



Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services

MINDFUL MATTERS



We'd like to thank all of our sponsors and supporters of our annual Champions of Hope fundraiser. Because of you, this year's virtual event was a success! We were able to raise over \$128,000 to ensure people with mental illness, addiction, and related challenges lead healthy and productive lives.

If you missed the live stream you can view it on our website: gcbhs.com

Meet Abby

Abby is a resident at one of the Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services Recovery Houses in Clermont County. She shared her story of addiction and recovery during the Champions of Hope virtual event on May 7th.

If you would like to see her story, it is available on our website: gcbhs.com

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What Every Child Succeeds has **MEANT TO ME**

BY ECS CLIENT AMANDA

Having the Every Child Succeeds program be a part of my postpartum experience probably contributed to my safety and well being in more ways than I can express.

Having the Every Child Succeeds program be a part of my postpartum experience probably contributed to my safety and well-being in more ways than I can express. I came from my home that, many times, was unsafe. Although there was no shortage of unconditional love, everyone was battling demons and that was not ideal for raising a child. It was really great to have the validation that I'm not repeating those generational traumas and that I am making better choices for my child.

And because of GCBHS' partnership with Sweet Cheeks, I did not have to buy diapers during the entire pandemic. Food stamps

and WIC do not help with diapers and I cannot tell you how many times we would have had to choose between putting gas in the car, buying laundry detergent, etc. or making sure our son had diapers, without this connection.

Tara, my home visitor, helps me prioritize my health and safety, and gives me the best opportunity to support my son. It's intimidating to have someone coming to your home especially a stranger. I'm just really grateful that I was open-minded and took the support. It seriously made all the difference."



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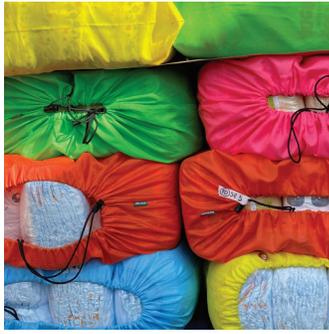
- Amanda



Every Child Succeeds

Founded in 1999, Every Child Succeeds (ECS) serves Greater Cincinnati moms and babies. Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCBHS) is a service provider for the program. ECS was started to help babies get off to a good start in life since research has found that the first 1,000 days of life are critical for a baby's success. Says GCBHS ECS Program Manager Pamela Wilz, "We take advantage of that time by concentrating on the health of Mom and her baby; we work on parenting skills and interaction, and we provide resources if needed. The main goal is on child development and parent/child interaction so we can ready them for pre-school and kindergarten."

GCBHS home visitors use evidence-based models when working with families. "One of the things that we appreciate most about being involved with the program," says Pamela, "is that it has such a strong research component. Researchers connected with ECS have won grants to study postpartum depression, safe sleep, and father involvement, which helps us address those impacts on the life of the baby."



One sweet **Partnership**

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GCBHS partners with Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank to obtain diapers and feminine hygiene products for our clients in the Every Child Succeeds program. Sweet Cheeks Founder and CEO Megan Fischer started the nonprofit when she found out that diapers weren't covered by SNAP or WIC. After reading about a diaper bank in another state she naturally assumed there would be one in the Cincinnati area. She wanted to look them up so she could volunteer and make a financial contribution. But she couldn't find one! "I thought, this can't be right," says Megan. "Cincinnati has the 4th highest poverty rate for children. How can this be? But it was true. No one was helping families with this very basic need."

Her hope was to obtain information that could assist someone else in opening a diaper bank in Cincinnati. At the time Megan had a

full-time job and two kids to raise. But after another year passed and 16,000 children were still in need of diapers, she knew she had to do something. So with no experience in non-profits she launched the program from her basement. They passed out 3,500 diapers the first month, then 5,000. Eventually they gave out 165,000 diapers per month. But that was pre-pandemic. Megan estimates that the need went as high as 220,000 and yet they are only able to meet approximately 25% of the need for diapers in Greater Cincinnati.

Presently Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank works with 50 social service agencies and hospitals to provide access to diapers, feminine hygiene products and more recently, adult continence supplies; with a waiting list of another 30 organizations. The need is great.

LEARN MORE

For more information on Sweet Cheeks go to:
sweetcheeksdiapebank.org

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Funding from Deaconess Making a Difference in the Community

The Deaconess Associations Foundation recently awarded Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services a \$65,000 grant.

The award will go towards funding a community-based nurse position to assist clients served by the Housing Support Team. This is a mental health care management team that serves up to 300 people with co-occurring medical conditions.

Because the clients are currently experiencing or formerly experienced homelessness, many have gone for years without medical treatment. While the team's focus is on housing, they know that medical issues are a huge contributor to barriers faced by these clients. The nurse will do physical assessments, with referrals to medical care providers and share education regarding the management of existing health conditions and medications. By adding a nurse to this team we will empower people to take a bigger role in their healthcare needs and enhance their quality of life.