



**Enhancing Mental Health Awareness
& Acceptance in all Beaver County Schools**

What is the Youth Ambassador Program?

The Youth Ambassador Program (YAP) is a youth-centered, youth driven program operating in Beaver County schools that promotes awareness of current issues that youth face today.

The goals of the program are:

- To increase awareness of mental health and wellness
- To decrease stigma of mental health
- To build relationships with youth in other districts

What do the Youth Ambassadors do?

- Participate in countywide events to learn about mental health, wellness activities, and available services.
- Participate in club activities at their school to spread the information to other youth, family members, and the community and to address relevant issues in their district
- Promote YAP through social media, posters, videos, and other platforms.
- Represent the program by being “change agents” that teach others about YAP at national conferences.
- Help change the culture of understanding and acceptance of mental health and related issues.

Who are the Youth Ambassadors?

Any youth who resides in Beaver County from 6th through 12th grade is eligible to participate by contacting their district representatives. Youth are currently active in all Beaver County districts as well as some private, parochial, charter, cyber, and alternative schools. It is a diverse group representing both males and females, several racial and ethnic backgrounds, various sexual orientations, and those with and without knowledge or experience with mental illness.



@BCYAProgram



/beavercounty.soc



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bc-systemofcare.org

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Beaver County Youth Ambassador Program (YAP)

YAP is a youth centered, youth driven program operating Beaver County schools that enhances mental health awareness and acceptance.



#bcyouthvoice



2016: Program began with 5 Beaver County school districts and 80 students.



2023: Expansion to 20 school districts reaching over 300 + students!

Who are the Youth Ambassadors....

Students in grades 6-12

Beaver County residents

Diverse group of members

Students with or without knowledge of mental health and/or lived experiences



Benefits of being a YAP member:

Learning

Helping others

Being a "change agent" to enhance the culture of acceptance

Meeting others with similar experiences

Making a difference in their community

It's OK to Not Be OK!

Program Focus:

- Increasing awareness and acceptance of mental health and wellness
- Promote leadership and self advocacy
- Become familiar with local resources
- Fight inequities and stigma

Things we have done:

Meetings with:

Harrisburg Legislators
PA Suicide Prevention Taskforce
County Commissioners

Outreach:

Mental Health Awareness Events
Countywide Events
Outreach to younger students

Engaging the youth:

Poster Contest
Chalk Talk
YAP After Dark
Expansion of YAP to middle schools



Beaver County System of Care (SOC)



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Youth Ambassador 101



HELPFUL RESOURCES

Find out about local mental health resources and come up with ways to educate your friends, family and school community.

BE A YOUTH AMBASSADOR!

HOW TO START A YAP GROUP

Schedule regular meetings – once a month, twice a month, whatever works for your group!



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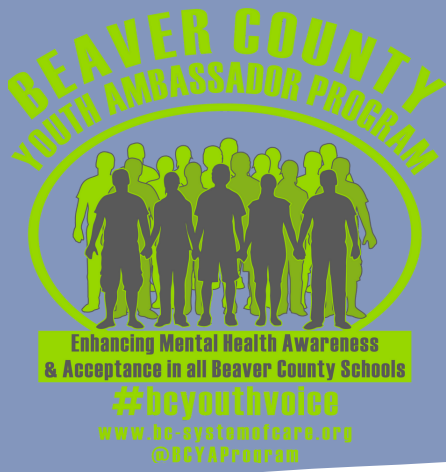
INCLUDE AN ACTIVITY

- What's on my plate
- Talk and toss ball
- Random acts of kindness
- Inspirational messages

DISCUSS A TOPIC

- Coping with stress
- Dealing with anxiety
- Transitioning to adulthood
- Self-advocacy
- How culture affects MH awareness





Beaver County Youth Ambassador Program

FALL-2023

526 YOUTH ATTENDED THE TWO YAP EVENTS THIS FALL
309 ATTENDED THE HIGH SCHOOL EVENT
217 ATTENDED THE MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENT
160 FIRST TIME ATTENDING YAP EVENT
288 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY
54.7% SURVEY COMPLETION RATE
 AVERAGE AGE **15.2** YEARS OLD

DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

Caucasian/White **76.4%**
 Black/African American **12.8%**
 Biracial /Multi Racial **8%**
 Asian **0.7%**
 Hispanic/Latino **0.7%**
 American Indian/Alaskan Native **0.7%**
 Other **0.3%**
 Blank **0.3%**

