



Clarkston Area

Strengthening Families
Through Community Involvement

2019

CLARKSTON AREA YOUTH ASSISTANCE ANNUAL REPORT

*Community
coming together
to be the wind
beneath our
wings!*



From the Chair:

Last year, we had a young lady named Amy who spoke at our Annual Meeting about the things that CAYA has done for her through mentoring, the Homework Club and camp, and how these things changed the trajectory of her life. My work at CAYA for the last 30 plus years has always been in the background so I don't often see the direct impact that we have on the kids. It was great to witness so close up and personal. It gave me a renewed sense of commitment to this organization. It also made me wonder how many other "Amys" are out there.

Although CAYA has faced some unexpected challenges in the past few years, we continue to be resilient. We continue to be small but mighty. One continuing challenge that we have, and have always had, is getting name recognition out to the community so that families that need help know where to go.

Another challenge that we face is the recruitment of volunteers. Parents are busier than ever with both parents working in many families. In addition, children seem to be involved in more sports and other activities than ever before and parents are attending these events making it harder for them to have the time to volunteer their services.

Of course, we can't forget the challenge of fundraising which seems to be a shared issue for many small nonprofits in the area. We are looking at some exciting possibilities for 2020.

I have noticed over my time with CAYA the increased connection we have with Clarkston Schools. The well-being campaign has brought us even closer together and this collaboration helps our community strengthen and grow. The Clarkston School system is personal to me as I am proud to be the parent of two CHS graduates, a grandparent of a CHS graduate and another grandchild there in the 11th grade. It strengthens my commitment to this district and especially to CAYA as we work hard together to make a good impact on the youth in our community.

Jackie Fromm, Chairperson

Executive Committee:

Jackie Fromm, Chairperson
Jan Scislowicz, Vice Chairperson
John Nicholson, Treasurer
Leah Preston, Secretary

Board Members:

Mike Allard
Jamie Graves
Jessie McDonald
Judy Parnes
Dawn Schallar

STAFF

Lauren Klos, Caseworker
Debbie Wertz, Office Manager

Oakland County Youth Assistance

Mary Schusterbauer, Chief
Nikki Keller, Supervisor



Family Education

The Family Education Committee identifies and plans education programs for both parents and youth based on trends in the community. In the 2018-2019 year, the Family Education Committee planned several programs, many of which were made possible due to partnerships with the Clarkston Coalition for Youth, Easterseals, Michigan Abolitionist Project, Calvary Lutheran Church, and PKSA Karate Clarkston. A new program that was implemented this past year was Prime for Life, which is an educational class for students to learn about the risks of substance use. This program was put in place as a way to help prevent and reduce substance use among youth, especially with vaping, alcohol, and marijuana use. This program was done in collaboration with Clarkston Community Schools, Easterseals, and the Clarkston Coalition for Youth and yielded positive results in reducing substance use among the participants. Listed below are all the Family Education programs from this past year and the number of attendees:

- **Prime for Life** – CHS and CJHS student groups.....25
- **Girls Stand Strong** – CJHS student group.....4
- **Stranger Danger** – safety awareness for Elementary students.....93
- **Marijuana Community Talk** – education on marijuana legislation.....23
- **Understanding Anxiety** – parent/student seminar.....34
- **Human Trafficking Awareness** – parent/student seminar.....28
- **Every Brilliant Thing** – theater production on depression awareness.... 62



CAYA Youth Recognition Program: Strengthening Youth

The 2019 Youth Recognition Ceremony and Dessert Reception was held on April 24 with 600 in attendance to honor 203 youth. A few months before, teachers, administrators, and caring adults, were asked to reflect over the past year and identify youth for accomplishments of well-being:

Well-being of Self (personal growth)

- Personal progress
- Meeting and overcoming challenges
- Developing leadership skills
- Learning to set and meet realistic goals
- Discovering and unlocking his/her talents/interests
- Developing problem solving skills
- Making positive choices

Concern for the Well-being of Others

- Volunteering
- Brightening the day for others
- Advocacy for others
- Day to day acts of kindness
- Respectful assistance and support to others
- Making sure all students feel welcomed & included
- Showing compassion and empathy for others

It was with great dignity and respect that 203 Clarkston area youth (kindergarten through grade 12) were honored and celebrated for contributing to the well-being of their class, school, or community. The name of each honoree was announced and a brief description of his/her accomplishments of well-being were read aloud as they crossed the stage to receive congratulatory handshakes from a long line of dignitaries and nominators. There were 179 out of 203 honorees present at the ceremony. **The celebration continued at the festive Dessert Reception with over 500 attending - families sharing moments of joy and pride.**

The Youth Recognition Program is aligned with community efforts and interests in developing a culture of well-being, with its recognized long-term positive impact on the social, emotional, and academic growth and development of youth.

