

APPALACHIAN CHILDREN COALITION PRIORITIZED AREAS OF REGIONAL INVESTMENT IN CHILD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENTS

PRIORITY 1 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT | \$10 MILLION

Expand behavioral health workforce through enhanced training and support

- Create a training collaborative for community health workers, patient navigators, chemical dependency counseling assistants, child development assistants, and other paraprofessionals with free training provided to up to 700 individuals
- Establish a career impact loan fund to provide no-interest, repayable up-front educational costs for those seeking behavioral health careers
- Provide funding for multiple institutions to collaborate on new, more streamlined curricular pathways to careers in behavioral health

(Key Partners: Appalachian region community colleges, training providers, Ohio University, Building Bridges 2 Careers)

PRIORITY 2 SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS | \$10 MILLION

Provide local health services to children in remote, underserved areas

- Establish up to 15 school-based health clinics connected to a network of other schools through telehealth capacity
- Develop out-of-school programs to support emotional well-being and offset COVID-related deficits

(Key Partners: Nationwide Children's Hospital, Hopewell Health Centers, SE Ohio Museum Complex, Boys and Girls Clubs of Ohio)

PRIORITY 3 CRISIS STABILIZATION SERVICES | \$5 MILLION

Provide local support for children in mental health crisis and promote in-home treatment

- Create a 16-bed crisis stabilization unit to serve children in 13 Eastern Ohio counties
- Provide wraparound services for children and families
- Provide enhanced recruitment, training, and support for therapeutic foster parents to offset a near total lack of such placements in the region
- Develop an Appalachian Foster Care Resource Center
- Generate 20-30 new therapeutic foster care placements in the Appalachian region
- Increase CASA programming to 10 additional Appalachian counties
- Create technical assistance resources for county courts to utilize in developing new CASA programs
- Develop a regional CASA program coordination model to reduce costs and increase effectiveness of county programs

(Key Partners: 4 regional ADAMH Boards, Ohio CASA Association, County Children's Services agencies, county courts)

PRIORITY 4 DATA TO SUPPORT DECISION-MAKING | \$5 MILLION

Generate knowledge and data to support local and state agencies in decision-making about Appalachian child health

- Establish the Center on the Appalachian Child to gather and distribute data on Appalachian child health issues
- Conduct child behavioral health needs assessments in all 32 Appalachian counties
- Develop a freely-accessible, searchable, regularly-updated database of child health indicators to support decision-making regarding programs and investments in the region
- Provide program evaluation and community assessment support to schools, ADAMH boards, and other local entities

(Key Partners: Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Mental Health, Nine area ADAMH boards, Ohio University)



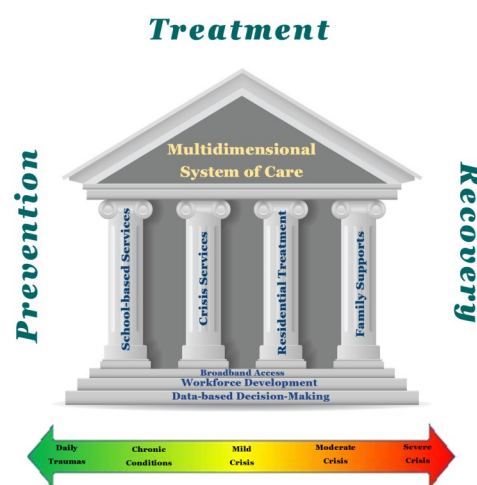
APPALACHIAN CHILDREN COALITION MULTIDIMENSIONAL SYSTEM OF CARE MODEL

Positive behavioral health outcomes are achieved through systemic investments in prevention, treatment, and recovery programming that reflect multidimensional, integrated services and supports for children and families. Such a system includes foundational elements upon which areas of service delivery are built and services that reflect high degrees of engagement, collaboration, and innovation.

These recommendations for one-time investment would lay the foundation on which a systemic prevention, treatment, and recovery model can be built. Children's problems are complex and solutions must be equally so. A true systemic model includes a number of foundational focal areas on which are built specific areas of investment to bring about change. The recommendations we advance are connected to the various elements of the model described below.

A systemic model of prevention, treatment, and recovery activities reflects:

1. **A continuum of children** from those who deal with daily traumas to those experiencing the most severe mental health crisis. A systemic approach provides prevention, treatment, and recovery services to children regardless of where they exist on this continuum.
2. **Three critical foundations:** 1) enhancements to broadband as a key access tool, 2) deliberate efforts to grow and enhance the behavioral and mental health workforce, and 3) generation of data at the population and program levels to support decision-making and ongoing investment strategies. **Each of these is an area of critical deficit in the Appalachian Ohio region.**
3. **Services across four domains:** a) school-based services delivered through local and telehealth models, b) a range of non-residential crisis services targeted to children and their families, c) residential treatment options for children facing the most severe crises, and d) supports for children's families and those who provide foster care in the face of family pathologies.
4. **Multidimensional system of care** that is responsive to the needs of Appalachian youth in its attention to prevention, treatment, and recovery supports, with involvement by schools, primary care, behavioral mental health, juvenile justice, and social services with each providing appropriate resources in partnership with one another. The Appalachian Children Coalition consulted local and regional experts in all those disciplines in formulation of this investment list.



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APPALACHIAN CHILDREN COALITION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: \$10 MILLION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

This investment would result in a number of educational and infrastructure resources to contribute to the recruitment and retention of behavioral health workforce in the Appalachian region. Funds would be used to create a Workforce Development collaborative to provide accessible training programs from participating providers for community health workers, patient navigators, case managers, chemical dependency counselor assistants, and other paraprofessionals; establish a revolving educational loan fund for those who wish to become behavioral health professionals in the Appalachian Ohio region; develop streamlined educational pathways to behavioral health careers; undertake outreach to high schools and displaced workers; and develop curriculum and training to allow current professionals to upgrade their credentials and scope of practice so as to advance in the behavioral health career sector. Funds would also be used to support a set of incentives to encourage those entering into or remaining in the behavioral health workforce to practice in underserved areas of Appalachian Ohio.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Improve support for recruitment and retention of behavioral health workforce
- Create streamlined educational pathways to behavioral health occupations
- Provide a range of accessible, free training programs for paraprofessionals
- Provide support to eliminate up-front costs for new professionals
- Develop incentives for behavioral health professionals to work in Appalachian Ohio

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- Create a consortium of behavioral health training resources to provide accessible training programs for community health workers, patient navigators, chemical dependency counselor assistants, and other paraprofessionals
- Develop and present curriculum to allow those in the health workforce to upgrade their credentials and scope of practice
- Develop a streamlined, seamless educational pipeline model to facilitate more rapid entry into behavioral health occupation
- Establish a revolving loan fund to be available to cover up-front costs associated with training and education so as to facilitate movement into behavioral health positions with repayment after hiring.

Key Partners: **Area Universities, Community Colleges and Training Providers**
Ohio Alliance for Population Health
Building Bridges 2 Careers

Alignment to State Goals

A shortage of behavioral health workers represents the single greatest challenge in meeting the needs of children in the Appalachian region. Several hundred professional and paraprofessional positions are unfilled and providers across the region report that they cannot find workers and many report losing workers to other organizations. This represents both a challenge and an opportunity. On the one hand, behavioral health services and supports are limited by the lack of adequate workforce. On the other hand, the large number of available professional and paraprofessional positions represent an economic development opportunity for the region. This investment would both address this challenge and create movement toward this opportunity. In those respects, it aligns with the State of Ohio's priority on economic development and job creation. It would also stand as a recruitment tool to draw additional population to the region.



APPALACHIAN CHILDREN COALITION

SCHOOL-HEALTH SERVICES: \$10 MILLION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Schools represent a particularly effective platform to bring local access to health services to children without providers in their home communities. This investment would result in the development of up to fifteen additional school-based clinics to deliver primary care and behavioral mental health services in areas using a “hub and spoke” model. On-site clinics would be established at a school location in each of the participating districts and telehealth resources would be used to extend access to appropriate services at other locations in those districts. These clinics and connected sites would provide a range of pediatric primary care and behavioral mental health services along with selected dental and vision care. The investment would also support the development of a workforce to fill positions in newly-established clinics. Clinics would be financially sustainable through the delivery of reimbursable care services. The recommended investment would cover one-time start-up costs associated with clinic development, expansion of telehealth capacity in participating districts, and short-term costs associated with developing an expanded workforce to fill clinic positions.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Provide local access to healthcare services not effectively delivered through telehealth.
- Establish integrated systems of school-based care in **15** Appalachian school districts with demonstrated need
- Establish a network of rural school health teams (including providers and districts) to support sustainability and to ensure long-term success of school-based health partnerships
- Ensure technical assistance is available to teams to support the planning and implementation of integrated school-based health systems

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- Implement an effective and efficient patient care delivery system.
- Award 10-15 Primary Care Providers **\$500,000** in grant funding upon completion of the NCH School Health Learning Collaborative
- Create a “hub and spoke” model connecting school health clinics to other schools through telehealth delivery
- Develop and convene a network of rural school health providers and districts and establish shared evaluation metrics for future success

Key Partners:

Nationwide Children’s Hospital
Hopewell Health Centers

Akron Children’s Hospital
Participating schools and local providers

Alignment to State Goals

Children and families living in rural areas of the State of Ohio are challenged by a lack of access to local healthcare resources, resulting in a demand for considerable travel by those who live in those communities to receive services. In many small, rural communities, schools represent the most viable access point for the delivery of services. This investment aligns with a State of Ohio commitment to expand access to healthcare services across primary care, behavioral health, dental care, and vision care for children and families. It would result in the building of long-term, sustainable health and wellbeing partnerships into our educational systems. Integrated systems of school-based care will combat the long-term effects of the pandemic by increasing access to both primary care and behavioral health services while also addressing health equity.



APPALACHIAN CHILDREN COALITION

CRISIS SERVICES: \$5 MILLION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Appalachian region exhibits a distinct lack of both immediate intervention and long-term support services for children in crisis. These children are often dealt with through law enforcement and/or emergency rooms rather than through the behavioral mental health system and often either do not receive adequate follow-up care or must be sent hours away from their homes to receive such care. In some cases, children are sent hundreds of miles away for services; representing both a traumatic shift for children and an expensive proposition for counties. This investment would support a set of services to assure that children in crisis could remain near their communities and supportive individuals in their lives. Included are:

- The development of a Child Crisis Stabilization Unit in eastern Ohio to serve children from across the SE Ohio region and planning for additional facilities and services in other parts of the Appalachian region. The Eastern Ohio project would include a 16-bed short-term treatment facility for children 8-21 who are experiencing a mental health crisis that could lead to out of home placement or hospitalization. A set of immediate crisis response and wraparound services would also be developed. Individual, family and group therapy along with psychiatric and case management. In addition to the above facilities, planning support and technical assistance would be offered to other ADAMH boards to promote development of crisis intervention services.
- The creation of a regional foster parenting support structure to promote recruitment and retention of therapeutic foster placements in the region and enhanced support and navigation services for kinship caregivers.
- Provision of technical assistance to courts develop new CASA programs in counties in which they do not exist and to enhance services in those programs that do exist.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Expand regional availability of short-term crisis stabilization services for children
- Provide supports to law enforcement and other community agencies in dealing with youth in crisis
- Expand therapeutic foster care placements in areas of the region where placements are lacking.
- Provide supports to grandparents and other kinship caregivers struggling to meet the needs of the children who have entered their custody
- Provide technical assistance to courts interested in developing or expanding CASA programs

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- Expansion of short-term crisis stabilization services across 14 counties including 32 short-term crisis stabilization placements
- Facilitate up to 20 therapeutic foster placements in the region.
- Create a navigator program to assist kinship caregivers in finding the resources they need to care for the children placed with them.
- Develop a technical assistance service available to courts to promote development and/or enhancement of CASA programs.

Key Partners:

4 regional ADAMH boards

OhioKAN

Coleman Services for Behavioral Health

Ohio CASA Association

Alignment to State Goals

In Southeast Ohio, there are substantial gaps in resources to meet the needs of the children who are experiencing more extreme behavioral health crises. Often, immediate, intensive, short-term crisis intervention means the difference between being able to keep a child in their home versus placing them in expensive foster care or residential treatment programs. When longer-term intervention is required, there are a lack of placements and supports for foster parents and a lack of support for children engaged who are the subject of custody proceedings. Crisis intervention, then, is a lynchpin of an effective continuity of care model that promotes family stability. These options are most salient in terms of addressing youth with multisystem needs. For Ohio RISE to be impactful in the lives of children across Ohio, it will be important that all children have access to the array of services to stabilize their behavioral issues, provide ongoing treatment and support, and to instill some sense of permanency in their living arrangements. This investment would result in a set of services that would fill a critical gap in the behavioral mental health ecosystem in Southeast Ohio—stabilization for children in crisis so that they can be addressed through a variety of treatment and service options.



APPALACHIAN CHILDREN COALITION DATA TO SUPPORT PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING: \$5 MILLION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Informants throughout the region and across State agencies have identified a lack of information on Appalachian children as a significant hindrance to progress in developing impactful behavioral mental health interventions. The requested \$1.5 million would fund the creation of the Appalachian Child and Family Data Support Center to offset this deficit. The center would aggregate data on child health and well-being measures from various local, state, and federal sources and build and maintain a database that would support the development of profiles of children at the community, county, and regional levels so as to support strategic planning and decision-making by child-serving entities and local governments. It would also design and conduct community assessments of needs and resources associated with child health and well-being across 25 Appalachian counties available to ADAMH boards, educational service centers, behavioral mental health providers, schools, social service agencies, and juvenile justice organizations to design and conduct rigorous evaluations of programs and other activities to assess their efficacy in enhancing child outcomes and to inform decisions regarding best practice models.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Provide accessible, searchable data profiles of children and families in the Appalachian region.
- Provide a resource to conduct assessments of community needs and resources related to child health and well-being.
- Provide program evaluation services to organizations that do not have the resources to analyze outcomes associated with their activities.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- Develop and maintain a searchable database of metrics on child health and well-being including data from multiple local, state, and federal sources.
- Conduct and/or enhance community assessments of needs and resources associated with child health and well-being in 25 Appalachian counties in support of various State initiatives
- Program evaluation support available to ADAMH boards, educational service centers, behavioral mental health providers, schools, social service agencies, and juvenile justice organizations

Key Partners: Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership & Public Affairs
Ohio Alliance for Population Health

Alignment to State Goals

Officials in the State Departments of Education, Health, and Mental Health & Addiction Services have all identified a lack of data on Appalachian children as a significant hindrance to progress in the region. Each of those agencies has indicated strong interest in the development of a database on Appalachian children and families to support their work. State officials have also expressed concern regarding the lack of capacity in the region to conduct meaningful, locally-informed community assessments of needs and capacities related to child health and well-being and a lack of clear data on the impact of programmatic investments on child outcomes. While there are a number of centers (often located at universities) focused on aspects of children and families, none of these focus specifically on Appalachian youth nor do they offer direct support to communities or agencies in conducting assessments and evaluations. This data generation would support investment decision-making in each of the State of Ohio priority programs focused on child well-being.

