



Get Connected Helps Callers Find the Mental Health Care They Need

Dealing with a mental health issue can feel overwhelming.
Finding the right provider shouldn't.

When someone is dealing with a mental health issue, and they don't know what to do or who to call, MHAOhio's Get Connected program can help.

Get Connected helps individuals navigate the local mental health system, which includes connecting people to outpatient care, community mental health, hospitals, and crisis services; helping them work through the intricacies of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid; and following up with them to make sure the connections to their providers and resources were made.

LeeAnn Mattes has been the Get Connected Program Director since 2016 and has seen the program grow and change over the last eight years.

"In 2020, Get Connected had 835 new client referrals, and in 2023 that number rose to 1,563," she said. "In addition, each person's situation and the system itself has become more complex."

LeeAnn and her team member, Get Connected Program Manager, Hannah Davey, spend most of their days answering phone calls and emails from people facing a mental health situation. They work hard to respond to each inquiry within 24-48 hours. They have an in-depth conversation with each caller about what their needs are, if there are any barriers to care, and what specific type of care they may need. They apply their extensive understanding of different private and public insurance models and knowledge of how to obtain help without insurance, and they work to connect each caller with the provider that meets that person's needs the best.

Sometimes finding the right connection requires research and sleuthing, but other times, because of how closely LeeAnn has worked with local providers over the years, she immediately knows who the right individual for that person would be. They aim to offer each person multiple care options.



Pictured above : LeeAnn Mattes and Hannah Davey

"We try to make it as easy as possible for someone to connect to a provider," LeeAnn said. "We can make a direct referral for them to speed up the process, or we might send them a direct link to the intake paperwork. If the client doesn't have the technology to access the paperwork online, we sometimes mail it to them so they can fill it out and take it to the provider. We do everything we can to break down barriers so they can get the help they need."

A few weeks after referring a client, LeeAnn and Hannah follow up with the client to make sure the connection was made and their needs have been met.

If the provider doesn't work out or if the client's insurance changes and the provider doesn't take the new insurance, Get Connected will work with them again to find another option.

Anyone in the Central Ohio/Franklin County area can access Get Connected at no cost to them.

The program is funded primarily by the Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Board of Franklin County, with additional funding from the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging to serve older adults in Franklin County.



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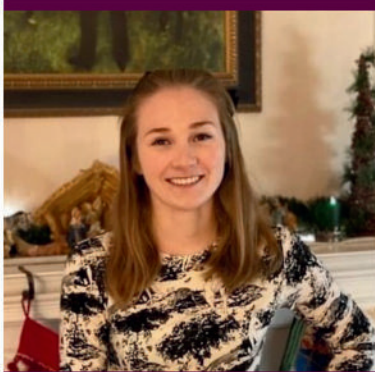
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MHA OHIO NEWS

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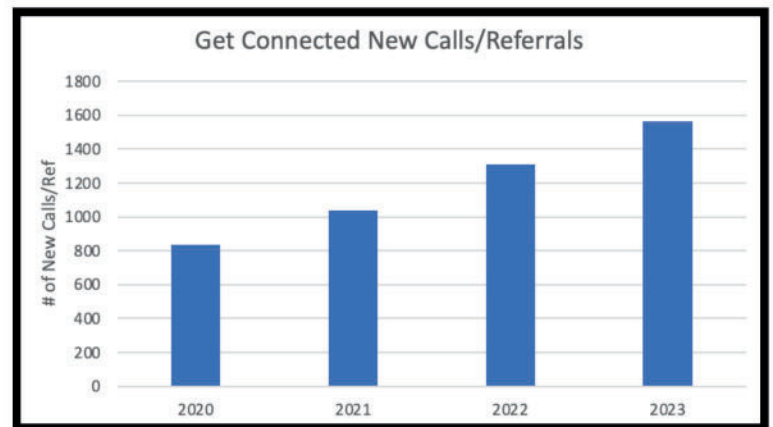
Get Connected

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Get Connected's new referral numbers have climbed each year as more people become aware of the service and its impact on their mental health. That trend is expected to continue into 2024.

"It's been really great to be able to witness the growth of Get Connected and the agency as a whole and know we're all working toward the same goals," LeeAnn said. "We are passionate about our mission, accessibility to care, and overcoming stigma. We talk about it every day and live it in our daily work."

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health issue, contact Get Connected at (614) 242-4357.



IN REFLECTION

TONYA FULWIDER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On December 6, during the final Board of Trustees meeting of 2023 and just minutes before our annual Holiday Magic event, I was appointed as MHAOhio's next Executive Director. That made this year's Holiday Magic extra special, and I am profoundly honored by this responsibility.

As most of you know, I'm not a new face at MHAOhio. My connection with MHAOhio dates back to 2012 when I joined as the Program Director. POEM, an organization I co-founded with Amy Burt in 2003, became a part of MHAOhio. I assumed the role of Associate Director in 2019.

Over the years I've witnessed the transformative influence of compassion and connection. I'm grateful for the fulfilling time working alongside the dedicated individuals at MHAOhio. Together, we've made strides in dismantling barriers to care, fostering understanding, and providing crucial support to those navigating challenges.

The future of MHAOhio holds immense promise and growth, and I am genuinely excited to be a part of it. It is an honor to stand amidst the exceptional talent and commitment of every individual dedicated to our mission.

I extend my deep appreciation for the unwavering support of our volunteers, partners, and donors over the years. Your commitment to our mission has played a pivotal role in supporting individuals on their mental health journey. Your generosity has touched countless lives, and our work wouldn't be possible without you.

