

ODMH Kids News: Building Ohio's Future



Monthly E-Newsletter

September/October 2007

Volume 7 • Issue 5

OHIO'S TRANSITION AGED YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES EFFORT

On June 12, 2007, over 140 people attended the networking event, *PAVING THE WAY FOR A NEW DAY FOR TRANSITION AGED YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN OHIO'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM*, at Polaris Business Center in Columbus. This collaborative networking event was held to bring together diverse stakeholders in Ohio's mental health system for information sharing, awareness building and excitement raising for transition aged youth mental health services. The day's activities included: panel discussions, a presentation of national policy successes and challenges, and networking activities.

There were three panel discussions, including young adults, families and providers. Members of the "Young Adult Panel" shared their experiences of successes and difficulties in accessing supports and resources they needed to go to college, get an apartment, find and keep a job while strengthening and maintaining family and other interpersonal relationships. The "Family Panel" celebrated the successes of their family members, while identifying the difficulties in accessing and maintaining services for their teen/adult children who no longer qualify for "child" mental health services, and the available adult services do not meet their needs. The "Provider Panel" members identified the transition aged services they have developed to "bridge the gap" between child and adult programs. The providers identified the successes, barriers and lessons learned through developing, implementing and sustaining their programs.

After the panels, Mary Ann Davis, Ph.D. presented an overview of transition aged youth social service research, and state and federal policy efforts. Dr. Davis argued that the experience of transitioning to adulthood has changed over the last 40 years, and that mental health services, and state/federal policy has not realigned with those sociological changes. She detailed several successful programs as well as policy guidelines which can serve as a framework for decision making. Her presentation is available at: <http://www.ohioactcenter.org/documents/plenaryC.pps>

Networking activities began after Dr. Davis' presentation. More than 25 of Ohio's transition youth providers, CCOEs, and advocacy groups set up and staffed information tables, detailing the work they each do. A young adult was also assigned to each table. Attendees were each assigned a "profile of a young adult with specific challenges" and asked to complete a "transition checklist" in order to secure the resources they needed to maintain work, health benefits, a place to live, and access to services. The "table presenters" and the young person at each table shared information about their services and experiences in Ohio, while facilitating the experiential activity, of "transitioning to adulthood". This networking activity was identified as "extremely valuable" and "engaging".

At the end of the day, the event's organizers, which included the Transition Aged Workgroup, the Center for Innovative Practices, the Ohio Coordinating Center for ACT, the Ohio Federation of Children's Mental Health, Community Services of Stark County, NAMI Ohio, and the Ohio Department of Mental Health, asked attendees to identify specific next steps and to make a personal commitment of continued

involvement, awareness raising, and excitement building for transition aged mental health services in Ohio.

To learn more, and to help build awareness and raise excitement for Ohio's transition aged mental health services, visit <http://www.ohioactcenter.org/transition.html>.

There you will find:

- 1) A regional networking list of stakeholders
- 2) Mary Ann Davis' PowerPoint
- 3) The most recent draft of the Transition Youth Position Paper*

Transition Youth Position Paper*

We welcome the input, suggestions, and recommendations from the many "experts" which include youth, young adults, parents, providers, administrators, policy makers, and concerned stakeholders on the content of this paper. ***The position paper will serve as the main vehicle for consensus building that will help guide our action steps*** for the transition age population in Ohio. Download the paper: <http://www.ohioactcenter.org/documents/transition%20Position%20Paper%206-9-07.doc>

If you have input to this paper, please forward them through the following channels:

- 1) Email: pfetzer@csstark.org
- 2) Fax: 330-455-2101 Attention: Patti Fetzer
- 3) Mail: Patti Fetzer, Community Services of Stark County, Inc., Canton, Ohio 44702

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Ohio's Transition Aged Youth Mental Health Services Effort - (Con't from page 1)

Send your input in one of the following ways:

- 1) In writing on a separate piece of paper
- 2) Enter changes directly on the draft position paper in **red**.

