

Executive Summary

Measuring the Long-Term Impact of Family-Focused Recovery

Volunteers of America Mid-States (VOAMID) is conducting a five-year study to evaluate the long-term outcomes and social value of its Freedom House program -- a residential substance use disorder (SUD) treatment model for pregnant and parenting women. The program is the only one of its kind in the region that allows and encourages moms and all of their minor children to remain together and integrates trauma-informed care, parenting support, early childhood services, and wraparound supports to address the complex needs of families affected by addiction.

VOAMID currently collects point-in-time data around client graduations and healthy babies born and collects anecdotal stories of graduates where their lives and their children's lives are now on a different trajectory. This project aims to quantify the program's longer-term social impact on investment and inform policy, funding, and program design. In order to achieve this, two alumni coordinators are utilizing proactive relationships with clients prior to discharge, connecting with clients at least monthly after they depart the program and collecting all outcomes data.

Partnering with VOA Mid-States are expert researchers Jarrod Koski, a data analyst whose work includes developing healthcare damages models used in opioid settlement arrangements, and Dr. Khary Rigg, a professor in the Department of Behavioral Health Science & Practice at the University of South Florida.

Interim Outcomes: Social Return on Investment (SROI) Findings

An interim SROI analysis demonstrates the transformative and cost-effective nature of Freedom House:

- **\$6.9 million invested** generated **\$11.48 million in benefits** over two years.
- Net social value created: **\$4.58 million.**
- Return on Investment: **\$1.67 per \$1 invested** (2-year), projected up to \$6.50 over five years.

Key Outcomes Achieved:

- **94.3% reduction in arrests** (485 incidents prevented)
- **43% fewer ER visits** and **45% fewer hospitalizations**
- **264% increase in employment** (211 people employed)
- **67% reduction in homelessness** (100 people housed)
- **72% reduction in depression** and **71% reduction in anxiety**
- **44 GED completions** and significant increases in vocational training and college enrollment

These results underscore the program's ability to reduce public costs, improve health and safety, and foster long-term recovery and family stability.

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Client Testimonials

- “Freedom House has made me who I am today. I'm a better wife and a better mom. I wouldn't be where I am today if it hadn't been for the staff helping me out at the Freedom House, and am forever thankful.”
- “Freedom house has impacted my life in some pretty amazing ways. Because of the help and support I received, I now want to live a happy, sober life with my kids. I now strive to do better, and I can actually say I want to be happy again thanks to the amazing staff and clients.”
- “The Freedom House loved me back to life.”
- “Freedom House has helped me build the life I was meant to have, and for that I am so super grateful. I have healthy relationships with my family, kids, and spouse!!!”
- “Freedom House changed my life. They made it possible for me to keep my daughter while I became the best version of myself. Life was hopeless before, but now I have so many opportunities life has to offer!”
- “The Freedom House has ABSOLUTELY saved my life!! And allowed me to be a mother and consistent family member and human being again! I am now fully capable of living a proper, stable life. From the bottom of my heart and with all my soul! THANK YOU FREEDOM HOUSE AND VOA.”