



STEPPING UP & TAKING ACTION

TAKING ACTION

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

2
MILLION people with serious mental illnesses are admitted to U.S. jails each year

And almost three-quarters of incarcerated adults with serious mental illnesses have co-occurring substance use disorders. Jails have become de facto inpatient psychiatric facilities across the nation.

Ohio is no exception, either, with 30 percent or more of our incarcerated population having mental illnesses. Incarceration takes its toll on everyone: individuals, families, and even taxpayers. It's more expensive to jail persons with mental illnesses than it is to provide community mental health services. It's also in the interest of personal and public safety to help those who need mental health services get the treatment they need.

Stepping Up Ohio is an adjunct of the national Stepping Up Initiative launched in 2015 by the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, the National Association of Counties, and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation, with support from the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Assistance.

THE MISSION

The mission of both the national and Ohio's Stepping Up Initiative is to help criminal offenders with mental illnesses get connected to clinical treatment and other services so they can get well, make positive life changes, and stay out of jail.

Directed by Ohio Supreme Court Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton (ret.), along with other state and county leaders, Stepping Up Ohio is supported by the CSG Justice Center and is generously funded by Peg's Foundation.

“Under Governor Mike DeWine’s leadership, Ohio is committed to building the behavioral health system that was promised but not yet realized.

We strive to make quality, cost-effective mental health and substance use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery services more visible, accessible, and effective for all, illuminating a pathway for more Ohioans to live up to their full, God-given potential.”

– LeeAnne Cornyn, Director
Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

THE OHIO PROJECT

We're already making strides in reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in our jails, thanks to the many Ohio counties that have committed to the Stepping Up Ohio initiative. Reform is coming and it will look something like this:

- Validated screening and assessment tools
- Diversion programs instead of jail time for those with mental illnesses charged with low-level crimes
- Embedded mental health professionals to help ensure that people with mental illnesses are connected to community-based services
- Specialized courts that meet the unique needs of defendants with mental illnesses
- Training and response programs to improve law enforcement's response to the needs of people with mental illnesses
- Technical assistance and resources for housing needs
- 988 and crisis continuum responses from mobile response teams to full crisis centers



4 WAYS OHIO CAN HELP COUNTIES 'STEP UP'

1

Join the growing list of supporters.

Become a Stepping Up Ohio registered county by passing a resolution in support of the initiative.

▶ www.stepuptogether.org/take-action

2

Request a visit from the Stepping Up Ohio team.

Our team will meet with you virtually, bringing resources, policies, and best practices to share. We'll also help you set and prioritize your next steps.

▶ To schedule a visit, email kathleen@mightycrow.com.

3

Get access to resources to help with your county plan.

As a Stepping Up Ohio participant, you also get access to a variety of technical resources, such as learning opportunities, peer exchanges, and a newsletter containing important grant and training information and conferences of interest.

▶ For details, email kathy.yokum@mha.ohio.gov.

4

Map your county's resources and needs.

See Infographic 17 (Sequential Intercept Mapping) to participate in this valuable two-day program offered free only to Stepping Up Ohio counties.

READY TO STEP UP OHIO?