Butler County
Suicide Prevention
Recommendations

Ohio **Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services**

Butler County Suicide Prevention Recommendations

Following the Butler County Suicide Prevention Community Conversation on October 22, 2024, the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (OhioMHAS), Butler County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery Services Board (BCMHARS), and the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships) partnered in applying the evidence-based Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) to identify local suicide risk and protective factors to inform prevention priorities. The 2024 Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment (Appendix A) was conducted to gather feedback from residents on the most prominent risk and protective factors across the socio-ecological model. Based on responses from 219 respondents who live or work in Butler County, the following eight suicide risk and protective factors were identified as the most critical to address:

Protective Factors	Risk Factors
• Reasons for living (e.g., family, friends, pets) • Support from partners, friends and family • Feeling connected to school, community, and other social institutions • Reduced access to lethal means of suicide (e.g., safe storage of firearms) among people at risk	• History of depression and other mental illness • Social isolation • Lack of access to healthcare • Stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness

On November 14, 2024, OhioMHAS virtually joined BCMHARS and the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships) for the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition meeting to engage the coalition members in applying findings from the Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment to the completion of the Butler County Gap Analysis. Based on the Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment results, the Butler County Gap Analysis (Appendix B), and perspectives shared by the Coalition during the November meeting, OhioMHAS is providing the following recommendations:

1. Increase Access Knowledge, and Delivery of Behavioral Health and Suicide Care

2. Decrease Stigma Associated with Help-Seeking and Mental Illness

3. Decrease Social Isolation

4. Increase Support from Partners, Friends, and Family

1. Increase Access, Knowledge, and Delivery of Behavioral Health and Suicide Care

Lack of access to healthcare was identified as the top community risk factor in the Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment. The Gap Analysis indicates this risk factor to have high changeability due to Primary Health Solutions, a Federally Qualified Health Center, expanding services and offering services to those who are uninsured in the community. OhioMHAS recommends expanding upon these efforts by educating the public about behavioral healthcare options, supporting time sensitive intervention and care coordination, and increasing multisystem collaboration. Community events such as Behavioral Health facility open houses or resource fairs allow the public to learn more about resources and facilities in their community. Behavioral health providers and other health entities should consider building relationships with area employers, chamber of commerce, schools, libraries, and other community partners to meet people where they are and spread awareness about available services, including Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS), the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, and Peer Recovery Supporters (see Appendix C for more information). County boards and coalitions can work with local behavioral healthcare systems and schools to implement the evidence-based Zero Suicide framework for safer suicide care; federal grants may be available to support this work (Appendix C). Behavioral healthcare capacity can be further grown through increasing the availability of providers that are Farm Stress Certified (Appendix C).

2. Decrease Stigma Associated with Help-Seeking and Mental Illness

Stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness was identified as the top societal risk factor in the Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment. The Gap Analysis indicates this risk factor to have moderate changeability due to a long-standing history around stigma in the county and the need for additional programming. OhioMHAS recommends allocating resources and collaborating with multi-sectoral partners to decrease stigma, encourage help-seeking, and increase awareness of resources. A multi-pronged approach includes implementing anti-stigma campaigns and suicide prevention training that engages and empowers Butler County community members. Community members can partner to decrease stigma by becoming certified Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) instructors and providing training to their sectors and social networks. Community members engaged in such efforts should reflect the diversity of Butler County. Anti-stigma messaging should be tailored to subpopulations identified in the Gap Analysis (e.g., men between 33-74 years of age). Statewide campaigns that may supplement local anti-stigma campaigns include Life is Better With You Here, Man Therapy, and Be Present Ohio. Additional information about programs and resources to decrease stigma are included in Appendix C.

3. Decrease Social Isolation

Social isolation was identified as the top relational risk factor in the Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment. The Gap Analysis indicates this risk factor to have high changeability due to expansive prevention and education through Envision Partnerships and other community organizations. Existing programs and resources include Uplift and Elderly Services Program, Edge Teen Center, and the Fringe Coffee Shop. OhioMHAS recommends supplementing existing programming by allocating resources and collaborating with multi-sectoral partners to decrease social isolation and increase connectedness to schools, community, and other social institutions. Efforts should target high-risk subpopulations identified in the Gap Analysis (e.g., men between the ages of 33-74). Taskforces and committees within the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition can collaborate on strategies to decrease social isolation among their populations of focus. Place-based frameworks, such as the Asset-Based Community Development framework, can be leveraged to increase connectedness within neighborhoods. Partner with community members in implementing and evaluating evidence-based strategies (e.g., youth-led programs and Sources of Strength) to increase connectedness among Butler County residents. Additional information about programs and resources to decrease isolation and increase connectedness is available in Appendices B and C.

