



State of the Child
in Central Ohio
2016

TOGETHER: WE CAN GROW

I'M ONE - WE'RE MANY
TOGETHER: WE CAN GROW

May 11, 2016

Dear Central Ohio Community,

Directions for Youth & Families is one of central Ohio's oldest and largest mental and behavioral health organizations, serving young people and their families for more than 115 years. We believe that every child has value and potential, and we work to help our community's young people have the best futures possible.

In 2015, we touched the lives of more than 7,800 young people and families in central Ohio. The kids in our programs learn the importance of staying in school and the values of responsibility, respect, self-reliance, tolerance, abstinence and how to make good choices.

We hope our 2016 State of the Child annual report provides you with insight about the work we do every day in central Ohio thanks to the support of neighbors and friends like you. It highlights the actual situations of a few kids and families we served in the past year.

With the ongoing commitment, support and collaboration of organizations, businesses, government and individuals throughout central Ohio, we will continue our mission of touching the lives of young people and families in remarkable ways.

Sincerely,



Duane Casares
Chief Executive Officer



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Headlines today show the escalating need for mental and behavioral health counseling.



Directions for Youth & Families has 18 programs that address mental, emotional and behavioral health. Through treatment and prevention programs we are proud of the impact we have in contributing to a healthy community - one individual, one family at a time.

DFYF has over 85 social workers, counselors, and case managers. Our outreach model eliminates barriers to treatment by providing services in client's homes, schools and other community settings.

The stories told in this report are based on actual events that occurred in the lives of clients of Directions for Youth & Families. The identities have been altered to protect the children and their families.



**TOGETHER: with your support
we can change lives,
strengthen families,
impact communities.**

School Connections and Student Outreach Services involve collaborations with South-Western City Schools, Columbus City Schools and Delaware City Schools providing students with linkage to services. Professional consultation and training opportunities are also available to school staff.

“DFYF has been able to provide counseling services that involve not just the student, but the family. In doing so, the student has a support system both at school and with the parent.”
-Tresa Davis,
Principal, Norton Middle School

“From my perspective, DFYF services are ABSOLUTELY necessary for our school. There is NO WAY I would be able to touch all the different parts of my job if I did not have DFYF. I feel that the DFYF counselors are part of our team.”
- Erin Harris, School Counselor,
Finland Middle School

“As an assistant principal, I do not feel equipped to discuss/guide some of our students with the problems they are having. An example is the number of 11 year old girls who are threatening suicide and/or cutting. Directions for Youth & Families is teaching them more appropriate coping skills and provides for our students’ mental health - which is necessary for their academic growth.”
- Carol Merritt, Assistant Principal,
Franklin Woods Intermediate

In 2013, 14% of Ohio high school students reported they had seriously considered suicide within the past year, 6% reported attempting suicide and 26% reported feeling so sad or helpless they stopped doing usual activities.*

*Ohio Department of Health, 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Butterfly Girl

Her arms were covered with wide, raised, angry scars. Up and down her arms. Horizontal, vertical, diagonal. She began cutting when she was in elementary school.

She started School Connections when she was 14. She transferred from a school that asked her to cover her arms. (A school district not served by DFYF).

Lived with her mom. Kicked out.
Lived with her dad. Changed schools.
Back to the school district that asked her to hide her scars.

Her DFYF counselor drove out of district to continue working with her.

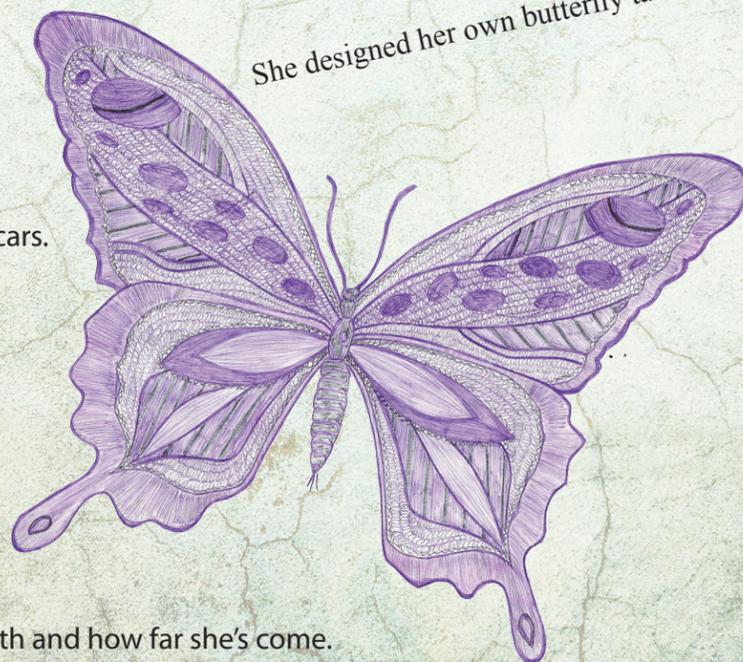
For her 16th birthday, her mom let her get a butterfly tattoo on her wrist.

