



# REACH & RISE®

The Butler County Family YMCA is proud of our youth group mentoring program **Reach & Rise®**. This group model helps empower youth ages 6-17 in overcoming challenges that are prevalent in today's society, such as low self-esteem, unsatisfactory academic progress, peer difficulties, and poor decision-making skills.

## **How is this program different than other youth mentoring programs in Butler County?**

**Reach & Rise®** is a national YMCA evidence-based youth mentoring program with published research leading to specific guidelines that will help to ensure the success of the program. Our group mentoring program matches up to six youth of similar age with two trained adult volunteers. Each group can be formed by age, goals they would like to work toward (like gaining social skills or managing anger), by geographic area, or in other ways that will benefit children in the group. Then volunteer mentors create safe, healthy and meaningful relationships with youth utilizing therapeutically-based activities developed by **Reach & Rise®** to help the youth achieve their personal goals for growth.

## **What are the benefits of this program?**

**Reach & Rise®** is an **evidence-based youth mentoring program** with published research leading to specific guidelines that will help to ensure the success of the program. **Participants report:**

- "Reach and Rise helps me to not get so mad."
- "I'm learning about emotions and feelings. I'm learning what to do with them and how to explain them."
- "At first, I didn't know anyone, but now I am making friends."
- "**Reach & Rise®** helped me learn about managing my anger and I'm making friends."

These quotes are a small representation of the three highest reported reasons for program participation – Reducing Anger, Communicating Feelings, and Developing Friendship Skills. Other goals have included Managing Anxiety and Depression, Improving Self-Esteem, Building Healthy Relationships, and trying things outside their comfort zone.

## **Is there training for volunteer mentors?**

**YES!** Volunteer Mentors must:

- Be at least 21 years old
- Obtain background clearances
- Complete a 15-hour training
- Spend 2 hours a week co-facilitating a mentoring group
- Check in weekly with Coordinator

### **How can children be referred to the program?**

To be included in the program, a youth and their family meet with a program staff to fill out the required paperwork and discuss the youth's strengths and goals for personal growth. Referral sources include school districts, churches, mental health providers, individuals and family members.

### **How did you choose Reach & Rise®?**

Since its founding, the YMCA's cause has been to strengthen communities. Our Youth Mentoring efforts to date have been focused on one child/one adult model. We recognized there is a gap in serving groups of children. As we researched numerous programs over the course of a year, we found the **Reach & Rise®** program was a good fit to meet the needs of the community.

It's an established successful YMCA program. Resources and ongoing support are available at no cost through the YMCA of the USA, our national organization.

A group mentoring program will provide safety for volunteer mentors and youth.

Participants and volunteers will see benefit from an evidence-based program where outcomes are tracked.

### **How is Reach & Rise® funded?**

This program is offered for free to participants. Funds for this program come from the YMCA's Annual Support Campaign. This important fund helps to support community programming to ensure that everyone regardless of age, income, or background has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive. In addition, we have fundraising events that are established and dedicated to our Youth Mentoring programs. We are confident the community will continue to support efforts to help children.

We are already applying for multiple grants. We are meeting, and in many ways exceeding, the national standard for **Reach & Rise®** program goals.

We are excited to **REACH** more youth and are preparing to **RISE** to a new level of service in Butler County!

For additional questions, contact Melanie Holzwarth, **Reach & Rise®** Administrative Assistant, at [mholzwarth@bcfymca.org](mailto:mholzwarth@bcfymca.org).