

Newsletter

Building Ohio's Future

Happy New Year!

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Policy Team Focuses on Youth and Young Adults in Transition

-- by Kathy Coate-Ortiz,
ODMH Office of Children's Services

In September 2008, the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) was awarded a technical assistance grant from the National Policy Academy of Georgetown University. After participation in training in Washington, DC, and in collaboration with several statewide partners, the Ohio Youth and Young Adults in Transition (Y/YAT) Policy Team was developed. The team's target population is youth and young adults 14 to 25 years old with mental health needs, regardless of status, system or diagnosis. The group's mission is to develop and implement seamless treatment, supports and services that result in improved outcomes for this population through an inclusive process driven by young people.

The Ohio Y/YAT Policy Team identified three goals as the focus of their work through the grant period (September 2008 – September 2009) and beyond:

- o *Goal 1: Launch a state-supported and youth-guided interagency group to develop and evaluate policy that supports youth and young adults in transition.*

Our policy team included more than 20 representatives including youth/young adult members who provided valuable input and recommendations. The team is now transitioning into an oversight committee that will provide input to ODMH and collaborate with other partners.

- o *Goal 2: Develop standards of practice and technical supports for incorporating comprehensive and youth driven transition planning within individualized services plans.*

The team provided recommendations for child- and adult-serving systems to better enable them to transition youth and young adults within their systems. Boards and agencies are encouraged to review and adopt these recommendations for use within their local systems. The team also encourages national accreditation organizations to adopt standards that require agencies to develop transition plans for this population. ODMH will monitor the status of these accreditation standards.

- o *Goal 3: Address the continuity of benefits for young adults with Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED)/Severe Mental Disability (SMD).*

To address this issue, Ohio's policy team asked the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to research options for a Medicaid waiver. We are aware that this option will take time. In the meantime, we will monitor the federal government's progress on universal health care that would include young adults.

For more information contact Kathy Coate-Ortiz at kathy.coate-ortiz@mh.ohio.gov

ODMH Office of Children's Services experiences staff changes for 2010

Due to budget reductions, former System of Care lead Diane Nutter was unfortunately among the ODMH staff who were subject to lay-off. We welcome Linda Garrick, who has transferred to the Children's Office as part of reorganization. Linda comes to us with 14 years of state service, serving most recently in the ODMH Forensic Office.



Ted Strickland, Governor
Sandra Stephenson, Director

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<http://mentalhealth.ohio.gov/what-we-do/provide/children-youth-and-families/>

Innovative Local Programs Help Youth and Young Adults in Transition

We would like to share brief information about the innovative programs that some Ohio counties have developed to meet the housing, employment, education, service and support needs of youth and young adults who require behavioral health services as they transition into adulthood.

Cuyahoga County: Beech Brook's Transitional Youth Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team uses a high-fidelity, multidisciplinary team approach to provide comprehensive, community-based services for youth and young adults. The intent is to maximize each individual's recovery and to promote success in employment, housing and the community. People served have a primary diagnosis of schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder or major depressive disorder recurrent and have high service needs as evidenced by psychiatric hospitalizations, frequent use of psychiatric emergency services, and/or stays in residential treatment or therapeutic foster care. They are experiencing moderate to major functional impairment in the areas of activities of daily living, employment, education, homemaking, and/or social, community, interpersonal functioning and have symptoms of severe mental illness that have not responded to traditional treatment.

Franklin County: North Central Mental Health Center's Transitional Community Treatment Team was the first transitional community treatment team for adolescents in America when it was established in 1990. It was selected as the "Best Special Program in America" by the National Council for Community Behavioral Health in 1993. Some of the defining features of North Central's successful adolescent transition teams include a well-coordinated multidisciplinary approach founded on ACT principles. Team membership consists of a psychiatrist, nurse, team leader, team counselor (dually trained) and case managers. The program employs younger staff (most in their twenties) who relate well to this population. There is a strong staff training component, so they are well-versed in adolescent development and treatment strategies. The program philosophy strikes

an effective balance between a youth system orientation encompassing the person- and family-centered approach, and a young adult approach of adolescent empowerment, responsibility and developmental autonomy. Most services are provided in the community, in natural settings to promote normalization. Team meetings are held three mornings per week to insure tight communication and coordination of care. Flexible staff scheduling can meet individual youth needs, with 24 hour crisis supports at all times. The program also focuses on emancipating adolescents into safe, affordable housing arrangements.

