

The Responder

A Guide for Parents

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Summit County Juvenile Court Intake Department
330-643-7778

Summit County Juvenile Court Family Resource Center
330-643-3613

PEERS Parent Advocate Program
330-923-0688



Mental Health / Juvenile Justice



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INTRODUCTION

Middle school can be a time of adjustment for children. This is sometimes the first time that problems or concerns such as disruptive school behavior or truancy may trigger a referral to the Summit County Juvenile Court. Fortunately, there is a program to reduce the number of referrals to Juvenile Court due to acting out or truancy which has as its root a mental health issue or concern. The program is a cooperative effort between the Summit County Juvenile Court, Child Guidance and Family Solutions and your school. The program recognizes that addressing behavior through a referral to counseling and/or behavioral health services may provide a more meaningful intervention for some children.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goal of the program is to link children and families to services offered in the community and thereby avoid a referral to the Court. In the event that acting out or truancy becomes an issue, your school has the option of calling a “Responder” to evaluate the situation and make appropriate linkages and referrals. In determining the needs of the child, school and family, the Responder will assemble a team that will include the school as well as the child and family. This team effort will benefit all involved.

This is a voluntary program and you will be contacted if a Responder referral is made for your child. You will be a member of the decision making team and your input is valued and important in helping to reduce further acting out or truant behavior.

WHO IS THE RESPONDER?

The Responder is a professional who has training in screening for mental health issues in youth. The Responder acts as a case manager who assembles a team that can provide you with assistance in planning for treatment or counseling that may benefit your child. The Responder does not provide the counseling services but works with you and your family to help you find a treatment provider that you are comfortable with.

IS THERE HELP FOR ME?

You are not alone. Many families struggle to find the most appropriate way to deal with behavioral issues with their children or difficulties in getting their children to attend school due to their child’s mental health issues. The PEERS Program is there to help you. Parents who have either dealt with or are struggling with similar issues can provide a helping hand in listening, explaining resources or even attending meetings with you. These parent advocates are available through Mental Health America and can be reached by calling 330-923-0688.

HOW MUCH DOES THE RESPONDER PROGRAM COST?

Thanks to a grant from the MacArthur Foundation and funding from the Summit County Juvenile Court, there is no charge to families for the services of the Responder. The Responder will work with you to help you identify service providers for on-going counseling or treatment, if necessary, that fall within your insurance coverage or financial means.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON’T MEET WITH THE RESPONDER?

Since the Responder is only called by your school for behavior for which a Court referral could be made, the school could decide to file charges in the Juvenile Court. You would then be required to appear with your child in Court.

