

The Ohio Federation for Children's Mental Health



June 2010 | Volume 3 | Issue 4

RESILIENCY

Resiliency is truly foundational to mental health and wellness for all children, youth and young adults, but especially for those with mental health challenges and the families that nurture and support them. The Federation is committed to sharing the message of hope and strength throughout Ohio so that young people, family members, service providers, and policy makers can all embrace the promise that resiliency is life giving. Our kids and families have many talents, strengths and abilities; we can nurture such gifts and facilitate the positive growth of our youth. They can thrive and be successful; they can "get a life" that brings meaning and happiness.

There's much that needs to be done to support our young people and their families but the good news is there is LOTS we can do! Checkout the resiliency website, www.resiliencyohio.org or join us in the numerous trainings we offer across the state. Ask your county board or service provider to invite the Federation to come and do training in your local area. We never turn down an opportunity to share. RESILIENCY is "FOR REAL." Kids and families can succeed!

Terre Garner,
Executive Director



Our 6th Annual Resiliency Ring is a Success!

We heard songs, poems and speeches from resilient children and we heard words of encouragement from Director Stephenson, of the Ohio Department of Mental Health. Tracee Black-Fall read a proclamation from Governor Ted Strickland declaring May 4, 2010 Ohio's official Children's Mental Health Day and Kevin Jennings, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Safe and Drug-Free Schools, U.S. Department of Education shared his hope for Ohio's children. Hundreds of youth, young adults, families, and professionals joined hands and jumpropes to form a human ring around the Statehouse. Most importantly, our youth, young adults and families said they felt their voice was heard. Children's mental health is an important topic and many families visited legislative offices after the resiliency ring to show a video about resiliency and share their personal stories of resiliency. Advocacy at this level is very important! We were honored to provide the format and materials that enabled families to share their stories with our state leaders.

To view more photos please visit our website www.OhioFederation.org.



Restraint & Seclusion at School

The Federation would like to encourage you to take the survey at the link below to share your thoughts and feelings about restraint and seclusion. Legal Rights Services developed this survey to gather information to learn about the experiences of students with disabilities across Ohio and to advocate for their education rights and personal safety. If your child has experienced restraint or seclusion in a classroom, on a school bus, or in another education setting please take the survey. www.olrs.ohio.gov/news/restraint-seclusion-survey.

FREE Online Access to Journal on Children's Mental Health

Len Bickman and Kim Hoagwood have edited a special double issue of Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research (Vol. 37, Nos. 1-2) on child and adolescent mental health. Springer has made on-line access to the journal free for one year. Models for Change partners are welcome to share this web address with all: www.springerlink.com/content/0894-587X.



Calling all Members

Please join us for a resiliency training from 12:00 pm-1:30 pm on Saturday, September 11, 2010 at the Dublin Library (Columbus). This is one of the trainings we have available for your group or community.

It's that time again, our Annual Membership Meeting is also Saturday, September 11, 2010 at the Dublin Library, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm. We need to hear from YOU about what YOU want and need from the Federation and we need to elect new board officers. R.S.V.P. to 1-800-298-9155 or offcmh1@fuse.net.

Speaking of voting, would you like to make a nomination for one of our board officers? Would you like more information on what offices are open and what they do? Give us a call.



Share Your Suggestions or Comments

Call our NEW number 1-800-298-9155 or email marjorie_offcmh1@fuse.net

Speaking of Family Engagement...

More and more, the mental health system – both nationally and throughout Ohio – is recognizing the need to become family-driven instead of provider-driven. Parents have a long history of advocating and supporting their children by being integral parts of mental health organizations over the last century. This includes Mental Health America (founded in 1909), then NAMI (1979), and our parent organization, the National Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health (1989.) However, as you’ve probably experienced, the current mental health system is complicated and under-funded. It is more important than ever for families to be heard and to actually drive decision-making for their children. After all, parents (and/or caregivers) are the experts and strongest advocates for their children.

There are several elements to family engagement that parents, peers, and family members can adopt as they interact with various agencies, professionals, and schools to provide for youths’ mental health. First, find professionals and volunteers in the mental health system that listen, understand, and respect you and your family. These are people that “walk the talk”, value your expertise, respond to your needs with compassion and a positive, can-do attitude and treat you as an equal member of the team. Look for those who seek to discover the strengths in your child and family, understand your culture (even though they may not be part of it), and treat you as the expert on your child. Then take the time to build relationships with these individuals. Establishing trust and sharing information both ways, creates a system of shared power and an environment of collaboration. It doesn’t mean that you always have to agree with each other. But if a good relationship exists, both sides are able to listen to the other’s perspective and suspend judgment until understanding is reached. Then a win-win solution can be achieved.

Another important element in family engagement is understanding boundaries. Only family members understand what is acceptable and not for the family system and its members. Professionals only see a part of what the family is experiencing, so it is important for families to share how they function and cope. This can improve service. Conversely, families can seek to understand the boundaries that agencies face. Sometimes there are legal, financial, and other constraints that limit a professional’s ability to fully serve the family. For example, a parent recently called OFFCMH lamenting that she could not get her child in a certain program for youth with autism, we were able to share limits in acceptance and budget criteria that shifted the parent’s focus to other more viable options. Ideally, the organization itself should have been more transparent, but the situation also demonstrates another element to family engagement: reaching out for support.

Families can engage with each other by connecting at trainings, attending support groups, and volunteering or working in mental health agencies. Not only do families gain much needed emotional and practical support in dealing with a difficult child and navigating the mental health system, but there is strength in numbers. As families pull together their voices become stronger.

OFFCMH has expertise in the area of family engagement. We can provide educational training to service providers and families themselves, and we can advocate for you in the mental health system to make improvements. Please contact us to see how we can help you promote, educate, and develop tools to engage families in your community.

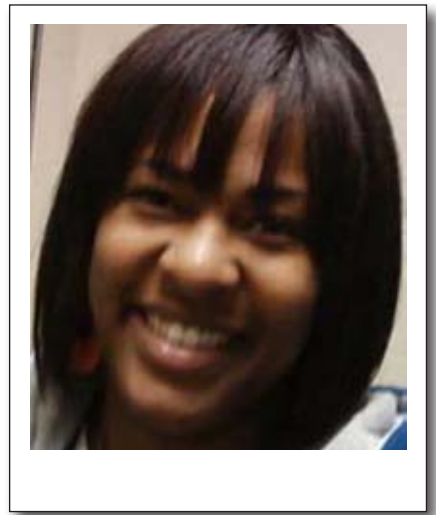
by Tracy McClorey

.....
: **Remember - Membership is always FREE for families** :
.....

Meet Kesha



Kesha will be joining our team for the summer as a work-study student. She has graduated this past spring with a degree in Organizational Leadership. She has a younger brother with a rare disease called hemangeoma and is eager to learn ways to help him cope mentally. She is very bubbly and will bring lots of energy to our organization.



Meet Tracy



Tracy McClorey has joined us for summer work study from the University of Cincinnati, where she has just finished the first year of the two year Masters in Social Work program, focusing on the mental health track. She and her husband have two teenage children and love downtown Cincinnati. Tracy believes herself to be part of a resilient family, having experienced mental health issues with family members. Tracy will be working on various projects for OFFCMH from developing communication materials to conducting research.



Ohio Federation for Children's Mental Health
3030 West Fork Road • Cincinnati, OH 45211

Phone: 513-761-6030

Toll Free: 1-800-298-9155

Fax: 513-761-6031

www.OhioFederation.org