BENEFITS OF YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

91.2% CHANCE TO HELP OTHERS

89.5% OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN MORE

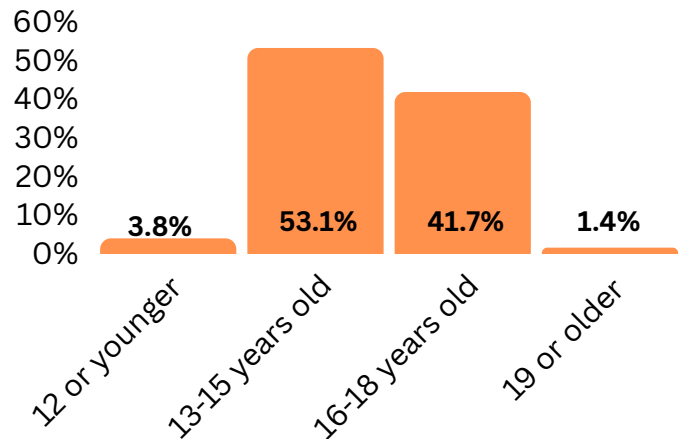
80.7% OPPORTUNITY TO GROW PERSONALLY

73.7% OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT WITH FRIENDS

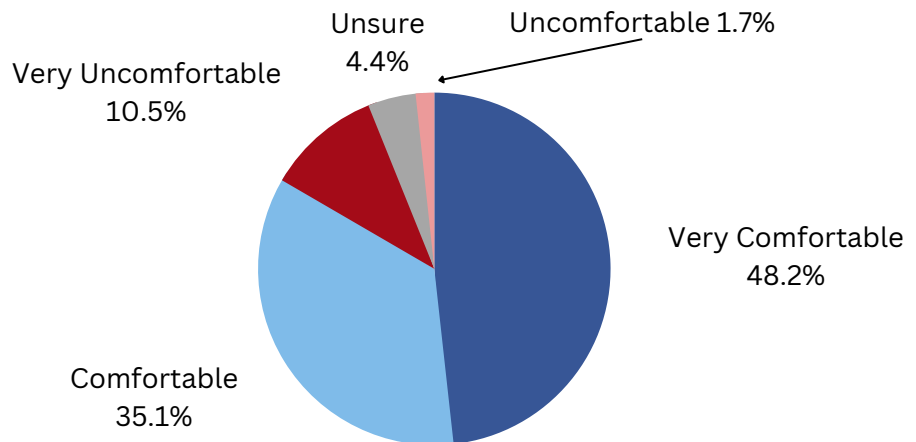
1.7% OTHER

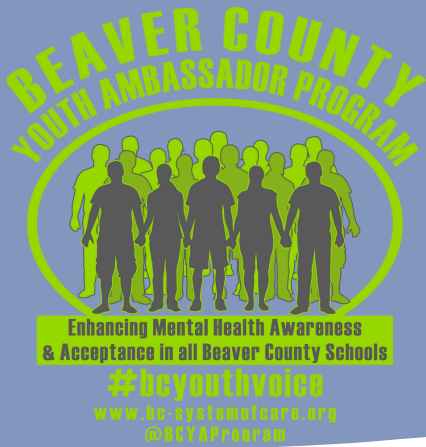
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AGE GROUPS REPRESENTED