4. Increase Support from Partners, Friends, and Family

Increasing support from partners, friends, and family was identified as the top relational protective factor in the Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment. The Gap Analysis indicates this protective factor to have high changeability due to the growing number of community events, coordinated by chambers of commerce. OhioMHAS recommends supplementing community events with evidence-based gatekeeper training to equip partners, friends, and family with life-saving suicide prevention skills. Coalitions and county boards can partner with multi-sectoral organizations (e.g., private sector, healthcare sector, schools, higher education, faith sector, and public safety) to coordinate Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) training and Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training. Be Present Ohio: The Online Experience (BPO:XP) is a new suicide prevention program for youth on identifying warning signs of suicide, supporting each other, and reaching out for help. OhioMHAS recommends implementing BPO:XP with youth to supplement and expand youth suicide prevention programming. Consider coordinating QPR or MHFA with parents and caregivers through schools prior to rolling out BPO:XP as a way to encourage and support family conversations about mental health.

Budget Considerations

Furthermore, OhioMHAS encourages engaging local elected officials including commissioners, trustees, and administrators in budgetary conversations to allocate funding to the suicide prevention priorities identified in the Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment and Gap Analysis. Utilizing the process outlined in the SPF, it is recommended to map the top risk and protective factors identified in the Butler County Assessment and Gap Analysis to the 2024-2026 Suicide Prevention Plan for Ohio and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Suicide Prevention Resource for Action (Appendix C).

Consider setting up an introductory meeting or a follow up meeting with your local elected officials and community leaders to detail your current suicide prevention and postvention efforts, pitch what new initiatives are needed in the community, and craft your ask. These crucial conversations allow for the appropriate amount of allocated funding to introduce new programs, sustain ongoing initiatives, and increase system-wide community buy-in and collaboration. It is also recommended to seek resources and partnerships at both the state and national level to grow suicide prevention capacity. Diversification of partners and funding streams will strengthen the sustainability of suicide prevention programming. Additionally, consider building relationships with non-traditional/ multi-sectorial community partners such as chambers of commerce, local businesses, non-profits, coalitions, barbershops/hairstylists, and other community goods and service providers to maximize impact. Creating relationships with these non-traditional partners allows for increased awareness, greater community buy-in/recognition, and innovation.

Appendices
Appendix A: 2024 Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment

The 2024 Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment is a survey consisting of 18 questions total with 16 multiple choice questions identifying demographics and community protective and risk factors as well as two open-ended questions regarding suicide prevention strategies and continued participation. The survey was deployed following the Suicide Prevention Panel Discussion led by BCMHARS, the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships), and OhioMHAS on October 22, 2024. The survey was made available to community members at the Community Conversation, online, and distributed by email, and word of mouth.

The survey received 219 responses from participants ages 18 to 70 and above who live, or work in Butler County with approximately 87% of the respondents identifying as white, 6% of respondents identifying as Black or African American, and 4% identifying as Hispanic or Latin-American. Regarding gender, 81% of respondents identified as female, 17% of respondents identified as male, and less than 1% of respondents identified as other. Approximately, 84%

