



## Annual Report FY 18/19



Addiction & the Family





COCA partners with local EMS to provide Naloxone and hands-only CPR training. Pictured here, community members at St. Ignatius Church in Sinking Spring.



In May 2019, about 50 women attended a women's recovery program. The event included speakers, vendors and group discussions about recovery.

For additional information regarding fiscal year 2018/19 financial details, treatment specifics and more, please visit:  
[cocaberks.org/ar18-19.html](http://cocaberks.org/ar18-19.html)

## table of contents

- 2 Message from the Executive Director
- 3 Addiction & the Family
- 4 Fiscal Report
- 5 Prevention
- 7 Intervention
- 8 Treatment
- 9 Recovery
- 10 Commissioners, Board & Staff

## WHAT IS COCA?

Since 1972, the Council on Chemical Abuse (COCA) has served in a lead role, offering the resources necessary to respond to the complex problems of substance abuse and addiction. Designated by the County Commissioners as the Single County Authority (SCA) for Berks County, COCA is responsible for the administration and management of publicly-funded alcohol, tobacco, and drug services. COCA is a non-profit organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors reflective of the local community, and serves as the coordinating agency for publicly supported drug and alcohol programming in Berks County, Pennsylvania.

Learn more about us at [www.cocaberks.org](http://www.cocaberks.org)

## MISSION

*To provide leadership in the development and implementation of policies and programs related to a system of prevention and intervention services that prevent the onset of addiction, and treatment services that promote recovery.*

# A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Stanley J. Papademetriou

Our message  
to family  
members is  
this - suffer  
in silence no  
more.

In the past several years, substance use disorders have been in the spotlight due to the crashing wave of the opioid crisis. Too many of our friends, family and neighbors are no longer with us because of a lethal overdose. This crisis has led the entire community to sharpen its focus on providing appropriate treatment services for those with a substance use disorder. These services include behavioral therapy, sometimes in combination with medication, as well as recovery supports. This is a successful combination, as effectively addressing substance use disorders requires a long-term, multi-faceted approach. The good news is that individuals with substance use disorders can and do recover!

However, there are still many affected by addiction who suffer in silence. These individuals do not regularly receive the necessary attention and support needed to address the debilitating effects of addiction. I am referring to the family members and the loved ones of those suffering from addiction. They too endure in anguish, the devastation associated with addiction. Watching a loved one's life slowly (or not so slowly) being destroyed is soul crushing and can leave the family desperate. Families are the collateral damage of substance use disorders and are not immune from the helplessness and hopelessness that accompanies addiction. Unfortunately, family members can continue to suffer the effects of addiction long after their loved one is in recovery.

What can family members do? They can better educate themselves on substance use disorders and learn about available help, both for themselves and for their loved one. They can seek professional and/or spiritual counseling to help them cope and find solutions to their situation. They can participate in a support group with others in a similar position, to share common experience, strength and hope.

Addiction is an equal opportunity destroyer. The good news is that help, resources and support are available. Our message to family members is this - suffer in silence no more. Family members can also enjoy the benefits of recovery from addiction.

# ADDICTION & THE FAMILY



iStock

## Living in Silence

One in four families are affected by substance use disorder. The impact on the family can be likened to a tornado, tearing its way through the lives of those closest to the individual using the drug. No matter whether the person who uses is a child, a sibling, a parent, or a grandparent, this disease touches every member of the family and can uproot their lives, causing a constant state of uncertainty.

Family members are oftentimes taken hostage by the disease. The stigma and shame creates an imbalance, raising the stress levels within the home. When a family member suffers from a substance use disorder, his or her commitments or promises are often not kept. Family members are on a roller coaster of high hopes and great disappointments. The family lives in silence, learning to cope by denying the problem. Isolation becomes the norm and families adhere to three emotionally crippling rules: Don't Talk, Don't Feel, and Don't Trust.

Family recovery begins with hope - when a family member recognizes that he or she has choices and can break the cycle. The journey begins with the acceptance of the 3 "C's" of Recovery: "I didn't cause it" - "I can't control it" - "I can't cure it." Family members are not alone, and things can get better! With education and support, each family member can learn to take control of his/her own healing journey and make the choice to "Love the person and hate the disease." The programs highlighted in this annual report provide a snapshot of many resources that can support both the individual with a substance use disorder and his/her family members, as they discover their own pathways to recovery.



