



# INVESTING IN YOUTH RESILIENCY

# Investing in Youth Resiliency

Since late 2020, the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio in partnership with the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation of Nelsonville has provided funding to strengthen community-based organizations working to build resilience and increase protective factors for young people in our region.

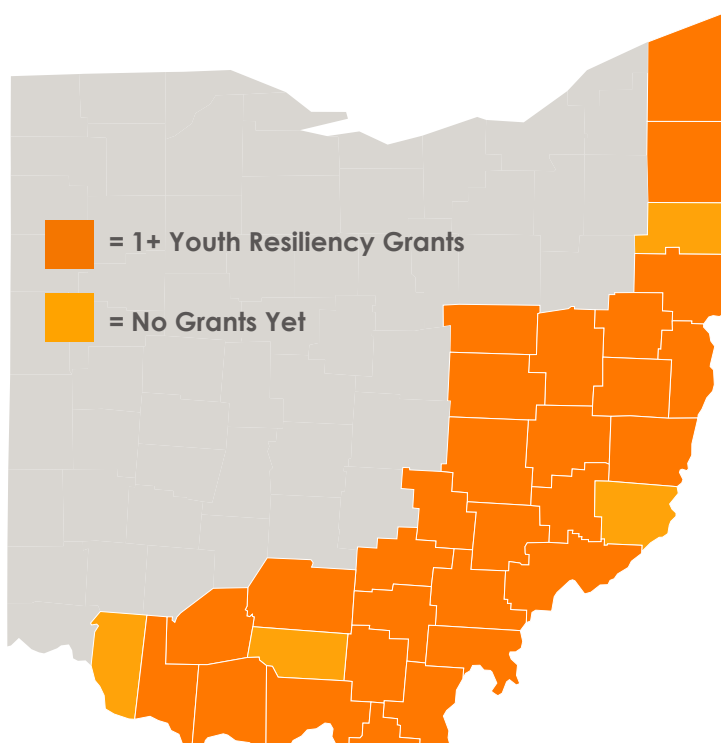
By investing in youth resiliency, we hope to reduce the long-term impact of substance use disorder, the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and generational poverty. Since late 2020, we've awarded more than \$700,000 through 39 grants to trusted local organizations serving young people, preschool through age 18, through the Investing in Youth Resiliency program. We've funded programs focused on protective factors proven to lower the likelihood of substance use disorders or other self-harm behaviors in young people, including initiatives to support academic success, physical and emotional safety, coping and problem-



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in Appalachian Ohio

solving skills, increased self-esteem, and connections with mentors. These programs complement the work of behavioral health professionals, providing a community of support that's most active outside non-traditional school hours.

Our goal? To decrease substance use disorders and the long-term effects of adverse childhood experiences on our region's young people – as well as the costs associated with addressing these impacts later in life.



## Cohort 1 Projects (2021)

- Addressed extraordinary challenges young people faced during COVID-19 pandemic
- Prioritized needs of youth experiencing risk factors that jeopardized their ability to thrive and achieve
- Served more than 5,000 individuals, including those participating in meal programs and educational programming

## Cohort 2 Projects (2022)

- Emphasized support for young people during out-of-school time
- Broadened access to social support systems and resources at times it's most needed

## Meals, Wheels and More!

The Ohio Valley Youth Network's Sycamore Youth Center in Steubenville offers more than 40 free educational and activity-based programs each week to students in grades K-12, with a focus on serving underprivileged youth. With a first-round youth resiliency grant from FAO, the network purchased a used church van to transport children to their afterschool programming, technology support to assist with homework help, and shelf-stable food to share with students for weekends, when school is not in session. The result? More than 300 youth participated in afterschool programs covering everything from tutoring to martial arts to financial literacy, and 500 meals were shared with students who might otherwise be hungry on weekends. During the summer months when school is not in



session, the Ohio Valley Youth Network uses the van to distribute food to children in need at six mobile locations throughout the Steubenville and Wintersville area.

## Developing self-esteem through art and life skills.

Thanks to a second-round grant from the Investing in Youth Resiliency program, the Somerset Artists' Cooperative has developed a Clay Academy for students in the Perry County Juvenile Court's ALPHA program, an alternative school serving at-risk youth who have not been successful in a traditional school setting. The goal? To use art experiences to develop problem-solving skills, self-esteem, and connections with mentors and peers. In addition to a four-class series using the pottery wheel, the Clay Academy also includes activities associated with the science, technology, and economic impact of clay in Perry County – including regional job opportunities dealing with clay. The Perry County Juvenile Court was a first-round grant recipient and used those funds to teach life skills – including classes in laundry, cooking, gardening, resume writing, money management, sewing, and more – to 37 youth between the ages of 13-18 in the ALPHA program and the Perry Multi-County Juvenile Facility.



***“Year after year, we sit in meetings and say, ‘I wish we could help this youth with self-esteem, mental health, hygiene, and other life problems ... This grant did that for the court.’”***

***- Martina Brown, Perry County court administrator***

# Our Grant Recipients

## 2021 Cohort

**Athens-Meigs Educational Service Center** enhanced its career pathway education program and provided age-appropriate toiletry kits to help students prepare for job interviews.