Hamilton County: Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Service's Transitional Youth Program (TYP) is an intensive case management service that assists youth/young adults ages 16-22 in making a successful transition from the children's mental health system to adulthood. TYP serves clients who have severe mental illness and have the potential to live independently. The program offers interventions including supported apartments, training in job readiness, interpersonal skills and parenting, coordination for alternative schooling and psychiatric assessment.

In addition to case management, TYP offers individual counseling and peer mentoring. The peer mentor assists clients in building natural supports in the community.

Lucas County: The Transitional Living program at Harbour Behavioral Health serves youth ages 17.5 to 25 who are forced into adulthood because of abandonment, domestic violence, abuse or mental health issues. All clients participate voluntarily in the six- to 18-month program and must display an ability to learn various skills that are necessary to attain independence. The first goal is to stabilize the clients' housing needs. Short-term emergency placement is available if needed. Basic skills (budgeting, cooking, cleaning, hygiene, accessing community resources, etc.) are assessed and further developed to insure independence. Clients are aided in obtaining all adult documentation, such as state ID, social security card and birth certificate. Case managers and mentors work with youth to set, monitor and reach educational goals. They also link clients to community resources and agencies, and assist clients

Our community will recognize and respond to the voice, value and potential of every young man and woman as we work in partnership toward successful transitions into adult life.

Mission of the Stark County S.I.T.T. Program

in identifying permanent and appropriate housing in Toledo. Prior to case closure, clients are monitored for a three-month period to assure stability in home, work and school. They are subsequently linked to Adult Services.

Stark County: S.I.T.T. (Stark Intra-System Transition Team) was initiated in September 2004 by a group of service providers looking for solutions to the increasing number of 18 year olds presenting without housing, employment, life skills or sufficient supportive services. This (initially) small group has grown to include representatives from mental health, children's services, juvenile court, substitute caregivers, education, alcohol and drug treatment, social services, and most importantly, the young population. The program's vision is that every young man and woman in Stark County will have the skills, opportunities, resources and support they need to successfully transition into adult life. The mission states: "Our community will recognize and respond to the voice, value and potential of every young man and woman as we work in partnership toward successful transitions into adult life." The monthly agenda focuses on the areas of most concern as voiced by the young people themselves, such as housing, employment, mentoring, education, advocacy, leadership development and communication.

Trumbull County: Valley Counseling Services, Inc. created the H.E.A.R.T.S. Program in 2007 to provide specialized services to youth and young adults in transition. Participants in the program chose the name which stands for "Helping Early Adults Reach Their Success." The program is composed of case management services and therapeutic groups. Each person enrolled can receive one or both of these services depending upon their needs and choices. H.E.A.R.T.S. assists young people in transitioning successfully to adulthood by supporting them in achieving their goals in for education, employment,

living situation and community life. The therapeutic groups focus specifically on needs in the area of community life. Each young person establishes his/her own goals that they hope to achieve through the group. The topics for this curriculum include daily living, leisure activities, community participation, self determination, communication and interpersonal relationships. Groups are offered at Valley Counseling sites and at local schools.

ODMH Study Results of Transition Age Youth Served in SFY2008

-- by Carol Carstens, ODMH Office of Research and Evaluation

In order to assist the Ohio Y/YAT Policy Team (see story on page one) with information necessary for policy development and program planning, ODMH's Office of Research and Evaluation analyzed records for 107,737 consumers between the ages of 14-24.9 who received services in SFY 2008. The analyzed records are from the Multi-Agency Community Services Information System (MACSIS), an automated payment and management information database of outpatient behavioral health care services for both Medicaid paid and non-Medicaid paid services.

The following highlights from those analyses describe distributions of youth and young adult consumers by insurance coverage and by gender and race. A full "Snapshot of Transition" report can be found at: mentalhealth.ohio.gov/what-we-do/promote/research-and-evaluation/publications/evaluation-reports.shtml.

The first analysis asked, "How many 14 through 24.9 year old consumers accessed mental health services by type of insurance coverage?"

Table 1 (see next page) shows the distribution of 107,737 consumers between the age of 14 and 24.9 who received mental health services in SFY 2008. The category "MCD_Yes" means the consumer was

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NEW! Office of Children's Services Transition-Age Youth web page at

<http://mentalhealth.ohio.gov/what-we-do/provide/children-youth-and-families/transition-age/index.shtml>

Medicaid eligible at the time of service delivery. The category “MCD_No” means the consumer was covered by other sources of funding at the time of service. Other Funds Coverage included levy or general revenue funds (GRF). This latter group of transition age youth (TAY) accounted for 33 percent of the total (N = 322,372) consumers served by public mental health providers in SFY 2008. The 14 through 17.9 age group accounts for over half (55 percent) of the total 108,118 child and adolescent consumers, while the 19 through 24.9 age group accounts for only 20 percent of the total 217,109 adult and older adult consumers served that year.

