

The Relate Reader

Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign

The Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) is a faith-based initiative founded in the early 1900s with a mission to serve the community. They have provided many services to our local communities, including much work in hunger relief. In 1982, they began a campaign to restock food shelves in the 7-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, and given the success of that effort, they continued to run a campaign in March to continue the same efforts. Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign is the largest grassroots food and fund drive in the state and helps stock and support the capacity of nearly 300 food shelves in the month of March.

As part of the MN FoodShare March Campaign, we wanted to share about our Community Partnerships Program's work to provide mental health support to clients of 4 area food shelves. The March Campaign supports the 4 area food shelves that are in partnership with Relate. To learn more about the MN FoodShare March Campaign, [click here!](#)

Community Partnerships Impact Data

Did you know Relate Counseling Center provides mental health support to 4 local food shelf partners: VEAP, IOCP, PROP, and ICA? In these partnerships, we offer mental health care services to those who may not have access otherwise. We have 5 Relate Therapist on our Community Partnerships team. The same high-quality mental health therapy in our offices or partner schools is offered at our 4 local food shelf partners. We are so proud of this program and wanted to share some of our work in our Community Partnerships Program.

A few words from our Community Partnerships Staff:

- **Andrew Benson:** " I think that our program provides much support to people who cannot utilize therapy normally. I consistently hear from clients how thankful they are for this free service."
- **Dana Teller:** " The most meaningful part of my work at the food shelf is the partnership with the clients. The sacred gift our clients share, it is an honor and privilege to walk alongside them during some extremely challenging and stressful moments of their lives. I am very grateful for this opportunity. The team of dedicated staff, frontline office staff, case managers and volunteers are true heroes behind the scenes and work very hard to create a space where the dignity and value of each person is felt regardless of circumstance and ability. Remember to check out your local food shelves! So much happens beyond those doors. They provide support with housing, childcare, computer skills, employment assistance, a sense of safety and acceptance."
- **Camryn Heckel:** " I would describe the impact of my work within food shelves as necessary. Every human being has struggles and deserves support, regardless of race, sex, income, etc. Many of the clients receiving services through the food shelves are experiencing hardships in a variety of ways, and many barriers have prevented them from receiving mental health services, whether it's due to stigma, financial, systemic, transportation, etc. Providing services for clients who may not be able to receive services otherwise is such an honor!"
- **Joe Haselman:** "How often can you combine professional goals, personal desires, and get to help others in the process? I get to do just that! Working at the food shelf is a rewarding and meaningful way to help our communities grow and thrive. I feel honored to represent Relate for the greater part of 2 years working at both PROP and VEAP food shelf. Within our community partnerships I've strengthened my sense of purpose, belonging, and connection to the communities I grew up in. My food shelf clients constantly inspire me in their resilience to weather adversity with dignity, pride, and graciousness."
- **Colleen Dale:** "The food shelf program allows us to support clients who would otherwise not be able to access mental health services. It's significant to be a part of it, and it has been one of the best parts of my job at Relate."

In our Community Partnerships work, our staff have been invited to give a few trainings to the food shelf staff and food shelf volunteers. These trainings are provided to support the staff in helping clients who utilize their services and protect them from burnout.

Trainings topics we've provided:

- Coping & stress: A two-part series
- De-escalation training: Done at two different sites.
- Burnout/vicarious trauma

Feedback from our clients:

- "We have been working with our therapist for a while, and we appreciate their professionalism in working with our participants and staff."
- "We appreciate our therapist's quick response to emails and phone calls in a timely manner. They also keep us and participants update on when they'll be out of the office so we can plan accordingly."
- "We are very happy to be working with Relate Counseling Center in providing free counseling to participants in our service area."

