

1973-2023

YEARS

# ANNUAL REPORT

20

22



2600 Corporate Exchange Drive, Suite 180 Columbus, OH 43231 (614) 461-0014 OhioChildrensAlliance.org



The Ohio Children's Alliance believes that all children deserve the opportunity to grow up in healthy, safe, equitable, and loving environments. Investing in this belief is an investment in our state's future.

We advocate and foster collaborations aimed at improving lives of children and the success of their families with an informed and unified voice.

We work directly with community agencies to deliver knowledge, strategies, resources, and opportunities that provide value to them as well as the families and communities they serve.

Members and supporters of the Ohio Children's Alliance are connected to a wideranging and respected community of collaborators and are provided access to timely news and innovative resources. Together, we are making Ohio a better place for children and families.



# EDUCATE



Sharing knowledge, resources, and opportunities that promote equitable outcomes for children, families and communities

# DVOCATI



Building efficient paths to the best and most equitable outcomes for Ohio's children and families



Promoting the needs of all Ohio children by being in front, up front, and exceedingly prepared for a diverse, inclusive and just future



Fostering a respected community of diverse collaborators committed to achieving just outcomes for children, families, and communities across Ohio

# CELEBRATING



- On January 5, 1973, the Ohio Children's Alliance became the first statewide child advocacy organization in Ohio and Virginia Colson became its first Executive Director.
- The Children's Alliance became the first statewide advocacy group to represent the needs of children and families to the Ohio General Assembly.
- The first statewide conference for public children service agencies and communitybased agencies was convened by the Alliance.





- In the 1980s, Alliance membership and staff grew, with Penny Wyman leading as Executive Director. Community-based agencies began providing care and support to children beyond group care settings, including home and community-based settings and treatment foster homes.
- The Alliance moved into its own office for the first time on 400 Fast Town Street in downtown Columbus.
- In 1988, the Alliance provided leadership toward the development and passage of the Ohio Mental Health Act, which was a major step in the development of Ohio's system of care.

# 1973 - 2023

- The Alliance worked with state legislators on foster care reform bills, including legislation regarding certification and continuing training requirements for foster caregivers as well as the operation of training programs which passed in the 123rd General Assembly.
- In 1999, the Behavioral Health and the Foster Care and Adoption Committee were formed. These committees, which continue to this day, provide policy and practice guidance and resources, as well as opportunities to engage with state leaders and learn sector news.





2000s

- In 2005, the Alliance became a pioneer in developing one of the first software systems in the country for child welfare and behavioral health outcome management, the Outcomes Data Project.
- In 2007, the Alliance led passage of major foster care reform legislation that established new standards and accountability.
- In 2007, together with Board Members, the Alliance undertook a comprehensive strategic initiative, redefining its Mission and creating a new Vision for the future.

- In 2011, Mark Mecum, then Associate Director for Government Relations, was hired as the third CEO of the Alliance.
- Beginning in 2016, the Alliance played a pivotal role in the design and implementation of Ohio's Medicaid managed care model for community behavioral health.
- In 2017, the Alliance founded a provider network, the Child and Family Health Collaborative of Ohio, which provides an opportunity for government agencies and health plans to partner with community providers to improve health and social outcomes, and achieve savings.
- In 2018, the Collaborative was awarded the first-ever Bridges grant by the State of Ohio, and began collaborating with community agencies to empower thousands of youth transitioning out of foster care.







20s & Beyond

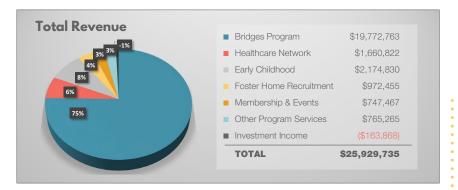
- Beginning in 2020, the Alliance contributed to the design, funding, and launch of the OhioRISE program, a unique specialized Medicaid program for multi-system youth.
- The Alliance celebrated legislative wins in 2021, including passage of legislation that supports the foster care workforce through Recruitment and Retention grants and the elimination of red tape requirements to perform certain jobs.
- In 2022, the Alliance's Respite Care Program, a program of the Collaborative, was recognized by the Ohio Association of Health Plans with a Pinnacle Award.

