

ODMH Kids News: Building Ohio's Future



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Let's Talk About Prevention



When I started my position as Administrator for Prevention Initiatives in August 2002, a book titled "Prevention, The Critical Need" was sitting on a file cabinet in my cubicle. As I read the note by author, Jack Pransky, an excerpt

caught my eye. He wrote, **"My intent was to provide the field of 'prevention' with a book that could serve as a guide for its effective practice. I had no idea what I was getting into. This field is huge!"** After five years of coordinating prevention initiatives for the state of Ohio, I share Jack Pransky's perspective...I didn't know what I was getting into and prevention (when done effectively) is huge! Prevention spans far beyond what any one system can manage. I have spent these years being a vocal advocate for all types and levels of prevention and I think it's appropriate to end my career with the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) doing what I do best, talking about prevention.

So, let's talk about prevention the way it should be done...no more silos, but infrastructures working together to bring about a more cohesive and collaborative system that coordinates and maximizes resources.

What is prevention? Prevention is a proactive continuum of services which empowers individuals,

families, and communities to meet the challenges of life events and transitions by creating and reinforcing conditions that impact physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and cognitive well-being while promoting safe, healthy behaviors and lifestyles.

Why do prevention? Prevention should achieve positive, more desirable results. Achieving positive results is the fundamental premises upon which prevention is measured.

How do you effectively practice prevention? Through committed partnerships that promote the reduction of risk factors and the increase in protective factors that impact positive development.

Who is responsible for prevention in Ohio? Absolutely everybody! Prevention must look within and across state agencies to ensure an infrastructure that speaks with one voice through many voices to support the delivery of evidence-based prevention practice, policies, strategies, and programs throughout Ohio.

The answer to these questions reflect the commitment made by eleven state systems to work together to provide a sound foundation to support county/community evidence-based prevention planning and the implementation of evidence-based prevention practice, policies, strategies, and programs. This edition of ODMH Kids News highlights some of Ohio's state and county prevention activities. Some initiatives are a direct reflection of state agencies commitment to work together via interagency prevention partnerships to promote strategies of Ohio's Shared State Agency Prevention

Framework. The value of these and many other state and community prevention efforts is immeasurable and I think worthy of acknowledgment in this special newsletter edition focusing on prevention.

So, in saying farewell in these last days at ODMH, I share one final excerpt from Jack Pransky's book.

"The prevention field attracts caring, optimistic, thoughtful, hardworking, dedicated people who work without expecting much in return."

It has been my joy and honor to work alongside so many people like this during my 18 years at ODMH.

Thanks to each of you for joining and supporting me on this journey...one that is not over yet.

Stay tuned.

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In this edition...

Positive Connections Program	2
ODH: Rape Prevention Program	2
Ohio's FASD Initiative	3
Safety and Violence Curriculum	4
Depression Awareness (D/ART)	4
Bullying Prevention Policy	5
Links to Ohio's Prevention Initiatives and Reports	6
Link: Newsletter subscription	6

Positive Connections Program

A Community Based Prevention Partnership

Positive Connections is a program that helps children ages 18 and under understand their parents' or caregiver's mental illness. The program is geared toward improving coping skills by providing education about mental illness, peer support, and one-to-one mentoring relationships with a caring adult. The program was launched in Toledo and has been in existence since 1999. It is a collaborative program with the Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Greater Toledo (NAMI), and Unison Behavioral Health Group, Inc. Positive Connections is divided into three components of education, support, and mentoring. The education and support are ten-week groups while the one-to-one mentoring relationship is six-months. The program culminates with a graduation celebration and provides ongoing support.

The program supports resilience building factors including caring relationships by adult role models, high expectations with opportunities for participation, education of specific positive coping skills and plans, and constructive use of time. Several of the youth participants have graduated from the program and from high school, and are attending college.

Positive Connections has had documented standardized research that children demonstrated an increase in self-esteem, coping skills, and academic performance during involvement in the program (Orel, Groves, Shannon, 2003). Positive Connections uses Pre-Post Tests, Participant Satisfaction Surveys, Parent Report & Mentor Report Evaluations and anecdotal information. The program has enrolled 168 youth to date. It has received local, State and international inquiries and support. The Lovell Foundation and The United Way of Greater Toledo currently fund the program.

For additional information, contact Leona Lewis at llewis1035@earthlink.net or visit the web site at www.positiveconnections4u.org.

