



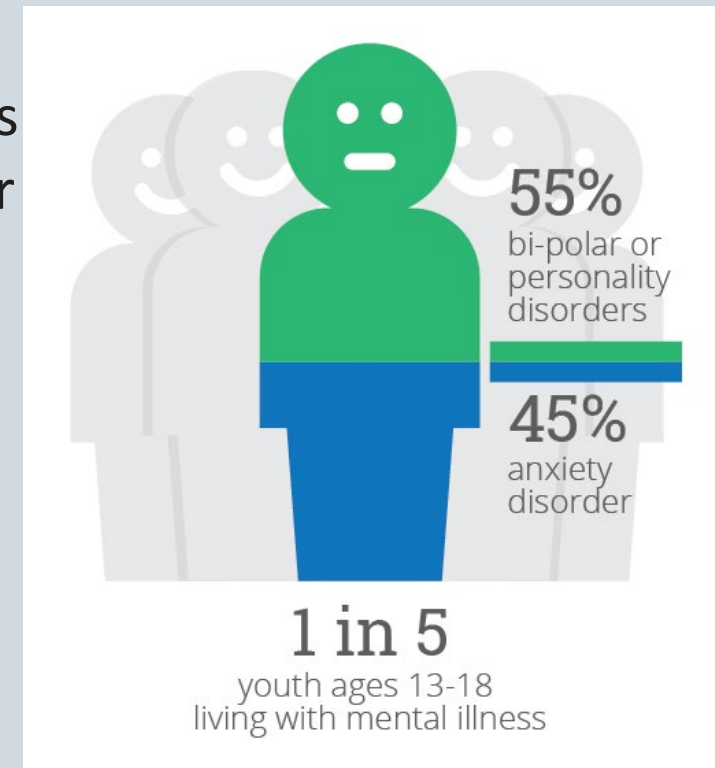
Mikey's Story



CAROL LEWIS (MOM)

Challenges being a Parent to a Child with Mental Health Issues

- Lack of available support groups for parents with a child/youth living with a mental health issue.
- Stigma attached to mental health. As one parent stated, “There is a stigma attached to mental health issues, I see it more with older generations who believe mental illness is a “mindset” and our children need to suck it up”.
- “Lack of understanding and compassion for what our youth are going through, especially since the pandemic hit” - a parent.
- Lack of licensed child psychiatrists to test/assess children/youth. Single parent: “not being able to focus as much time on youth’s mental health as I would like to/need to in order to help him”.
- “Not my child”, you do not think it will be your child. Do everything to have a healthy and safe home. No control. Great chance for patience and growth as a parent/caregiver.



Mikey's Art



What Pictures Do Not Tell You



Seeking a Diagnosis & Treatment

- Mikey was diagnosed at age 10
- Testing by a psychiatrist diagnosed him with bipolar
- In the three years we will have seen four psychiatrists. We will be seeing his fourth psychiatrist this December.
- During an emergency visit at the hospital, we connected with Terros Health/Mobile Crisis Unit.
- We are fortunate that Mikey does sees a counselor weekly. “Mr. Bill” as Mikey calls him has been a consistent presence in Mikey’s counseling journey.



School Support

Bradshaw Mountain Middle School Principal Jessica Bennet has made it a priority to create a culture of supporting students at where they are at. She values the importance where teachers are establishing clear routines and procedures that provide students with a safe structure. She promotes social and emotional learning throughout her campus.

Mrs. Bennet extends this into instructional strategies where teachers can provide accommodations to help kids who struggle academically. Teachers provide notes, break lessons apart and work with students to ensure

As much as students do not like rules, not having cell phones on campus and adhering to dress code and other rules provides expectations and structure.



Jessica Bennett, Principal Tricia Boyer, LMSW, Social Worker



Bradshaw Mountain
Middle School

School Support

Ms. Tricia Boyer has worked to ensure the social and emotional learning is implemented at BMMS. She regularly checks in with teachers and students and promotes the Believe in You! Curriculum. Every day in every class, BMMS takes the beginning of the morning (5 to 10 minutes) to promote social and emotional skills, relationships, self-management and responsible decision making. The goal is less discipline, develop skills and ultimately help them for employment skills.

Each morning a student writes in their journal. For example: what motivates you. Conversation to learn about others and promote empathy are some of the things promoted during this time.



School Support

The school district applied for a school safety grant through the Arizona Department of Education to fund Tricia's position and additional positions to support other schools within the district. The grant was to provide a licensed mental health worker or social worker. If a student needs additional resources, the school will refer to a behavioral health agency and student can receive services for free. If the school is in need of assistance with a student in an immediate crisis, Terros is called in to assist.

Tricia also stressed the importance of having a clear predictable environment, no chaos and the importance of a student knowing what to expect to create a safe and effective environment.



Bradshaw Mountain
Middle School

Jessica Bennett, Principal Tricia Boyer, LMSW, Social Worker

What Is Needed In Our Rural Areas To Address Youth And Mental Health

- Collaboration among healthcare systems, schools, primary care clinicians, and family support programs can offset the challenges faced by children and youth living in rural areas.
- Reducing the stigma of mental illness and behavioral disorders among children and youth.
- More specialty mental health services for children and youth in rural areas that are open to both private and AHCCHS patients.
- Provide more inpatient services for children and youth in rural areas.