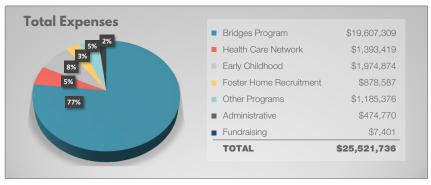


#### FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## **CY 2022**







<sup>\*</sup> PRE-AUDITED FIGURES

### **Purchase a Plate & Drive Support**

#### FOR OHIO'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Ohio drivers can show you care for Ohio's children and families with the Ohio "Kids First" specialty license plate, which is available for purchase through the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles and oplates.com. Sales of the plate benefit Ohio Children's Alliance, helping to advance advocacy efforts for community agencies that serve youth, young adults, and families.



<sup>\*</sup> AS OF 12/31/2022, CONSOLIDATED NET ASSETS - \$2,590,078





As Ohio's oldest and largest child and family advocacy organization, the Ohio Children's Alliance is a changemaker in the child and family services sector. We lead and engage a statewide network of community-based agencies and partners to advance policies, best practices, and collaborative strategies.

Today, the count of community-based agencies that partner with us to achieve our mission has grown to new heights - 89 across Ohio - in addition to various other types of system partners, such as Medicaid managed care plans and other statewide advocacy groups. Collectively, our partners drive our advocacy agenda and fuel innovative system improvement efforts.

Our advocacy team includes our CEO, Mark Mecum; Chief Advocacy Officer, Sarah LaTourette; Policy Manager, Kate Rossman; Policy Analyst, Stacey Kennan; and a contracted lobbying firm, The Fitzgibbon Group.

During 2022, we expanded our impact through development and participation in multiple advocacy coalitions at the federal and state levels, including the formation of the Ohio Children's Mental Health Budget Coalition. We maximized the collective strength of community-based agencies by mobilizing their involvement in policy reform, and amplifying their voices, and the voices of families and youth, across Ohio. Our concerted efforts produced many wins on public investments to kids and families, implementation of the OhioRISE Medicaid program, and legislation that expanded the foster care workforce.

For 50 years, the Ohio Children's Alliance has applied our collective strengths to achieve better outcomes for Ohio's children and families.



In 2022, the Ohio Children's Alliance expanded its portfolio of innovative new initiatives, enhanced its existing infrastructure, and pursued new state contracts in the foster care, youth services, and behavioral health sectors. The hard work our team performed has begun to see the fruits of its labor. By the end of the year, we executed three new programs in partnership with state agencies: early childhood mental health, resource home recruitment, and a center of excellence. We expanded our statewide Respite Care program to OhioRISE members, and continue to administer the Bridges program, Ohio Reach, a robust professional education program, and a clinically integrated behavioral health care network.

Center to our advocacy and system improvement efforts is the Next Generation Medicaid structure, which began on July 1, 2022. This structure includes OhioRISE, a coordinated care program for children with complex behavioral health needs. The Alliance met this challenge by providing technical assistance to community agencies and advocacy to the government to support continuity of care and reduce complexities. Focusing on scope of practice, rate adequacy, and billing obstacles, we made successful inroads across multiple state departments.

Collectively, the Ohio Children's Alliance and our partners shaped policy changes affecting OhioRISE particularly surrounding Care Management Entities (CME), waiver services, the new Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility benefit, the CANS assessment tool, and increased Medicaid reimbursement rates. We also expanded our work with the Ohio Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Center of Excellence and launched a learning community to drive best practices in the OhioRISE CME program.

# 2022

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Produced new workforce development and support opportunities for foster care and mental health agencies through regulatory relief and targeted state funding.

Championed legislation that expanded Ohio's treatment foster care workforce and increased parity between public and private foster care agencies.

Established and lead the Ohio Children's Mental Health Budget Coalition with key partners and foundation support from Interact for Health.

Shaped the implementation of many statewide child welfare initiatives, including kinship family supports, tiered foster care, foster parent training re-design, and best practices for family engagement with residential care.