Medicaid coverage ranges between 76 and 80 percent among TAY consumers in the 14 through 17 age bands. After dropping off to 70 percent of all 18-year-old consumers, Medicaid coverage ranges between a low of 47 percent and a high of 56 percent among TAY consumers in the 19 through 24 age bands. This drop-off is an expected result of loss of Medicaid eligibility at age 18, but the fairly stable number of TAY consumers in all age categories covered by Other Funds is remarkable. Similar to those covered by Medicaid, there is clearly a loss of the total number of 18-year-old consumers covered by Other Funds. Nevertheless, this loss in total numbers is much smaller relative to the Medicaid coverage drop-off, and the proportion of those covered by Other Funds rises to 30 percent (N = 2379) among 18-year-olds from a low of 19 percent (N = 2910) among the 14-year-olds. The proportion of TAY consumers covered by Other Funds reaches a high of 53 percent among the 21-year-olds.

A second analysis asked, “What is the gender and race distribution of TAY consumers by age?” Table 2 (at right) shows the proportion of race categories for male TAY consumers. The proportion of African-American males ranges from a high of 28.1 percent of all 14-year-old male consumers to a low of 17.7 percent of 23-year-olds. This bar chart does not show the drop in consumers that occurs at age 18 (as seen in Table 1); however, it highlights the disproportionate frequency at which African-American males drop out of services between age 18 and 23, when compared to White and Other male consumers. The “Other” category in this analysis includes Asian, Hispanic, and unknown racial/ethnic background.

Table 3 shows the proportion of race categories for female TAY consumers. The proportion of African-American females ranges from a high of 30.4 percent of female all 14-year-old consumers to a low of 17.3 percent of 22-year-olds. This bar chart does not show the drop in consumers that occurs at age 18 (as seen

in Table 1); however, it highlights the disproportionate frequency at which African-American females drop out of services between age 18 and 23, when compared to White and Other female consumers.

Table 1. Insurance Coverage

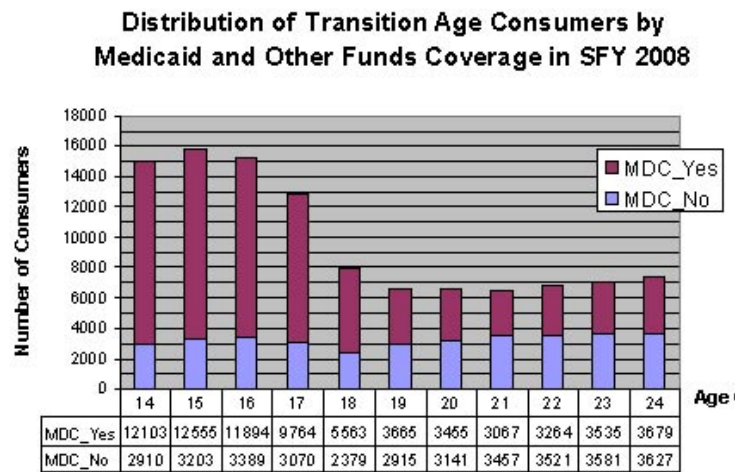


Table 2. Male TAY Consumers

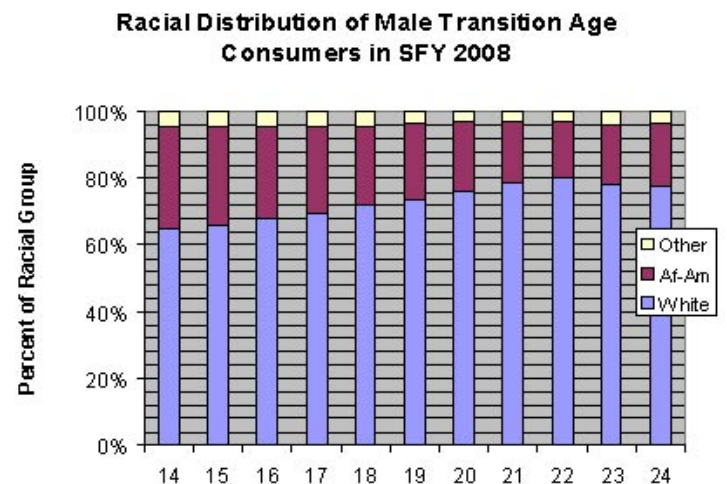
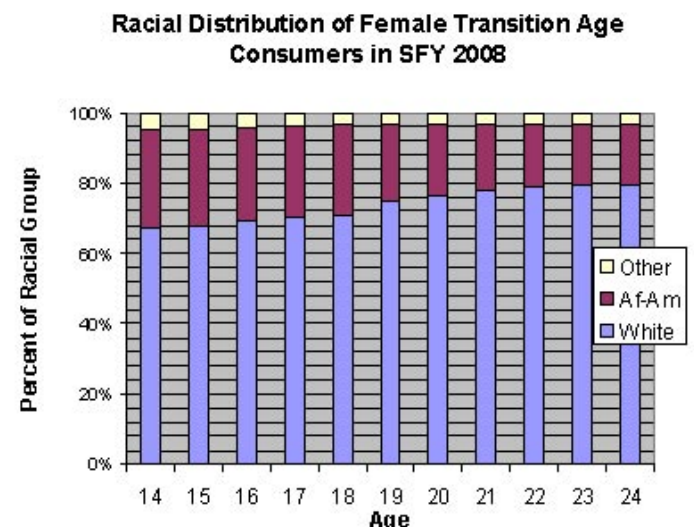


