

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Community Invited to Free Mental Health Awareness Symposium Featuring Lima Native Seth Gehle

Hosted by Big Brothers Big Sisters of West Central Ohio and CASA | Crime Victim Services in Partnership with Perry Local Schools and the Ohio Department of Youth Services


LIMA, OH — Big Brothers Big Sisters of West Central Ohio, in partnership with CASA | Crime Victim Services, Perry Local Schools, and the Ohio Department of Youth Services, is proud to announce a Mental Health Awareness Symposium on Friday, May 16, 2025, at Perry Local Schools, 2770 E Breese Rd, Lima, Ohio. This free and powerful event will feature keynote speaker Seth Gehle, a Lima native whose story of trauma, resiliency, and healing continues to inspire audiences nationwide.

Designed to uplift and empower, this event is especially vital for those who work with or support children and youth—educators, law enforcement officers, court officials, counselors, social workers, youth mentors, and others in youth-serving roles. The insights shared will provide practical tools, compassion, and renewed purpose for individuals on the frontlines of youth development, safety, and well-being.

“Mental health is foundational to every part of a young person’s life—from their ability to learn to their sense of belonging,” said Dr. Portia G. Smith, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of West Central Ohio. “This symposium offers an opportunity for our community to come together and stand behind youth who may be silently struggling.”

“We are honored to co-host this timely and important event,” added Britani Ward, Program Manager for CASA | Crime Victim Services of Allen and Putnam Counties. “Seth’s story speaks to the heart of what we see in our work—children navigating deep pain who need hope, advocacy, and healing.”

EVENT DETAILS:

 **Date:** Friday, May 16, 2025

 **Time:** 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Doors open at 8:30 AM)

📍 Location: Perry Local Schools, 2770 E Breese Rd, Lima, OH 45806

💻 Registration: <https://bit.ly/MentalHealthAwareness2025>

AGENDA:

- 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM: Keynote Presentation by Seth Gehle
- 10:30 AM – 11:00 AM: Live Q&A
- 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Book Signing & Networking Wrap-Up
- FREE signed copy of *Beyond the Shadows* for the first 100 registered attendees
- Complimentary light breakfast

This symposium is open to all individuals, professionals, and community members across Allen, Hancock, Hardin, Logan, Paulding, Putnam, Van Wert, and Wyandot Counties, as well as broader regions throughout Ohio and neighboring states.

Vendor tables are available for organizations interested in sharing their resources and services related to mental health, youth development, or community wellness.

To learn more about Seth Gehle and his story, please visit www.sethgehle.com.

For questions or to inquire about table space, contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of West Central Ohio at 419-222-8500 or info@bbbswco.org.