# **Advocacy Successes**

FOR CHILD WELFARE AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

#### Workforce

- Published a Workforce Crisis Report leading to additional statewide advocacy demanding a response for more trained and qualified professionals.
- Produced a Telehealth White Paper illuminating new policies around mental health service delivery and virtual platforms and advocated for telehealth regulatory flexibilities with state
- Represented the child and family service sector in new State of Ohio Direct Care Working Group.
- Successfully advocated for passage of SB 239 and HB 428 which support and expand the health and human services workforce.

#### **Family Supports**

agencies.

- Expanded reach of Family Preservation Services through partnership with the Ohio Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Center of Excellence.
- Established the Ohio Children's Mental Health Budget Coalition with key partners and foundation support from Interact for Health.
- Advocated on the Tiered Foster Care Workgroup and supported pilot agencies.

#### **Next Generation Managed Care**

- Successfully advocated for regulatory relief and funding for providers impacted by Next Generation Medicaid Managed Care implementation transition.
- Advocated to support OhioRISE, Intensive Home-Based Treatment, and Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, implementation and rate improvements.
- Successfully advocated against various Medicaid system challenges, including a practitioner modifier requirement, and supported best practice business policies.



\$85M

home and community-based

\$40M

new Adoption Incentive Program

\$10M

foster care agency recruitment and retention

\$9M

custody relinquishmen prevention funds

\$4.5M

relief funding for residential centers

# **Programs**





#### **Professional Education**

Intentionally providing training sessions and conference workshops focused on diversity equity and inclusion, and best practices in behavioral health, child welfare, leadership.

#### **Ohio Reach**

A support network program in higher education institutions across the State of Ohio designed to support former foster youth as they pursue a certificate or degree.





#### **Child & Adolescent Center of Excellence**

As a subgrantee, we are supporting

Ohio's statewide program to assess, improve and expand service and care coordination capacity for children with complex behavioral health needs and their families.

#### **Early Childhood Mental Health**

Furthering trauma prevention and community supports by connecting child care centers and families with highquality mental health services.





#### **Foster Home Recruitment**

Partnering with ODJFS's It Takes Heart Ohio Campaign to increase awareness and the number of qualified kinship, foster care and adoptive families across the state.



OhioReach is a collaborative partnership between the Ohio Children's Alliance and the Ohio Department of Higher Education dedicated to supporting the higher education goals of former foster youth.

OhioReach is building a campus support system at community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities to help these youth overcome the challenges of emancipating from foster care, secure an education, and become employed.

**Center of Excellence** 

We expanded the work of our Financial Services Program, which oversees reimbursement for Family First Prevention Services Act services. Under the leadership of Senior Program Manager Carol Taylor, this program, which is part of Ohio Child and Adolescent Center of Excellence, was developed to reimburse providers to deliver Multi-Systemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy family preservation services. Our contributions to the Center of Excellence also included:

Released grants to support 61 clinicians across 30 community-based organizations to advance best practices in the delivery of mental health services over telehealth platforms.

A study of Health Information Technology in the community behavioral health system, to assess gaps between current use and possibilities.

Last year, we supported former foster youth in significant ways:

### Awarded 6 scholarships

to foster youth pursuing higher education totaling \$30,000.

Released \$2.4M in emergency federal

funding to support 1.600 foster care alumni across the state.



### **Early Childhood Mental Health**

Our early childhood mental health programs support the youngest Ohioans and their families. Through partnerships with the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, we able to accomplish many wins during 2022:

**Developed Mental Health Bridge** to expand access to mental health care for children served in ODJFS-licensed child care centers; over a hundred child care centers engaged during the pilot phase.

**Expanded therapeutic child care programs** in Ohio by releasing over \$3 million of funding to 6 community-based organizations.

Produced 15 new early childhood mental health online courses accessed by over 4,500 child-serving professionals.

Expanded Ohio's expertise in early childhood mental health by releasing \$600,000 in grants to 12 community-based organizations; empowered 155 clinicians and professionals to pursue Infant Mental Health and Early Childhood Mental Health Credentials.