of respondents received a bachelor's degree, 27% of respondents obtained a graduate degree or higher, 13% of respondents completed some college but received no degree, and 8% of respondents completed high school.
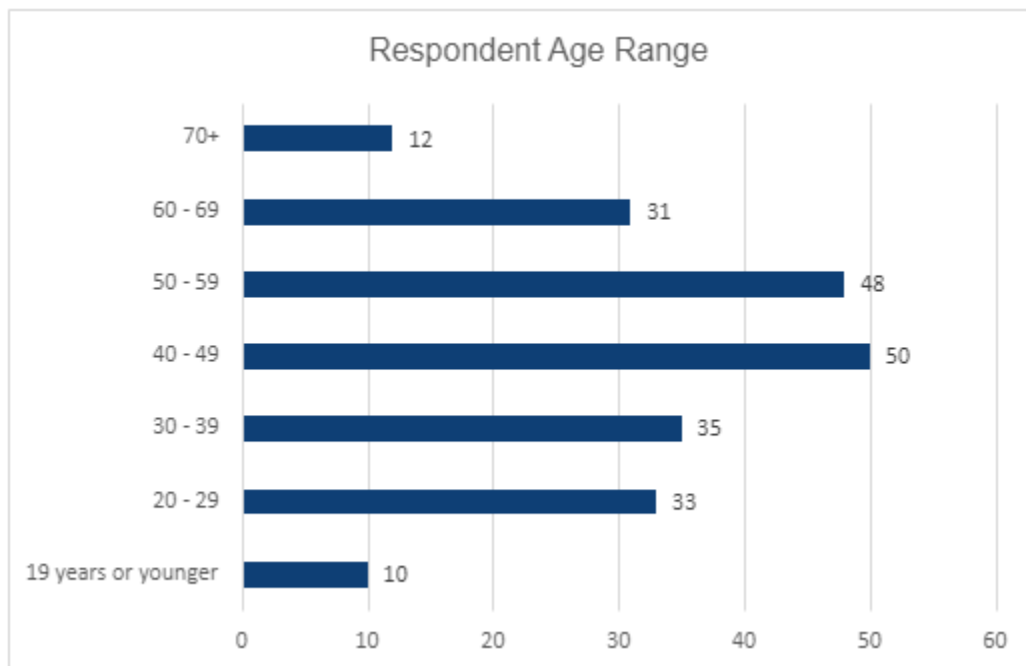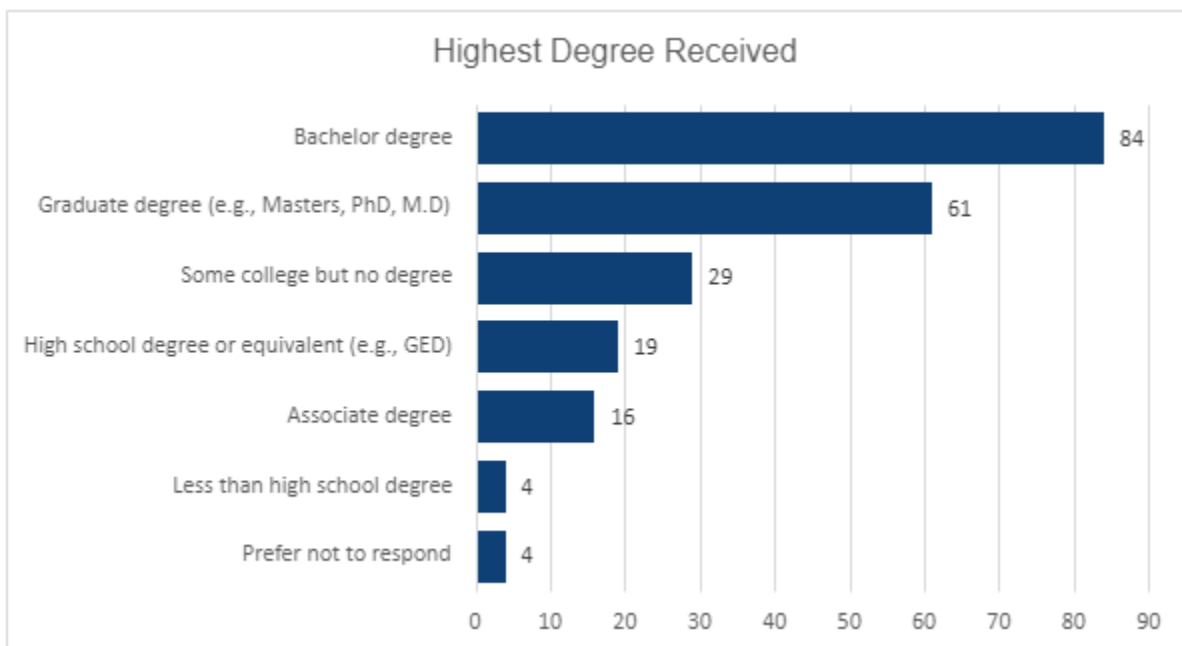
Figure 1. Respondents by Age Range

