

Empowering Students to Make a Positive Change

Portage County students learned how to make a positive change in their schools and communities during a Youth Leadership Summit hosted by Townhall II and the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County. The event was facilitated by Joe Markiewicz, a national youth trainer.



Portage County Commissioner Mike Tinlin greeted the students and offered words of encouragement as they began their day. After starting off with a fun team-building ice breaker, the group talked about problem behaviors and concerns in their schools. Overall, their top concerns were mental health problems, vaping, cyber bullying, and alcohol use.

The students spent time learning about protective factors that help buffer youth from risk. Markiewicz shared a list of 40 research-based, positive experiences and qualities that are building blocks for healthy development such as adult role models, school engagement, creative activities, faith community, and service to others.

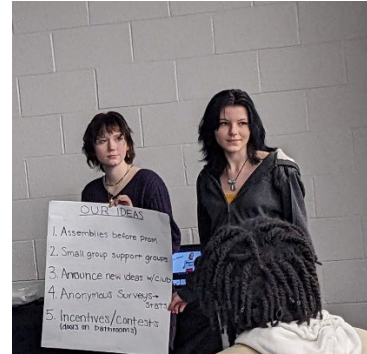
The students spent the rest of the day creating action plans to increase the protective factors to bring back to their schools for implementation. To help keep the students on track implementing their action plans, Townhall II will send a Youth-Led Prevention Specialist to meet with the students in their schools this spring.

“The Youth Leadership Summit was such a rewarding experience for our students,” said Ravenna High School Principal Jonathan Lane. “Our student leaders were exposed to the issues that face our schools and our communities and were then challenged to brainstorm solutions to these problems. Our students identified a couple of key areas they would like their future work to focus upon. We have already met as a group following the summit to put our plans into action.”

High school and middle school students from Aurora, BioMed, Kent, Ravenna, Rootstown, and Streetsboro participated.

“Youth-led prevention strategies are an important component of prevention for young adults as it empowers youth by giving them a voice in the process while still having adult guidance,” said John Garrity, PhD, Executive Director of the Mental Health & Recovery Board. “It is an evidence-based model that has been shown to reduce risk factors among youth.”

This was the second youth summit Portage County has held since 2020, and Townhall II Director of Prevention and Outreach Sarah McCully hopes to make it an annual event. “We had to halt the program because of the pandemic,” she explained. “It is such a positive and rewarding experience for the youth.”



Suicide Prevention Coalition of Portage County Awarded Public Awareness Grant

The Portage County Suicide Prevention Coalition was awarded a grant from the Ohio Center for Excellence for Behavioral Health Prevention and Promotion to connect residents to mental, emotional, and behavioral health resources, and to advance public awareness.

The awards are part of \$1M in grant awards to 22 community-based coalitions across Ohio to support statewide prevention and promotion efforts.

The Portage County Suicide Prevention Coalition is using the funds to promote the “Be Present” campaign which was developed by the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation and the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services. It provides tools for adolescents and young adults to help each other through mental health resources, information, and peer-to-peer support. There is also guidance for parents and caregivers.

“Our community has been under many stressors these past few years, especially our youth,” commented John Garrity, PhD, director of the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County. “This funding will give us an opportunity to share mental health information and to reach out to them with a message of hope.”

The Be Present campaign’s message is to let people know that “it’s ok to not be ok” and to be there for each other during the struggles of daily life can be seen locally in Portage County in local movie theatres, TV commercials, streaming digital services, and social media. The advertisements also feature the Portage County helpline number (330-678-HELP) as well as letting people know they can call or text 988 if they need help.



Sports Betting Increases Addiction Risks

It's hard not to notice all the advertisements and news stories about the new sports betting law that took effect in Ohio this year. The sports betting companies seem to be surrounding their ad campaigns around 'risk free' betting. This may be of 'low risk' in terms of an individual placing their first bet, but it may pose a high risk in leading to addiction problems and financial and mental health concerns.

There are multiple studies showing the correlation between gambling and sports betting and the negative impact on an individual's overall mental health, including problems with depression, anxiety, suicide, and other addictive disorders.