#### **Foster Home Recruitment**

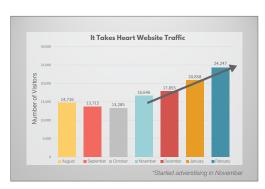
The Ohio Children's Alliance administers a program that promotes awareness and marketing strategies for resource home (foster, adoption, kinship) recruitment. The program, through a partnership with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, embraces proven and effective recruitment practices, and amplifies the contributions of local agencies by spreading best practices. The program leverages the State of Ohio's *It Takes Heart Ohio* campaign. Together with system partners, we are increasing the number of qualified kinship, foster care and adoptive families across the state. In its second year, the program:

Successfully surveyed over 13,500 former and current foster caregivers and foster youth.

**Hired 12 employees** to implement a targeted, data-driven, statewide marketing campaign.

**Developed and implemented many marketing tactics** to reach Ohioans, including billboards, print media, and online advertising.

**Significantly increased website traffic,** which is only continuing to rise.







# **Connecting to Share**

#### EDUCATION AND COLLABORATION

The Ohio Children's Alliance is dedicated to fostering a respected community of collaborators and advancing child and family services. Our educational programs aim to serve as a resource for clinicians and other child-serving professionals and ensure the availability of useful, timely, and accurate information in the ever-changing behavioral health and children services sectors. We are committed to educating key stakeholders and partners to promote informed, intersectional, and equitable policymaking that rises up for kids.

Facilitated two statewide conferences in partnership with OhioMHAS to advance Trauma Informed Care. before 1,300 participants, featuring 60 presenters, and 40 individual sessions.

Hosted 24 professional education trainings to 800 participants on 15 topics.

Convened our 46th **Annual Conference in** the Spring, and another Conference during the Fall, before 500 participants, featuring 100 presenters, and 50 individual sessions.

# **OPPORTUNITIES**



Hosted 25 state department leaders in conferences, meetings, and events.

Connecting with and sharing resources from over 25 statewide and federal coalitions and workgroups.

Leveraged virtual and in-person educational opportunities, reaching more than 2,500 child-serving professionals.

**Established a Provider Resource Center for** our Collaborative's health care network. inclusive of recorded trainings and various quality improvement resources.



The behavioral health care and social service sector is rapidly changing in Ohio and across the country. In 2017, we started this Collaborative of community agencies to work together to advance value-based care and social services innovation. The Collaborative consists of more than forty community agencies spanning every region of Ohio.



#### Clinically Integrated Health Care Network

Empowering behavioral health providers to be competitive, the Health Care Network administers value-based care programs in partnership with Medicaid Managed Care Organizations.



#### **Bridges Program**

Ohio's program that supports young adults aging out of foster care with education, housing, health and well-being, and employment, and empowers them to actively take part in building a better future for themselves.



#### Respite Care

Our network of respite care practitioners assist CareSource and OhioRISE members with normal activities of daily life in order to meet the needs of the children and parents served.



#### Same Day Access & Telehealth

Through expert consultation and development of our own proprietary toolkit we have established improved capability to provide mental health assessments to children without appointments.

# **Bridges**

Bridges is a voluntary statewide program serving young adults who have aged out of foster care. ODJFS and the Collaborative have partnered together on the program since its inception in 2018. Over the last five years, the Collaborative, through its network of 21 community-based provider agencies, has successfully connected over 3,600 young adults with safe and stable housing, educational and career opportunities, and resources to support their personal safety, mental health, and more.

In 2022, the Bridges program focused on specific aspects of its training and technical assistance work to enhance overall performance metric scores which have been steadily increasing. The Collaborative and ODJFS focus on enhancing the ability to gather and analyze qualitative data to ensure that young adults in the program progress toward independence. The Collaborative made strategic efforts to increase marketing and awareness of the program to ensure that eligible young adults are informed and understand program enrollment.



As a result of COVID-19 pandemic relief legislation, 312 young adults who exited Bridges were able to re-enroll, and another 640 participants continued past their 21st birthday. This culminated in a 70% increase in participant length of stay in the program over the previous year.

With the help of Bridges service teams, these young adults were able to work on their goals like finding and maintaining employment, pursuing educational endeavors, maintaining safe and affordable housing, and taking steps to improve their well-being.