COMFORT LEVEL HELPING PEERS N=131

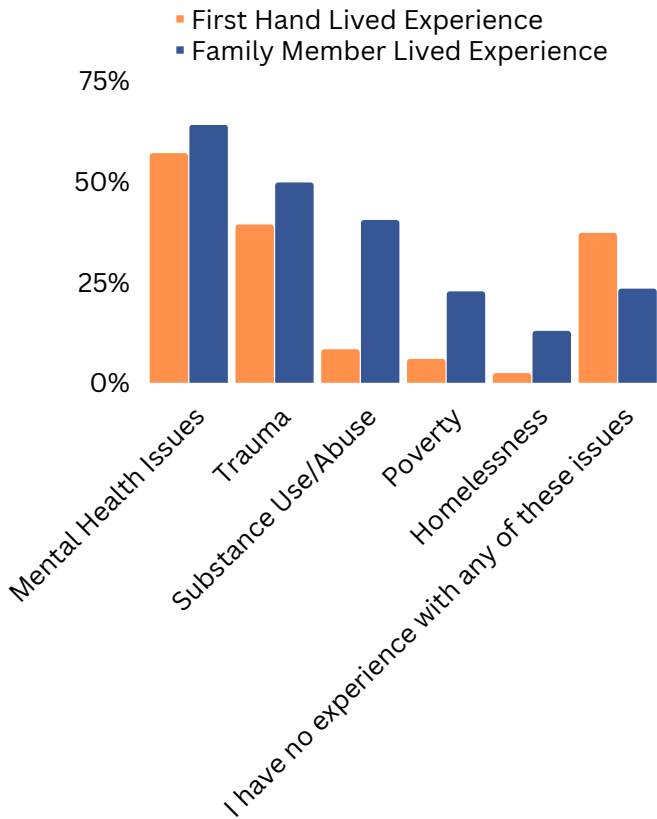




Beaver County Youth Ambassador Program

FALL 2023

Lived Experience



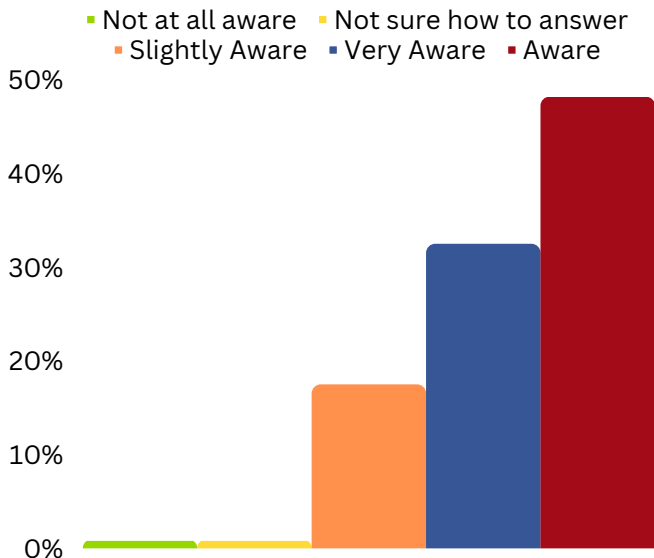
76.7% HAVE HAD CLOSE FRIENDS OR FAMILY MEMBERS WHO HAVE DEALT WITH THE PRESENTING CONCERNS

62.8% HAVE HAD LIVED OR FIRST HAND EXPERIENCE WITH ANY OF THE PRESENTING CONCERNS



AWARENESS OF BEAVER COUNTY RESOURCES

N=114



17 OF 20 YAP SCHOOL DISTRICTS REPRESENTED WITH A RANGE OF **1-60** STUDENTS

16.9 AVERAGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITH A MEDIAN OF **15** STUDENTS

TOP 3 SCHOOLS REPRESENTED:

HOPEWELL
BIG BEAVER FALLS
SOUTHSIDE



BEAVER COUNTY YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



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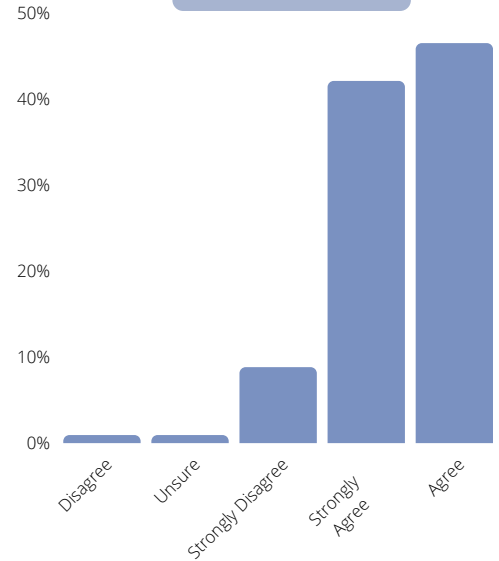
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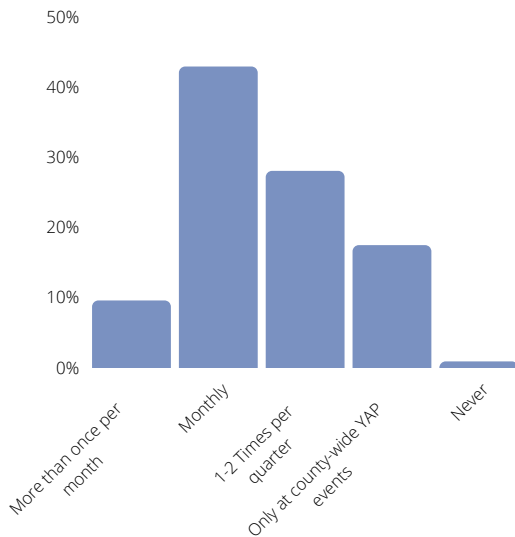
Beaver County Youth Ambassador Program

FALL 2023

SINCE BECOMING A YAP MEMBER, I HAVE AN INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF MENTAL HEALTH.



STATEMENTS THAT WERE TRUE FOR NEW OR JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS:	JUNIOR HIGH	HIGH SCHOOL	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
I am enjoying this YAP event.	30.7% (46)	69.3% (104)	150
I am meeting new people	31.9% (30)	68.1% (64)	94
I am learning about mental health	31.2% (37)	68.6% (81)	118
I am learning about mental health resources in Beaver County	28.1% (32)	71.9% (82)	114



**HOW OFTEN DOES YOUR SCHOOL DO YAP SPONSORED PROGRAMMING?
(N=114)**

Video Links:

YAP the Next Chapter!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiHsGKu0bBI&list=PL6IF8gWeCfKzZoEY0-sDZeKooyJ-ft6_m

Kidsburgh: Program in Beaver County provides resources for teens struggling with mental health

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkk4qVzhce4&list=PL6IF8gWeCfKzZoEY0-sDZeKooyJ-ft6_m&index=2