I look forward to continued collaboration and the positive impact we will create together.



BOARD SPOTLIGHT ERIN RYAN

Erin Ryan has been a member of the MHAOhio Board of Trustees since 2021 and is currently serving as Board President.

Erin's career has always been connected to advocating for social justice and positive policy change, and she has her own experience navigating mental health challenges for herself and her family. When she had the opportunity to join the MHAOhio Board of Trustees, it felt like a perfect fit for her professional skills and personal passion.

"The most memorable part of serving on the board has been getting to experience the Holiday Magic events, where MHAOhio volunteers are recognized," Erin said. "We have an opportunity to see the impact of the organization with each of the incredible people who are honored for their involvement and hear about the difference the organization's services have made on people's lives. It puts the work in perspective to understand the ripple effect that MHAOhio has across our community."

Erin is the Founder and President of Elevate Advocacy, LLC, where she provides independent consulting in policy, advocacy, and government affairs to drive forward positive change for families, communities, and our society. Erin has been a leading voice in Ohio on early childhood issues, maternal and infant health, and gender justice. Access to mental health services and eliminating the stigma of mental health are foundational to her justice-driven mentality. Thank you, Erin, for your years of service to MHAOhio.

FUNDRAISING SPOTLIGHT



On September 29, MHAOhio brought back its popular fundraiser, Give Mom the Mic, for the first time since the pandemic! Our 10th celebration of Give Mom the Mic raised over \$100,000 to support MHAOhio's vital programs.

Over 260 people joined us at The Grand Event Center in Grandview for uplifting stories from people who have benefitted from the services of MHAOhio.

They enjoyed delicious food, a competitive wine toss, a thrilling silent auction, an exciting paddle raise, and a hilarious performance by best-selling author and comedian Jen Mann. Ann Fisher graciously emceed our event, as she has every year since the event's inception.

We are grateful for Ann's continued commitment to our mission.

We appreciate all our sponsors, ticket purchasers, silent auction donors, those who bid on the silent auction, program ad purchasers, and wine toss and paddle raise participants! You made our event a success!

Special thanks to Raquel Williams, our Mission Moment speaker, and to the participants who openly shared their stories in our event program, inspiring us all.

Mark your calendars for 2024's Give Mom the Mic event, which will be held on September 13 at The Exchange at Bridge Park featuring comedian and writer, Julie Kim!



FIFTH THIRD BANK



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We make every attempt to accurately acknowledge our donors.

To report an error or omission, please contact Jen Van Camp at JVanCamp@mhaohio.org or 614-221-1441

PROGRAM UPDATES

MHAOhio Hosts Event for Prospective PRS

On October 24, we welcomed more than 50 prospective Peer Recovery Supporters and partners to the Columbus Metropolitan Library for "Building a Peer Supporter Career," an information session and resource fair to assist new PRS as they begin their professional journey.

Certified PRS shared their experiences working in a variety of settings. Experts in benefits management, re-entry, resumes, and interviewing provided information and job-readiness tools.

We are grateful to representatives from CareSource, the Columbus Metropolitan Library, MHAOhio's PRS Program, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, Ohio Means Jobs, Overcomers on the Move, Southeast Benefits, Management, Southeast RREACT, and Southeast Vocational Services who hosted tables at the resource fair and met one-on-one with participants.

Thank you to the ADAMH Board of Franklin County, OhioMHAS, Maryhaven and Southeast Healthcare for partnering with us to provide another successful PRS recruitment event, and to the Columbus Metropolitan Library for hosting us!



Ohio Perinatal Mental Health Advocacy Day is May 1!

The Ohio Perinatal Mental Health Task Force – a collective impact project hosted by MHAOhio's POEM program and funded by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services - gathered in November and December of 2023 to discuss Ohio perinatal mental health policy priorities in 2024.

Through this collaboration, the task force created and finalized a policy agenda at the end of 2023. As the agenda publicly launches in 2024 and the task force moves forward on its priorities, we are excited to host an Ohio Perinatal Mental Health Day of Advocacy at the Ohio Statehouse on May 1, World Maternal Mental Health Day.

The Ohio Perinatal Mental Health Day of Advocacy will be an opportunity for all Ohioans with a vested interest in perinatal mental health to meet with legislators to advocate for and promote initiatives that are important to them. The goal is to elevate perinatal mental health policy that will have a lasting impact on Ohio moms and birthing persons. During the day, interested advocates will meet with legislators to discuss perinatal mental health related issues and share stories of lived experience. An evening reception will follow from 5-7 pm.

More details will be coming. Please scan the QR code to share your interest in attending.



BECCA ALEXANDER Sr. Manager of POEM Statewide Services

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MHA
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Save the Date!

GIVE MOM THE MIC

★  ★

Friday, September 13
The Exchange at Bridge Park
Join us for a hilarious and heartwarming night out!
Details coming soon!

The poster is divided into two main sections. The left section has a solid pink background and features a large, stylized, light-pink microphone graphic. In the top left corner of this section is the MHA logo. The right section has a white background and contains the event details. At the top right of the poster, the text 'Save the Date!' is written in a large, bold, pink font. Below this, the event title 'GIVE MOM THE MIC' is written in a black, sans-serif font, arched over a circular pink background that contains a white microphone icon. Two black stars are positioned on either side of the microphone icon. Below the title, the date 'Friday, September 13' and the venue 'The Exchange at Bridge Park' are listed in bold black text. The final two lines of text, 'Join us for a hilarious and heartwarming night out!' and 'Details coming soon!', are in a smaller black font.