If you would like to be quoted in the paper or have provided information that needs to be referenced, please send the proper reference citation.

The timeline for contributing and completion of the paper is:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 3/07 - 6/12/07 | Develop paper with the Transition Advisory Group (TAG) |
| 6/12 - 7/1/07 | First Draft Released at Conference, Open for Network Input |
| 7/1 - 7/23/07 | Second Draft Completed |
| 7/23 - 8/12/07 | Second Draft Open for Network Input |
| 8/12 - 10/1/07 | Input from Youth Advisory Workgroup |
| 10/1/07 | Final Draft Completed, Executive Summary Completed |
| 10/1 - 11/1/07 | Final Draft Circulated Among Statewide Advocacy/Trade Org. |
| 11/07 | Final Paper Released |

A CALL TO ACTION: WHAT CAN I DO?

If you are a YOUTH or YOUNG ADULT you can:

- Register to vote and seek understanding of issues
- Write your local and state elected officials
- Get involved on your agency/local boards or form your own youth advisory board
- Set goals for your future and work to reach them
- Tell your caregivers and providers what you want or need to reach your goals
- Tell at least one person about what your hopes and dreams are for your future and then ask that person to help you reach them
- Seek/connect with at least 1 professional partner who supports you
- Review and edit/comment/contribute to Ohio's position paper**

If you are a PARENT or a CAREGIVER you can:

- Seek out trainings and information on parenting through the transition years
- Give your young person more choices and responsibilities that include lots of opportunities to practice and learn life skills
- Make time to listen to what your young person has to say about their hopes, dreams, and desires...then make time to lead them to the support and opportunities needed to accomplish them
- Form a parent support group related to parenting through the transition years
- Tell your providers, boards, and legislatures what young people in your area need
- Seek/connect with at least one (1) professional partner who supports you
- Review and edit/comment/contribute to Ohio's position paper**

If you are a PROVIDER you can:

- Seek out trainings and information on promising practices for serving the transition age population
- Ask your young people, both formally and informally, what they want in relation to the services and supports you provide
- Ensure that you have youth/young adult friendly environments and staff
- Form or get involved in a local network or coalition that is committed to working together to serve the young people in your community
- Seek young peoples input in development and administrative decisions
- Create seamless protocols/expectations for movement between Child/Adult systems
- Review and edit/comment/contribute to Ohio's position paper**

If you are a LOCAL BOARD or ODMH Staff you can:

- Promote and/or make available trainings related to promising practices for serving the transition age population
- Encourage providers and boards under your jurisdiction to carve out transition age services and supports
- Conduct a community needs assessment related to what is available and what needs to be available for the transition age population under your jurisdiction
- Ensure the voices of young people are heard through membership on boards
- Review and edit/comment/contribute to Ohio's position paper**

*Submitted by: Angela Lariviere
Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)*

HOMELESSNESS AMONG YOUTH: YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (YEP)

INTRODUCTION

Homelessness among youth is on the rise in Ohio. The multiple issues that youth in transition face have become increasingly difficult to manage. The Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio's (COHHIO's) Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) works with youth and service providers to identify and meet the needs of these youth. When discussing youth issues, it is important to identify which age category you are discussing. YEP addresses the issues of all homeless children and youth, but for this article, we are focusing on the 16-24 year old population. It is important to note that all youth in this age category are transitional as they move from adolescents into adulthood but a major difference is that youth who are homeless usually lack any outside support or safety nets that exist for other young adults. Without these safety nets these youth are at serious risk of becoming chronically homeless, in unsafe and unhealthy relationships, or incarcerated.

Many factors contribute to youth homelessness including, family history of homelessness, history of mental illness, inconsistency in education, history of drug and alcohol addictions, family conflict or abuse, and aging out of other systems such as foster care or juvenile justice. YEP is a program that looks at all the issues homeless and at risk youth face and provides resources and information to youth and service providers in order to help build that safety net to prevent homeless youth from becoming homeless adults. Two of the major areas YEP has focused on include building resources for stability in education and addressing the needs of youth aging out of foster care.

