

## 2017 Thrive! Flinthills Foundation Program Evaluation Review – Leader Outcomes

Purpose statement for 2017:

*Thrive! alleviates poverty through positive and long-term relationships, fostered in a safe and consistent place, that build life skills and resilience across generations.*



“I have people who care and are there for me. My Thrive! meetings help me put unexpected troubles into bettering myself as a whole instead of a number.”

Thrive! Leader, 2017

“Thrive! has given me the ability to make a stand and move forward with my life and to give back as was given to me.”

Thrive! Leader, 2017

### **Program Evaluation Results for 2017:**

Improvements were made across nearly all assessment domains:

- **Bridging Social Capital** (friendships)
- **Confidence** to improve life situation(s)
- **Stability** of finances-housing-education-transportation
- **Resources** to improve financial stability, social support/connection, healthy relationships, persistence/motivation
- **Progress** towards goals
- **Health**

While there was little reported change in income\*, attitudes about Leaders’ financial situation and stress associated with finances showed great improvement. The number of friends Leaders counted on increased by an average of 1.6 friends from an average of 2 to 3.5 nearly doubling their social and emotional support. While not included in assessments, we believe that establishing new friendships expands the Leader’s prospective for improved social capital as well as providing more opportunity for positive feedback and support to the Leader and their families. Leaders reported social support and connections improved one point on a five-point scale, and healthy relationships improving by 1.5 points and persistence/motivation by 2.5 points.

\*Monthly income levels declined by \$37/mo.

To support this analysis of outcomes, here are selected comments from Leaders. There were no negative comments reported on the assessments.

- Learning, sharing, caring. Less feeling of isolation. A chance to see myself and others blossom and grow.
- Helps to come and have the support you need for anything – even starting a new business – even if there are bumps in the road.

- Confidence - willing to share with others rather than feeling bad and keeping things to myself.
- To be able to have friends and support. To be able to do something more in my life like starting my own business. To come to a positive outlook on life that you can do anything if you put your mind to it.
- Makes me feel connected and worthy as a person. Something to look forward to every week.
- Having a positive community to go to is helpful and gives me hope and a chance to make social connections.
- During times of need I can't think of a better group to belong to. Being part of it has helped me tremendously.
- Positive outlook on life.
- A way to meet people in a safe environment; enjoyed discussion about poverty issues and solving problems.
- Increasing social supports, learning new ways to be financially independent.
- Helpful to listen and learn with this program.
- Made friends, and learned about different resources.
- I have some sort of social skills, but I'm not exactly good with words.

Leaders have these plans for the next six months:

- To better my income and hope I will be able to work.
- Hopefully be able to work.
- To overcome slothiness [sic], laziness in cleaning home.
- Keep on trucking.
- Find a house, possibly another better job.
- To have a better stability financially in the future, to put us right on track and be able to pay everything off and move to the next step in our lives.
- Hopefully a house, my company progressing, be in better financial stability.
- Re-coop from recent surgery and hopefully look for additional income.
- Increase online income, go to meetings, apply for one position daily.
- Move into a Habitat House.

NOTE: Though impact of Thrive! on Allies has not been included in this report, another summary report is being prepared based on assessments available in 2017.

**Review Details:**

There have been 39 Leader assessments completed since 2015. For 2017, assessments from 18 (cohorts 2-4) Leaders were used for this annual review. Assessments include pre-training, post-training, and as frequently as once every three months for up to 18 months. Due to the small number of assessments, analysis was completed using averages between initial assessments and final assessments. Cohort 1 used a Circles USA assessment tool while cohorts 2-4 used the assessments developed for Thrive! by K-State University, School of Family Studies and Human Services. In 2018, the assessment tools will be adjusted for simplicity. Also, since several Thrive! graduates continue to have connection to the program well after 18-months, annual assessments will be pursued for up to 5 years. Youth program outcomes will be collected using on-site observations by trained volunteers and

parent report of the child's social emotional skills. See attachment A for summaries of each analysis, demographic information and recommendations for assessment modifications for 2018.

**The Thrive! Program:**

Thrive! was established as a 501c3 non-profit organization in December 5, 2016 for Riley and Pottawatomie counties after originating as Circles of Manhattan Foundation Thrive! Flinthills, started in April of 2015 as a chapter of Circles, USA. Our first group of nine leaders (cohort 1) completed the program under Circles. In October 2016, Circles, Manhattan reorganized as Thrive! Flinthills Foundation (herein noted as Thrive!). Thrive! has continued programming with an initial training of 9 weeks for Leaders and 4 weeks for Allies, weekly meetings for Leaders with Leader discussions the second and fourth week of the month and team time the first and third weeks. Leader discussions includes numerous topics about goals, self improvement, communications, money management, etc. Team time provides matched Allies and Leaders time to share support, ideas, feedback and stress reduction. Each weekly meeting begins with a dinner meal where connections and bonds can be initiated and strengthened. Child care is provided allowing the Leaders to focus on their programming and providing respite. Child care includes discussions with the children covering similar topics to their parents' discussions with the goals to encourage conversations between child and parents as well as have a positive impact on generational poverty.

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