

Board Update

Mental Health & Recovery Services (MHRS) Board
Serving Coshocton, Guemsey, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble & Perry Counties
1500 Coal Run Road, Zanesville, Ohio 43701
Phone: 740-454-8557

Regular Board Meeting
Highlights
July 9, 2020



Samanta Boddapati, Ph.D., and Glenn Thomas, Ph.D., from Nationwide Children's Hospital, presented an update about the network's PAX Good Behavior Game initiative.

The Burden of Mental Illness on our Children:

Mental disorders among children are described as serious changes in the way children typically learn, behave, or handle their emotions, causing distress and problems getting through the day. Among the more common mental disorders that can be diagnosed in childhood are attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, and behavior disorders. Eleven percent of children ages 8-11 have had a mental illness with severe impairment. Twenty-two percent of teens ages 13-18 have had a mental illness with severe impairment. However, only 50% of youth with a mental health disorder receives any behavioral health treatment.

What is PAX?

The PAX Good Behavior Game (GBG) is a research-based environmental intervention used in the classroom to create an environment that is conducive to learning. The GBG nurtures self-regulation in peer-contexts to improve attention and reduce impulsivity, thus wiring the brain during any school activity for long-term gain. The GBG is designed to reduce off-task behavior; increase attentiveness; and decrease aggressive and disruptive behavior and shy and withdrawn behavior.

Journey to Best Outcomes:

Beginning in 2018—in collaboration with Nationwide Children's Hospital—the MHRS Board identified the evidence-based PAX Good Behavior Game (GBG) as a way to provide the best people and programs to achieve best outcomes for kids in our service area. The MHRS Board provided funding for: 1) several PAX teacher trainings throughout the six-county service area; 2) PAX Partner trainings for individuals who could support PAX teachers and help to collect and use data; and 3) PAX Tools trainings that include a collection of trauma-informed behavior strategies for families and communities to promote the development of self-regulation of the children in their lives.

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***The mission of the
MHRS Board is to
facilitate a Recovery-
Oriented System of
Care that promotes
mental health and
supports the recovery of
each person who needs
services for mental
illness and/or addiction.***

Benefits of PAX:

In the short-term, PAX classes typically report additional instruction time, reductions in disturbing or disruptive behavior, a decrease in discipline and special education referrals, and significant improvements in Math and Reading scores. Its long-term benefits are even more impressive. A series of longitudinal clinical trials initiated in 1984 have demonstrated that exposure to the GBG at a young age can dramatically reduce a child's risk of mental illness and substance use disorders later in life.

PAX is Reaching Nearly 5,000 Children in One Year across the MHRB Board's Six-County Region!

One of the major reasons for the success of the PAX Program is that children play an active role in reducing negative and unwanted behaviors (called 'Spleems' in the classroom).

When comparing Spleem data for our network's 11 participating schools (from baseline to mid-year), it is evident that the schools are on track and moving in the right direction—with drops in Spleem counts ranging from 4% to as high as 83%.

As teachers and students become adept at PAX, the students develop an ability to turn on their attention voluntarily; to go up and down in excitement with grace; handle distractions and disappointments well; and cooperate with others in meeting common goals. Kids are excited about their successes and are proudly pointing out how they've changed. Teachers are also excited about the program and are seeing improved peace and harmony among students.



Impact of COVID-19:

With the onset of COVID-19, consultations were shifted to virtual meetings and nurturing online spaces were created. The most significant impact of the pandemic on the PAX Program was the disruption in the collection of observational data.

Future Direction:

In the coming year, it is hoped to increase data analysis and presentations to stakeholders and expand regional partnerships (Ex: State Support Teams and PAX and PBIS alignment). PBIS stands for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.

MHRB Board Director Misty Cromwell noted that, when she first learned about the PAX Program, she saw it as an early-intervention, self-regulation tool that could help to prevent mental illness and addiction disorders in later years. Ms. Cromwell noted that the MHRB Board looks forward to continued involvement in the program that improves academic engagement and short- and long-term outcomes.

Board Member Kelly Lynch expressed her belief that the PAX Program is one of the best investments our system has ever made. She reported that, when talking to educators in Guernsey County, they enthusiastically express their love of the program.