HOMELESS EDUCATION

Among the many barriers that homeless youth face, access to education should not be one of them; however, many homeless youth face incredible barriers to accessing basic education. Some of the common problems that homeless and transitional youth experience with education are associated with enrollment, school fees and graduation fees. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act addresses the issues that homeless children and youth face in accessing K-12 education. YEP works on educating advocates and youth about their educational rights but problems still exist.

One issue that arises is a homeless or transitional student attempting to register for school. Many schools or advocates may not realize that

independently homeless youth have a right to enroll and attend school without a parent or a guardian. School districts may not understand the protection that federal homeless education law provides to the student.

Another issue that often arises is school fees. Schools may not want to allow students to continue their education or graduate if they have school fees that remain unpaid. This is a major problem for some students as they may have up to 12 years of unpaid fees. Often, school districts refuse records and diplomas until all fees are paid. This barrier alone can appear to be impossible to overcome, however with advocates assisting the homeless or transitional student they can have these fees waived based on state and federal homeless education laws.

Educational barriers do not end at the end of 12th grade but continue into post-secondary education and accessing federal financial aid through FAFSA. Most students under the age of 24 are required to submit a parent's information. Independently homeless youth cannot produce this information and often have their financial aid declined; however, there is a process where you can request a dependency override. With documentation of their personal situation, a youth can apply to the school's financial aid office for independent status. This process however is unpredictable, and the override is granted at the discretion of each school's financial aid department.

Due to the difficulty of the dependency override, advocates have determined that independently homeless youth should have a streamlined, simple way to receive independent status. Currently, there is a bill in Congress called the "FAFSA FIX For Homeless Kids Act" (HR 601) that could help to alleviate the confusion surrounding federal financial aid for independent students. In the middle of June, the Youth Empowerment Program loaded up three vehicles and took off for Washington DC to convince Congress of this also. YEP youth met with Ohio Congressional representatives, their staff, and others who would help to fight for change on this issue. Legislators often do not hear or see the impact of programs, policies, and changes that have been made and how they are beneficial or hurt the community. Alwiyah, an 18 year old from Columbus, describes her experience this way; "It was kind of surreal that me and another 18 year old girl from Ohio who just graduated from high school could just stroll in to the house of Congress and tell them to work on our issues. I know people say you can do whatever you put your mind to but you don't believe it until something like this happens. At first I felt like I was intruding because they are these big powerful people, but the thing is they are there to work for us. We elected them so they should do what is right for us and fix issues that are affecting people in our community."

FOSTER CARE

According to the Ohio Department of Job Family Services (ODJFS), 56% of the current adult homeless population in Ohio was in the foster care system. This number shows how youth without stability and family support end up homeless. There are some programs that help youth transition from foster care. The Chaffee Independent Living Act of 1999 provided funding and guidelines for serving youth in foster care between the ages of 16-18. They are supposed to receive independent living skills training such as how to shop, clean, cook, or balance a checkbook. Despite the formal programs that do exist, they are under funded and cannot serve all youth that should qualify. Most youth at age 18 will not have the skills to be self-sufficient, and even more so with youth in foster care.

Another program under Chafee provides support for youth 18-21, who officially age out of the system. These youth are entitled to request follow up assistance in meeting their needs. These services may include housing assistance, case management, assistance with post-secondary education and training, or referrals to other agencies. There are three issues we face in accessing these follow up services: 1) There are restrictions on who officially ages out and is eligible (youth who are not in the full permanent custody of the state may not qualify); 2) If a youth is unaware of the services, they will not know to request them; and 3) Most of Ohio's 88 counties do not have the capacity to serve all the youth who are eligible for services. Finally, Ohio has chosen to not open up Medicaid services to these youth, even though the Chaffee Independent Living Act allows the state the opportunity to provide Medicaid to youth that have aged out.