Figure 2. Highest Degree Received by Respondents

The 2024 Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment asked respondents to identify risk and protective factors. Risk and protective factors both influence a person's behavioral health, but in opposite ways; identifying these factors can help explain why suicide risks exist and be useful in decreasing the likelihood a person or community experiences suicide. Suicide risk factors increase an individual's risk of suicide and occur at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. Respondents identified the following risk factors for Butler County: history of depression and other mental illness, social isolation, lack of access to healthcare, and stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness.
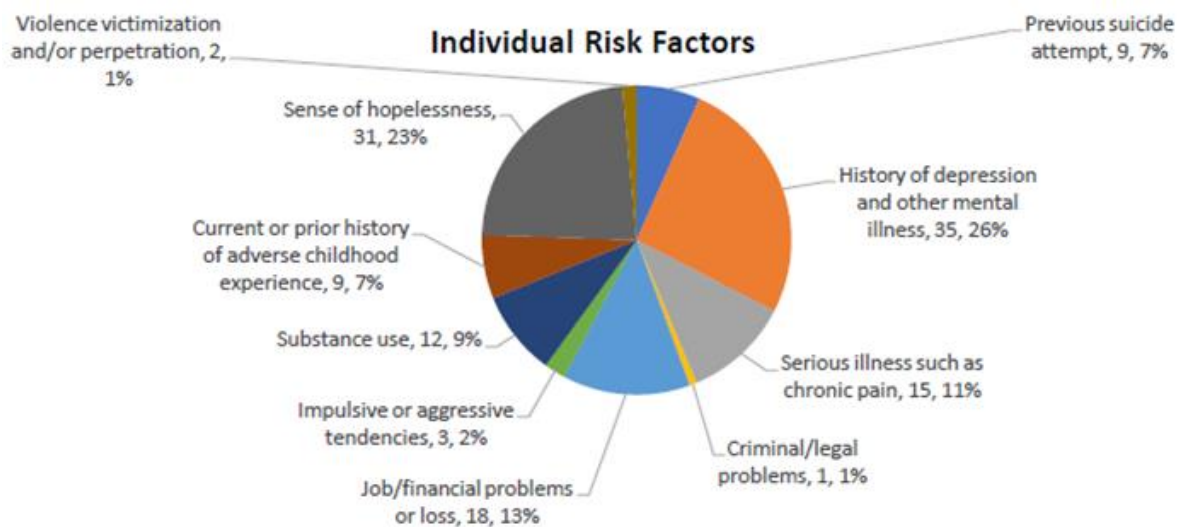

Figure 3. Individual Risk Factors that Contribute to Suicide Risk

Protective factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels can help protect people from suicide. Respondents identified the following protective factors for Butler County: reasons for living (e.g., friends, family, pets, etc.), support from partners, friends, and family, feeling connected school, community, and other social institutions, and reduced access to lethal means of suicide. Responses to the open-ended question, 'Please share any suicide prevention strategies you would like to see implemented in Butler County' revealed the following themes: more space for community conversations, safe spaces, and social support, more resources for minority and LGBTQ+ communities, increase education about suicide and the brain, and more community awareness through billboards and other social marketing methods.

Individual Protective Factors

- Feeling connected to school, community, and other social institutions, 27, 25%
- Reduced access of lethal means of suicide (e.g., safe storage of firearms) among people at risk, 24, 23%
- Effective coping & problem solving-skills, 26, 24%
- Support from partners, friends, and family, 30, 28%

Figure 4. Individual Protective Factors that Decrease Suicide Risk

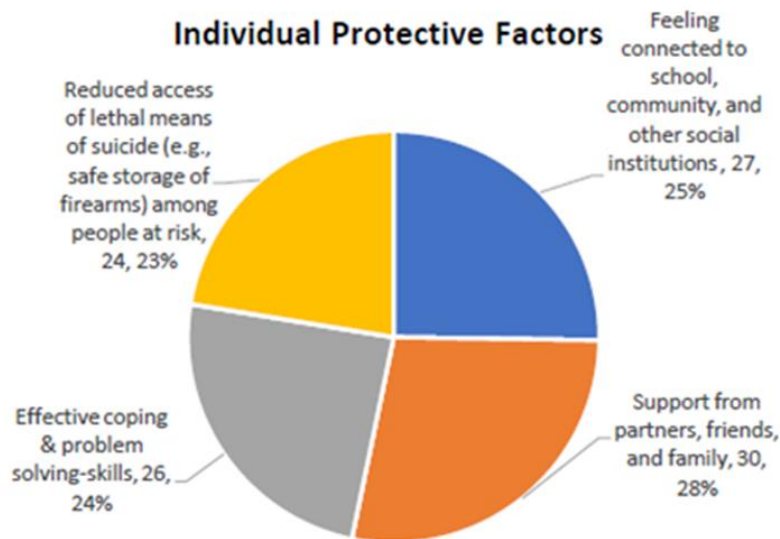| **Suicide Prevention Strategy Themes from the Open-Ended Response** |
| --- |
| • More space for community conversations, safe spaces, and social support
• More resources for minority and LGBTQ+ communities
• Increased education about suicide and the brain
• More community awareness through billboards and other social marketing methods |