**Athens Photographic Project** facilitated an expressive photography program and public art installation for youth.

**Caldwell Exempted Village School District** implemented Caldwell Cares, a school-based student assistance program that helps K-12 students overcome social and emotional barriers.

**Coal Grove Lions Club** supported programs in partnership with the Pathfinder Youth Center, providing youth a safe place to socialize and complete schoolwork outside of school hours.

**Georgetown Self Care Closet** provided counseling resources and expanded its Care Closet, which supports students with basic needs items.

**Impact Prevention, Inc.** connected high school students from a youth-led substance use prevention team with elementary students for mentoring. Funding also supported warm winter clothing and food for students, as well as technology for remote learning and mentorship.



**Integrated Services for Behavioral Health** continued the engagement of school-aged youth with “The Hive on Fly,” a mobile outreach effort supporting education and student basic needs.

**Live Healthy Appalachia** supported healthy habits through hands-on cooking experiences, physical activity, and mindfulness practices in partnership with The Hive of Nelsonville. They also extended the program to Sojourners Care Network.

**Minford Elementary School** supported social and emotional learning by providing training for educators and purchasing curriculum supplies and children’s literature to reinforce social and emotional learning content.



**Morgan Local School District** provided food, basic needs items, hygiene products, clothing, and technology to elementary students.

**Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center** offered teletherapy and telemedicine services to students and leveraged additional resources through BroadbandOhio to expand the program.

**New Lexington Schools** supported the Blessings in a Backpack program, providing meals to students who face food insecurity.

**Ohio Valley Youth Network** expanded its Afterschool Enrichment and Life Skills program for K-12 students by providing transportation and technology support for children impacted by the social, economic, educational, and health effects of poverty.

**Perry County Juvenile Court** provided life skills classes to youth that have interacted with juvenile court. Classes focus on mental health, finances, food safety, coping skills, and job preparation.

**Pioneer School** supported youth diagnosed with autism or developmental disabilities by working to increase inclusion through virtual connections to schools, sports teams, and clubs during the pandemic.

**Rural Action** facilitated paid internships for high school students in partnership with Building Bridges to Careers.

**Sojourners Care Network** supported its Athens Resiliency Center, which serves youth who are homeless or at imminent risk of being homeless.

**Southeastern Ohio Legal Services** provided trauma-informed education, advocacy, legal services, and representation for vulnerable, low-income students and their families.

**Southern Local School District** provided training for staff to implement trauma-informed care and educational approaches.



# Our Grant Recipients

## 2022 Cohort

**Athens Photographic Project** is expanding its expressive photography program for youth who are in treatment for behavioral health disorders.

**Belmont County Board of Developmental Disabilities** is supporting youth and their families through the Behavioral Health Network Alliance Youth in Crisis Program, which provides respite and targeted interventions for young people.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Ohio** is providing programming at Camp Oty'Okwa, which serves youth from across the region.

**Breaking Free Therapeutic Riding Center** is providing equine-assisted learning programs for young people.

**The Carol Hammond Children's Theatre** is expanding its summer arts camp.

**Community Food Initiatives**, in collaboration with The Hive of Nelsonville, is developing a program engaging youth in therapeutic gardening.

**Crooksville Exempted Village Schools** is launching a workforce development program for district high school students, in partnership with Hocking College.

**Ely Chapman Education Foundation** is supporting the Ready for Success afterschool program in implementing The Leader in Me curriculum.

**French Art Colony** is expanding summer youth programs including dance classes and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) camps.

**Holmes Center for the Arts** is purchasing equipment needed to launch the DAY (Digital Arts for Youth) program.

**Hopewell Health Centers** is expanding summer programs for children with behavioral health disorders.

**Kent State University Foundation** is supporting Rising Scholars, which provides students who have promising academic ability with peer mentors and other support to reach their full potential.

**Nelsonville-York City Schools National Honor Society** is supporting a self-defense and empowerment program for high school students.

**Noble Learning Center** is building culturally relevant social skills through the Everyone Matters program, helping students succeed post-high school.

**Rural Action** is supporting paid internships for high school students.

**Shawnee Family Health Center** is supporting summer programming for youth impacted by trauma through the Building Resiliency in Appalachian Youth program.

**Sojourners Care Network** is developing programming to strengthen communication skills and foster successful social connections through the Athens Youth Resiliency Center.

**Somerset Artists' Cooperative** is supporting the Clay Academy program for justice-involved youth. Through this program, young people experiencing trauma or other adverse experiences can reap the benefits of artistic expression through pottery classes.

**Survivor Advocacy Outreach Program** is supporting participation in Rising Appalachia summer camps by children whose parents are engaged in New Leaf Justice Enterprises and providing camp counselors with training in trauma-informed care and social-emotional learning.

**Tecumseh Theater** is providing leadership development programming through social-emotional learning for teenagers.

