



JEFFERSON COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

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OhioRISE offers helping hand at Lisbon Trunk or Treat

LISBON – OhioRISE handed out help and valuable information to families of children who might need them during a trunk or treat organized by the Head Start Community Action Agency of Columbiana County Oct. 17.

Jefferson County Educational Service Center (JCESC) OhioRISE (Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence) is a Medicaid managed care program for children and youth with complex behavioral health and multisystem needs in Columbiana, Belmont, Carroll, Harrison, Jefferson, Monroe, Stark and Tuscarawas Counties and operated by the Jefferson County Educational Service Center. OhioRISE was formed to coordinate resources and put families in touch with what is available.

Care coordinators Andrea Andrusiewicz and Jennifer Lynch were among the celebrants in their fun attire. They had candy for the young trick-or-treaters and explained OhioRISE's services to their families.

While offering QR codes for referrals, Andrusiewicz noted all the trunk or treat's guests were potential beneficiaries of OhioRISE.

"It's a great place to get the word out at Head Start," she said.

Last year about 400 families and almost 600 people from Columbiana County and beyond attended. Some heavy foot traffic made the rounds in the latest trunk or treat, and many were introduced to OhioRISE. Andrusiewicz, who lives in the area and has worked at Head Start, saw quite a few familiar faces.

Vendor agencies included many close OhioRISE partners. Head Start often refers families to OhioRISE, and services also dovetail with Help Me Grow. Andrusiewicz recalled connecting one family of a child with behavioral issues to the Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) for parenting education. Behavioral issues may stem from mental health or other underlying issues, and OhioRISE wants families to know support is out there.

Community Support Programs Supervisor Tana Snyder of the Counseling Center of Columbiana County which operates Triple P and other programs said OhioRISE has been an invaluable partner.

"It's been excellent. We're very collaborative with OhioRISE. We appreciate them reaching out. They make referrals, we have contact with their case workers," Snyder said.

"We have worked with a few case workers here in Columbiana County, but we've also been in contact with some of the case workers in Jefferson County as well," she said. "Through some of the visits, we've been able to share resources with their Ohio workers as well as them being able to share some of the resources they have for us." Bonnie Virden, also with the Counseling Center, said OhioRISE has assisted them helping families in other counties.

"In Jefferson County it's opened up lots of doors for our parents, being able to collaborate with OhioRISE," she said.

"They seem to know where some little spots are where we can get the families the help that they need," she said. "It's a great place. It's a great opportunity for the parents and people like us to partner with and give the families more resources."

Family advocate Leanne Wells of Head Start has worked with OhioRISE to help families who wish to pursue better lives.

"It's been amazing! (OhioRISE) has helped provide so much help," she said. "We had a family last year and they

were homeless and (OhioRISE) worked with community partners to provide a hotel for them to go to until they found a home to stay in, and (OhioRISE) provided help to find a home.”

Wells said OhioRISE was always welcome.

“We love OhioRISE and we will always use OhioRISE when needed.”

Head Start Family and Community Partnership Coordinator Heather Henthorne said OhioRISE was a natural choice to invite.

“We’ve worked closely with OhioRISE with a couple of our families. I get to see them. I work with the Family and Children First Council, so I always get their updates and it’s always really nice to hear how many families they’re serving, so naturally we were happy to have them come.”

Early Childhood Office Manager Candi Welsh of the Columbiana County Board of Developmental Disabilities said OhioRISE’s services mesh well. She knows of OhioRISE from attending FCFC meetings and commended any help in connecting families with resources.

“It’s hard to let everybody know, too. There’s not enough out there to let these people know.”

CEO Tom Andrews of the Community Action Agency of Columbiana County said OhioRISE has been an important addition to the annual trunk or treat.

“We’re familiar with OhioRISE,” he said. “We’re glad to see OhioRISE here to participate in this.”

Andrews said OhioRISE is a key component in the “wraparound” philosophy of customizing services from different agencies to meet a child’s needs.

“I think the best thing is their coordination with our Columbiana County FCFC. Our case management doing wraparound services and referring to them, then referring them out to OhioRISE for those kids and families that really need those services, so it’s been a great coordination between OhioRISE and the FCFC committee,” he said. “It’s a really good connection.”

Afterward, Andrusiewicz said word is getting out.

“It went really well. I was actually surprised by how many of the children I handed cards to, their parents said they already had OhioRISE,” she said. “Familiar and already have a care coordinator in their home.”

To learn more about OhioRISE, call 740-792-4011, email ohiorise.info@jcesc.org or visit OhioRISE online at <https://www.jcesc.k12.oh.us/CareManagementEntity.aspx>

Photo Cutline:

OhioRISE care coordinator Andrea Andrusiewicz speaks to CEO Tom Andrews of the Community Action Agency of Columbiana County when OhioRISE participated in a trunk or treat in Lisbon. OhioRISE works closely with multiple agencies to coordinate services for children who need assistance.