It covers some of her scars. It is beautiful.

It is a reminder. She would never cut a butterfly.

She is as as worthy as a butterfly.

Every time she looks at it, it is a reminder of her strength and how far she’s come.



She designed her own butterfly tattoo.

In 2013, 21% of Ohio high school students reported seeing a doctor, nurse, therapist, social worker or counselor for a mental health problem.*

Building Bright Futures provides home and school based individual and family counseling for youth ages 12-18 who are at risk of school failure. In 2015, 338 students were served in the Building Bright Futures program.

*Ohio Department of Health, 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Greg is 15 years old and attends Lincoln McKinley High School. He walks to school, plays drums in the marching band and runs track, until he became ineligible to participate in sports because of his grades. And then there was the lying and stealing. He was referred to DFYF’s Building Bright Futures.

- I'm not doing well in school, I do just enough. I know I can do better but it's hard to care.
- My mom doesn't care if I do well or not, she still has something to be mad at me for. She treats me way different than my brother and sisters.
- Everything I do is a big deal. I took pizza pockets to school without asking, you'd think I robbed a bank.
- I had my brother's old i-phone, I'd had it for months. She was looking for something else she thought I stole and she found it. Again, I'm the bad guy.
- Since my mom thinks I'm such a bad kid and a thief, she's saying I can't run track, even if I bring up my grades. What's the point? I hope my counselor can help.

At the end of treatment, Greg had made the honor roll for two consecutive marking periods, was earning privileges in the home and was more accountable for his actions and behavior. He improved his relationship with his mom and was looking forward to the first day of track practice.



- At first I didn't tell my counselor the truth, but then I realized it felt good to admit things to him, like stealing the backpack. He helped me realize I was hurting myself by the things I was doing.
- My goals are to make better decisions, get better grades and accept responsibility for my actions.
- I'm more open talking to mom now. I was trying to get back at her but it was only making it worse for me.
- I'm not stressed out about my grades anymore. I feel proud of working hard to do better. And mom's finally letting me apply for a job.
- I think mom has begun to realize how hard she is on me. She admitted she's mad at my dad. I'm just glad we're getting along better.

In 2014, 9.4% of adolescents aged 12-17 in the United States (an estimated 2.3 million adolescents) used drugs in the month prior to being surveyed.*

Our **Healthy Alternatives for Youth** program provides outreach services to youth ages 12-17 with a history of substance use, delinquent behavior and home and school problems.

*SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2014

Amelia is 15 years old and living with her mother and twin younger brothers.

Because of behavioral issues at school and home and suspected marijuana use, Amelia was referred to Directions for Youth & Families substance use counseling program, Healthy Alternatives for Youth.

Amelia is:

- struggling with decreasing academic performance
- skipping school and nearly being expelled
- having significant difficulties with her parent's separation
- having stressful contact with her father

Through the Healthy Alternatives for Youth program, Amelia:

- addresses
 - the impact of her personal experiences which contributed to her use of drugs
 - her feeling of guilt about the separation of her parents
 - her grief regarding the separation
- develops positive coping skills to manage social and family stressors
- experiences a significant increase in self-efficacy and esteem
- gains summer and fall employment
- is praised for her work ethic and values
- recognizes triggers that she avoids
- successfully uses her relapse prevention plan when she is faced with stressors

At the end of treatment services, Amelia has:

- abstained from alcohol and drugs for over 6 months
- been in contact with multiple colleges so she'll be on target to seek higher education after high school graduation
- significantly improved her school and family relationships



TOGETHER: WE CAN LEARN



In 2014, over one million juveniles under the age of 18 were arrested in the United States.*

Building Bright Futures Reclaim Ohio provides community support and counseling services to youth who are at risk of re-involvement in the juvenile justice system. In 2015, 155 youth were served in the program.

