



2019–2020
COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



It's About Life

EDUCATE • ENGAGE • EMPOWER

Looking towards a bright future

A Note from Jack Binder, CEO



As always, thank you for your continued support of the LifeAct mission – our community’s young people are better equipped due to your kindness. While this year certainly has had its challenges, we are proud of the work that we were able to perform and look forward to a bright future with our newly added resources, such as virtual programming.

COVID-19 has interrupted daily life for every organization, and LifeAct was not immune. More than 4,000 students at 38 schools had their LifeAct program canceled when schools were shut down, and our two signature events, the *Into the Light* walk and *Links for Life* golf outing, were postponed to the Fall of 2020. However, this pandemic has shown the resiliency of LifeAct’s instructors and our program team, who quickly jumped into action creating new resources and program formats, as you will read more about in this annual report.

LifeAct continues to set the groundwork for increasing our program reach, and recently we received funding for the first time from the State of Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. This funding demonstrates our ability and capacity to provide prevention services to young people across the state, and will allow us to continue to grow our program territory and ultimately, save more young lives.

Lastly, we were proud to be the recipient of the 2019 Enlightenment Award from the Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Foundation. The Enlightenment Award recognizes outstanding activities during 2019 that enhance the public's access to treatment and the public's understanding of mental disorders and decreases stigmas.

Thank you again for all of the ways you help LifeAct provide valuable education and resources to our community – we hope you enjoy this year’s Community Impact Report.

A Beacon in the Storm – LifeAct’s COVID Response

During COVID school shutdowns, we quickly pivoted and offered a series of virtual, informational sessions called ‘LifeChats,’ in conjunction with a licensed therapist from Highland Springs Changes, a behavioral health facility specializing in adolescent care. Students were able to anonymously ask questions, receive support and learn about mental health topics such as depression, self-harm and coping skills. During this time, our instructors ramped up their efforts in re-envisioning the program and updating the content for the coming year, while also undergoing professional development and training in such areas as trauma informed care, domestic violence and child abuse prevention.

Most importantly, we piloted our program – virtually – with classrooms that had gone on-line to complete the school year. This program focused on loneliness, coping skills and resiliency, areas that are of importance to our young people as they navigate the pandemic.

LifeAct’s Impact (2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR)



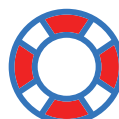
174
SCHOOLS



985
CLASSES



23,027
STUDENTS



2,892
STUDENTS ASKED
FOR HELP



38
SCHOOLS WE
COULDN’T REACH
DUE TO COVID



\$0
CHARGED TO
SCHOOLS

Mental Health By the Numbers

15.6%
of all Ohio Middle Schoolers have seriously thought about attempting suicide

10%
of youth ages 12-17 have diagnosed anxiety

After accidents, suicide is the
#1 CAUSE OF DEATH
for people 24 and under

13.3%
of Ohio youth report being electronically bullied in last year

18.1% of Cleveland school district students report that they have attempted suicide – **MORE THAN DOUBLE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 8.9%**

Evie Callahan

A Guiding Light for LifeAct



As a rising junior at Twinsburg High School, Evie Callahan served as the Youth Advisory Board President for the 2019-2020 school year. Evie was inspired to serve on the YAB after going through the LifeAct

program as a freshman. Having her own mental health experiences, Evie wants to be an ambassador for mental health, especially emphasizing the importance of breaking down harmful stigmas.

Part of those stigmas center around how parents interact with their own kids. “I

would tell parents that having an open and honest conversation is key, and to be really willing to listen to their stories and their experiences, because the worst thing is to feel like your parents don’t care. It’s also important for parents to seek out their own research and support groups to help make sure they are comfortable. I am grateful for my parents who are so supportive of me.”

LifeAct’s YAB is made up of high school students from across Northeast Ohio who support the organization by serving as consultants on programming and outreach materials and as ambassadors at our events. To find out more about the YAB, or to join, please contact Amanda Horner at ahorner@lifeact.org.

Marcos Ortiz

A Decade of Saving Young Lives



This year marks Marcos Ortiz’s 10th year saving young lives as an instructor with LifeAct. As a certified prevention specialist and chemical dependency counselor, Marcos came to the LifeAct program by chance, when while leading a team of prevention specialists, one of Marcos’ clients died by suicide. Committed to getting his team additional training and support to better assist their clients, Marcos made a fateful call to LifeAct to see if we could help. That phone call changed the trajectory of his career.

Last school year alone, Marcos taught 3,000 students at 25 schools how to recognize depression, prevent suicide and access help for themselves or others – lifesaving skills that those students will keep with them for a lifetime. Many of the schools taught by Marcos are in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, which reports the second highest suicide attempt rate for a metropolitan school district nationwide. The deep connections that Marcos forges with schools, administrators and students who see him at different points in their school careers allow for students to open up and truly explore the topic of mental health.

As a teacher at NE Ohio College Preparatory High School stated, “The information included in this presentation is great and the content included is engaging for students. Mr. Ortiz himself has an incredible, comforting aura that the students pick up on and really respond to. His willingness to engage with students, answer their questions, and address their personal concerns is what makes this program so powerful... This is lifesaving information that should be available for everyone.”

Marcos’ work isn’t confined to the classroom – he works and trains school officials, safety officers and support staff to ensure that they are ready and able to help a child in need. As LifeAct’s QPR (Question, Persuade and Refer, an emergency mental health intervention technique) trainer, Marcos is bringing his skills and knowledge to train community members in the three simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. If you are interested in bringing QPR training to your workplace or community, please reach Colleen Jost at cjost@lifeact.org – our community will be stronger for it!

LifeAct’s Care Partners



Save the date for LifeAct’s Events:

INTO THE LIGHT WALK

April 18, 2021

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

www.lifeact.org/walk

LINKS FOR LIFE GOLF TOURNAMENT

Spring 2021

Kirtland Country Club

www.lifeact.org/golf



LifeAct’s Mission is to prevent teen suicide by educating youth to recognize depression and the warning signs of suicide and access help for themselves and/or their peers.



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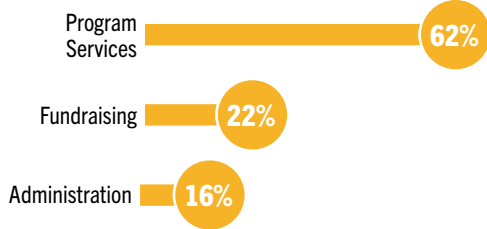
LifeAct of Northeast Ohio



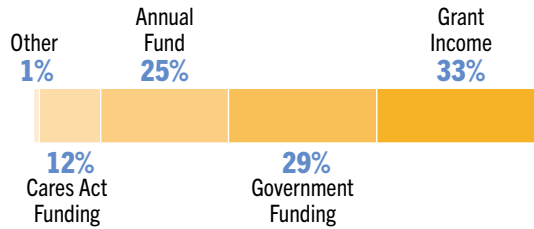
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Financial Profile 2019-2020

LifeAct Expenses



LifeAct Income



Pockets of Excellence

Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success



2019 – 2020 Lifesaving Society

\$10,000+

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\$1,000 – \$2,499

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**of blessed memory*

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