

ODMH Kids News: Building Ohio's Future



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Red Flags: Depression Awareness Program for Middle Schools

Red Flags is a comprehensive depression education program for middle schools. This program is a toolkit designed to strengthen the school's infrastructure and promote early access to health treatment. The Center for Disease Control lists depression and depression related suicide as the leading disease-related cause of death and disability in children between the ages of 11-24. Red Flags is a universal prevention program that involves the entire school community, reduces stigma, enhances emotional intelligence, and improves school climate. It is flexible, simple to implement, low cost, and has been proven effective at any level of implementation.

Red Flags consists of three parts: a curriculum for students at a grade level chosen by the school, information for teachers and staff, and educational materials for parents. The program alerts students, parents, and teachers to the early signs of adolescent depression; demystifies the source and treatment of mental illnesses; helps students, parents, and teachers recognize the behavioral symptoms and dangers of untreated depression and gives them a language and process for accessing help; encourages school personnel to develop and know the district policy for recognizing, referring, and accommodating students; and assists parents in getting help. The program was piloted in 1998

and was launched in 1999. While the student curriculum has been designed for grades 6-8, it has been used in 5th and 9th grades as well. The school personnel component is applicable for the entire district at all grade levels. The parent component can benefit parents with any age child.

The program is designed to be flexible for schools. Its components should be implemented annually. The student portion of the curriculum is the easiest to implement and should be taught at the same grade level, designated by the school, every year. An important part of the curriculum is the video Claire's Story. Claire, a middle school student, describes her experience with depression during adolescence. Claire is now a middle school teacher and the video includes a beginning and ending segment explaining that she was in 6th grade when the video was created and to ignore the "fashion fads". She also encourages students to help their friends. It is recommended that the program be conducted over 3-5 days and incorporated into the existing health curriculum, although the subject matter can also be implemented in other subjects i.e., Science in the Genetics Unit ; Language Arts in conjunction with reading "Eye of the Tiger" or "Outsiders". A half day in-service is ideal for the personnel component. A nine-minute video with handouts, at a faculty meeting is the minimum requirement. Numerous strategies for parent education are suggested and may include sessions at an open house, articles in the school newsletter, or a website.

The Red Flags program was recently added to the Effective Practice Registry of the Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success (www.omhnss.org). This registry highlights schools and school-mental health partnerships that are demonstrating effective implementation of a program or strategy that is successfully addressing an academic and/or social-emotional need of students in their community.

To find out more about the Red Flags program, contact Victoria Doecker at 1-800-991-1311 or vdoepker@mhasc.net.

*Submitted by: Kris Washington
Prevention Initiatives Administrator, ODMH*

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Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation

In Ohio, 1319 Ohioans die by suicide each year, an average of 3 persons a day. For every homicide in Ohio, there are 2 suicides. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for people 15-24. Suicide is the eleventh ranking cause of death for all ages. Males account for 79% of Ohio's suicides, females account for 21% and 13% of suicides are persons 65 years or older. As reported by the 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 27% of Ohio's teens report feeling depressed, 18% report seriously considering suicide and 9% of Ohio's teens report attempting suicide during the past year.

The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF) launched in 2005, is a catalyst to bring about change in attitudes and perceptions regarding the stigma attached to suicide, mental illness, alcohol and drug abuse and addiction. The Foundation's mission is to promote suicide prevention as a public health issue and advance evidence-based awareness, intervention and methodology strategies which will support all Ohio-based suicide prevention efforts

Over the past 6 months the Foundation has concentrated on the education and awareness message that suicide is a public health problem, one that is preventable. A statewide awareness campaign is under way. Brochures have been sent to community organizations, business leaders, state policy makers and other interested parties. It will take a unified effort to help eliminate stigma and increase help seeking behavior for individuals who are experiencing suicidal thoughts, mental illness and substance abuse or addiction. The Foundation has completed three 30 second public service announcements that will be used to continue to help educate Ohioans regarding suicide prevention.