Well-being is an area where participants excelled. 93% of Bridges participants reported feeling secure in having their basic food needs met, 87% reported stability in their mental health, and 94% reported having health care coverage that was satisfactory and affordable.

All of the Collaborative's hard work on the Bridges program was recognized. Last year, the Bridges program earned several performance incentive awards, and the Collaborative was re-selected as the Ohio Bridges Program grantee for the SFY 24-25 period.

The Collaborative released a 2022 Impact Report detailing the opportunities and successes the Bridges program achieved.





### **Health Care Network**

Under the leadership of our Health Care Network Director, Lorie Stadtmiller, the Collaborative Health Care Network matured and grew significantly during 2022. During this last year, we produced a new quality playbook for community mental health agencies, organized several clinical best practice and coding/documentation trainings, and further integrated 34 community agencies into the network.

Value-based care continues to be the focus of how we make quality improvements. During 2022, we expanded value-based programs with UnitedHealthcare, Optum, and CareSource, and also partnered with CareSource to develop the Respite Care program to preserve families. We also successfully negotiated and secured favorable agreements with all of the new Medicaid managed care companies.

We are extremely proud of the successes achieved for CareSource members through our Respite Care Program. Over the last two years, we connected 250 children and their families to therapeutic respite services and prevented out-of-state placements and hospitalizations. The program is now also available to OhioRISE members.

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In fact, the optimal outcomes of the program were recognized with the Pinnacle Award from the Ohio Association of Health Plans.

#### OTHER WINS DURING 2022 INCLUDE:

Secured a contract with Aetna Better Health of Ohio, allowing us to expand services to OhioRISE members.

Cultivated a total of three value-based programs with Ohio Medicaid Managed Care Organizations.

Established a Learning Community to support the startup of OhioRISE Care Management Entity programs.

Implemented a data analytics platform, integrating valuebased performance with health information exchange data.





### **Board of Directors**

#### **OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT

John Banchy

Best Point Education & Behavioral Health

PRESIDENT ELECT

Sarah Steuer

Youth Advocate Services

TREASURER

Paul Haffner

Lighthouse Youth & Family Services

SECRETARY

Jane Anderson

**CHOICES** 

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Eric Cummins

NewPath Child & Family Solutions

#### GENERAL REPRESENTATIVES

LaVisa Bell

Beech Brook

Leigh Hall Wingspan Care Group

Marti Eagleton

Ohio MENTOR

Nancy Harvey

Community Teaching Homes

Matt Kresic

Cadence Care Network

Sheree Lynch

Positive Leaps

Matt Mitchell

Pressley Ridge

Sean Reilly

**UMCH Family Services** 

Vickie Thompson-Sandy

The Buckeye Ranch

Charity Wheeler

Journey Home Foster Care



### **Memberships and Partnerships**

#### NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

#### STATE ORGANIZATIONS

#### CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL PARTNERS AND MEMBERS

#### **PUBLIC PARTNER MEMBERS**

### **Full Members**



#### WE WELCOMED NEW MEMBERS Advocates for Families, Anew Behavioral Health,

A Place of Hope, and Quality Moments in 2022. These distinguished organizations are now a part of Ohio's oldest and largest alliance of community-based organizations serving children in the state. We are excited to add their unique perspectives to our rich and diverse membership and to serve as your "one stop shop" for advocacy, educational, and credentialing needs.

A Loving Heart Youth Services

A New Leaf

A Place of Hope

Abraxas Youth & Family Services

Adopt America Network

\*Adriel

Advocates for Families Agape for Youth

Anew Behavioral Health

Bair Foundation

\*Beech Acres Parenting Center

\*Beech Brook \*Bellefaire

Belmont Pines Hospital

\*Best Point Education & Behavioral Health

Beyond Behavioral Healthcare \*Buckeve Ranch. The

Cadence Care Network
Camelot Community Care

Caring for Kids Charlie Health

Children's Center of Ohio

CHOICES

Choices Coordinated Care Solutions Christian Children's Home of Ohio

Chrysalis Family Solutions

Clear Creek Farm

\*Cleveland Christian Home Columbus Springs Dublin Community Teaching Homes

Dungarvin Ohio

Eastway Behavioral Healthcare Family Pride of Northeast Ohio

Focus on Youth

Fox Run Center for Children & Adolescents \*Genacross Family & Youth Services

Ground Work Play Therapy

Hittle House

House of New Hope

Integrated Services for Behavioral Health

Isaiah's Place

Journey Home Foster Care & Adoption

JusticeWorks Youth Care

Kids Count Too

Life Start

Lighthouse Youth and Family Services

\*Marsh Foundation, The

Mayo Home for Youth Development

Mended Reeds

Merakey

Mohican Young Star Academy National Youth Advocate Program Nationwide Children's Hospital

