

Horizon

A newsletter for the community from
Columbiana County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board

School-based Care Team pilot puts emphasis on academics, attendance

A new collaborative approach to helping all students succeed in school is the goal of a pilot program which started this fall at Daw Middle School in Wellsville.

Called "CARE Team," the program is based on early identification of at-risk behavioral health problems and uses a team approach to coordinate efforts. Goals include increasing student success in academics, offering easily accessible early mental health intervention and providing family support.

What makes it different from other initiatives is the proactive, group approach to identify issues early and not let students "fall through the cracks."

Teachers play a key role in the process and take part in periodic meetings where they share their observations of student behavior, review attendance reports and discuss their students' academic progress.

This systemized approach allows teachers a venue to discuss their concerns and a way to share responsibility.

Students and families who may

need support services are referred to the CARE Team, a group which includes the school nurse, teachers, administrators and other district personnel, as well as a mental health therapist and mental health case managers from The Counseling Center.

Daw Principal **Dave Buzzard** says, "CARE Team is a safety net. We have to be proactive when issues arise, check on things and follow up. CARE Team

gives us a way to do that while looking at each student as a whole person."

Other initiatives include an after-school tutoring program where students receive a substantial snack. Buzzard is also a believer in exercise and fresh air for

middle school students and has added a lunch recess.

Another part of CARE team is a Truancy Prevention through Mediation program where families and the juvenile court work together. According to Buzzard, "Our attendance is already better and truancy rates have dropped."

Funded by a two-year Blueprint grant from the Ohio Department of Mental Health, the CARE Team model focuses on a partnership between high-need schools and mental health systems. Daw Middle School met the criteria and had already partnered with the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board and the Columbiana County Educational Services Center, as well as the Coordinated Action for School Health (CASH) Coalition.

"An important part of the Care Team initiative is that it provides a tool and a process to be imbedded into the school district," says ESC Superintendent **Anna Marie Vaughn**. "By removing some of the outside barriers to learning, it helps teachers teach and students achieve."



Meeting to discuss the Blueprint grant are front row from left: **Patricia Wagner**, MHRB Board; **Karen Arbogast**, Family & Children First Council; **Susan Ignelzi**, Center for Innovative Practices. Back row from left: **Dave Buzzard**, Daw Middle School principal; **Patricia Baumgartner**, MHRB Board Executive Director; **Janice Houchins**, Families & Children First Council Regional Coordinator.

A message from the Executive Director

The story behind the figures

Thousands of Columbiana County residents benefit from services provided by agencies funded by the MHRS Board. Our FY 2006 Annual Report enclosed in this issue gives you some of the highlights.

Our Board helps the community to "care for its own" by building a healthier community. We work with a variety of community-based agencies to promote prevention, education and treatment services and strive to keep families intact. We help people with serious mental illnesses and addictions, as well as others who are facing life's challenges. Thank you again for your support.

Mental Health Parity Bill helps end discrimination

After years of consideration, the state legislature approved a bill to help end discriminatory health insurance coverage of mental illness. Former Governor **Bob Taft** signed it on December 29. This new law requires health insurance coverage of mental illnesses at the same level as physical illnesses and prohibits discriminatory annual and lifetime dollar caps for mental health benefits. Advocates from Columbiana County and statewide are celebrating the passage of this landmark parity legislation.



Patricia A. Baumgarner
Executive Director

Wraparound team coordinates support for families in crisis

When families face complex problems which could result in an out-of-home placement for their child, Wraparound could be the answer.

According to Karen Arbogast, Family & Children First Council Coordinator, "Wraparound is all about assembling a team of professional and informal supports to help families who are facing serious problems. This team creates a plan that identifies, mobilizes and coordinates a variety of community services and supports."

What makes Wraparound unique? A trained facilitator works directly with a family through the entire process while a team of family, friends, neighbors, teachers, counselors, ministers and anyone who knows the child well helps develop a plan. Some teams might include representatives from Children's Services, Juvenile Court or mental health agencies depending on the situation.

"In Columbiana County, we collaborate to offer resources to help families in crisis," Arbogast explains. "But what we've learned is that pulling all the services and supports together and communicating with all the different agencies is not easy for people in these difficult situations."

That's where Wraparound facilitators come in. They have the expertise and training to keep families on track and together while troubleshooting problems.

