



FrontLine Service
Reaching out. Resolving crisis.

Annual Report 2021



In search of the most vulnerable. . .

ON THE COVER: Kyle Greig, outreach worker at FrontLine Service, climbs under a highway overpass to reach a campsite where there might be individuals who need help.

ABOVE: Kyle assesses whether the tent is occupied. If not, he will check back in a month. If it is, he will come back within 24 hours to connect with whomever is living there.

PHOTOGRAPHY (COVER, INSIDE COVER, PAGE 6): Blake Cook blakecookart.com

From Our Executive Director

Dear Faithful Community Members,

We have moved through another year together. In 2021 the pandemic continued to alter our lives and for many of us, brought increased isolation and weariness. Yet, when I look back at 2021, I am struck by how much we have to celebrate.

I am grateful to you, our extended family, who showed up as donors, volunteers, and champions of our shared vision to reach out to those in our community who are struggling to resolve life crises. And I continue to be humbled by our FrontLiners—staff who, despite the challenges of the pandemic and their own fatigue, leaned into helping others transform their lives. Yes, there is much to celebrate.

In that spirit, we share these highlights from the past year:

- The creation of a new program to support healing for children who have experienced the unimaginable loss of a parent to opioid overdose (pp. 3-4)
- Staff who walked and drove all over Cuyahoga County to maintain threads of hope and connection for those who experience deep hardship (pp. 5-6)
- Our incredible Crisis Intervention Specialists who provided 24/7 crisis and suicide prevention support, responding to 40,000 calls (p. 7)

These are just a few of the efforts we undertook in 2021, as one of many agencies committed to helping others rise above devastating life experiences. There are so many acts of hard work, resourcefulness, and exquisite compassion happening, every moment, in our community.

Let's celebrate together.

Susan Neth, Executive Director

“[What I like about this work is] helping people rebuild their lives and understand they’re not just the sum of the bad things that happen to them.”

—JENNIFER NILES, OUTREACH WORKER



When a Parent Dies by Overdose



ABOVE PHOTO: © Lisay via Canva.com To honor the privacy and dignity of those we serve, FrontLine Service does not share client photos or identifiable stories.

Twelve-year-old Sophie’s life has been devastated by the opioid crisis. As her mother’s dependence on opioids increases, the kitchen gets emptier. Days pass without enough to eat. Mom keeps disappearing and Sophie is home alone for days at a time. Sophie moves in with Grandma, where she can’t sleep or pay attention in school because she worries whether her mom, whom she sees less and less, is okay. And then Sophie gets the news she feared most—her mother has died from an overdose.

Sophie’s story sent Rosemary Creeden on a mission. For three years, Rosemary, Associate Director of Trauma Services at FrontLine, recruited partners to help the hundreds of Cuyahoga County children with stories like Sophie’s. In October

2021, FrontLine launched a five-year pilot, Supporting Children—Trauma Systems Therapy, to address this unmet need.

Supporting Children uses the evidence-based practice, Trauma Systems Therapy, to help children process the trauma of losing a parent to opioid overdose. Glenn Saxe, MD, Hassenfeld Children’s Hospital at NYU Langone, developer of Trauma Systems Therapy, is overseeing implementation. Supporting Children represents the first time this international model is being used in Ohio and the first time it will serve these children. Other partners include:

- Jim Spilsbury, PhD, Case Western Reserve University—Evaluation
- Cleveland Division of Police, Heroin-Involved Death Investigation Unit—Same-day referrals
- Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services—Service partner
- Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner—Data and referral partner

Last year in Cuyahoga County, 493 people died from an opioid-related overdose, a four-year high. Research indicates that about half of drug overdoses involve a parent/legal guardian of a minor, suggesting that in 2021 alone, at least 250 children had a story like Sophie’s. Supporting Children will create the first official record of these children and ensure that they are referred to FrontLine for support.

Supporting Children will work with Sophie to reduce her nightmares and anxieties and help her to engage in school and continue on the road to healing.

This project was supported in part by JoAnn and Bob Glick and by grant number H79SM084804 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of SAMHSA or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

“Up until now, we had nothing we could offer [these children]. This is filling a void that’s much needed.”

—KEVIN KINCAID, LIEUTENANT
CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE, NARCOTICS UNIT

OUTREACH DURING THE PANDEMIC: From Disconnection to Reconnection



ABOVE: Lisa Mann, Nurse Manager at FrontLine Service, sits in a client's apartment to check on her physical and mental health.

Disconnection is . . . sleeping underneath a highway overpass. Temperature so low that no amount of found items can prevent the pain of cold. Camouflaged in a corner to shield from the days, months, years that have passed since sleeping without the risk of someone assaulting you in your sleep. A milk crate as a bedside table creating order amidst chaos. Racing thoughts, delusion, and countless other symptoms of mental illness. A constant survival state, always on alert.

Connection is . . . sleeping in your own bedroom every night. A door that locks. Seeing the same nurse every month for 15 years and after she retires, calling FrontLine's Nurse Manager to ask, "You're sure she retired?" Reconnecting with estranged family, holidays, and at 67 years old, the first birthday cake you've ever had.

Reconnection is . . . why FrontLine Service was founded. The agency was established in 1988 to bridge the gap between available mental health services and those who were so disconnected they did not know how to get support. FrontLine specializes in serving those with extensive histories of homelessness whose symptoms of mental illness make it difficult to trust others or accept help.