Responses to the 2024 Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment were provided to BCMHARS and the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships) for review and analyzed by OhioMHAS. The data collected was used to inform the Gap Analysis completed by BCMHARS and the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships) and the Suicide Prevention Recommendations for Butler County provided by OhioMHAS. Ultimately, the data collected in addition to the Gap Analysis can be used to inform the Butler County Community Suicide Prevention Plan spearheaded by BCMHARS and the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships).

Appendix B: Butler County Gap Analysis

BCMHARS and the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships) collaborated in completing a Gap Analysis to assist with identifying suicide prevention gaps in their community to inform a community suicide prevention plan. Findings from the County Suicide Prevention Assessment were used to complete the Gap Analysis and identify the top

risk and protective factors of focus. Following the Strategic Prevention Framework, BCMHARS and the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships) identified underlying conditions, existing programs and resources, and opportunities associated with top risk and protective factors identified in the Suicide Prevention Assessment. Changeability of top risk and protective factors were rated from high to low, based on opportunities to address them.

The following information includes the Gap Analysis completed by BCMHARS and the Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition (Envision Partnerships):

<p style="text-align:center; color:red">GAP ANALYSIS</p>

DATA & EVALUATION

Suicide in the County

There has been an ongoing trend of white males aged 33-74 dying by gunshot wounds. The Suicide Prevention Coalition created the Lethal Means Taskforce and meets monthly. In partnership with the VA, gunlocks are distributed to shooting ranges and gun shops. Also, with Lifeside, Ohio, statewide campaign.

County Suicide Fatality Review Board

In Butler County the SFR started in September 2022 relates to the OFR and together is called the Butler County OFSR. The OFSR is hosted by the Butler County General Health District, meets quarterly, and is in the process of creating a recommendations/ follow up sub-committee group.

County Suicide Prevention Assessment Results

Participants included, African American, Asian, Native American, and White.

COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

County Suicide Prevention Coalition

The Butler Suicide Coalition is under the umbrella at Envision Partnership. Envision Partnership is an Ohio Certified Prevention Agency. Leadership is executive committee which includes chair, vice chair, secretary, and chairs from each Taskforce/ Committee which meets monthly. There are over 200 members in our distribution list and regular attendance consist of 25-30 members monthly. There are monthly taskforce meetings that members participate in as well.

- Suicide Coalition -Envision Partnerships – Kristen Smith
  - Meet the second Thursday of the month 3-4:30 p.m.

- **Taskforce to Improve Mental Health in the African American Community**
  - Meets on the 3rd Monday of the month at 3:30 PM _**VIRTUALLY**_
  - Contact Chair, Kim McKinney at deltakim11@aol.com
- **Volunteer for the L.O.S.S./D.O.S.S. Team (Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors/ Drug Overdose Survivor Support)**
  - **CLICK HERE** for information on how you can be a volunteer serving survivors of unintentional drug overdose or suicide.
  - Contact Chair, Jennifer MacLean at JMacLean@EnvisionPartnerships.com
- **Lethal Means Safety Taskforce**
  - Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 11:30 AM _**VIRTUALLY**_
  - Contact Chair, Kendra McMullen at Kendra.McMullen2@va.gov
- **LGBTQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce**
  - Meets on the 2nd Friday at 4:00 PM _**VIRTUALLY**_
  - Contact Chair, Michelle Minette at maminette@mamchlc.com
- **Older Adult Taskforce**
  - Meets on the 3rd Tuesday at 3:30 PM. _**HYBRID**_ meeting. Meets at Envision Partnerships office and virtually
  - Contact Chair, Lynda O'Connor at Lynda@C3Ohio.org
- **Attempt Problem Solving Committee**
  - Meets on 2nd Wednesday at 1:00pm via ZOOM
  - Contact Kristen Smith at (513) 868-2100 ext. 228 or ksmith@envisionpartnerships.com for ZOOM link information
- **Veteran Commission's Veteran Suicide Prevention Committee**
  - Meets on the 4th Thursday of each month at 2:00pm at 315 High Street, Government Service Center Conference Room, Hamilton
  - Contact Lisa Meece at MeeceL@ButlerCountyOhio.org
- **"A Walk to Remember" Planning Team** - _short-term planning_
  - Planning begins Monday July 1 and meets every other Monday at 3:00 until the week after the event. _**HYBRID**_ meeting. Meets at Envision Partnerships office and virtually
  - This event occurs during the week of World Suicide Prevention Day- _September 10_.
  - Contact Chair, Kristen Smith at ksmith@envisionpartnerships.com

Existing Countywide Suicide Prevention Priorities and Strategies

Each Taskforce Coalition has a process in place to help vulnerable communities. Example, community safe space for LGBTQ families.

