

## Officer Butcher CIT Officer of the Year for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Time

Kent City Police Officer Matthew Butcher was named the 2022 Crisis Intervention Team Officer of the Year.

Ofc. Butcher was nominated for helping a suicidal intoxicated male with a gun and a self-inflicted hand injury. He spoke to him for close to two hours and was able to gain trust and eventually disarm the man so he could receive the medical and psychiatric treatment that he needed.

“There were many other calls in which Ofc. Butcher has deescalated over the past year, but this call for service was above and beyond for another job well done,” said Kent City Police Chief Nicholas Shearer.



*Ofc Butcher receiving his award, fr left: William Nome, Mental Health & Recovery Board; Ofc Matthew Butcher, Kent City Police; Dr. John Garrity, Mental Health & Recovery Board; Chief Nick Shearer.*

This is the third time Ofc. Butcher received this honor from the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County and the Portage County Police Chief’s Association. He also received it in 2014 and 2020.

“Throughout the course of my career, Officer Butcher is without a doubt the best CIT officer I have ever worked with,” stated Shearer. “He takes time when dealing with people experiencing mental health crises and shows an immense amount of compassion. It is evident in his interaction in the situations that Officer Butcher really cares and wants to help people.”

“Because of these facts, it is no surprise that he has been recognized three times during his career as the Portage County CIT officer of the year,” Shearer continued. “Matt has also communicated his intent to retire in 2023. Although we will be sad to see him go, I cannot think of a better way to honor him in his last full year than to see him win this award for the third time!”

Each year officers are recognized for practicing the communication and de-escalation techniques they learned during their CIT training in dealing with individuals who are experiencing a mental health crisis or are struggling with addiction.

“The Board is proud to join together with law enforcement to honor the officers who are using the tools to keep themselves and the persons with mental illness safe in unpredictable situations.” John Garrity, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County. “Congratulations to Officer Butcher.”

Since 2006, more than 250 officers have completed the class in Portage County. Every law enforcement agency in the county has CIT officers. The course is supported nationwide by the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

# Suicide Prevention Trainings Offered

The Board is offering 90-minute suicide prevention "gate keeper" trainings for Portage County community organizations and businesses at no cost through a SAMHSA grant. Participants will learn to recognize a crisis and the warning signs that someone may be contemplating suicide, how to ask the tough questions, and then to refer the person to a local resource. To learn more and schedule a training contact Karyn at [karynk@mental-health-recovery.org](mailto:karynk@mental-health-recovery.org).



*Sarah McCully leads a Question Persuade Refer training at the Kent United Church of Christ.*

## Incident Response Team

Portage County's Incident Response Team is a group of local mental health professionals who provide immediate counseling support, referrals to resources when necessary, and help for persons to begin the recovery process quickly.

Any event which results in substantial distress to bystanders or survivors can be regarded as a critical incident. Examples include death of a student or teacher, a worksite fatality or natural disaster.

If you need to contact the team, call the Townhall II 24-hour helpline at 330-678-HELP (4357)



*The IRT is staffed by Board funded agencies: Children's Advantage, Coleman Health Services, Family & Community Services, and Townhall II.*

## We're Here For You!

If you or a someone you know is struggling, let them know they are not alone. Our local helpline is here to talk you through any emotional crisis and to provide support and information.

**330-678-HELP (4357)**  
or **988**

*This holiday season.....*

*Spend some time talking to the young people in your life about the dangers of drugs & alcohol*

**Did you know:**  
Over 55% of Portage County youth say that their parents influence their decision whether or not to drink or misuse drugs.

- Let them know you disapprove of underage and other misuse.
- Show them you care about their health, wellness, and success.
- Talk frequently, be clear & consistent.



Learn more at [www.mental-health-recovery.org/prevention-tips](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org/prevention-tips)



**MENTAL HEALTH & RECOVERY BOARD OF PORTAGE COUNTY**

155 E. Main Street, Kent, OH 44240

[www.mental-health-recovery.org](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org)