There is a free online gambling screening available on the Board's website (www.mental-health-recovery.org) to see if treatment should be sought.

Townhall II is a local Portage County agency that provides gambling addiction treatment. In addition to in person counseling, they are offering Ohio's 1st online gambling treatment group open to any Ohio resident at no cost. Call 330-678-3006 for more information.

No drugs are safe,
but fentanyl is making
drugs deadlier.

If you or a loved one is
using, never use alone,
carry naloxone, and call 911
immediately at signs of an
overdose.

For Project DAWN kit
330-296-9919 or
330-678-3006

Treatment works &
is available!

Addiction Helpline
330-678-3006

Mental Health &
Recovery Board
OF PORTAGE COUNTY



MENTAL HEALTH & RECOVERY BOARD OF PORTAGE COUNTY

155 E. Main Street, Kent, OH 44240

www.mental-health-recovery.org

2022 HIGHLIGHTS



Several board members joined the other 175 attendees of the Portage Substance Abuse & Mental Health Conference which included topics on gambling and gaming, the rise of methamphetamine and its impact on the overdose crisis, the impact of lack of sleep, harm reduction, and prescribing controlled drugs after the opioid epidemic.



The Board along with our partners at Kent State University held suicide prevention and mental health awareness trainings throughout the year during the first year of a five year SAMHSA Mental Health Awareness Training Grant. Over 575 individuals were trained in Portage County.



Officer Matthew Butcher (second from left) of Kent City Police was named the 2022 Crisis Intervention Team Officer of the Year by the Portage County Police Chief's Association and the Board. He received the honor for the assistance he gave to a suicidal woman this year. The Board trained 27 first responders in the 40-hour CIT course in 2022.

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

DIRECTOR'S DESK



As our community began to emerge again after the pandemic, the Mental Health & Recovery Board and provider agencies were able to begin new programs as well as expand existing programs and much needed services.

Handle with Care is a new Board initiative to help Portage County children. It's a cross-system collaborative and trauma-informed program to identify children who have been exposed to adverse events and provide them with interventions that build resilience through positive relationships with teachers and first responders. The Northeast Ohio Children's Trust Fund awarded the Board a grant to begin this work.

Coleman Health Services began a *Mobile Response Services Team* for youth and adults. The team provides mobile behavioral health services to individuals in the home, at school, the workplace, and in various other community settings for crisis intervention, information, and referral.

The *988 National Suicide and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline* launched in 2022. Townhall II is the provider for service in Portage County as well as continuing to operate their longtime board-funded 24/7 helpline phone number, 330-678-HELP.

Celebrating Families is a 16-week program at Children's Advantage for families struggling with addiction to come together to heal through family meals and guided discussions. The program is funded through the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services' State Opioid Response Grant.

Townhall II launched a peer-led *Mothers In Recovery Support Group* with an education component provided by prevention specialists. Dinner and childcare is included in this popular program funded by the Board.

The *Portage Crisis Intervention Team's (CIT) Mental Health Outreach program* received the Celebrate Portage Health Initiative Award. The program is a collaboration between police officers and case managers at Coleman Health Services to improve responses to mental health crises by outreaching to individuals in the community alongside police to provide resources and to assist in service engagement.

This fiscal year, the Board had levy funds remaining from FY20 and FY21 because agencies weren't able to fully spend down their contracts due to the pandemic. The Board reinvested these funds back into the agencies to target long-term investments in infrastructure as well as work force development and uncompensated care.

As we realize the effects of the pandemic have been overwhelming, we will continue to evaluate the needs of our community. The Board's goal is to provide needed and effective mental health and addiction services, maintain financial support for the system of care, and educate the community about mental health and addiction services and issues.

John Garrity, PhD, Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Harold Farrier	Jeff Langstaff	Scott Swan

HELPING PORTAGE COUNTY CHILDREN & ADULTS

419 children and teens received treatment for trauma, emotional problems, mental illness and substance use disorders.

1515 adults received treatment for trauma, emotional problems, mental illness and substance use disorders.

