



RED OAK
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Where the Acorn Grows

Spring 2021 Edition

**Connect.
Grow.
Thrive.**



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We Can Do Hard Things

a note from Red Oak's CEO

The past year has brought increased attention, engagement, and dialogue regarding racism, but it has not yet resulted in systemic or institutional change. While accountability for inflicted trauma is important, justice demands that we do everything in our power to prevent the trauma from happening in the first place.

Red Oak's commitment to trauma-informed care is a commitment that extends to every relationship we have, including our relationships with our clients, our partners, our staff, and ourselves. That work is built on a foundation of safety and trust. Our core values here at Red Oak – Character, Courage, and Connection – demand that we lean in to discomfort, engage with accountability, lead with honesty and transparency, and ensure there is a safe and welcoming place for every voice at our table.

While there is an overwhelming amount of work before us when it comes to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, so long as I have the privilege of serving as a leader here, it will remain a priority of this agency. I have committed to centering this work with the understanding that it will be slow and difficult, but also with the belief that progress is both imperative and possible.

One of my favorite quotes from Cynthia Ocelli reads as follows: "For a seed to achieve its greatest expression, it must come completely undone. The shell cracks, its insides come out, and everything changes. To someone who doesn't understand growth, it would look like complete destruction." Growth, therapy, and change all require a coming undone in order to rebirth again in a truer and more authentic form. First the pain. Then the rising. We can do hard things.

I am grateful to our staff, our clients, and our partners for leaning into this work despite your weariness, skepticism, discomfort, or fear, and for continuing to help me and Red Oak grow. This is hard work, but it is perhaps the most meaningful work we could do for this agency, for our community, and for those we serve.

-M

May is Mental Health Awareness Month: Many organizations highlight mental health awareness during the month of May, but the need to talk about mental health doesn't go away during the rest of the year. Understanding mental illness, and amplifying the message that #youarenotalone allows us to focus on the healing value of connecting in safe ways, prioritizing mental health and acknowledging that it's okay to not be okay.





Red Oak Behavioral Health's Vision: Behavioral Healthcare that meets you where you are.

Our Trauma-Informed Care Journey



In May, the Red Oak Trauma Team completed the first year of Trauma-Informed, Resilience Oriented Community Training through The National Council for Mental Wellbeing, and gave a presentation highlighting our accomplishments, barriers and plans for sustainability. In year one, we elected to focus on three of the seven domains of TIC: Domain 1 (screening and assessment), Domain 3 (workforce development) and Domain 4 (use of best practices). Red Oak showed marked improvement on its OSA scores from last year to this year in all three areas:

Domain Area	OSA #1 (2020)	OSA #2 (2021)
1: Screening & Assessment	3.68	4.13
3: Workforce Development	3.17	3.97
4: Best Practices	3.62	3.97

Moving forward, we will continue our work in these three domains and begin making focused efforts in the remaining domain areas. Engaging our staff and consumers with lived experience will remain a priority, and the team will focus on concepts such as: trauma-Informed supervision,

The 7 Domains of Trauma-Informed Care



continued training on trauma-informed principles for all staff and ongoing training in evidence-based practices for service providers.

For more information about Red Oak's trauma-informed, resilience-oriented care journey, or to join the Trauma Team, contact Ann Robson, Director of Clinical Services, at @redoakbh.org.

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI)

In 2020, Red Oak created a JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion) Committee of staff and community stakeholders. This team is charged with the development and implementation of a robust 3-year DEI strategic plan in partnership with the Diversity Center of NEO. The vision of the JEDI Committee is to *foster a culture that empowers our team, our agency, and our community to educate, advocate, support, and engage in ways that create an environment that is equitable, diverse, inclusive, and just.*

The **JEDI Strategic Plan** will include goals and strategies across six core areas:

- Focus Area 1: Hiring and Recruitment
- Focus Area 2: Accountability Procedures
- Focus Area 3: Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)
- Focus Area 4: Education/Leadership Development
- Focus Area 5: Advocacy
- Focus Area 6: Community Education/Involvement

This team will continue its strategic planning work through June, with clear goals and objectives defined for inclusion in Red Oak's overall strategic plan. If you'd like to learn more about Red Oak's Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion efforts, contact Red Oak's Director of Human Resources, Renee Richardson at rrichardson@redoakbh.org.



Trauma creates change you DON'T choose.
Healing is about creating change you DO choose.

-Michelle Rosenthal-



Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much.

-Helen Keller-

United Way Partnership:
Serving Akron Families

In February 2021, Red Oak Behavioral Health was awarded a United Way of Summit and Medina Counties Community Impact Award to provide Parent University and therapeutic family services in Akron Public Schools' Family Resource Centers (FRC's) as part of their BOLD GOAL#1.

Red Oak and the FRC Coordinators will work together to analyze the needs of families in each community and create a strategy for effective family engagement. The Red Oak representative will also serve as a point of contact supporting all programming offered by United Way within the FRC's, promoting resource center offerings to Red Oak families and encouraging participation.