Table 3. Female TAY Consumers



Nine Million Grant Awarded to Clermont County to Help Children In Need

“This is a great day for Clermont County children and their families,” said Clermont Department of Job and Family Services (DJFS) Director Tim McCartney after the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration selected the Clermont County Mental Health and Recovery Board (MHRB) as one of 19 agencies from across the country to receive multi-million dollar grants to develop and expand care systems for children and youth with serious emotional disturbances.

“The MHRB will receive an almost \$9 million grant to expand programs to help young people, between the ages of 3 and 21, with emotional and behavioral problems,” said Clermont MHRB Director Karen Scherra. “It is the largest grant we’ve ever received!” The grant was submitted in collaboration with the Clermont DJFS, Family and Children First, Clermont Juvenile Court, and other local providers and child-service agencies. Grant monies will be divided over six years.

“This grant comes at a time when our agency and many of our partner agencies are experiencing budget cuts and are concerned about the impact service cuts will have on the children and families

they serve,” said Scherra. “This grant will enable us to meet some of those needs, providing new and enhanced services. Our goal is to intervene early when a child has mental health issues that, if left untreated, could lead to severe problems later in life.” Scherra said the first year of the grant will focus on strategic planning, and hiring and training around 29 administrative and clinical staff members.

“All children and families deserve to receive the services they need, when and where they need them, and to be on a “fast track” to success,” said Family and Children First Project Director Gretchen Behimer. The so-called FAST TRAC strategy will be utilized to provide additional screening, consultation, and treatment of mental health problems for children in preschools and daycare facilities. It will also enhance school-based and home-based prevention and treatment services, provide specialized treatment services for youth (aged 16 to 21), and include respite and other support for families.

For details, contact Clermont County Communications Director Kathryn Lehr at (513) 732-7597 or by e-mail, klehr@co.clermont.oh.us.

Hamilton County Board Awarded \$9 Million Federal Grant to Serve Youth

The Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board (MHRSB) has been awarded a \$9 million, six-year federal grant by the Center for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to serve youth, ages 14-21, with serious emotional disturbances. The grant will fund a new project called Journey to Successful Living (JOURNEY), which will strategically build upon an existing partnership between the mental health and substance abuse system, child welfare system, juvenile justice system, and/or mental retardation and developmental disability system. This is the largest grant ever received by the Hamilton County MHRSB.

Patrick Tribbe, President and CEO of the Hamilton County MHRSB, said, “The grant will help develop a system of care for youth who are dealing with difficult adolescent years and, at the same time, coping with their mental illness.”

The grant will fund one year of planning for JOURNEY and five years of implementation. During the planning year, JOURNEY will involve additional partners from schools, social service agencies and the business community. One partner, Moira Wehr, Director of Hamilton County Department of Job and

Family Services, stated, “It is exciting to have a project that will benefit the youth and families we serve.”

A feature of the grant will be the participation of youth and families from the planning stage to policy development and comprehensive service planning, which is designed to address behavioral health, education, employment, housing, finances, health insurance and physical health.

Diana McIntosh, Vice President of Clinical Services with the board, who will oversee the grant, said, “This grant will transform the way mental health services will be integrated and specifically targeted to meet the needs of youth, ages 14-21, and their families.” For more information contact McIntosh at (513) 946-8603 or by e-mail, dianam@hamilton.mhrsb.state.oh.us.

Visit the new ODMH Transition-Age Youth web page at

<http://mentalhealth.ohio.gov/what-we-do/provide/children-youth-and-families/transition-age/index.shtml>