*National Center for Juvenile Justice, based on FBI's 2014 Crime in the United States Report



The Story of Michael the Survivor

THE FACTS / THE FEELINGS/ACTIONS

Michael is 15 years old and just lost his mother to cancer. / Grief and loss issues. Hopelessness. He is placed with his aunt whom he does not get along with. / Dysfunctional relationship. Depression. Negative peer association. / At-risk influences. Bad decision making. He is picked up for receiving a stolen car. / Delinquent behavior. Expelled from school for fighting. / Doesn't care about consequences or his future.

On probation with Franklin County Juvenile Court. / No remorse, it's just the course his life is taking. He is ordered to complete services with DFYF. / No sense of future. Michael begins to see his counselor, Lamarr. / Not on board. Very closed. 2 months, later he is arrested for Breaking and Entering. / Continuing bad decisions. 2nd offense so he is held for 3 weeks. / Scared.

Lamarr visits him in detention center. / Michael is surprised and relieved to see Lamarr. He is released but has to wear an electronic ankle monitor. / Relieved, angry. Lamarr helps him find alternative schooling. / Starting to care and feel cared about. Lamarr always goes to court appointments with him. / Trust. Aunt is helped to see his behavior was part of processing grief. / Understood, supported.

Michael and Lamarr are consistently meeting. / Open, exploring feelings and sees life options. They go to the gym. / Learns to release aggression in healthy ways. Processing grief and loss. / Developing coping skills. Discussing decision making and anger management. / Feeling in control. Aware of positive options. As weeks go by he disclosed more of his frustrations and feelings. / Positive expression of feelings.

Enrolls back into traditional school. / Good to be back in the mainstream. His grades are up. / Improved self-esteem, encouraged. Gets into half-day career center. / Starting to explore his interests. Likes working on cars. / Finds his passion. Completes probation. / Learned some hard lessons.

Finishes DFYF services after 9 months. / Thankful. Hopeful future.



Many of our programs address some of the most difficult situations a child might experience - violence, sexual abuse, child abuse, grief and loss. DFYF staff are trained in trauma informed care.

In 2015, 1,398 cases of sexual abuse were investigated by Franklin County Children Services.*

Our **PROMISES** program provides individual, family and group counseling to youth who have experienced sexual abuse.

**Data sourced from Ohio Department of Job & Family Services State Automated Child Welfare Information System.*

At the completion of service, a 14 year old client who was molested and came into the program with frequent self-harm behaviors wrote this note to her counselor:

*I'm going to take everything you taught me about not keeping stuff in,
- let your emotions out and don't try to control things that you are not in control of.
I'm going to also keep everything out and open and no secrets.
I'm going to take everything I've learned and apply it to life and not dwell over things that happened in the past because you can't redo the past. You have to accept that it happened.*

PROMISES group members write to future group members to encourage them not to be scared to attend their first group counseling session.

Dear Survivors,
Being in a group could make you feel uncomfortable, however, you will get through it. No matter what - each set of eyes have gone through the same thing. Just remain honest. The workers are here to help. I was nervous and uncomfortable because it was my first group. Remember, you've survived the abuse, the worst part is over. Now you can get through the counseling. It may get bumpy but you'll make it. Trust me, I did.

Dear Survivors,
Promises group is a lot of fun. It's a place to get to know yourself and a place where you can be comfortable to talk to others about the struggles you have. I never thought group would have helped me, and I never wanted to open up, but I am glad to say that I have. Don't be afraid to open up and pour out your heart, because if there is any place, this would be the place. Enjoy the time with your group members and workers!
Life will get better, I promise. I've gone through many things and being able to be in a group like this has allowed me to get through these things. I am so grateful for this group.

A secret
Shameful part of my identity
I am not isolated anymore
My PROMISES group is a safe spot.
A unique powerful space.



TOGETHER: WE CAN HEAL

More than 60% of youth surveyed were exposed to violence in the past year.*

Our **COMPS** (Children of Murdered Parents and Siblings) program provides individual, family and group counseling to youth who have lost a parent or other significant loved one to homicide.