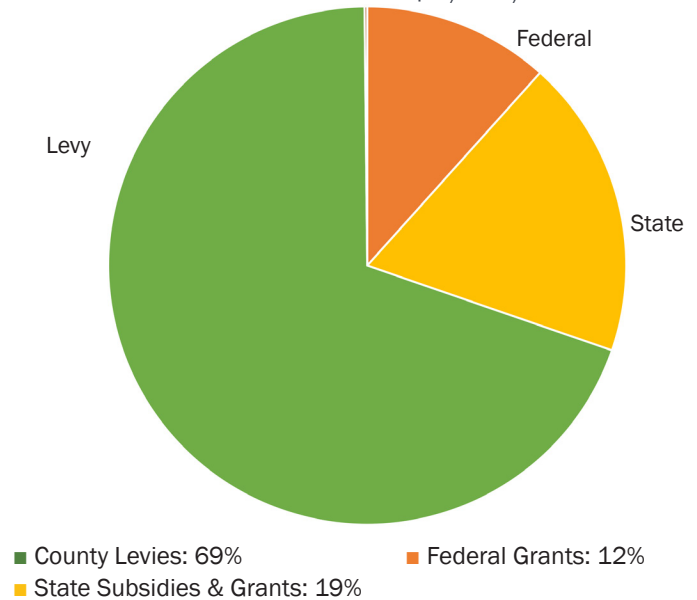
32,078 contacts with people through the 24-HR crisis calls, information and referral calls, incidents of walk-in counseling, crisis outreach and screening for hospitalization.

132 admissions through the Coleman Crisis Stabilization Unit.

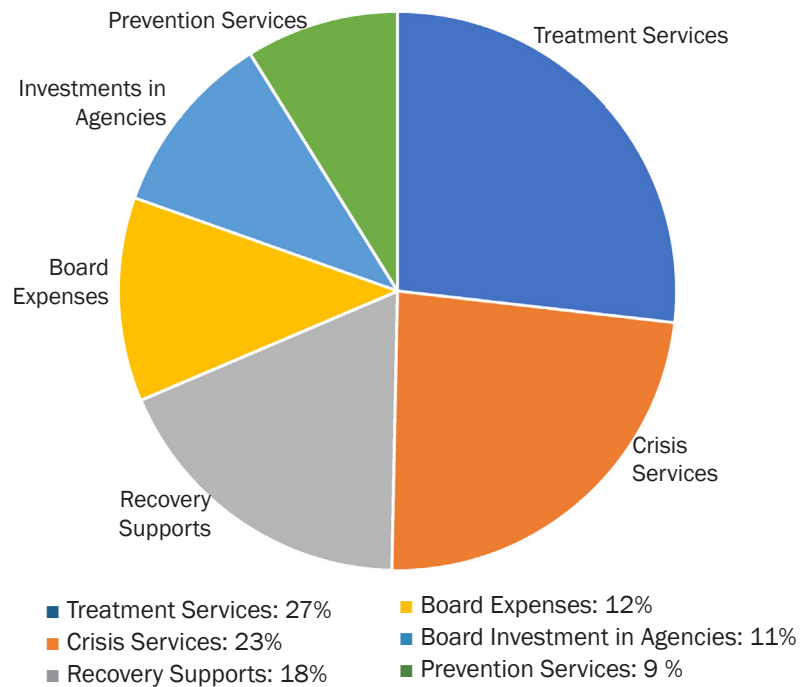
6,902 youth and adults participated in prevention education programs.

541 students identified at risk and screened in all Portage County School Districts through a program funded by the Board. **43%** were identified as having mental health issues requiring therapy and/or psychiatry services.

REVENUE SOURCES FOR FY2022 TOTAL REVENUE = \$9,279,445



TOTAL EXPENDITURES FOR FY 2022 = \$8,769,851



NETWORK OF AGENCIES:
 Children's Advantage
 Coleman Health Services
 Family & Community Services
 Townhall II



www.mental-health-recovery.org • 330.673.1756 • 155 E. Main St. PO Box 743, Kent, OH 44240



We celebrated the ribbon cuttings for two board supported facilities this year — Children's Advantage's new counseling offices (left) and the Family & Community Service's King Kennedy Community Center gym in Ravenna.

Coming together to support the Recovery Community at Lights of Change.