## IN MEMORY OF...

**Robert C. Bagenstose**

Passed away March 5, 2019

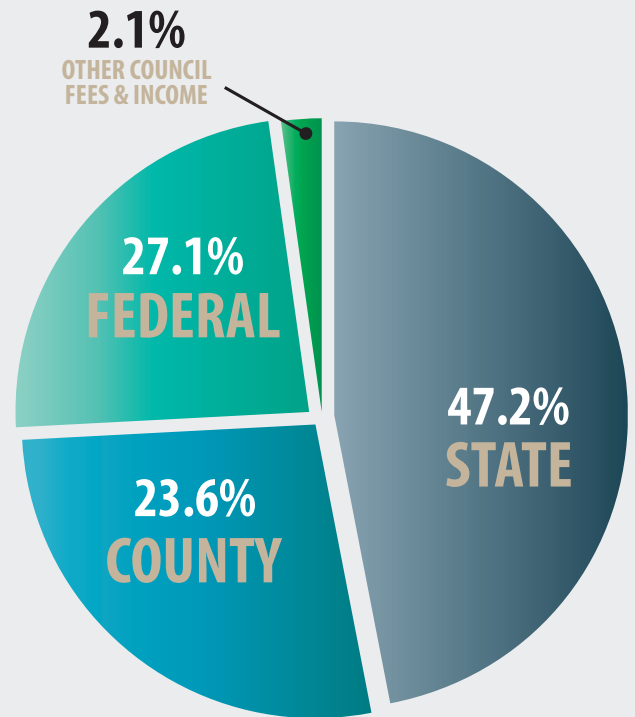
*COCA lost a dedicated and reliable Board Member and Berks County lost an advocate for drug and alcohol prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery services. Bob served on the COCA Board of Directors for the better part of 30 years beginning in the early 90s. He assumed various leadership roles for the organization, including President for several years. His strong financial background was extremely beneficial, especially as COCA's resources expanded. Bob was a compassionate and caring individual who wanted the best for his community. He is sorely missed.*



# JULY 1, 2018 TO JUNE 30, 2019 FISCAL REPORT

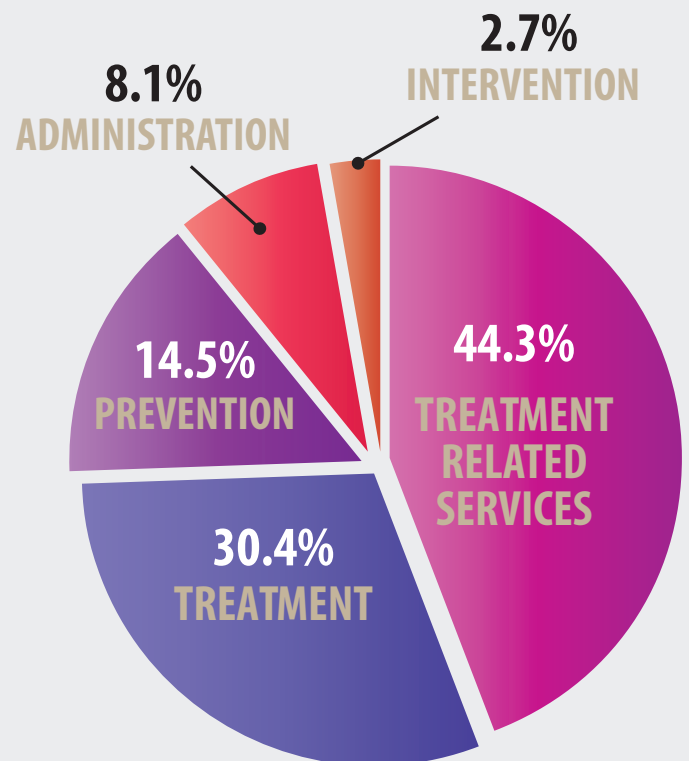
## REVENUES

State Funds	\$4,667,907
Federal Funds	\$2,842,390
County Funds	\$2,208,655
Other COCA Fees & Income	\$125,426
<b>TOTAL COCA REVENUE</b>	<b>\$9,844,378</b>



## EXPENDITURES

Treatment Related Services*	\$4,362,788
Treatment	\$2,990,711
Prevention	\$1,428,758
Administration	\$798,333
Intervention	\$263,788
<b>TOTAL COCA EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$9,844,378</b>



\* Treatment Related Services include the following: screening assessment, referral, case management, recovery support services and transitional/recovery housing.