**U.S. Department of Justice, National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence, 2009*

Sam's Story

Sam is 14 years old and has returned for his second episode of treatment in the COMPS program for individual and group grief counseling. His father was murdered when Sam was 9 years old. Sam has entered a new developmental stage of adolescence with the absence of a father. He presents with depression, rage, denial, confusion and loneliness. His relationships with family and friends have been significantly impacted, as well as his school performance, since the loss of his father.

Our **Children Who Witness Violence** program provides peer support, individual and family counseling to youth who have been exposed to family, community or peer violence.

going to make me mad by whopping me so I wanted to make him mad by running and hiding from him. I wanted Dad to feel how I felt. I never wanted to call the police because I was scared of Children's Services. I would call

would get mad and he and Mom would fight. When I think of these memories I feel like my chest gets filled up with air and I get mad.

Children Who Witness Violence
James age 12 and Elana 8 witnessed physical violence between mother and father until parents separated. Siblings moved between mother and father's home. At mother's home, children witnessed mother being physically abused by boyfriends and experienced homelessness and physical abuse as punishment. Meanwhile, father began abusing prescription medication and alcohol resulting in frequent hallucinations and overdoses. As a result, the children experienced neglectful, harsh and inconsistent parenting. Themes of treatment include esteem, expression, safety and attachment.



One way I am proud of myself for being brave back then ~~was~~ is trying to break up fights.

Mom always got hit

DFYF Youth Centers provide under-served youth ages 8-17 an opportunity to participate in programs emphasizing abstinence from substance use and delinquent behavior while focusing on staying in school. DFYF after school programs offer homework help, leadership development, nutrition education, computer training, community service projects as well as opportunities to participate in vocal and instrumental music, visual arts, dance and recreational activities. In 2015, 291 youth attended Ohio Avenue Youth Center and 92 youth attended Crittenton Center.

Students of low-income families drop out of high school at 6x the rate of students from high-income families.*

Our **Outreach Counseling Program** provides home and school based individual and family counseling to youth ages 5-17 who are dealing with various behavioral, emotional and mental health issues. In 2015, 1,672 clients were served in the program.

*2014 Franklin County Children's Report

Ohio Avenue Youth Center



Jennifer helping another student play "Cha Cha West"

A description of Jennifer, by Sam McCoy, OAYC Music Instructor

Establishing the steel band program at Ohio Avenue became my biggest priority this year. While Ohio Avenue had many percussion groups over the years, it had never been exclusively a steel band. I began to look for students who had been participating in percussion groups. Jennifer was one of the students who had participated consistently playing mallet percussion. With her main instrument eliminated, Jennifer switched first to the six bass pans and then to lead tenor to fill needs in the ensemble. She came in one evening a week after summer camp hours to rehearse with a group of students who were too old to attend our camp. She quickly learned the bass parts for every song and became the most consistent member of the group. She switched to lead tenor later when the need became urgent due to losing a few experienced players. She comes every day to practice and rehearses and challenges herself to be the best she can be. As I write this, I hear her playing Stevie Wonder in the steel band room. While Jennifer is naturally a quiet person, she has become a leader in the group and teaches many of our new students parts. She has grown so much as a musician, as a person, and especially as a leader of her peers.

Crittenton Center

A description of Nautica, by LaSandra Dent, Crittenton Center Supervisor

Nautica is a young lady who has made tremendous progress. She has emerged as a youth leader, has been instrumental in assisting staff in organizing youth events, developing youth activities and leading youth groups. When she initially enrolled at Crittenton Center, she struggled with decision making, interacting positively with peers and managing her anger. Through the program, she has mastered skills to assist her in these areas. As a result, she makes good choices, interacts well with peers and utilizes skills to manage her temper. As an example of her leadership growth she was tasked with a search of the internet for African-American history facts. She developed a lesson plan and presented the lessons to youth with follow-up questions. She has organized and facilitated the positive points program. She tutors younger youth in academic assignments. She assists staff as a youth leader in facilitating our social skills groups for youth in 2nd and 3rd grade. Overall it has been a pleasure to have her at the center.



