

# Breathe Program

Providing services for at-risk youth in Ross, Pickaway, and Fayette Counties in South Central Ohio.



## Ross and Pickaway County: What is available and working

- Ross and Pickaway Counties have service options for many youth with mental illness and developmental disabilities. Additionally, Family and Children First Councils provide services coordination for some youth and agencies express interest in further cooperation.
- There are currently options for 24 hour assistance. SPVMHC operates a 24 hour crisis line and offers 24 hour crisis services at two locations. RCBDD and PCBDD, and the children service agencies also have availability by phone 24 hours/day for emergency and reporting purposes.
- Respite Care is currently provided through the IO, Level 1 and Self waivers through the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. Children services, DD and behavioral health also have options for out of home respite in limited circumstances.



## **Ross and Pickaway County's Risk Factors:**

- The lack of local specialized services in time of crisis results in risk to individuals and families, potential law enforcement involvement and high cost of out-of-home, often out-of-county placements.
- There are limited respite options and supports for families and caregivers of youth at risk due to mental illness and/or developmental disability which can lead to caregiver burnout, lack of community connectedness, and risk of harm to the individuals and caregivers. Many respite options are available only after the point of crisis and parents/caregivers often feel there is stigma attached to needing respite care. Finally despite expressed interest, there are no family/parent support groups or mentoring programs available.
- In our community, as in many others, there are limited opportunities for youth with mental illness/developmental disabilities and their families to connect with others in the community. This is further exacerbated for youth with challenging behaviors.



## **Our response: Breathe Program**

- Bringing Respite, Education and Awareness to help every Family Thrive
- Three Goals:
  - Raise community awareness and involvement
  - Provide respite and other support services for families
  - Ensure access to coordinated crisis intervention services.



## Implemented Programming: Therapeutic Services

- Art Therapy Classes
  - Breathe contracts with a Certified Art Therapist to provide programming for 8-12 year olds year round.
  - Art Therapy Partners: Integrated Services of Appalachia, Hopewell Health, Chillicothe City Schools (Mt. Logan and Tiffin Elementary Schools), Zane Trace Local School, And Huntington Local School.
  - Future Sites: Adena School (Winter, 2019) and Unioto School (Spring, 2019)
  - Since Art Therapy has been offered, it is estimated we have worked provided this service to 100 children in the previous two years.



## Implemented Programming: Therapeutic Services

- Rainbows Grief Support Services
  - Rainbows for All Children offers peer support groups, led by trained facilitators, for children who are grieving the loss of a loved one due to death, divorce, deployment, incarceration, a long-term illness, or another life-altering event.
  - We currently have six facilitators (three licensed counselors, three unlicensed) running three groups serving ages 8-19. Sessions run for 12-14 weeks and there is a maximum of 10 youth in each group.
  - Once the second session is completed this fall, there will be 50 youth who have participated in the program.



## Implemented Programming: Therapeutic Services

- Equine Assisted Behavioral Health and Therapeutic Riding
  - This service is provided in partnership with Natural Freedom Wellness Center in Albany, Ohio and SpiritHorse of Ohio in Jamestown, Ohio.
  - Natural Freedom Wellness Center travels from Albany to the Charles and Daisy Black Horse Farm in Ross County to provide this Medicaid funded service. The only cost to Breathe is for transportation for youth.
  - Breathe provides sponsorship to Fayette County children to participate in Therapeutic Riding.



## Implemented Programming: Mentoring

- Mentoring programs have been in place in Ross and Pickaway Counties to help youth establish a positive relationship with a trusted adult.
- The waiting list for children waiting for mentors had grown in both counties and funding was required to provide the needed services.
- With the additional funding through Breathe, The Ross and Pickaway County Family and Children First Councils are able to provide mentors for 30 additional children.



## Implemented Programming: Teen Center

- The Get Together Center opened in March, 2016 to provide a place where teens and young adults could congregate to receive a meal, socialize, and have access to needed resources. Attendance averages 12 teens per week.
- It is open every Wednesday, 3:30 to 7:30 pm at the Day Habilitation building for First Capital Enterprises. Supervision is provided with three paid staff and one intern through Ohio University-Chillicothe.
- Activities include Yoga for Teens and parties to celebrate Halloween and Graduations.