# PREVENTION

## VAPING EDUCATION

**STUDENTS REACHED: 3,939**

Vaping has become an epidemic among American youth, with nearly one in four high school students reporting that they have vaped in the last 30 days. Our prevention specialists have provided presentations to 6-12th graders across the county, where they discuss the dangers of vaping, the damage caused by nicotine and the parallels of marketing between the vape industry and Big Tobacco. With the constant changes in vaping trends and health risks, information in this presentation is constantly evolving to provide our youth with the most up-to-date facts.

## TOO GOOD FOR DRUGS

**ELEMENTARY STUDENTS  
REACHED: 613**

Too Good for Drugs is an evidence-based curriculum for students in grades K-12. Elementary youth learn social and emotional skills for making healthy choices, building positive friendships, developing self-efficacy, communicating effectively, and resisting peer pressure and influence.

## RED RIBBON WEEK

**RIBBONS DISTRIBUTED:  
35,535**

Red Ribbon Week is nationally recognized and celebrated as a symbol of support for efforts to reduce drug use through youth prevention and education programs. By wearing a red ribbon, individuals show their opposition to illegal drugs, and their dedication to living drug-free. Every year, COCA sponsors the campaign by providing red ribbons to all Berks County schools.



*This summer, we offered a program that focused on kindness, encouraging kids to fill "kindness buckets" with notes about daily acts of goodwill.*

## The Evolution of Prevention

Prevention has changed over the decades. Gone are the times of scare tactics and mountains of information. Effective prevention is about reducing the factors that have been proven to place our youth at greater risk for substance use, while at the same time, enhancing the protective factors that can build resiliency and positive decision-making. Risk factors occur in multiple domains. At an individual/peer level, favorable attitudes towards drug use and peer pressure are common risk factors. In the home and community, laws, rules, and norms regarding youth substance use must be developed and enforced.

*Effective prevention goes far beyond just educating our youth about current trends, consequences and scientific information.*

We provide skill building that prepare our youth to develop healthy responses to peer pressure. To help reduce and reverse the risk factors our youth face in every facet of their lives, we teach critical thinking, mindfulness, and stress reduction



techniques. Parents and the communities are vital partners in prevention. We offer programs to parents, teachers, caregivers, and other influential adults on a variety of family and community concerns, from the impact of marijuana use and vaping, to the growing interest in technology and gaming addictions. Prevention can be most effective when there is a cohesive message at home, at school and in the community. From our involvement at health and wellness fairs to our parent and caregiver presentation, “Time to Talk,” we strive to reach and provide information and skills to influential adults in a youth’s life.

# did you know?

All COCA presentations are free and available to any Berks County school, organization, or community group.

## PREVENTION

### ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND OTHER DRUG (ATOD)

Youth participants in single service events across Berks County	13,574
Youth participants that received COCA ATOD recurring curriculum sessions	1,513
Health Fair Events	76
Pledges from drug free youth	1,026
Parent program participants	223
Pregnant or parenting teen mother participants in addiction and parenting education	271
Informational brochures and pamphlets distributed on various addiction topics	35,595
Drug free events for youth	76

### GAMBLING\*

Participants that received COCA gambling recurring curriculum services	170
Participants in single service gambling prevention presentations	3,306
Gambling prevention materials distributed	3,729

*\*There are commonalities between gambling disorders and other addictions (alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs) and therefore, similar prevention strategies are considered to be effective.*

# INTERVENTION

## INTERVENTION

Calls to the 24/7 Drug & Alcohol hotline with Reading Hospital - (484) 628-8186	483
Clients who received drop-in services at the Reading Hospital Drug and Alcohol Center	77
Urine drug specimens collected	57,905
Berks County Jail inmates screened for drug and alcohol problems	3,121
Berks County Jail inmates released directly to community-based residential substance use disorder treatment	211
Students who received Student Assistance Program (SAP) assessments	1,276
Naloxone Kits Distributed	1,090

### WHAT IS A STIGMA?

Stigma describes the negative perceptions commonly associated with individuals with substance use disorders. Stigma can be a powerful barrier that prevents those suffering from addiction from accessing treatment.