Parent University is a mini conference-style program that allows families to engage in a focused learning experience tailored to their individual needs and interests. Sessions are delivered by Red Oak and other community experts, with a keynote presentation and supporting materials for continued learning beyond the session date.

For more information about Parent University or the therapeutic family services provided in the Family Resource Centers, contact Jon Wachtel at jwachtel@redoakbh.org.

QPR: Question. Persuade. Refer.



QPR (Question. Persuade. Refer.) is an evidence-based suicide prevention training designed to provide three simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life. Red Oak's Prevention Department began hosting QPR trainings for mentors and staff in March, with the goal to train 150 individuals this calendar year, adding to the growing numbers of trained gatekeepers in Summit County through the Summit County Suicide Prevention Coalition's Education Subcommittee.

To-date we have trained 48 staff and volunteers. This and other training sessions are open to interested individuals wanting to be equipped to support someone in crisis by providing hope and a plan. If you or anyone you know are interested in QPR click the link <https://redoakbh.org/services/mental-health-training-and-education/> and click on the "Contact Us" link and place "interested in QPR" in the "How can we help" section and we'll get you signed up for the next available training.

QPR is not a form of counseling or treatment. Rather it is intended to offer hope through positive action. By learning QPR, you will come to recognize the warning signs, clues, and suicidal communications of people in trouble, and gain skills to act vigorously to prevent a possible tragedy. The Gatekeeper training course can potentially help save the life of an in-crisis friend, colleague, family member, neighbor, or client. We hope you can attend and build skills that can potentially save a life.

A HUGE thank you to all who supported Red Oak at our virtual event. With your support, we raised over \$30,000 to support the children and families we serve.



thank you

to the Taylor Oswald Company for providing Red Oak's clients with an opportunity to visit and explore Africa, Asia and beyond through a summer membership to the Akron Zoo.

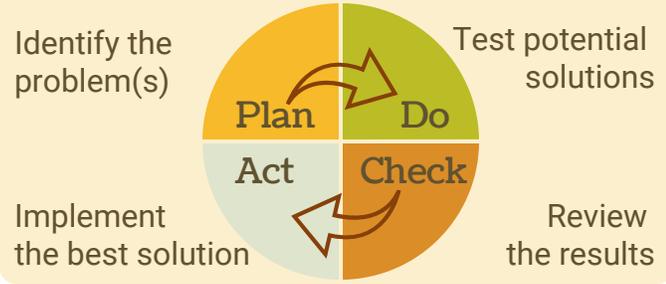
PQI Updates: The Details Matter

Did you know that Red Oak has a dedicated Performance and Quality Improvement committee working behind the scenes? Performance and Quality Improvement, otherwise known as PQI, is an important part of our work in every department and provides an opportunity to assess needs for improvement. Improvement planning is the formal process we use to document the work.

The PQI committee utilizes the **Plan, Do, Check, Act** model of change to work through improvement plans. The **Plan** step is where we identify and evaluate the data that indicates there is a need for change and determine the problem we're trying to solve. The **Do** step is where we determine how the plan will be put into action and the specific steps that need to take place (along with who is responsible). The **Check and Act** phase is an evaluation phase where we assess progress. If progress is not being made after putting all of the steps into place, we may go back to the drawing board and start over.

Once progress is made, the new changes will be adopted into practice. It typically takes approximately 6 months to move through the steps of an improvement plan, and they can put into place for almost any opportunity we identify and wish to address. There are multiple improvement plans in process at Red Oak at any given point in time.

The PQI committee is always open to feedback on how we can improve our systems and services, and we welcome participation from our partners! Contact Jennifer Puglia at jpuglia@redoakbh.org for more information.



COA: National Accreditation

Red Oak had its national accreditation visit from the Council on Accreditation (COA) in late April, and received full re-accreditation for all services/programs. COA accreditation is completed every four (4) years, with a comprehensive review of the following areas:

- Financial Management
- Governance
- Human Resources
- Network Administration
- Performance & Quality Improvement
- Risk Prevention & Management
- Admin/Service Environment
- Behavior Support & Management
- Client Rights
- Program Administration
- Training and Supervision
- Service Delivery

This was Red Oak's first year accrediting prevention and wellness services, and we are excited to be able to continue to expand our footprint in the health and wellness space as a result.



“Quality is never an accident. It is always the result of intelligent effort.”

-John Ruskin -



If you're interested in becoming a mentor for the 2021-2022 school year click [HERE](#) to start the process and be ready when the school year starts.

iC.A.R.E. Mentoring[®] Community Update

By the time this newsletter comes out the iC.A.R.E. team will be wrapping up another school year of school-based mentoring through a virtual lens. The year was both challenging and rewarding. There were speed bumps, hurdles, and barriers along the road, but the team came together to overcome them with the assistance of our volunteer mentors. To say that everything went to plan would not be true but the resiliency of our staff, mentors, mentees, and school staff helped to make this year successful in different ways.