*Submitted by: Leona Lewis
Positive Connections*

ODH: Rape Prevention Program

The Ohio Department of Health Rape Prevention Program currently provides grants to support sexual violence prevention programs around Ohio; these programs are working to identify and use evidence-based and/or best practice models to do violence prevention at multiple levels (individual, family, community, and society) using population based approaches. Ohio Department of Health (ODH) initiated a process to develop a statewide sexual violence prevention plan working in partnership with other stakeholders from around the state.

In ODH, prevention programming, identification and implementation of evidence-based practices has been an area of focus and growth. There are a very limited number of comprehensive programs that have been identified as evidence-based, and in the last several years the state rape prevention education programs have been working closely with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to assist programs in implementing and evaluating adaptations of these programs. Identified model programs include Safe Dates, Expect Respect, and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. Additional programs identified by the CDC for evaluation include the Men Can Stop Rape program, Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault, and Ga Du Gi SafeCenter. Programs in Ohio look at these national models and assess their own evaluation efforts to identify best practices in program planning.

Recommended articles for more information about sexual violence prevention that can be found online include:

Sexual Violence Prevention: Beginning the Dialogue
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/SVPrevention.htm>

Sexual Violence and the Spectrum of Prevention
<http://74.205.36.203/cms/fileUpload/spectrum.pdf>

For more information or additional resources, contact Debra Seltzer, MPA, Program Administrator, Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Prevention Program, Ohio Department of Health, debra.seltzer@odh.ohio.gov or (614) 728-2176.

*Submitted by: Debra Seltzer, MPA
Ohio Department of Health*



Ohio's FASD Initiative

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These effects may include physical, mental, behavioral, and/or learning disabilities with possible lifelong implications. Prenatal exposure to alcohol is the leading cause of **preventable** birth defects in the country. FASD is an

irreversible, lifelong condition that affects every aspect of a child's life and the lives of the child's family. **There is no cure for FASD.** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the US Surgeon General, there is no known safe amount or safe time to drink alcohol during pregnancy.

Each year, as many as 40,000 babies are born with an FASD, costing the Nation about \$4 billion. It has been estimated, the cost of FASD to Ohio taxpayers for providing special services for education, juvenile justice, medical and mental health services, foster care and unemployment is nearly \$300 million every year. According to Dr. Ann Streissguth, Professor at the University of Washington, School of Medicine and a recent conference speaker in Ohio, **"Mental Health Problems is by far the most prevalent Secondary Disability. The most frequent mental health problems for children and adolescents with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders are attention deficit problems, followed by depression, suicide and psychotic symptoms."**

Early diagnosis and treatment for FASD can help children reach their fullest potential, lessen secondary disabilities and problems, and help families better understand and cope. FASD is 100 percent preventable. "Many states work solely within service silos hampering access to services and efficiency, but Ohio's committed partnership promotes a sustainable approach that focuses on collective voice, system integration and the utilization of existing resources."

Since 2004, Ohio's FASD State Steering Committee has partnered to fight the tragic effects of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. This partnership includes representatives from Ohio Family and Children First, state agencies, universities, providers, and parents. With its mission to establish efficiency in state systems resource allocation, coordination of services, and augmentation of available resources to address FASD, the Committee developed a strategic, implementation and evaluation plan to address the established need. The plan has five goals:

- Increase the availability of services for those already affected by FASD and for parents and other caregivers;
- Increase awareness regarding the risks associated with alcohol use during pregnancy;
- Provide FASD-specific education and training for agencies, organizations and professionals who provide services to children and families with or at risk of FASD;
- Adopt appropriate FASD screening tools and protocols and increase access to screening; and
- Create and implement a data tracking system to track FASD risk factors, prevalence, and incidence in Ohio, and measure progress toward reaching the other four goals.

Professional education opportunities have occurred across the state to include; two statewide conferences focusing solely on FASD, regional summits, the development and training of FASD Generalist Training, professional development opportunities at state agencies, and the integration of workshops into existing conference venues.

As part of a universal social marketing plan to raise awareness among the citizens of Ohio, the FASD Steering Committee, Ohio Resource Network at the University of Cincinnati and the Center for Learning Excellence at Ohio State University introduced a statewide media campaign to include television, radio, print, and web based marketing strategies. Targeted efforts have included women's treatment facilities, physicians, law makers and service providers. It is the intent of this group that **"Not a Single Drop"**, will become a familiar phrase in homes across the state. There is no safe time or safe amount of alcohol use during pregnancy.