Individuals Reached in Warm Handoff Program	1,142
Blue CARES Visits	40

## MARIJUANA DIVERSION PROGRAM

**PARTICIPANTS: 90\***

Individuals who have been charged with possession of a small amount of marijuana can have charges dismissed after attending a 3-hour educational session provided by COCA. This program was launched in early 2019.

*\*Number reflects participants from April 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019.*

## UDECIDE PROGRAM

**STUDENT PARTICIPANTS: 324**

The UDecide Program (UDP), formerly known as the Underage Drinking Program, is an educational program for young adults who have experienced trouble at school, home, or have legal problems as a result of substance use. Participation includes attending three 4-hour classes and a parent session for minors.

## Blue Cares (Cops Assisting Recovery Engagement & Support)

The Blue CARES program is a collaboration between Berks County police departments and COCA. Through this initiative, a police officer and a drug and alcohol Certified Recovery Specialist (CRS) make a visit to the residence of an individual whose overdose was reversed through naloxone administered by law enforcement.

It is not unusual for law enforcement to respond to multiple overdose incidents for the same individual. As long as an overdose survivor remains active in his or her addiction, the chance for repeated and potentially fatal overdose remains high. The purpose of the Blue CARES program is to encourage the overdose survivor to engage in appropriate addiction treatment, and provide educational and supportive resources to family members. The combination of a police officer and a CRS can provide the much-needed inspiration for an overdose survivor to accept treatment and the necessary know-how to facilitate a treatment admission. If the individual accepts help, there is an immediate referral for appropriate services. If no one is home at the time of the Blue CARES visit, substance use disorder related literature and contact information for the CRS is left at the home.



# TREATMENT



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## Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)

Medication-Assisted Treatment, or MAT, is the use of approved and proven medications in conjunction with behavioral therapy and recovery support to treat opioid and alcohol use disorders. Medications such as disulfiram, acamprosate, and naltrexone are used to treat alcohol use disorders. Methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone are used to treat opioid use disorders. These medications do not cure alcohol or opioid use disorders. Rather, depending on which medication is prescribed, they can help normalize brain chemistry, block the euphoric effects of alcohol or opioids, and relieve physiological cravings. This allows the individual to participate in behavioral therapy, attend to areas of life need and engage in recovery activities.

A misconception about MAT for opioid use disorders is that people are substituting one drug for another. The fact is that these medications are prescribed at safe and effective doses that relieve withdrawal symptoms and do not impair the individual. Research shows that MAT is effective in the treatment of substance use disorders. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), this treatment approach has been shown to: improve survival rates for people with substance use disorders, increase retention in treatment, decrease illicit opiate use and other criminal activity, increase the ability to gain and maintain employment, and improve birth outcomes among women who have substance use disorders and are pregnant.

## HELP IS AVAILABLE

No one has to navigate treatment alone.  
Find support for you and your loved ones.  
Contact us:

[www.cocaberks.org](http://www.cocaberks.org) | (610) 376-8669

## DRUG TRENDS

Opioids continue to be the most reported primary drug for individuals funded for treatment by COCA. However, during FY 18/19, there was an increase in the number of individuals who reported methamphetamine as their primary drug and an increase in the number of individuals who reported marijuana as their primary drug.

## TREATMENT ACCESS REQUESTS TO COCA: 3,358

When an individual requests access to treatment, screening/assessment is completed to determine the person's need for substance use disorder treatment and their eligibility for COCA treatment funding. Berks County residents with a substance use disorder and no public or private insurance benefits are eligible for COCA treatment funding.

## TREATMENT SERVICES INDIVIDUALS FUNDED FOR TREATMENT: 1,571

### TREATMENT EPISODES: 1,992

Since in the course of treatment, an individual may require admission to several levels of care (i.e. detoxification followed by residential treatment), the number of treatment episodes is greater than the number of individuals. Of the 1,992 treatment episodes in fiscal year 2018/19, 553 were for residential levels of care (i.e. detoxification, residential treatment and halfway house) and 1,439 were for outpatient levels of care (i.e. intensive outpatient, partial hospitalization and medication-assisted treatment).

# PEOPLE CAN AND DO RECOVER

## RECOVERY



### New Community Center Focuses on Recovery from Addiction

In 2018, the dream of opening a community recovery resource center in Berks County, PA started to become a reality. After about a year of discussion and planning, the COCA Board of Directors approved the establishment of the center at the Big Mill Apartments Building in Reading, PA. Crews busily began construction at the 8th and Oley street ground floor space in late spring 2019 and the RISE Center officially opened on September 14, 2019. RISE, an acronym for Recovery – Information – Support – Education, is the first center of its kind in Berks.

The RISE Center is not a drug and alcohol or mental health treatment facility, nor will anyone reside at the location. The center is also not a clubhouse, but rather exists to support the recovering community in Berks, no matter the pathway. At the RISE Center, individuals seeking recovery and their family members have access to health and wellness related resources and support. Monday through Saturday, a Certified Recovery Specialist is available to those seeking recovery support services. There are programs every day of the week from yoga to crafts, to mutual-support meetings and family support groups. Details on the center's events and programs are determined by a Steering Committee comprised of community residents who are committed to promoting and advancing addiction recovery.

The establishment of the RISE Center was made possible through monies made available specifically for this center. This includes drug forfeiture funds received from District Attorney John Adams, state grant funding received through strong support from Senator Judy Schwank, and monies received from the MH/DD HealthChoices Program and Community Care Behavioral Health Organization.

Learn more at [BerksRISE.org](http://BerksRISE.org)

### COCA-Funded Programs

#### WALK IT OUT PARTICIPANTS: 475

Walk It Out Recovery Services provides addiction education and support to the Latino and Spanish speaking community. This program educates families, friends, and other concerned community members about the disease of addiction and ways they can find help and support for themselves, as well as their loved ones. Educational forums include topics such as addiction as a disease, boundaries and detachment, codependent relationships and enabling and self-care for family members.

#### CRAFT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS: 108

Community Reinforcement Approach and Family Training (CRAFT) is a scientifically-based intervention program, designed to help concerned significant others to engage a loved one with a substance use disorder into treatment. No one has better information about the substance user's behavioral patterns than a close family member. CRAFT teaches the significant others how to use this information in a motivational way to increase the chance of their loved one entering treatment.

#### WHAT ELSE WAS "COCA-FUNDED"?

This year 347 individuals were funded for transitional/recovery housing and 1,549 attended post-treatment support groups. More details found at [cocaberks.org/ar18-19.html](http://cocaberks.org/ar18-19.html)



# CONGRATULATIONS!



## 2019 Patricia Ganter Scholarship Winners

Every June, the Council on Chemical Abuse awards a student (or students) \$1,000 for college costs. The scholarship is funded through private donations and fundraising. Recipients are chosen for being active in substance abuse prevention in his/her school or community.

Students chosen for this award are pursuing an education in one of the following areas: human services, behavioral health, social work, addictions studies, criminal justice, or psychology.

Congratulations Izahne' Williams & Ashleigh Huhn!



## 2018 Annual Conference Award Winners

These individuals and/or organizations have exemplified the highest standards in the areas of addiction prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery services.

THE ALGOT "AL" ECKSTROM RECOVERY AWARD  
Ryan Herrera, YMCA of Reading and Berks County - Camp Joy

THE BETTY J. MCDONOUGH TREATMENT AWARD  
Pennsylvania Counseling Services, Inc.

THE ROGER S. HERTZ EDUCATION AWARD  
Anne Fisher, Reading School District

THE FRANCIS "FRAN" DREXLER PUBLIC SAFETY AWARD  
Lieutenant Nelson Ortiz, Berks County District Attorney's Office

THE JOSEPH "BUD" HAINES COMMUNITY AWARD  
Al Dallao, ARC Point Labs &  
Eric Esterbrook, West Reading Drug Store

THE GEORGE J. VOGEL PRESIDENT'S AWARD  
Jim Hehn, Reading Hospital's Center for Mental Health

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As of 6/30/2019

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**Get up-to-date news, statistics, videos, information on upcoming events,  
additional resources and more by connecting with us!**



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**Tune into our monthly WEEU show every  
3rd Monday of the month at 11 a.m.**