In 2008 the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation has funded 8 new Suicide Prevention Coalitions bringing the total to 63 coalitions serving 69 counties across Ohio. For State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2007 and 2008 there was an investment of \$ 253,603 in County coalition

Development. Additionally, the Foundation provided \$1,000 mini-grants to 21 county initiatives for collaborative suicide prevention awareness efforts between suicide prevention and alcohol and drug coalitions. Ohio's Youth Risk Assessment project has 15 programs with 117 individual screening sites covering 21 Counties and 10 SAMHSA Garrett Lee Smith Grant Recipients for a total of \$240, 925.

OSPF provided two dynamic statewide conferences in SFY 2008. In November, the Foundation held the Fourth Annual Suicide Prevention Conference for Coalitions, one hundred forty people were in attendance to hear James Rogers, Ph.D., and President-elect for the American Association of Suicidology provided the plenary remarks. In June, the Foundation held the first statewide conference for survivors of suicide loss. John Jordan, Ph.D., a nationally recognized expert in suicide grief resolution presented the plenary and afternoon support session. The conference was well received with over 100 participants in attendance.

The OSPF Web Site is renovated and features several benefits for Ohioans: an interactive map of County Coalition efforts, information on the Youth Risk Assessment Project including SOS and TeenScreen programming, county hotline numbers and Web based resources.

In September 2008, the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation moved their offices to the Ohio State University's School of Social Work at Stillman Hall. The Foundation will be holding Regional Educational Advocacy Trainings in November around the state, and their Fifth Annual Suicide Prevention Conference for Coalitions in December. Contact Cheryl Holton at 614-668-4480 or visit their website at www.ohiospf.org for more information about their new location, upcoming trainings and conferences.

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Akron Public School Students Featured in New Video for Red Flags and Suicide Prevention Statewide

Mental Health America of Summit County is excited to release the new educational video "Thick 'n Thin: Understanding Teen Depression" to be used with the statewide Red Flags program on adolescent depression and mental health awareness. Accompanying the video is an updated curriculum incorporating the experience gained from using this program over the last ten years. Materials are for youth ages 11-15, with supplemental materials provided for adults working with youth and for parents.

Funded by the Ohio Department of Mental Health since 1998, the Red Flags Program is a universal mental health promotion program. Red Flags advocates awareness of symptoms and early treatment to prevent the social and academic consequences of untreated depression and related mental illnesses.

Red Flags not only provides information regarding mental illnesses in children, but by promoting the development of appropriate coping mechanisms including accessing help, it assists children in developing emotional intelligence. They learn how to recognize their feelings and act on the information they have received in the classroom. One of the most satisfying results of Red Flags is that children learn to go to an adult with their problems. The operative concept in Red Flags is to act as soon as a child begins to exhibit problem behavior.

The new video is a scripted narrative, written and directed by former Board President, Penelope Frese, Ph.D. and filmed in the City of Akron. Featuring students from Miller South School of the Visual and Performing Arts, it focuses on the role of friendship in helping a young person with depression. It teaches symptoms of depression, the process for accessing help and the benefits of treatment. The new video also addresses suicide, cutting, and substance abuse.

Mental Health America of Summit County is working with Multiethnic

Advocates for Cultural Competence to have the video translated into Spanish and closed-captioned. The video, made possible by a grant from the Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation, and its companion manual is available for implementation during the 2008-2009 school year.

Mental Health America is offering a two-session training designed for NEW and EXISTING implementers. It is open to all middle school teachers, principals, parents, mentors, pupil services, counselors, nurses and mental health or other district staff and community or faith-based youth organizations that would like to bring Red Flags to their school/community.

Upcoming Training Dates are in Columbus on November 6, 2008 and in Athens on January 15, 2009. See redflags.org to print the training brochure.

SAMHSA Announces 2008 Science and Service Award Winners

Congratulations go out to two Ohio agencies who work with kids and families that have received SAMHSA's 2008 Science and Service Awards. These awards recognize exemplary implementation of evidence-based interventions that have been shown to prevent and/or treat mental illnesses and substance abuse. Ohio is one of 16 states with a total of only 27 organizations nationwide who received awards. Now in its second year, this annual award program recognizes public- and private-sector organizations, as well as community-based groups and coalitions, which have worked to improve their communities and the lives of individuals by providing the best services possible. "Families and individuals expect the best services possible for the prevention and treatment of health conditions. This includes an expectation for the best services for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse and mental illnesses," said SAMHSA Acting Administrator Eric Broderick, D.D.S., M.P.H. "These award winners are blazing the trail to show how it can be done." All in all, a total of 5 Ohio organizations received awards. The two programs which provide services to kids and families are highlighted here:

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SAMHSA Announces 2008 Science and Service Award Winners (cont'd)

St. Vincent Family Centers
Incredible Years, Parent, Classroom and Small Groups
614-252-0731
www.svfc.org

St. Vincent Family Centers, in Columbus, Ohio, provides comprehensive services addressing the behavioral health needs of children in Columbus and Franklin County, Ohio. The services include residential / respite, school age and preschool partial hospitalization, community support, wraparound services and outpatient family services. In addition, specialized programming is provided for Hispanic / Latino children and families; Deaf children and their families throughout the state of Ohio; and, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation and treatment.

The organization began using The Incredible Years program in 2006. The program grew from thirteen Parent, Classroom and Small Groups in Fiscal Year 2007 to twenty-three Parent, Classroom and Small Groups in Fiscal Year 2008. In 2007, St. Vincent Family Centers expanded implementation of Incredible Years Classroom Group curriculum into the Preschool Partial Hospitalization Program; a year-round, classroom based program which addresses the behavioral and emotional needs of children 3 – 6 years of age. Since January 2007, parents of preschool students have had the opportunity to participate in Incredible Years Parent Groups. In 2007, the Deaf Services Program began implementing Small Group and Classroom Group components. Group facilitators use specially modified puppets which were outfitted with fingers which could be manipulated, allowing the puppets to communicate with the children using American Sign Language. According to The Incredible Years national office, this is the first time puppets have been used with this population. In 2008, the program was further expanded to provide an Incredible Years Parent Group for Hispanic / Latino parents. Throughout these efforts, fidelity to the program is maintained through various means, including staff trainings. In 2007, 68% of children assessed increased in one or more protective factors; there was an overall 36% decrease in behavioral concerns; and, among children with "concerns" in the behavioral area, 57% decreased their behavioral

concerns. Further, of the 46 children reported to be at risk of removal from their child care setting, 41 were maintained in their child care.

Wood County Educational Service Center
Life Skills Training (LST) Middle and High School
419-354-9010
www.wood.k12.oh.us

The Wood County Educational Service Center (WCESC) School- and Community-Based Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) Prevention Program provides evidence-based prevention programming to 10 school districts and 18,000 students in Northwest Ohio. The mission is to build and sustain a multi-systemic approach to prevention that ensures all Wood County youth will be given the opportunity to develop to their full potential through a culture of substance-free living.

The WCESC School- and Community-Based ATOD Prevention Program began offering the Life Skills Training curriculum in 2003. Since then, over 10,000 students in Wood County have received Life Skills Training. A record number of 2,500 students received the program during the 2007-2008 school year alone. In 2008, the ATOD Prevention Program was awarded a highly competitive, discretionary grant from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. A portion of grant funds will allow 1,200 7th and 8th grade students from four parochial schools to receive the Life Skills Training Middle School Program for the first time. In addition, the newly-developed Life Skills High School Program will help over 1200 9th and 10th grade students navigate the challenges associated with high school and gain skills for the transition into early adulthood.

Results of survey data collected during the 2007-2008 school year suggest that Life Skills Training is a valuable program in Wood County. Evaluations of supplemental pre-test and post-test measures indicate that, after participating in Life Skills, students endorse more realistic views of ATOD, increase knowledge about the decision-making process related to substance use, and increase the likelihood of declining substances offered to them. Data collected biannually from all Wood County schools from 2004 to 2008 compared ATOD prevalence rates among youth who received Life Skills Training to the prevalence rates among youth who did not. Results suggest that youth in grades 7 through 12 who did not receive the program report higher rates of ATOD use than students who completed the program.

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IN THE NEWS

Subject: SAMHSA to Fund Systems of Care for Children and Youth with Serious Mental Health Challenges and Their Families

Details: Accepting applications for cooperative agreements whose purpose is to develop and expand systems of care for children and youth with serious emotional disturbances and their families, pending the availability of FY 2009 funds. It is expected that \$17 million will be available to fund up to 17 cooperative agreements. The agreements will support integrated home and community-based services and supports for children and youth with serious emotional disturbances and their families by encouraging the development and expansion of effective and enduring systems of care. A system of care for children's mental health is a network of community-based services and supports that are organized to meet the challenges of children and youth with serious mental health needs and their families.