TOP IDENTIFIED RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Top Relationship Risk Factor: Social Isolation

- *Local conditions contributing to social isolation include*
  - *Covid-19 isolated many within our community, all ages and especially those in rural areas.*
- *Existing programs and resources addressing social isolation include,*
  - *Uplift and Elderly Services Program, Edge Teen Center, and the Fringe Coffee Shop.*
- *Opportunities to expand capacity to decrease social isolation include*
  - *Bring awareness to rural areas and grow existing programs.*
- *Changeability of the social isolation is considered to be high due to expansive prevention and education through Envision Partnerships and other community organizations.*

Top Community Protective Factor: Feeling connected to school, community, and other social institutions

- *Local conditions contributing to feeling connected to school, community, and other social institutions include,*
  - *Envision Partnership, FCFC, and Butler County ESC*
- *Existing programs and resources addressing feeling connected to school, community, and other social institutions include*
  - *School liaisons, Edge Teen Center, and School Partnership Programs through Envision Partnerships.*
- *Opportunities to expand capacity to increase feeling connected to school, community, and other social institutions include*
  - *More funding to go into the schools*
- *Changeability of the feeling connected to school, community, and other social institutions is considered to be **Moderate** due to…*
  - *The variety of programs that already provide opportunities for connection within the community, as well as more programs being expanded and developed.*

Top Individual Risk Factor: History of depression and other mental illness

- *Local conditions contributing to history of depression and other mental illness include high rate of poverty, generational trends, and seasonal depression due to fluctuating temperatures seasons.*
- *Existing programs and resources addressing history of depression and other mental illness…*

- Local crisis team and line, multiple inpatients and outpatient programs addressing mental wellbeing. Additionally, Envision Partnerships provides prevention in the county.
  - o Opportunities to expand capacity to decrease history of depression and other mental illness include…
    - Further expansion and promotion of the previous stated resources.
  - o Changeability due to fluctuating temperatures seasons.
  - o is considered to be [high/low) due to…

Top Community Risk Factor: Lack of access to healthcare

  - o Local conditions contributing to lack of access to healthcare include…
    - Lack of education on obtaining insurance, as well as inability of Primary Care Physicians to accommodate same day needs of patients.
  - o Existing programs and resources addressing lack of access to healthcare include…
    - Primary Health Solutions is a Federal Qualified Healthcare agency that is constantly addressing and expanding services within Butler County to meet the needs of the community and assist patients who are uninsured.
  - o Opportunities to expand capacity to decrease lack of access to healthcare include…
    - Primary Health Solutions is currently working on expanding to other underserviced communities within Butler County, as well as add needed services such as Cardiology and Chiropractic care.
  - o Changeability of the lack of access to healthcare is considered to be **High** due to…
    - Primary Health Solutions pushing forward to expand services and to offer needed services to those who are uninsured within the community.

Top Societal Risk Factor: Stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness

  - o Local conditions contributing to stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness include…
    - Butler County is a very conservative county with a long-standing history around stigma with help-seeking and mental illness.
  - o Existing programs and resources addressing stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness include…
    - Within Butler County there are now a growing number of "stigma busting" campaigns to help breakdown the negative outlooks on mental illness treatment and to foster mental wellness for the whole community.
  - o Opportunities to expand capacity to decrease stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness include…

- Current programming can be expanded, and new programming continues to be developed to further "stigma busting" campaigns.
    - ○ Changeability of the stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness is considered to **Moderate** due to…
        - The current programming needing expanded and the conservative mindset of the Butler County community.

Top Individual Protective Factor: Reasons for living (e.g., family, friends, pets, etc.)