Youth Recognition is more than a one day event. The accomplishments of well-being help the honorees to flourish, as well as those whose lives they have touched. The printed program contained the affirmation that was read aloud for each honoree—to be reread with pride for years to come. Youth Recognition helps enrich and rewrite life stories.

Judy Parnes, Chairperson

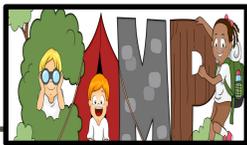
Homework Club

The 2018/19 school year brought 3rd through 5th graders back to CAYA's Homework Club which was in its 15th year of operation. The program takes place after school and offers tutoring at the Bridgewater Park Apartments in Clarkston. Upon arrival to the Homework Club, students receive a nutritious snack and converse with their tutors before engaging in homework. The program is designed to give kids a safe place where they can count on the consistency of caring adults, twice a week, who provide homework support and other various forms of guidance including dealing with peer relationships at school.

Every Tuesday and Thursday, when school was in session, the Homework Club met with approximately 16 volunteer tutors, some part-time, and 12 students. Our volunteers maintained the previous year's estimated 900 hours of their time working with the kids. The program also provides the students with snacks and lunches during Spring Break.

The language arts and math program was once again held during the summer for students from Pine Knob Elementary (PKE) at the apartment led by PKE teachers. The Homework Club benefits from PKE teacher support in a variety of ways, including learning materials that reinforce what the kids are learning in school and ideas that increase the effectiveness of the tutor-student relationship. One of our goals at the Homework Club is to build confidence and self-esteem in the students by helping them to go to school prepared, and therefore, feel more confident about their performance in the classroom.

Jan Scislowicz, Co-Chairperson
Shelby Etinger, Co-Chairperson



Camp & Skill Building Scholarships

Clarkston Area Youth Assistance offers camp & skill building scholarships to income-qualifying families to help Clarkston area students attend an activity and give them exposure to new skills and/or areas of interest.

This past year, CAYA awarded 22 skill building scholarships for youth. We also sent 3 students to overnight camp at Howell Nature Center Camp & Camp Copneconic. Furthermore, due to the generosity of the Independence Township Parks and Rec. Department, we awarded 42 Summer Day Camp week-long scholarships at Clintonwood and Baycourt Parks. The camp committee would like to thank our community that so willingly supported the efforts that afforded this opportunity for these children to attend camp this summer.

Mentors Plus

The Mentors PLUS Program matches pre-screened volunteers with local children who need a positive adult figure in their lives. Children are referred to this program through schools, parents, teachers, and local police officers. Mentoring is fun, creates new friendships, and allows volunteers the opportunity to share their lives with a child who could benefit from their attention and support. Currently, Clarkston has 2 mentor matches. If you are interested in joining the Mentors PLUS Program, please contact the Mentors PLUS office at 248-858-0045.



Pinwheels for Prevention

April's blue pinwheels are becoming more meaningful and interactive in the Clarkston Community. Since 2016, the Pinwheels for Prevention Program has sponsored and coordinated for Clarkston the nationwide campaign, April as Child Abuse Prevention month. So far, 2900 pinwheels have been planted in 135 Gardens of Prevention (flower beds, flower pots, and arranged vases). In 2019, while continuing to sponsor and coordinate the nationwide campaign, a second focus was added regarding local interest and efforts in the well-being of the community, especially youth. **With the growth and development in research on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma informed approaches, and well-being, the Pinwheels for Prevention Program is focusing on community awareness, attention, education and involvement to help prevent the maltreatment of youth in all of its forms.**

The third annual Pinwheels for Prevention Community Kick-off that took place March 21st was hosted in partnership with Clarkston Community Schools (CCS). It brought together a cross section of the Clarkston community to continue conversations about working together to focus on support, prevention, and well-being—topics covered by speakers, Brenda Baker-Mbacke, CASA Director for CARE House of Oakland County, Staci Puzio, CCS Director of Student Growth and Well-being, and Shawn Ryan, CCS Superintendent. Three Pinwheels for Prevention bookmark designs were unveiled this year as well and distributed throughout the community.