Wraparound is funded by the Columbiana County Department of Job and Family Services and the



The Wraparound team gathers before the holidays. Front row from left: Amy Brestelli, Department of JFS and Children's Services; Sonya Stalker, Juvenile Court Placement Officer; Becky Nelis, FCFC Wraparound Supervisor; Karen Arbogast, Family & Children First Coordinator. Back row from left: Rebecca Young, Wraparound Facilitator, Family & Children First Council; Sherri McKinney-Frantz, Stark County Wraparound consultant; Ann Weigle, Wraparound Facilitator, Juvenile Court.

Columbiana County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board and implemented through the Family and Children First Council.

Two full-time, as well as two part-time, facilitators from local agencies, provide services.

For more information or to make a Wraparound referral, call the Columbiana County Family & Children First Council at 330-424-0195.

Bullying prevention program in 7 area schools; Addresses serious problem for children, teens

Bullying and peer harassment among children and teens is a serious problem. In fact, according to the American Medical Association, approximately 3.7 million children are engaged in bullying behaviors and more than 3.2 million are victims of moderate or serious bullying each year.

Students who are bullied may fear going to school, riding the bus or even using the bathroom. Those children who are bullied are more likely to be depressed, lonely and anxious, have low self-esteem, feel unwell and think about suicide. Long term consequences for victims and bullies are serious.

As part of school mental health needs assessments in Columbiana County, schools themselves identified bullying as a problem.

Seven area schools from six county districts currently participate in the Olweus Bullying Prevention program, funded by the Blueprint grant. Developed by a Norwegian professor, the evidence-based program requires staff training and a school-wide commitment by administrators and teachers.

"Bullying can be a component of youth suicides, and our schools are waking up and becoming proactive," explains **Patricia Baumgarner**, Executive Director of the MHRS Board. "Some statistics show that bullying can be a bigger issue in rural schools than in urban areas."

Did you know?

- Studies show that between 15 to 25 percent of U.S. students are bullied with some frequency.
- By self-report, boys are more likely than girls to bully others.
- Adults, including teachers, are often unaware of bullying problems.
- One study shows that each day over 100,000 children avoid school due to physical and emotional bullying.
- Children who bully very often bully as adults. Bullying behavior is linked with drug and alcohol abuse and violent behavior.



What is bullying?

Bullying and peer harassment is a series of repeated and deliberate aggressive behaviors perpetrated by an individual or group on another person to gain a sense of power over a victim. It can include:

- **Verbal abuse** – name calling, teasing, put downs and swearing.
- **Emotional aggression** – spreading rumors, gossiping, exclusion, extortion, intimidation and threats.
- **Physical abuse** – punching, hitting, kicking and tripping.
- **Sexual harassment** – sexual comments or innuendo, touching, grabbing or coercion.

What can parents do?

Talk frequently with your child about problems with bullying. Adults are often unaware because most children and teens do not report it. They may fear retaliation by the bullies, that adults won't take their concerns seriously or will deal inappropriately with the situation.

Ask your child's principal about a bullying prevention program in your school.



Recovery volunteers recognized at luncheon

In November, 2006, Columbiana County residents recovering with mental illnesses who volunteer to promote recovery for all residents with mental illnesses were honored at the third annual Recovery Appreciation Luncheon at Das Dutch Haus in Columbiana. Over 30 people who serve as BRIDGES teachers, WRAP facilitators, peer outreach volunteers, support group leaders, community board members, and recovery workgroup members were recognized for their contributions. Pictured front row from left: **Maureen Boals** and **Rachelle Lovier**. Back row from left: **Eunice Burkey**, **William Hood**, **Sherry Pierson**.

Mental Health and Recovery Services Board Members

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CONTRACT AGENCIES OF THE MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES BOARD

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Provides adult role models to help children from single parent homes.
330-424-0653

The Counseling Center

Provides comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services.
330-424-9573

Family Recovery Center

Provides comprehensive counseling and treatment for chemical dependency and mental health problems.
330-424-1468

Help Hotline Crisis Center, Inc.

24-hours a day, 7-days a week
 Crisis Intervention.
800-427-3606 or 330-424-7767

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Columbiana County

Provides support to families of persons with mental illness.
 Combats the stigma associated with mental illness.
330-332-4284

Neil Kennedy Recovery Clinic

Provides inpatient detoxification services and access to residential treatment.
800-228-8287

Shining Reflections

Provides consumers of mental health services with peer support and opportunities to work.
**Voc. Program 866-985-8000
 or 330-385-7000**

The Columbiana County MHRS Board will not discriminate because of race, ethnicity, religion, color, creed, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, lifestyle, physical or mental handicap, developmental disability, HIV infection, AIDS related complex, AIDS or the ability to pay.

This newsletter is available in PDF format by calling the Board office at 330-424-0195 with your email address.

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Serving Columbiana County Since 1969



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