- ○ Local conditions contributing to Reasons for living (e.g., family, friends, pets, etc.) include…
    - Various cities within Butler County offer various family events and festivals throughout the year, as well as local libraries offering family/community events. Some cities have built new dog parks to foster connection and a deeper sense of community.
- ○ Existing programs and resources addressing Reasons for living (e.g., family, friends, pets, etc include…
    - Multiple programs within the county aide families in deeper connections and facilitate spending quality time together. A lot of these programs are provided within school settings.
- ○ Opportunities to expand capacity to decrease Reasons for living (e.g., family, friends, pets, etc include…
    - More school and community funding is needed to expand services and programs that foster deeper connections with families and provide more community events.
- ○ Changeability of the Reasons for living (e.g., family, friends, pets, etc is considered to be **High** due to…
    - Multiple Butler County cities having a chamber of commerce working to diligently plan and expand on community events and to create a greater sense of community (example: 17 Strong!).

Top Relational Protective Factor: Support from partners, friends and family.

- ○ Local conditions contributing to support from partners, friends and family include…
    - Various cities within Butler County offer various family events and festivals throughout the year, as well as local libraries offering family/community events. Some cities have built new dog parks to foster connection and a deeper sense of community.
- ○ Existing programs and resources addressing support from partners, friends and family include…

- Each city within Butler County offers various community events. These events provide opportunities for partners, families and friends to gather and share common experiences with each other.
  - Opportunities to expand capacity to decrease support from partners, friends and family include…
    - More funding provided to cities to grow and expand community festivals and events for families and friends.
  - Changeability of the support from partners, friends and family is considered to be **High** due to…
    - Multiple Butler County cities having a Chamber of Commerce working to diligently plan and expand on community events and to create a greater sense of community. These events provide opportunities for partners, families and friends to gather and share common experiences with each other.

Top Societal Protective Factor: Reduced access of lethal means of suicide

  - Local conditions contributing to reduce access of lethal means of suicide include…
    - When firearms are purchased at a legal distributor, background checks are performed prior to purchase. Each gun purchaser is provided with a gun lock for the firearm. Shooting ranges "typically" have a range master in the range ensuring safety of customers.
  - Existing programs and resources addressing reduce access of lethal means include…
    - Envision Partnerships, in partnership with the VA, has a Lethal Means Safety Taskforce that is out in the community providing gun lock resources, crisis information and educating on local suicide rates and prevention.
  - Opportunities to expand capacity to decrease reduce access of lethal means of include…
    - Additional Task Force members and campaigning could be utilized to further expand education and awareness of lethal means safety.
  - Changeability of the reduce access of lethal means of is considered to be **Moderate** due to…
    - Current Lethal Means Safety Taskforce efforts as well as willingness of gun ranges and distributors to allow education to be visible within their facilities.

Appendix C: Strategies, Programs & Resources to Address Top Suicide Risk and Protective Factors in Butler County

OhioMHAS recommends implementing data-driven and evidence-based suicide prevention strategies to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors for suicide. It is recommended for Butler County to leverage its Gap Analysis to prioritize risk and protective factors that were identified in its Suicide Prevention Assessment. It is recommended to select factors across multiple levels of the Socio-Ecological model. See A Guide to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework for additional information. Strategies to address risk and protective factors can be found in the 2024-2026 Suicide Prevention Plan for Ohio and the CDC's Suicide Prevention Resource for Action. The following are strategies and resources to address top risk and protective factors identified in the Butler County Suicide Prevention Assessment.

Increase Support from Partners, Friends, and Family
Increase evidence-based and evidence-informed suicide prevention trainings.
- **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)**. Expand existing MHFA efforts to increase support from partners, friends, family, and non-traditional community partners by integrating it into systems serving high-risk populations. Growing a MHFA cohort of instructors can increase training capacity.
- **Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR)**. Increase QPR training across all sectors in the community, including the private sector. Recruit and train QPR Instructors who reflect Butler County's demographics. Offer a QPR Instructor Cohort to support instructors with scheduling trainings, collecting data, and covering training costs.
- **Be Present Ohio: The Online Experience (BPO:XP).** BPO:XP uses video game elements to teach suicide prevention skills to youth through self-paced modules. Collaborate with schools and youth-serving organizations to offer BPO:XP to youth.

Increase Safe Storage of Lethal Means
- **Life Side Ohio. Life Side Ohio** is a suicide prevention campaign dedicated to the firearms community. Resources include the Voices for Suicide Prevention Podcast and Life Side Ohio Media Kit.
- **Store It Safe.** Partner with healthcare providers and community organizations to provide safe storage information to families through Store It Safe.
- **Counseling on Access to Lethal Means** (CALM). CALM is an evidence-based training on discussing safe storage of lethal means with individuals at risk. Engage clinical, social, and health care providers in completing the training and provide them with resources to share with clients on local safe storage options (e.g., free lock boxes).