The Pinwheels for Prevention program helps bring the entire community together to focus on how each and every one of us can positively impact the well-being of the community, especially youth.

Judy Parnes, Chairperson



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month
Let's raise awareness about preventing child abuse.

Talking Points

- ◆ Blue Pinwheels represent the happiness and hopefulness of childhood. They remind us to help youth feel safe, hopeful and welcomed throughout the community.
- ◆ Positive relationships with caring adults throughout the community help children feel supported and helps to develop resiliency.
- ◆ A small act of kindness can leave a lasting impact. You never know when your small act could be the one that makes a big difference to someone else.



FUNDRAISING

We had a wonderful time on February 24, 2019, for our Bowl-a-thon at Cherry Hill Lanes North. Our 11 participating teams were from local businesses, Clarkston Schools, a running club, and other bowlers who were competing for the prize of best bowlers, most spirited, etc. These teams came together to help support CAYA and all that we do. In addition to bowling, we had a silent auction with items donated from local businesses and individuals. Thank you bowlers, businesses, and various organizations for supporting CAYA and look for us in the fall of 2020!

Jessie McDonald, Chairperson



Mission Statement

Clarkston Area Youth Assistance is committed to strengthening youth and families and to prevent and reduce juvenile delinquency, child neglect and child abuse through community involvement.

Clarkston Area Youth Assistance is a volunteer-driven community organization. It is one of 26 Youth Assistance programs in Oakland County. Each local Youth Assistance office is tri-sponsored by the Oakland County Circuit Court-Family Division, the local school district, and the local municipalities. The Oakland County Board of Commissioners provides major funding for professional casework staff in each unit. Volunteers work with the caseworker to plan and sponsor local prevention programs for youth and their families. More financial information is available in the office.

Program Sponsors

Oakland County Circuit Court-Family Division
Clarkston Community Schools

Independence Township
Springfield Township
The City of the Village of Clarkston

Casework Services - Fiscal Year-End Totals September 2018 to August 2019

116 total cases from Sept. 2018 to Aug. 2019:

40 Open cases from previous fiscal year
76 New referrals

35 Information and Referral Consultations

151 total families impacted by casework services

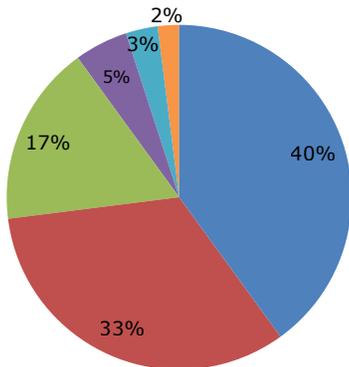
58% of new referrals engaged in services

26% did not engage - no response, declined/refused, got involved with formal court, or were receiving other services

13% - came a couple times but did not finish

3% - there has been some contact, but they have not fully engaged in services yet

58 Closures

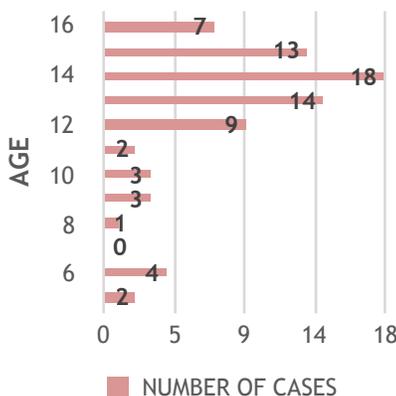


Closure Reasons

- Completed Goals
- Progress on Goals
- Did Not Respond
- Declined-Refused
- Accepted in Formal Court
- Declined-Receiving Other Services

REFERRAL SOURCE	TOTAL CASES
SCHOOL DISTRICT	43
PARENT/GUARDIAN	11
POLICE	10
OC PROSECUTOR	6
DHS/CPS	4
INTAKE DEPT.	1
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION	1
TOTAL	76

REFERRALS BY AGE



REFERRAL REASON	PERCENTAGE OF CASES
HOME TRUANCY	1%
ALCOHOL RELATED	1%
POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE	1%
THREATENING BEHAVIOR	3%
ASSAULT AND BATTERY	4%
HOME INCORRIGIBILITY	8%
POSSESSION OF OBSCENE MATERIAL	11%
SCHOOL INCORRIGIBILITY	22%
PREVENTION	49%