Necco

New Beginnings Residential Treatment Center

New Mercy Outreach

\*New Path Child & Family Solutions Northeast Ohio Adoption Services \*Oesterlen Services for Youth

Ohio Guidestone

Ohio Mentor-The Mentor Network Pathway Caring for Children Positive Education Program

Positive Leaps Pressley Ridge PsyCare

Quality Care Residential Homes

Quality Moments
Ravenwood Health
Reach Counseling
Safely Home
Shelter Care
Silver Linings Agency
Sojourner's Care Network

South Community
Southeast Healthcare Services

Specialized Alternatives for Families & Youth

St. Vincent Family Services The Village Network Thrive Therapeutics \*UMCH Family Services

ViaQuest

Wellmore Centre

Wingspan Care Group - Applewood Centers Wingspan Care Group - Bellefaire JCB

Wingspan Care Group - Bluestone Child & Adolescent

Psychiatric Hospital

Wingspan Care Group - Lifeworks

Wingspan Care Group - Wuliger Wellness Center

Youth Advocate Services

Youth Villages

<sup>\*</sup>Denotes charter member of the Alliance (1973)



strength of our members to sustainably improve the provision of services to children, young adults, and families through policy advocacy, performance improvement, and member supports.

## **Our Team**

#### **EXECUTIVE TEAM**



Mark Mecum. MA Chief Executive Offcei



Karen Hill Chief Operating and Financial Officer



Sarah LaTourette Chief Advocacy Officer

#### ADVOCACY & COMMUNICATIONS



Kate Rossman Manager, Policy



Stacy Keenan, MA Analyst, Behavioral Health Policy

#### MEMBER SERVICES & PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION



Ruthie Zimmerman Manager, Member Services & Professional Education



Nancy Drouet Saltos Program Coordinator, Professional Education

#### CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMS



Bridget Graber Program Manager, Foster Home Recruitment



Gabrielle Judy, MPA Program Coordinator, Foster Recruitment



Megan Modene Senior Program Coordinator, Ohio Reach

#### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS



Carol Taylor, MA Senior Program Manager



Lauren Barco, LSW Program Coordinator, Center of Excellence



Anna Kelley Program Manager, Early Childhood



Japera Benson Program Coordinator, Early Childhood



Haley Farver, MPA Program Coordinator, Early Childhood

#### **ADMINISTRATION**



Kelly Richards Director, Finance & Administration



Da'Viona Fowler Office Administrator



Tonya Guzzo Administrative Support Specialist



Jess Audey Data Analyst



Scott Warren Systems Analyst



Melody Saepae Executive Assistant



Gillian Thomson, MPA Data Analyst

#### HEALTHCARE NETWORK



Lorie Stadtmiller, MBA Director, Healthcare Network



Aditi Naik, MPA Senior Coordinator, Healthcare Network



Eliza Phinney Coordinator, Healthcare Network



Natalie Wilder Provider Relations Coordinator, Healthcare Network

#### **BRIDGES TEAM**



Geoff Hollenbach, MSSW, LISW-S Program Administrator, Bridges



Latasha Colbert, MS, MSW, LSW Senior Program Manager, Bridges



Kelcee Ancona Senior Compliance Coordinator, Bridges



Jennifer Anderson Intake & Referral Coordinator, Bridges



William Dawson Senior Program Coordinator, Bridges



**Trudy Burch**NE Regional Coordinator,
Bridges



Jason Harland Central Regional Coordinator, Bridges



Jennifer Hess SE Regional Coordinator, Bridges



Genah Babcock, MSW, LSW NW Regional Coordinator, Bridges