These are just brief overviews of two issues that the Youth Empowerment Program is working to address. It is our hope that we are able to strengthen the safety net to provide the necessary supports to assist youth transition successfully. More information can be obtained from www.cohhioyep.org and by calling Angela Lariviere at (614) 280-1984.

*Submitted by: Angela Lariviere
Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)*

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATES:

September 20, 2007 (8:30am-Noon)

Training: Professional Ethics

Presented by: Richland County Mental Health & Recovery Services
Who should attend: Hospital staff, physicians, social workers, counselors, therapists, treatment agency staff and nursing home staff.
Location: Mid Ohio Conference Center, 890 W. Fourth St., Mansfield, OH 44906. **For more information:** Contact the Training Coordinator at Richland County MH&RS Board, (419) 774-5811.

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**September 26, 2007 (8:30am-4:45pm)**

#### **Conference: A Delicate Balance**

**“Bipolar Disorder in Children and Adolescents: An Evidence-Based Approach”**

**Presented by:** Mental Health America of Franklin County  
**Who should attend:** Social workers, counselors, psychologists, nurses, chemical dependency professionals, teachers and other healthcare professionals; relevant for intermediate and advanced level clinicians. **Location:** Fawcett Center, The Ohio State University, 2400 Olentangy River Rd., Columbus, OH. **For more information:** [www.mhafc.org](http://www.mhafc.org).

**NOTE:** A community program, **“Calming the Storm: Understanding Bipolar Disorder in Children & Adolescents”**, will also be presented by MHAFC at the same location and date from 7-9p.m. Visit [www.mhafc.org](http://www.mhafc.org) or call (614) 221-1441.

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**September 28, 2007 (8:00am-4:00pm)**

## **Conference: Medication Assistance**

### **“Using Evidence to Improve Client Outcomes: Medication-Assisted Addictions Treatment”**

**Presented by:** Talbert House

**Who should attend:** Psychologists, social workers, chemical dependency and mental health counselors, nurses and students interested in the above fields. **Location:** University of Cincinnati Genome Research Institute, 2120 E. Galbraith Rd., Bldg. A, Cincinnati, OH 45237. **For more information:** Contact: Marva Duvall, (513) 751-7747 or e-mail: [marva.duvall@talberthouse.org](mailto:marva.duvall@talberthouse.org).

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September 2007 (various)

9/11-Toledo 9/19-Cincinnati 9/21-Nelsonville 9/28-Cleveland
9/18-Canton 9/20-Youngstown 9/25-Columbus

Briefing and Health Training: “WHAT OHIO’S CHILDREN NEED”

Presented by: Voices For Ohio’s Children

Who should attend: Health care providers, caseworkers, Help Me Grow providers, office support for physicians, parents, advocates and human resource professionals. **For more information:** Register for the briefing and/or training that fits your schedule at www.vfc-oh.org.

8:00a.m.-Noon – Community Briefings for Ohio’s Children & Families” - Ohio and the nation face many challenges and opportunities in 2007 and 2008. We will look at how the 2008 and 2009 state budget affects the programs we care about and how these services will be implemented.

1:00p.m.-4:00p.m. – “Health Training: How to make the most of the Ohio Child Health Expansion” - Help get your clients and consumers the health care coverage they are NOW eligible for under Ohio’s Medicaid program, and become prepared to help those covered by the expanded coverage that is coming.

September is National Preparedness Month

September 2007 will mark National Preparedness Month, a nationwide coordinated effort encouraging families to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools.

Every year, hundreds of natural disasters - ranging from blizzards and wildfires to hurricanes, tornadoes and flooding - wreak havoc on families, homes, and entire communities across America. Often times, people are reminded to take action to prepare before these events happen, but sometimes they occur without warning. Yet, too many Americans have not taken steps to prepare. There are simple steps each of us can take to prepare before an emergency happens. Emergencies will happen, but taking action now can help us minimize the impact they will have on our lives.

