

TriHealth Community Outreach Program

School-Based Behavioral Health Project

Funded by the Bethesda Foundation

Program Description

For the 10th year, the Community Outreach Program (COP) - School-Based Behavioral Health Project is offering services in Cincinnati Public Schools. Funded by the Bethesda Foundation, the project is committed to underserved children and families of the Greater Cincinnati area. Our primary goal in your school is to improve the social, emotional and behavioral health of students.

Because our funding comes through the Bethesda Foundation, children do not need to be “diagnosed” or “classified” to receive our services and we can offer individualized and innovative services (often unavailable in traditional settings). Our staff is on site every day and has become a part of the school community. Although not employed by Cincinnati Public Schools, the COP staff (with parental permission) can regularly communicate with school personnel. Collaboration with parents is an important part of our program.

Teachers, other school personnel, parents or students themselves can make referral to the program. After receiving a referral, the COP behavioral health specialist will need parental permission and input to begin an assessment process. Information is gathered from parents, teachers and the student. With that information, a service plan can be developed to address the student's psychological, social or emotional needs. Services include:

- Individual and group counseling (emphasizing a brief counseling approach)
- Parent training and family counseling, as indicated
- Primary prevention programs (in topics such as conflict resolution, stress management, communication, social skill development, anger management, etc.)
- Assessment and/or psychological evaluation (conducted in collaboration with the school psychologist, as indicated)
- Referral to community agencies and service coordination
- Consultation with school personnel

Program Sites (2007-2008):

- **North Avondale Montessori School Telephone/voicemail 363-3945**
- Clark Montessori Junior/Senior High School
- Winton Montessori School

Community Outreach Program staff for 2006-2007 school year

- Stephen P. Fritsch Psy.D., Clinical Psychologist, Clinical Supervisor (project coordinator)
- Joy McGhee Psy.D., Clinical Psychologist (Winton Montessori)
- Susan LaVelle Ficke, Psy.D., Clinical Psychologist (Clark Montessori)
- **Gwyn Griffiths, MA, LSW, psychological therapist (North Avondale Montessori)***
- **Andrew Sweeney, MA (XU pre-doctoral psychology assistant, North Avondale Montessori)***
- Shelby Spares, MA (XU pre-doctoral psychology assistant, Clark Montessori)***
- Kristen Weidner, (XU pre-doctoral psychology assistant, Clark Montessori)***
- Emily Sander, (XU pre-doctoral psychology assistant, Winton Montessori)**

* Registered with State Psychology Board under direct supervision of Dr. Fritsch

** Registered with State Psychology Board under direct supervision of Dr. McGhee

***Registered with State Psychology Board under direct supervision of Dr. Ficke

For additional information or to make a referral, contact the COP staff on-site at your school.
[Click Here to see Frequently Asked Questions](#) [Click Here for a consent form](#)

TriHealth Community Outreach Program Frequently Asked Questions

What is this program?

The TriHealth Community Outreach Program provides counseling and consultation services to the students, families, and staff of North Avondale Montessori School. Essentially, this program brings “private” counseling/therapy services to the school setting. We are employed by TriHealth Behavioral Health services, **not** Cincinnati Public Schools.

What types of services are available?

Individual, group and family counseling, as needed. Consultation with parents and teachers, classroom interventions, assessment, referral to community agencies and other behavioral health/medical providers, and service coordination.

Who provides these services and what are their qualifications?

Gwyn Griffiths has been the on-site clinician at North Avondale for the past ten years. She has a Masters degree in Clinical Psychology and is licensed as a Social Worker. Andrew Sweeney also has a Masters degree in Clinical Psychology and is working at NAM for one year as part of his training through Xavier University’s Doctorate in Psychology program. Both Gwyn and Andy are supervised by Stephen Fritsch, Psy.D. who is a licensed psychologist and the Community Outreach Program Coordinator.

How much do these services cost?

This program is wholly funded through a grant from the Bethesda Foundation, NAM's Partner-in-Education. There is no charge for services.

When do counseling appointments take place?

All counseling sessions take place during the school day. Before or after school times are also available for parent meetings.

My child’s teacher has recommended the program, but I am not sure we want or need counseling. Can I discuss this with you?

Parents can contact the counseling office to discuss concerns at any time. This information is confidential. Counseling will only occur with written parent/guardian consent, and these services are strictly voluntary. Meeting with the counseling staff does not obligate you to pursue counseling services further. In fact, many issues may be resolved through consultation only.

Does information about my child enter his/her permanent school record?

No. Information obtained through counseling services is the property of TriHealth and **will not** be part of your child’s school records.

How can I make a referral?

Simply contact the counseling office at 363-3945 to request a referral form.



Bethesda TriHealth Good Samaritan

Community Outreach Programs *Funded by the Bethesda Foundation*

Gwyn Griffiths, MA, LSW

Andrew Sweeney, MA

Supervised by Stephen P. Fritsch, Psy.D.
Clinical Psychologist, Program Coordinator

North Avondale Montessori School

Child's Name: _____ **Classroom:** _____

I. Parent permission for child to participate in services

I grant permission for my child to participate in services and programs provided by the behavioral health specialist(s) from **TriHealth Community Outreach Program (COP)** during the 2007-08 school year. These services will be provided onsite at North Avondale Montessori School and may include classroom observation, interview and assessment, individual and/or group counseling, brief interventions during the school day and/or classroom intervention.

Our goal is to help students to improve school performance, interpersonal relationships and general life adjustment. To effectively accomplish our goals, it is important to create a sensitive and confidential environment. However, you will be immediately informed if COP staff has any concerns about your child's health or safety. You have the right to withdraw your child from services at any time. You also have the right to receive a progress update and feedback at any time during your child's participation in behavioral health services. As a program of TriHealth, records generated by the staff of COP are subject to the recently implemented Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"). We are required by law to maintain the privacy of health information and notice of our privacy practices will be made available, upon request.

Services at North Avondale Montessori School will be provided by Gwyn Griffiths, MA, LSW and/or Andrew Sweeney, MA (under the clinical supervision of Stephen Fritsch, Psy.D., Clinical Psychologist). By signing below, you (the parent/guardian) grant permission for your child to receive services and agree to actively collaborate (as needed) with TriHealth staff.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

II. Consent to release information and coordinate services

I authorize the staff of the Community Outreach Program to exchange information with my child's teachers and school personnel (directly involved in my child's education) in order to develop a service plan and monitor my child's progress. I understand that this professional collaboration will be solely for the purpose of improving my child's social, emotional and behavioral adjustment in the school setting; and that the staff of TriHealth Community Outreach Programs will respect the privacy and confidentiality of my child and family. All records generated by TriHealth staff will remain the property of TriHealth and **will not** be part of your child's school record.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Preferred Telephone Number(s) _____

Email (optional) _____

PLEASE RETURN TO: **Gwyn Griffiths, MA, LSW**
Voicemail: 363-3945