First, we launched iC.A.R.E. in two new districts this year: Norton City School and Tallmadge City Schools. Although the matches are smaller in size and it took longer to launch than in the past, mentoring is occurring, and students are connecting with adult volunteer mentors from their community. Mentoring at its heart is about relationship development and empowerment. Students need a caring, consistent adult role model in their lives and mentors can serve as an extra value-added relationship for a student.

Second, we reconnected mentor-mentee matches that were cut short last year due to the COVID-19

pandemic. Some mentors were able to start in the fall semester and others started in April due to the ever-changing logistics coordination that is managed collaboratively by our staff. To hear and see the joy displayed from the mentees and mentors when they were able to reconnect, makes all the hard work well worth it and motivates us to continue to figure out creative ways to connect volunteers with students. Although some mentor-mentee matches only spent a few weeks together, the opportunity for a student to connect with another purposeful, powerful relationship can be the fuel needed to spark imagination and innovation as they travel down a pathway to success now and in their future.

The iC.A.R.E. team will be sending out end of year surveys to look at how we can enhance our programming for the upcoming school year. With everything that is on the horizon and the uncertainty of how school will start, one thing is for sure: mentoring will occur and happy children and mentors will be able to enhance their relationships and develop pathways to achievement that may not have been imagined before.

ROCKIN'
WITH
RED OAK

Summer 2021

Join us **beginning in June** for the kick-off to our summer concert series at **Lock 15 Brewing Co.** (21 W. North Street in Akron). Enjoy **GREAT FOOD** and **LIVE MUSIC** from Northeast Ohio's own **School of Rock**. A portion of the proceeds from the evening's sales will support Red Oak's services.

In late 2019, Barberton City Schools made a trailblazing investment in student health and wellness using its student success funding, with Red Oak as the coordinator of those efforts. Now nearly 18 months into our work together (nearly all of which was during a worldwide pandemic), we are excited to share how we've impacted the Magic's students and families.

BARBERTON HEALTH & WELLNESS OBJECTIVES

1 Develop a **model school-based health and wellness program** that serves students from early childhood through early adulthood **across the continuum of care.**

2 **Coordinate the efforts of community partners** to ensure **student needs are met**, gaps in care are addressed, and **services aren't duplicated.**

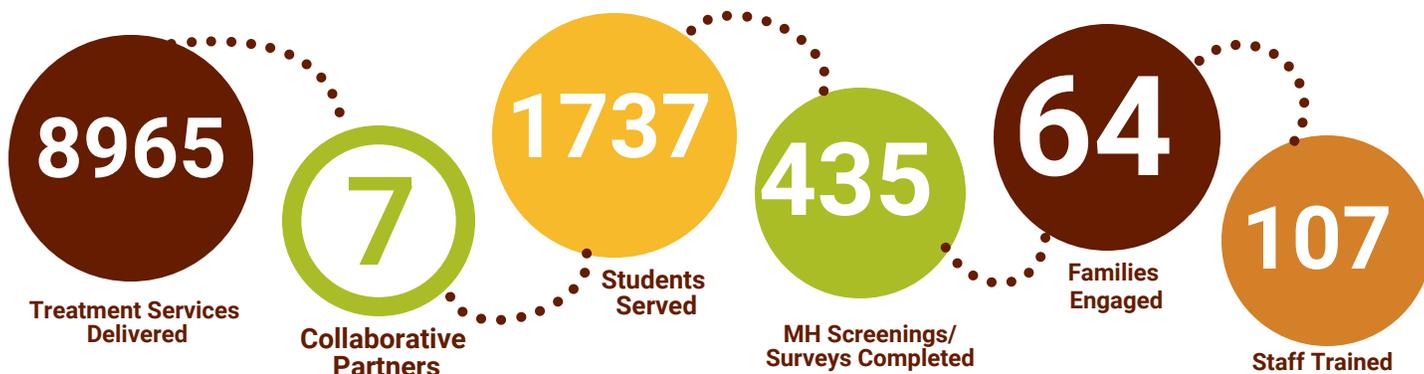


3 **Assess student risk** by utilizing **validated screening tools** to identify **risk and protective factors** and help to **build assets** in students across the entire district.

4 **Improve student engagement** by focusing on **social-emotional learning** and **addressing the needs of the whole child.**



2020-21 BARBERTON COLLABORATIVE IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



Shalonna Jackson, LSW serves as Red Oak's Health & Wellness Coordinator for the Barberton City School District. Shalonna is embedded in the BCS full-time, working with students in need of additional support either individually or in a group setting. In addition, she provides training and education for teachers and support staff, ensures mental health screening and data is readily available, links students/families with community resources, and supports the development of healthy self-care strategies across the district. Shalonna served as a BCS school-based therapist prior, and is also a BCS parent! To learn more about how the Barberton City Schools are working to transform their social emotional learning model please contact Jonathon Greer at jgreer@redoakbh.org and/or Shalonna Jackson at sjackson@redoakbh.org.



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