## Implemented Programming: Teen Center

- We have a psychologist who provides individual and group counseling for four hours per month. We also partner with various agencies to provide other programming including cooking classes.
- Other activities include: Movie nights, trips to a local outdoor drama, baseball games, and car wash fundraisers.



## Implemented Programming: Teen Center

- The Teen Center has partnered with different community agencies to provide resources that the teens would typically not have accessed. This includes the local library, OSU Extension Office, local churches, The Chillicothe Youth Civic Theater, The Foothill Folk Society, The Chillicothe Evening Lion's Club, and Adena Health Center. Another important partnership is Ross County Community Action who uses the Teen Center as a summer food site on Wednesday evening during the summer. All have donated time, food, and other resources to allow the Teen Center thrive.



## Implemented Programming: Respite and Stabilization

- Research consistently shows respite care provides benefits in overall wellness for the child and a reduction in cost of services within the systems that serve those children. Respite has been shown to improve family functioning, improve satisfaction with life, enhance the capacity to cope with stress, and improve attitudes toward the family member with a disability.
- When the program began, we offered respite events for children and parents on days and times that we thought would be the most beneficial. This was a learning moment because we found respite needed to be more individualized than we were offering.
- Individual respite has been provided to youth in Ross and Pickaway counties. Length of respite varies from a few hours per week to a weekend a month. Staff have assisted with finding a provider and completing background checks and training for providers. Breath pays for respite hours to h
- Stabilization is needed when a crisis occurs within a family setting and the child is not able to remain in the home. Therapeutic interventions may be needed for a length of time for the child to be able to return to the home.



## Pickaway County

- In summer 2018, Breathe contracted with the Family and Children First Coordinator of Pickaway County to assist in identifying needs of at risk youth and to implement programming to fill the service gaps.
- Previous programs included art therapy programming and an after school program through the YMCA. Individual respite has been provided, as well as supplementing their mentoring efforts through the FCFC and Extra Mile through the Circleville City School District.
- In November 2018, Breathe has signed an agreement with Foundations4Youth in Pickaway County to help fund a Site Coordinator for their after school program. This person will recruit, train and supervise volunteers and provide supervision for the program during hours of operation.



## Referring Someone for Services

- The Breathe Program is designed to provide support to youth age 8-24 considered “at-risk” of causing harm to themselves or others due to mental illness and/or a developmental disability. The goal is to prevent crisis situations by providing earlier intervention and services for children, young adults and their families.
- If you would like to refer someone for any of the programs we have, please contact the Family Connections Coordinator. There is a registration form to be completed for each program.



## Training

- Training continues to be an important part of the Breathe Program. In 2018, the Positive Supports Coordinator conducted the following trainings:
  - Held two day long trainings on Trauma Responsive care by Lara Palay, to help staff learn to deal effectively and support individuals with challenging behavior and trauma;
  - Trauma Informed Care and Resilience Building for Pioneer School staff;
  - Individual team trainings throughout the year on Human Rights and supporting individuals with challenging behavior;
  - With the MUI Coordinator, completed a “Customer Service” training with City Transit staff and drivers, to work toward a better experience for consumers during transportation services;
  - CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) Training: Started in 2013. With the MUI Coordinator, provides a portion of the training to educate law enforcement and first responders on the needs of individuals with DD, to help promote positive interactions and reduce trauma. This training is sponsored by the Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Center. As of May 2018, 150 officers/first responders have been trained.



## Outreach

- Increasing awareness to parents, agencies, and providers is an important component for the Breathe Program. This is accomplished through participating on various committees and attending meetings at community agencies.
- Presentations and information sharing include the Ross County Board of DD staff, Pickaway County Teen Task Force, Hope (Heroin) Partnership Project, Ross County Social Service Council, Family Fun Fest, Tristan Miller Scholarship MusicFest, Ohio University-Chillicothe Resource Fair, Systems of Care Summit, and Foundations4Youth Board of Directors (Pickaway County).



# Development

- Breathe is not a stagnant program and will continue to change as the needs of the community change. 2019 will be a year for informative trainings and innovative programs. Goals include:
  - Developing a summer program with each school to identify and provide in home visits to youth who are considered at-risk when school is not in session.
  - Day-long training for Pickaway County First Responders planned for early 2019
  - Increasing attendance for the established programs in Ross County.
  - Increasing programming and supports in Pickaway and Fayette Counties.
  - Renewal for the grant in July, 2019.



# Breathe Staff