ODMH Kids News: Building Ohio's Future

Monthly E-Newsletter

July/August 2007

Volume 7 • Issue 4 • Page 4

Leadership and funding from the state of Ohio secured by the Departments of Health, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, and Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities along with a contract from Northrop Grumman operating the FASD Center for Excellence through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) supported the implementation of Ohio's FASD strategic plan. Committed state partners, providers and partners will continue to help Ohio develop a comprehensive state system of care for FASD.

Additional information on FASD and the work of this statewide initiative can be found at www.notasingledrop.org or by contacting Kathy Paxton, Director of Behavioral Health Initiatives at The Ohio State University, Center for Learning Excellence at paxton.53@osu.edu.

*Submitted by: Kathy Paxton
OSU, Center for Learning Excellence*

Safety and Violence Prevention Curriculum

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce an exciting project sponsored by the Ohio Department of Education and The Ohio State University, administered through the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation. This project will provide training to all of Ohio's teachers on important topics such as suicide prevention, violence and bullying prevention, alcohol and drug addiction, and child abuse. A Safety and Violence Prevention Curriculum is being developed by a statewide team of experts under the leadership of Dr. Colette Dollarhide, an assistant professor in Counselor Education, and Dr. Lisa Hinkelman, Executive Director of the Interprofessional Commission of Ohio.

The culmination of this project will result in the delivery of appropriate, age-level curricula to K-12 teachers that will assist them in the identification and intervention of student's interpersonal, safety, and mental health needs. This project will ensure that all teachers in the state of Ohio will receive training on each topic and will interact with students with a foundation of knowledge about symptoms, prevention, and referrals.

To assist in this project, an Ohio Task Force has been convened that will serve as advisors, contributors, and reviewers of the project. This group of

stakeholders will have a unique opportunity to offer expertise and, in turn, impact the educational system in the state of Ohio.

For additional information, contact Cheryl Holton, Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation, (614) 688-4480 or holton.32@osu.edu or Cheryl Kish, Ohio Department of Education, (614) 466-9219 or cheryl.kish@ode.state.oh.us.

*Submitted by: Cheryl Kish
Ohio Department of Education*

Depression: Awareness, Recognition and Treatment (D/ART)

Did you know?

- "Depression is the most common mental illness that usually goes unrecognized."
- "Untreated depression can lead to suicide, but when identified, it can be treated and suicide can be prevented."
- "Depression runs in families."

D/ART is a project originally launched in 1988 by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) as a national initiative to raise awareness of the warning signs of depression, its symptoms, diagnoses, and treatments of clinical depression as well as strategies for early intervention and treatment. The Department of Mental Health agreed to head the D/ART project in Ohio in October 1989. As part of the national campaign, quarterly forums were held in Ohio for providers, family members, consumers, etc., to convene to network and share information on local and state initiatives to raise public awareness about depression. After the national initiative ended, Ohio valued the opportunity to share information and network amongst stakeholders and maintained its forums for advocates and prevention specialist across the state.

D/ART of Ohio currently convenes bi-annually in Columbus and continues to facilitate informational forums to network and share local and statewide activities related to depression awareness, recognition, and treatment. The D/ART networking group seeks to educate the public, primary care providers, and mental health professionals about prevention, early identification and effective treatment of depressive disorders and to encourage help-seeking behavior for the millions of Americans who suffer from these disorders every year.

During the past few networking meetings many wonderful speakers/presenters have come to share information to keep us abreast of current issues and concerns and/or what new and exciting initiatives are having great success throughout Ohio's counties. Agenda items have included: Mental Health Prevention Framework Planning Process; Overview of the Resiliency Model: Building Resiliency In Youth & Families; Update on the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation; Ohio's Shared State Agency Prevention Framework and Interagency Prevention Partnership; Update on the Transformation State Incentive Grant (TSIG); Red Flags Evaluation; Franklin County Crisis Hotline and the Suicide Prevention Coalition; Ohio Youth & Adult Speaker's Bureau (OYASB); Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians, & Gays (PFLAG); From our House to the Schoolhouse Initiative; Update on Access to Better Care (ABC) Initiative; Signs of Suicide Program and Ohio's Childhood Trauma & Maternal Depression Initiatives.

These opportunities to share information have proven to be very effective and insightful to the regular participants. However, as you can see from the broad range of topics covered over the past few years, we find that our focus is shifting from a network to share information on **depression awareness** to one that is more comprehensive, **prevention**. During the last D/ART meeting in April we discussed making a change to be more reflective of the purpose and intent of the forums and to better encompass our shifting focus. Promoting prevention practices in Ohio's behavioral health system in partnership with other systems will be the foundation upon which future forums are planned. We will no longer refer to these networking and information sharing forums as D/ART, but instead the forums will be called **Prevention Information & Networking Sessions** (PINS).

