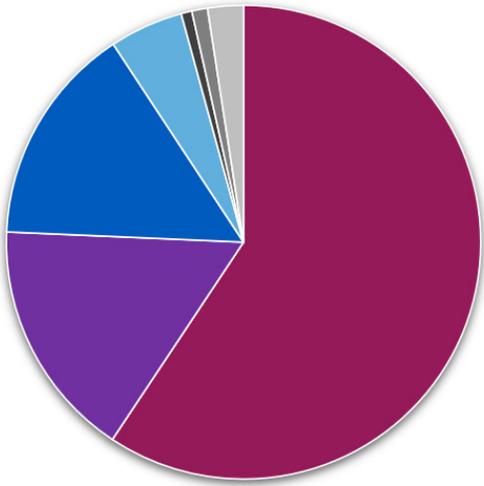


*Does not include "declined to answer" or "unknown" race.

**People we serve who identify as Hispanic and/or Latino/a/x may belong to any race.

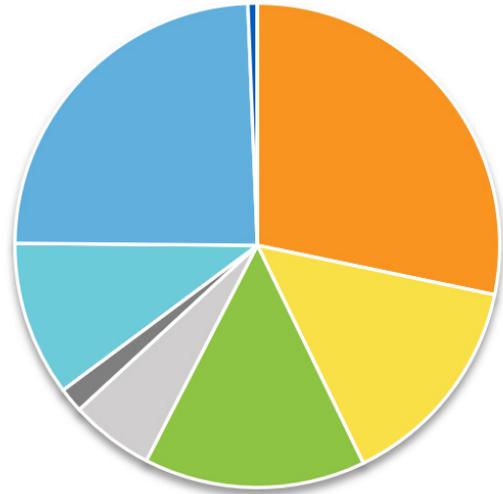
Financials | July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

REVENUE: \$108,144,493



- Medicaid
- State of Colorado
- Client, Third Party & Pharmacy
- Contracts & Grants
- Public Support
- Medicare
- Interest, Rent & Other

EXPENSES: \$109,214,381



- Adult Services
- Administrative
- Child & Family Services
- Pharmacy
- Residential Services
- Rehabilitation Services
- Access Services
- Fundraising

FINANCIALS FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2020

Total Income	\$108,144,493
Program Expenses	\$82,060,115
Fundraising Expenses	\$682,734
Administrative Expenses	\$26,472,519
Total Expenses (does not include Excess Reserves)	\$109,214,381
Reserves	\$(1,069,889)
End of Year Net Assets	\$72,374,313