National Preparedness Month Materials

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has prepared publications to help everyone understand what actions they can take today to be prepared. Below are a few examples of publications which can be downloaded at no cost at:

<http://www.ready.gov/america/publications/allpubs.html>.

- Get Ready Now
- Emergency Supply List
- Ready Kids Activity Book
- Get Ready Now - Older Americans
- Get Ready Now – Disabilities & Special Needs
- Get Ready Now - Pets

What is Ohio doing?

During National Preparedness Month, the Ohio Department of Public Safety will partner with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, national, state and local organizations to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and promote community involvement through a wide variety of events and activities.

The Ohio Department of Public Safety and U.S. Department of Homeland Security are asking all families, schools and businesses to prepare for all types of emergencies, from natural disasters to possible terrorist attacks. The Ohio Department of Mental Health encourages the behavioral health community to participate in National Preparedness.

More information on National Preparedness Month activities and materials is available at www.ready.gov or www.ready.ohio.gov.

For more information...

Contact [Joseph Hill](#), Administrator, Risk & Disaster Service Initiatives, or [Amber Wibbenmeyer](#), All Hazards Coordinator.

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October 12, 2007

Conference: "Transformation in Acute Care Settings: A conference for Private Psychiatric Hospital Providers"

Audience: Designed for clinicians & clinical administrative leaders of private psychiatric acute care facilities including leaders actively involved in Behavioral Health Systems Integration. **Goal:** Mental health care is transforming and recovery is the goal. Attend this conference to learn how transformation can occur in acute care settings, and hear keynote speaker, Dr. Sandra Bloom, reveal how recovery can occur amidst organizational stress. **Location:** Quest Business Business Center, Columbus. **More information & registration:** <http://www.mh.state.oh.us/index.html>

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**October 19, 2007 (8:30am-4:00pm)**

**Conference: Ohio Independent Living Summit**

**"On Our Own: Ensuring Success for Youth Transitioning Out of Care"**

**Presented by:** Ohio Association of Child Care Agencies, Inc. (OACCA)  
**Goals:** Create an environment for foster care youth & alumni to dialogue with child welfare professionals; celebrate & promote "Best Practices in Ohio", effective use of Chaffee & TANF IL funding; provide information for participants to apply in their work and/or personal lives. **Location:** Worthington Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center, 7007 N. High St., Worthington, OH. **For more information:** Register online at [www.oacca.org](http://www.oacca.org).

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November 9, 2007 (8:30am-3:45pm)

Conference: OSBHCA Fall Annual Meeting

"A Clear Vision: Improving Health Care for Ohio's Children"

Presented by: Ohio School Based Health Care Association (OSBHCA)
Content: How to utilize free eye health screening/detection services; clear understanding of social marketing concepts & ways to improve visibility of SBHCs & their services. **Location:** Columbus Department of Health, Rm. 119C, 240 Parsons Ave., Columbus OH 43215. **For more information:** Carrie Baker, (614) 464-2605 or e-mail: carrie@landermanmanagement.com.

November 15 & 16, 2007

Conference: Ohio State 5th Annual MH/MR Conference – "Mental Health Aspects: Treatment and Supports"

Audience: Administrators, psychiatrists, psychologists, direct care providers, physicians, educators, residential providers, family members, social workers, nurses, students, persons with disabilities, vocational staff. **Goal:** The National Association for the Dually Diagnosed is presenting the fifth annual MH/MR conference. The theme will be Mental Health Aspects: Treatment & Support. The Ohio Department of Mental Health is a conference sponsor. **Location:** Crowne Plaza North Hotel, Columbus. **More information & registration:** <http://www.mh.state.oh.us/index.html>

What's happening – Across the State

<http://dmhext01.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>

Suicide Prevention

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

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