Our next forum will be held **September 26, 2007 at the State Library of Ohio in Columbus starting at 9:30 a.m.** If you are interested in becoming a member of PINS, you may join our e-mail list to receive information about future forums. Please send your name, agency, address, phone no. and email address to: Jean Kendrick, PINS Coordinator at kendrickj@mh.state.oh.us or call (614) 499-1984 for additional information.

*Submitted by: Jean Kendrick
Ohio Department of Mental Health*

Bullying Prevention Policy

The mounting pressure for schools to improve academic performance has led many educators to focus on high-stakes testing. These tests help schools set performance goals, provide focus on curriculum, allow transparency in performance, and potentially provide additional funding support. However, there is little reason to believe that changes in curriculum and instructional practices will have any significant effect on academic performance if our children don't feel safe and respected at school.

It is clear that an environment rich in connectedness and safety will make it easier for students to be successful. Characteristics of a safe school include: high academic standards; clear rules and policies that are fairly enforced; high levels of parent involvement; effective community-school partnerships; extended-day and after school programs; good citizenship and character; and, well-prepared and practiced plans for crisis or emergency. In addition, students need support for their learning, caring relationships, opportunities to succeed, hope for the future, good health and a sense of belonging. Schools that provide these supports provide a learning community that is positively linked to students' academic achievement and social well-being.

Even those schools that are relatively safe can have individual students or groups of students that feel unsafe due to aggression and bullying. Many school shootings have been the response of the shooter to chronic bullying. According to the National Education Association (2003) failure to address bullying is a disservice to the bully, his or her victims, and bystanders. Developing policies and procedures that do not permit this type of aggressive behavior and that encourage and reinforce the reporting of bullying, especially anonymously can be helpful. Students that bully are not as likely to report for fear of reprimand, and victims may fear negative repercussions and lack of intervention.

In January 2007, former Governor Taft signed House Bill 276, a bill that requires school districts to have policies in place that prohibit harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any student on school property or at school sponsored activities. This bill attempts to address one of the non-academic barriers to student achievement. As of this date, the Ohio Department of Education has created and submitted for review a model policy that outlines the requirements of the law. In addition, the Department is creating a communication plan that will assist school districts in

ODMH Kids News: Building Ohio's Future

Monthly E-Newsletter

July/August 2007

Volume 7 • Issue 4 Page 6

building a comprehensive school plan for bullying prevention. This plan should include strategies not only for teachers and administrators, but also for bus drivers, cafeteria workers, instructional staff, and parents. Each school district must have a policy in place by December 2007.

For additional information contact Cheryl Kish, Ohio Department of Education, (614) 466-9219 or cheryl.kish@ode.state.oh.us.

*Submitted by: Cheryl Kish
Ohio Department of Education*

Links to Ohio's Prevention Initiatives and Reports:

- Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation -- www.ohiospf.org
- Red Flags -- www.redflags.org
- See Me, Hear My Feelings -- www.seemehearmyfeelings.org
- Ohio Prevention & Education Conference (OPEC) -- <http://www.ebasedprevention.org>
- Ohio Youth and Adult Speaker's Bureau -- <http://www.ohiospf.org/speakersbureau.htm>
- Ohio's Shared State Agency Prevention Framework -- <http://www.odadas.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODADAS/ODADASDefault.aspx?page=1>
- Child Fatality Review -- <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/cfhs/cfr/cfr1.aspx>
- Ohio's TeenScreen (Youth Screening) Program -- <http://www.ohiospf.org/resources/teenscreen.htm> (*currently under construction*)
- Ohio Resource Network/eBasedAcademy -- www.ebasedAcademy.org

What's happening – Across the State

<http://dmhex01.mh.state.oh.us/dmh/events/Listing.nsf/HomePage?OpenAgent>

Ohio Family and Children First

<http://www.ohiofcf.org/>

Kids: Quick Links

Archived and Recent Editions of this newsletter (**also link to subscribe**)

<http://www.mh.state.oh.us/kids/kidsnewsletter/kidsnews.html>

Mental Health and School Success

<http://www.mh.state.oh.us/kids/schoolsuccess/mh.school.html>

Suicide Prevention

<http://www.mh.state.oh.us/kids/suicideprev/suicide.prevention.html>

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