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Kaleidoscope Youth Center Announces Programming Expansion into Union County

COLUMBUS – Kaleidoscope Youth Center (KYC) and the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Union County are partnering to bring KYC programs to youth and families in Union County.

KYC is the largest and longest standing organization serving and supporting LGBTQIA+ young people in the state of Ohio. Their Drop-In Center provides positive youth development programs that focus on building resiliency and reducing risk factors and at-risk behaviors that may be faced by LGBTQIA+ young people, ages 12- 20. KYC’s approach engages and supports young people through a safer space; supports youth who are struggling with identity issues, family discord, mental health problems, and/or the challenges of adolescence.

Wren Hawkins, Lead Family Coordinator with the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Union County, reached out to KYC, after receiving a grant through SAMHSA. “We couldn’t be happier to bring this partnership with Kaleidoscope Youth Center to Union County. Their organization and people are top notch! This collaboration will bring much needed support to the LGBTQIA+ young people, and the parents and caregivers who support them that live in our community.”

While KYC works with young people statewide through schools in the Ohio GSA Network, KYC had yet to expand Drop-in Center programs beyond Franklin County. “This is an important next step for KYC in our continued expansion to meet the needs of our young people both regionally and throughout the state. Our youth need to know that there is a community that is here for them with resources and care. We’re very excited to partner with Union County in this way.” said KYC Executive Director Erin Upchurch, MSSA, LISW-S.

The two agencies are planning a virtual meet-and-greet with Union County families, providers, and members of the community on Thursday, May 14, with a tentative programming launch date with LGBTQIA+ youth and families in Union County in June.

About Kaleidoscope Youth Center

Since 1994, Kaleidoscope Youth Center has been a leader and expert in meeting the needs of and supporting LGBTQIA+ young people in the community. What started as a crisis line in 1994, has expanded into an organization that includes a drop in center; community education and training; advocacy and civic engagement; health and wellness; and housing opportunities.

About Mental Health & Recovery Board of Union County

The Mental Health & Recovery Board of Union County plans and funds services for mental health and substance use prevention, intervention and treatment through a network of qualified providers. The Board is composed of 14 local citizens who reflect the community, including people with lived experience of mental health and addiction concerns in themselves, their families, and their professional capacities.

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