New Coshocton Counseling Center Opens



Allwell Behavioral Health’s new Coshocton Counseling Center opened on July 8. The two-story, 9,500 square-foot building at 710 Main Street, features counseling, medication management, case management, and crisis intervention services in a state-of-the-art setting that will allow for expanding some services like day treatment programs. The new building will allow for all workers and programs to be under one roof. A ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening event will be scheduled in the near future.

FinancialMatters®

(Payments for Providing Mental Health & Addiction Recovery Treatment and Supports)

A/P DATE	In-Network Providers	Out-of-Network Partners	TOTAL
June 8, 2020	\$128,883.29	\$20,524.26	\$149,407.55
June 22, 2020	\$201,332.49	\$365,637.45	\$566,969.94
TOTAL	\$330,215.78	\$386,161.71	\$716,377.49

NOTE: Included in the June 22, 2020, Out-of-Network Partner Payments were allocations to local school districts participating in the MHRS Board’s K-12 School Prevention Initiative (refer to further information included in this report). Those payments totaled **\$347,724.45**.

In other actions, board members

- Officially accepted the MHRS Board’s State Audit Report for Calendar Year 2019. Once again, the MHRS Board received a “*clean opinion*,” with no matters involving any findings.
- Approved a \$60,000.00 allocation to Coshocton Behavioral Health Choices (CBHC) to assist with expanding parking space capacity at the CBHC campus. The total cost for the project is approximately \$80,000.00 (for the razing of a building and blacktopping the expanded space). The MHRS Board’s allocation was made possible due to the availability of existing county levy funding reserves in CBHC’s FY 2020 budget. It was noted that approximately 40+ vehicles need a parking space at any time (for

recovery house residents, CBHC staff, and clients participating in counseling, intensive outpatient groups, the medical clinic, and the “Flight School” for children and families – just to name a few of CBHC’s treatment and support programs).

- Approved a \$47,000 allocation to Guernsey Health Choices (GHC) to assist with costs associated with the renovation of a new office building (HVAC and roof repairs). This allocation was made possible due to GHC’s existing county levy funding reserves from their FY 2020 budget. The new facility site will offer easy access to clients, ample parking, and adequate space for expansion of services. NOTE: In FY 2019, the MHRS Board approved the release of \$82,500.00 to Guernsey Health Choices for a downpayment on a new office facility. These funds will be released as the purchase process moves forward.

K-12 Prevention Education Initiative

Now more than ever, students need to remain connected and develop the skills to build resiliency for facing life stressors, particularly those created during the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, Ohio has provided the K-12 Prevention Education Initiative as a pathway to create safe and supportive schools by providing effective prevention services to all students.

In the MHRS Board’s service area, 17 school districts have completed self-assessment surveys and 15 (as of June 24, 2020) have received state approval of their Plans of Action to support students’ social, emotional, and wellness needs.

As noted under the ‘*Financial Matters*’ section of this report, the MHRS Board has now issued K-12 funds to the 15 service area schools with approved Plans of Action, totaling \$347,724.45. The source of this funding is the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services and the Ohio Department of Education.

The schools will now be implementing their Prevention Education Plans of Action that will provide a foundation for social and emotional learning, problem-solving, critical thinking, perseverance, and effective communication and teamwork. Participating school districts are Caldwell Exempted Village Schools, Cambridge City Schools, Coshocton City School District, Coshocton Opportunity School, Crooksville Exempted Village Schools, East Guernsey Local School District, East Muskingum Local Schools, Maysville Local Schools, Morgan Local School District, New Lexington School District, Noble Local School District, Ridgewood Local School District, Riverview Local School District, Rolling Hills School District, and Zanesville City Schools.

FY 2021 Budget Allocations

Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services

The Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) has released information about their FY 2021 Allocations and Guidance for MHRS Boards. The Department has tried to maintain core services and system capacity by preserving the Community Line Items. Other funding opportunities, disbursements and budget updates will be announced throughout the year as they become available. The line items that are currently delayed are Special Legislative Funds, Specialized Docket Subsidy, Addiction Treatment Program, and Community Transition Program.

OhioMHAS noted in their Guidance Document Introduction: “*We want to acknowledge the difficult situation we are all in, the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the related changes and effects on all of our operations. Thank you for your work and the manner in which you have continued all you do for your communities as we go through these difficult times.*”