2023 Community Partnerships

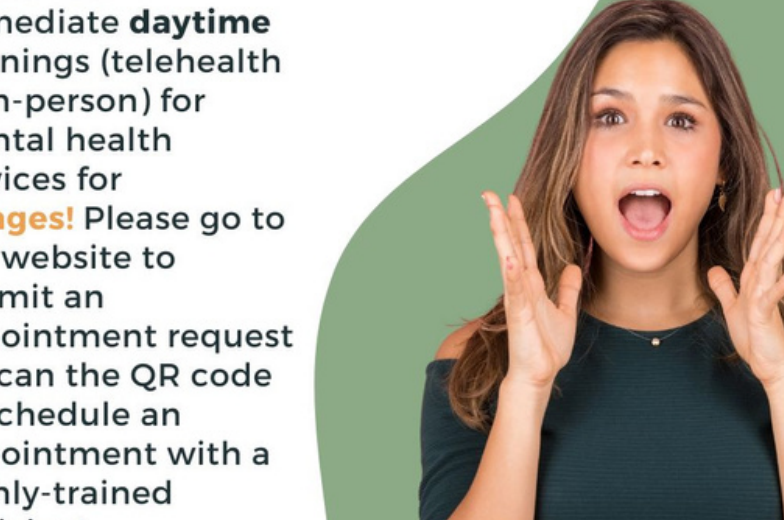
52
Individual Food Shelves
Client Served

119
Family Members of Clients
Directly Impacted

496
Total Therapy Sessions
Provided

5
Relate Clinicians on our
Community Partnerships
Team

Our Current Community Partners



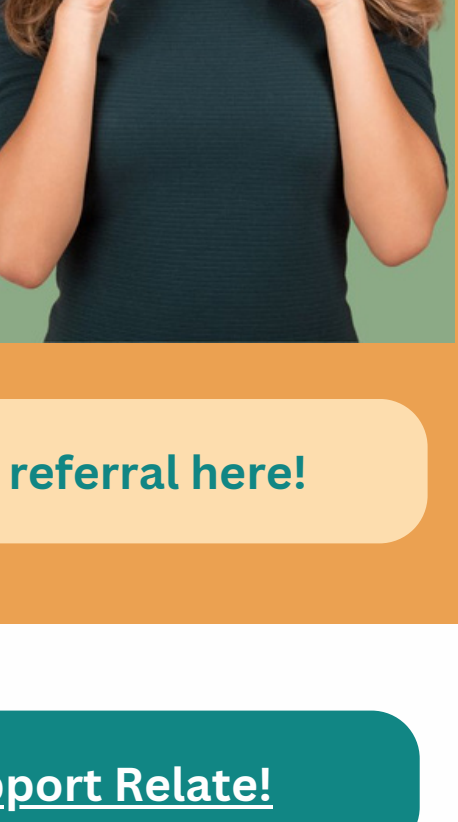
Get to know our staff!

Meet Colleen Dale! She is our Community Partnerships Manager and one of our Clinical Supervisors, and she provides outpatient therapy at our Minnetonka office. In her work as Community Partnerships Manager, she has worked to strengthen our relationship with each of our 4-area food shelf partners and offers support to the additional 4 staff that are on her team, providing mental health services across our partnerships. In her work as a Clinical Supervisor and Outpatient Therapist, she helps clients to identify and understand their defense mechanisms/wounds and supports them in accessing their wisdom and core self. Colleen also supports clients by teaching and strengthening coping strategies for tolerating stress and discomfort on a day-to-day basis. She believes in the healing power of laughter and likes to think she has a decent sense of humor. Thank you for all you do for Relate, Colleen!

Meet Our Staff:

Colleen Dale *she/her*

- Community Partnerships Manager, Clinical Supervisor, and Outpatient Therapist
- She manages Relate's partnerships with four area food shelves and provides supervision for staff therapists seeking independent licensure. She provides office-based psychotherapy to adolescents and adults and has a special interest in supporting adults facing parenting challenges.
- **Fun fact:** She once worked at a national monument and dressed up in historically accurate, fur trade era clothing every day.



Providers make a referral here!

[Click here to support Relate!](#)

NO WAITLIST

FOR ALL AGES!

Relate has immediate **daytime** openings (telehealth or in-person) for mental health services for **all ages!** Please go to our website to submit an appointment request or scan the QR code to schedule an appointment with a highly-trained clinician!



Providers make a referral here!

[Click here to support Relate!](#)