Who Can Apply: Eligibility is limited to public entities, such as states, cities, counties and towns; Indian tribes or tribal organizations; governmental units within subdivisions of a state, such as a county, city or town; District of Columbia government and federal territories.

How to Apply: Applications for No. SM-09-002 are available by calling SAMHSA's Health Information Network at 1-877-SAMHSA7 or by downloading http://www.samhsa.gov/Grants/2009/sm_09_002.aspx or www.grants.gov. Applicants are encouraged to apply online using www.grants.gov.

Application Due Date: January 15, 2009

Additional Information: Contact Diane L. Sondheimer at 240-276-1980, diane.sondheimer@samhsa.hhs.gov, or Gary M. Blau, Ph.D., at 240-276-1980, gary.blau@samhsa.hhs.gov.

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## IN THE NEWS

### **Subject: The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Infants & Toddlers (DECA-I/T)**

**Date(s):** Monday November 10th in Ashland  
Friday December 12th in Athens  
8:30pm to 4:30pm

**Sponsor:** This training is sponsored by ODMH Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative, but is open to all early childhood providers in all cross-systems.

**Details:** What is the DECA-IT? The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Infants and Toddlers (DECA-I/T) is a premier instrument for assessing protective factors and screening for social and emotional risks in very young children. The DECA-I/T comes with two standardized tools. It has a separate assessment for infants (1 month up to 18 months) and one for toddlers (18 months up to 36 months). The Infant assessment has 33 items and the Toddler assessment has 36 items. The infant assessment has 2 protective factor scales, Attachment/Relationships and Initiative. It also has a Total Protective Factor Scale that is an overall indication of the strength of a child's protective factors. The toddler scale has three protective factor scales, Attachment/Relationships, Initiative and Self-regulation as well as a Total Protective Factor Scale. If you are familiar with the preschool DECA, the layout and scoring will be similar. Once completed, the assessment can be easily scored using an individual profile to obtain t-scores, percentiles and descriptions (strength, typical, area of need) for each scale.

**How to Apply:** There is no cost for the training but all participants must pre-register. There will be no registration at the door. Please e-mail your registration to: Twinkle French -[Twinkle.French@nationwidechildrens.org](mailto:Twinkle.French@nationwidechildrens.org) Early Childhood Mental Health Program; Nationwide Children's Hospital.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

November 12-14, 2008

Conference: Differential Response in Child Welfare

Sponsor: American Humane Association

Location: Hyatt on Capitol Square, Columbus, Ohio

Content: Ohio professionals can hear from other states where Alternative Response is accepted practice, build knowledge/skills; exchange ideas related to implementing/sustaining alternative response in child welfare.

More Information: Contact Kristin Gilbert at Kristin.Gilbert@jfs.ohio.gov

November 15, 2008

Conference: The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander

Sponsor: Clark Cty JFS & Rocking Horse Community Health Center

Location: Champions Center, Springfield, Ohio

Content: Butch Losey, MA, PC and Susan Graham, M.Ed., trainers certified in the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, an internationally recognized evidence-based best practice model.

More Information: Kbg nau@rockinghorsecenter.org

Subject: 2008 TA Call Series

Sponsor: National Technical Assistance Ctr for Children's Mental Health

Content: Continuing its national topical telephone conference call series. Presentations from expert resource persons are followed by open discussion in order for all participants to ask questions and enrich the conversation. Upcoming in the series:

November 20, 2008: Child and Family Services Reviews - An Opportunity to Work Together to Meet the Mental Health Needs of Children and Families

December 18, 2008: Partnership Based Leadership: Anchoring Challenges in the Common Vision

Please visit website for registration information:

http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/programs/ta_center/tacalls2008.html

OTHER NEWS

Current Events - Across the State:

<http://dmhext01.mh.state.oh.us/dmh/events/listing.nsf/HomePage?OpenAgent>

Ohio Family and Children First: <http://www.ohiofcf.org/>

Archived and Recent Editions of this newsletter (also subscribe)

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

Suicide Prevention:

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



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