To help these individuals reconnect, FrontLine’s outreach, case management, and medical staff travel all over the community to provide face-to-face services wherever people need help. Once trust is developed, FrontLine staff can help these individuals secure housing and access the support they need to sustain it.

During 2021 . . . the pandemic magnified the paranoia and fear often experienced by individuals with mental illness. Many were afraid of being near others. Most who were homeless became more difficult to reach and more isolated. Many providers switched exclusively to telehealth, which is often not accessible for individuals who experience poverty, mental illness, and homelessness.

FrontLine staff responded by increasing their efforts to create connection. Outreach workers visited shelters and places not fit for human habitation to engage 782 individuals. Clinic staff provided walk-in appointments, and 100% of nursing visits and 83% of psychiatric appointments were face-to-face. Nurses and case managers coordinated 4,800 trips via bus and rideshare to help clients access in-person care. Other acts of reconnection that cannot be tallied included staff sitting for hours on hold or in emergency rooms to make sure their clients’ needs were addressed, or the many visits to tent sites bearing water and kind words before someone was ready to accept help.

Wherever an individual is on their journey, FrontLine staff provided hope, compassion, and unlimited support to help them move from disconnection to connection.

“Our clients have been afraid to go anywhere during the pandemic, even for essential health care—which puts them at risk of becoming unhoused again. It is critical that we continue to go to their homes to provide care.”

—LISA MANN, NURSE MANAGER

Calendar Year 2021—Individuals Served

20,412

Total Unique Clients Served in 2021

Clients Served by Program

Crisis Services	51%
Housing/Homelessness	39%
Trauma Services	10%

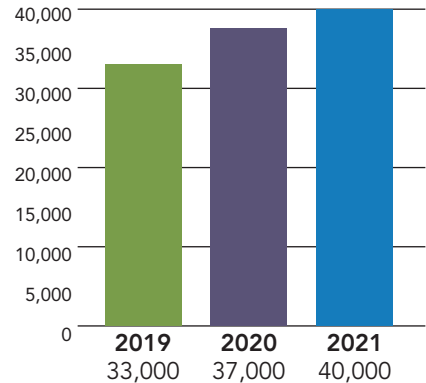


Mobile Crisis Team

Types of Calls to Mobile Crisis

Referral/Information	29.4%
Suicidal Thoughts	21.9%
Depression	15.1%
Relationship Issue	11.8%
Psychosis (Delusions of Thought)	10.9%
Anxiety	6.3%
Substance Abuse	4.6%

Total Calls to 24/7 Hotline



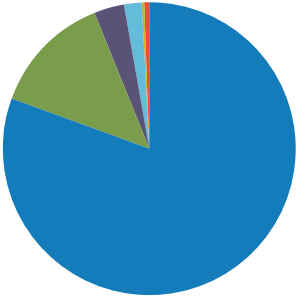
FrontLine Service has operated Cuyahoga County's crisis hotline 24/7 since 1995. Over the first two years of the pandemic, calls to the hotline increased by 21%. Our licensed Crisis Intervention Specialists provide nonjudgmental, empathetic support by phone, through chat, and when needed, through on-scene response.

If you are worried about someone who may be suicidal or in crisis, contact the hotline at 216.623.6888. Sharing this number could save a life.

Fiscal Year 2021–Financials

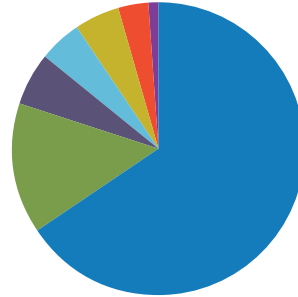
(July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021)

Revenue



Government Grants	\$22,769,614	80.8%
Medicaid	\$3,703,405	13.1%
Contributions/Grants	\$1,017,913	3.6%
Other	\$489,152	1.7%
In Kind	\$106,000	0.4%
Program Fees	\$107,887	0.4%
Total Revenue	\$28,193,971	

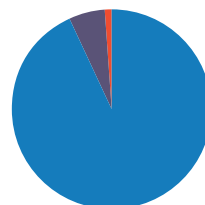
Expenses



Homeless	\$18,141,944	65.6%
Crisis	\$4,017,418	14.5%
Administration	\$1,574,876	5.7%
Trauma	\$1,361,558	4.9%
Medical Services	\$1,347,102	4.9%
Family Services	\$922,691	3.3%
Fundraising	\$270,964	1.0%
Total Expenses	\$27,636,553	

Expenses

Programs	93.3%
General Administration	5.7%
Fundraising	1.0%



Every contribution ensures that the over 20,000 individuals who are in crisis are not alone. With gratitude we recognize donors from 1/1/2021–12/31/2021.

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Mission:

Reaching out to adults and children in Northeast Ohio
to end homelessness, prevent suicide, resolve behavioral
health crises, and overcome trauma.



Reaching out. Resolving crisis.

MAIN OFFICE: 1744 Payne Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44114

MAIN: 216.623.6555 **MOBILE CRISIS HOTLINE:** 216.623.6888

www.FrontLineService.org

A contract agency of the Alcohol, Drug Addiction & Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County and a partner agency of United Way Services of Greater Cleveland.



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