Nautica takes center stage as our local television anchor on a field trip

Assignment: Story Map

Title and Author

The Life of an 11 Year Old "Troublemaker" from the Hilltop
By Ethan and Jose

Characters

Ethan - client, self described "troublemaker"
Jose - Ethan's DFYF Outreach Worker
Mandy - Ethan's mom

Setting

Ethan: The Hilltop of course! A lot of people have a negative impression of the Hilltop. Violence, drugs and school drop-outs. Let's just say growing up living on the Hilltop we don't have the ease of, say, your middle class problems. Life can be a day to day challenge.

Perspective Dialogue

Mandy: People often look at a kid's behavior and identify them as a disruption or troublemaker, instead of asking what is causing them to act out.

Ethan: How can we focus in school if we worry about where our next meal will come from, if our house will be shot at, if my brother will come home, if I will get jumped tomorrow or get in trouble in school.

Mandy: It's easy for others to judge us instead of finding out what the real problems are. But Mr. Jose comes out to our home, interacts with our family, takes the time to learn what the real problems are and he works with all of us.

Jose: Most families we serve experience trauma daily and often times grow up viewing the world from, as Ethan calls it, "life on the Hilltop". Most families don't have the means to travel their own city or recognize what is around them.

Introducing clients to a new world and a new perspective in life is a part of what I enjoy doing, showing them the world is bigger than "the Hilltop". How can we help the client's we serve if we don't understand their world? How can they trust us if we don't respect where they come from and what they experience? How can they behave differently if we don't show them a different way?

Ethan: Jose has taken me lots of places. When he took me to Battelle Park we saw bison roaming. I never knew I lived this close to bison! And I never thought I could go to college. Until now.

A great, but funny, ending

Mandy: You know what I'm going to say to you when you go to college?

Ethan: Bison? (we use a lot of humor on the Hilltop) THE END

There were 12,883 cases of child abuse reported in Franklin County in 2007. The majority of those cases were families in need of services.*

Our **Positive Paths Parenting** program provides group curriculum-based classes for parents to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and/or neglect. There were 174 participants in 2015.

*Source: 2007, Public Children Services Association of Ohio

Jeanette was court ordered to attend parenting classes due to hitting her 16 year old daughter in the face. She had previously spent 3 days in jail for child endangerment and domestic violence toward her daughter.

Jeanette shared:

- I was upset at having to attend this parenting class.
- During my own childhood, children were told they did not have a voice and stayed in their place at all times.
- I had my daughter when I was only 16 years old and did not want to be a mother at that young age, so I let my parents raise her.
- I felt more like a sister to my daughter than a mother.
- When I had more kids, I left them with my daughter to raise so I was able to go to work.
- We had numerous power struggles when I wanted to resume parenting duties and my daughter was unwilling to step down.

As classes progressed, Jeanette realized:

- I had given too much power and responsibility to my daughter at an early age requiring her to care for her own siblings.
- I found myself opening up more each class.
- I realized I needed to reconnect with my daughter and take back the responsibility of raising my kids so she could be a child also.

At the end of classes, Jeanette had a new perspective:

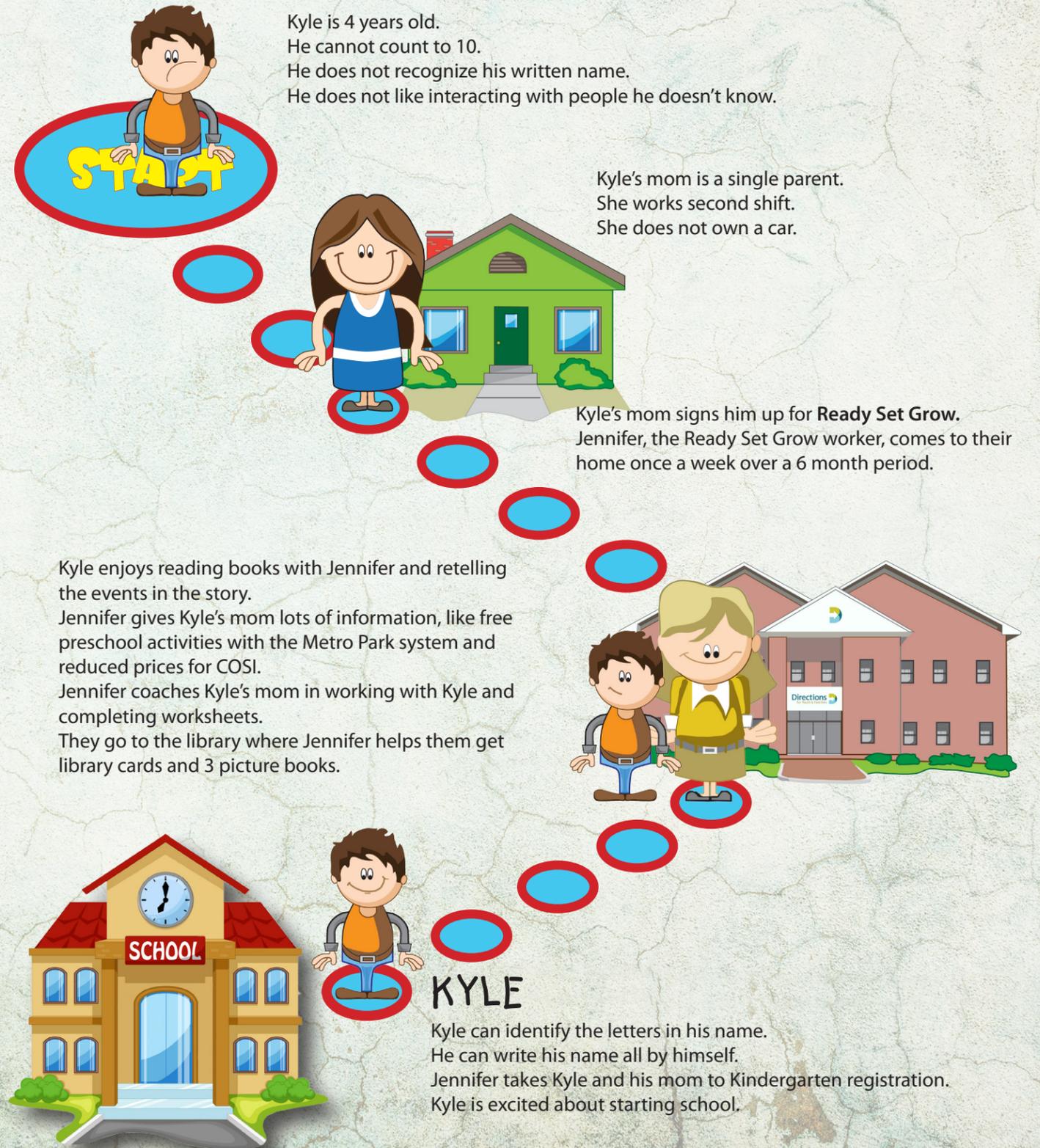
- I want to work on my relationship with my daughter.
- I think I finally realized that the anger between us was from our lack of bonding in the beginning. And from me treating her as more of a friend or sister than my daughter.
- I plan to enter counseling with my daughter in order to work on our relationship together.



About 85% of a child's capacity to learn is established by age 5.*

Ready Set Grow is an in-home kindergarten readiness program. We develop an individualized plan for each child and work with both child and parent/guardian in their home. The program not only includes child education but also assists parents with child development skills and connecting them with needed community resources.

*Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development by Rima Shore (NY: Families and Work Institute, 1997).

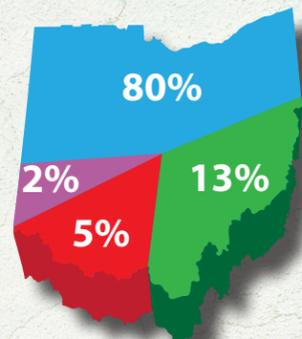


Clients Served in 2015

Counseling and Clinical Services:	4,605
Prevention, Education and After-School Programs:	2,920
Parenting and Early Childhood Programs:	355

Total Served: 7,880

Statement of Revenue and Expense for Fiscal Year 2015



Revenue:

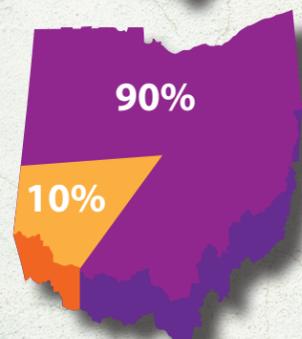
Government	\$6,219,981
United Way	\$1,012,960
Contributions	\$ 418,007
Other	\$ 158,433

Total Revenue \$7,767,182

Expense:

Program Services	\$6,810,505
Administrative & Fundraising	\$ 728,853

Total Expense \$7,539,358



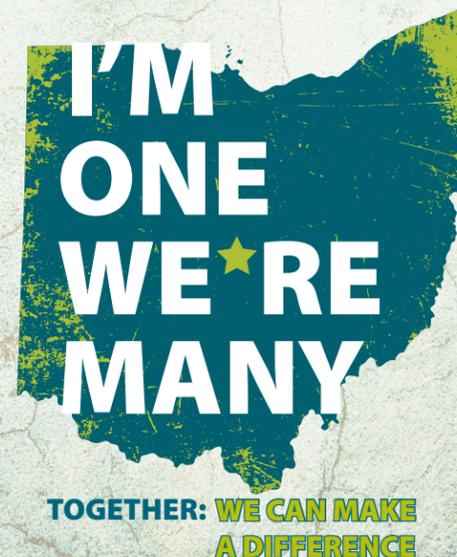
Support our Work to Help Youth and Families in Central Ohio

Your support is critical to the work we do to help young people and families in the community. Please consider making a donation to Directions for Youth & Families. Your donations support the vital programs and services that change lives.

You can donate on-line at www.dfyf.org, or send your gift to:

Directions for Youth & Families
Development Department
1515 Indianola Avenue
Columbus, OH 43201

Thank you for all you do to build strong, resilient youth in central Ohio!



78%

of 174 parents in the Positive Paths Parenting program increased their knowledge of parenting skills.

291

youth participated in programming at the Ohio Avenue After School program. These include Healthy Leaders and Life Skills groups, art, music, dance, recreation, homework help, and computer education.

93%

of the 1,262 youth completing the My Best Self program that encourages abstinence or delayed sexual activity, showed improvement in their ability to make responsible, informed decisions about relationships.

93%

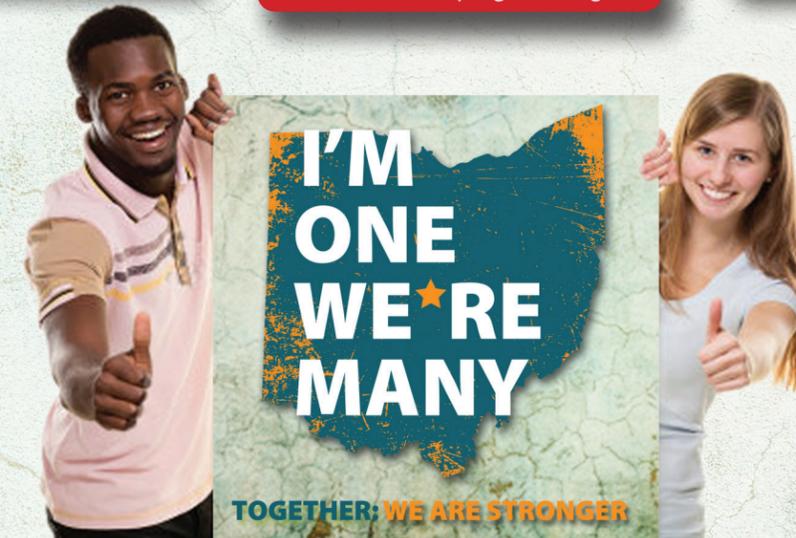
of 649 youth who completed the School Connections program, our partnership with South-Western City Schools, improved their school behavior and performance.

100%

of youth attending the new Crittenton Center After School program improved their overall feeling of self-esteem by participating in the prevention groups, homework help, dance, music and art programming.

87%

of the 1,672 youth completing services in the Outreach Counseling Program successfully completed their treatment goals.



1779

youth received mental health assessments through our partnerships with Columbus City Schools, South-Western City Schools and Delaware City Schools.

88%

of youth in our Teen Parent Connection program who are either pregnant or parenting, successfully completed services to improve parenting skills and improve daily living skills.

97%

of youth in the PROMISES program demonstrated improvement in their personal goals, decreasing the negative effects of sexual abuse.

88%

of youth and parents in the Ready, Set, Grow kindergarten readiness program improved their home environment and learned the skills necessary for the beginning of school.

83%

of youth in the Anger Management Options program displayed an improvement in functioning and emotional self-discipline.

93%

of 102 youth in the Children Who Witness Violence program and in the Children of Murdered Parents/Sibling program demonstrated improvement in coping skills and resilience factors.

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please pass it on to a friend. Thank you.

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