Decrease Stigma and Increase Awareness of Resources

Campaigns can be calendarized throughout the year to promote continuous messaging.

- **Life is better with you here.** The [LIBWYH campaign](#) provides resources and support for Black Ohioans suffering from mental health disorders or suicidal ideation. The campaign offers shareable content, including educational materials.
- **Man Therapy**. [Man Therapy](#) is a campaign that seeks to decrease stigma and increase awareness of mental health resources and help-seeking behavioral among middle-aged males. It provides various mental health resources, including a self-assessment.
- **Be Present Ohio**. [Be Present Ohio](#) is an online resource for youth by youth to destigmatize mental health issues.
- **Pause Before You Play**. Approximately 32% of people who are experiencing a gambling disorder consider dying by suicide. [Pause Before You Play](#) offers Ohioans resources to prevent disordered gambling and includes various [community toolkits](#).

Increase Connectedness and Decrease Isolation

Promote healthy peer norms and engage community members in shared activities.

- **Sources of Strength (Sources).** [Sources](#) is an evidence-based prevention program for grades 3-12 to improve school norms, connectedness, and resiliency. Promote Sources to schools, including the [HB123 Approach to Sources.](#)
- **Youth-led Prevention**. Grow youth-led prevention groups to promote healthy peer norms and prevent suicide. Resources include [Ohio Adult Allies](#), the [Ohio Youth-Led Prevention Network](#), and [Youth to Youth](#).

Increase Access and Delivery of Behavioral Health and Suicide Care

- **Zero Suicide** is a framework for health and behavioral health care systems for safer suicide care. [Zero Suicide](#) includes seven elements that collectively represent a holist approach to suicide prevention. County boards and coalitions can support providers with implementing the framework. Ohio specific consultation may be available through Nationwide Children's Hospital; email [SuicidePrevention@nationwidechildrens.org](#) to explore opportunities. Federal Zero Suicide grant opportunities are available through SAMHSA (e.g., [Implementing Zero Suicide in Health Systems](#)).

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.** OhioMHAS offers a 988 Ohio [Toolkit](#) for partners to increase awareness of 988. It includes social media shareables, downloadable materials (e.g., posters and handouts), QR codes, and key messages. Key messages can be integrated into community events to inform residents when to call 988 versus 911.
- **Mobile Response Stabilization Services (MRSS)**. Under Governor DeWine's leadership, OhioMHAS, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Children and Youth and the Ohio Department of Medicaid, is working to [expand Mobile Response and Stabilization Services](#) (MRSS) for youth across all Ohio communities. Currently located in 52 counties, MRSS is available to help young people up to age 21 who are

experiencing significant behavioral or emotional distress. This invaluable service aids our young people and their families who are grappling with suicidal thoughts and ideas, intense conflict, stress, and depression. Trained behavioral health professionals can deliver services to families 24/7, in person, at the young person's home, school, local emergency room, or another location in the community. This program not only offers immediate de-escalation, but also creates comprehensive wraparound care by providing up to 42 days of intensive in-home services. It connects families with peer support, skill-building opportunities, and prevention resources.

- **The Ohio State University (OSU) Farm Stress Certification.** Increase local workforce capacity to serve farmers through OSU's Farm Stress Certification program. The three-module program is designed to increase mental health professionals' understanding and resources needed to assist the agricultural community.
- **Certified Peer Recover Supporters** have direct lived experience with behavioral health challenges, or someone who has navigated services on behalf of an individual with behavioral health challenges. Certified peer supporters grow the reach and impact of a holistic behavioral health team and are critical partners in expanding access to care. OhioMHAS offers paths to Peer Recovery Supporter (PRS) certification and a training calendar of its free 40-hour PRS training.

Decrease Harms and Prevent Future Risk

- **Handle with Care (HWC).** HWC is a statewide trauma informed response to child maltreatment and children's exposure to violence. If a first responder encounters a child during a call, the child's name is forwarded to the school/childcare agency before the school bell rings the next day, along with the words "HANDLE WITH CARE".
- **Postvention**. Postvention is part of a comprehensive school suicide prevention program; the state offers recommendations for developing postvention policies.
- **Safe Reporting**. Maintain and grow relationships with media, providing continuous support for reporting safely about suicide. Resources include the Ohio Suicide Reporting Guidelines and national Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide.