

GREATER CINCINNATI YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CORPS

Host Site Information Session

Building near-peer mental health support across Greater Cincinnati

2026–2027 Program Year | Talbert House | AmeriCorps | ServeOhio | HEY! Cincinnati | Interact For Health

OPENING PURPOSE

Why We're Here Today

Thank you for joining us to learn more about becoming a host site. Today's session will help your organization determine whether this opportunity is the right fit for the youth and families you serve.

Our Goal

Strong, mission-aligned partnerships with organizations ready to create meaningful service opportunities and expand access to youth peer support.



Youth Peer Support

What the service is and who it serves



The Corps Model

How the national and local program works



Host Site Expectations

Responsibilities, supervision, and fee



Next Steps

How to move from interest to placement

What Is Youth Peer Support?

A strength-based, nonclinical service in which young adults with lived experience use their recovery and resilience to support youth facing behavioral health, social-emotional, and life challenges — helping them build resilience, self-advocacy, and coping strategies while working toward self-identified goals.



Who Serves

Young adults ages 18–29 who draw on lived experience to build connection and trust.



Where

Schools, homes, and community settings — meeting youth where they are.



How It Fits

Designed to complement, not replace, clinical mental health treatment.

Meet youth where they are · Offer support from someone who can relate · Move toward stability, connection, and growth

What the Role Looks Like



Builds Connection

Uses lived experience to establish trust with youth.



Coaches & Mentors

Provides peer-to-peer guidance and encouragement.



Navigates Resources

Helps youth access services and supports.



Advocates

Strengthens youth voice and self-advocacy skills.



Supports Transitions

Assists youth moving into adulthood.



Encourages Goals

Promotes confidence and recovery-oriented goals.

THE LOCAL NEED

Why This Work Matters

Greater Cincinnati continues to face significant youth mental health needs, including anxiety, isolation, and suicide. The HEY! Cincinnati needs assessment surfaced a clear and consistent message from young people and families:

Youth want support from peers who understand them.

- Youth report more comfort discussing mental health with peers than with adults.
- Youth with lived experience want to share their stories and help others.
- Peer support reduces stigma, increases referrals, and improves help-seeking.



“Having that support system — having the upperclassmen and the lowerclassmen all together in one room and sharing the same problems. Being there for one another to say, ‘I understand that. Here’s how I dealt with that.’”

— Local youth, focus group participant

The Youth Mental Health Corps Model

Launched in 2024, this national service initiative addresses both the youth mental health crisis and the shortage of behavioral health professionals by training young adults ages 18–29 to serve as near-peer mental health navigators.

2024

National launch

18–29

Member age range

3

Service setting types



For Youth

Members provide nonclinical support: peer mentoring, wellness education, resource navigation, outreach, and connection to services from someone close enough in age to understand their reality.



For the Workforce

Members gain practical experience, credentials, professional connections, and exposure to career pathways — helping them confirm whether behavioral health is the right long-term direction.

LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

The Corps in Greater Cincinnati

Developed in response to local needs identified through the HEY! Cincinnati assessment and informed by the national model — positioning our region as an early leader.



Greater Cincinnati's implementation provides a practical foundation for expanding youth peer support beyond this region.

THE COMMITMENT

Expectations for Host Sites

900

hours of service per member

20–22

hours per week, on average

**Oct 2026
– Aug 2027**

service term

Successful host sites create service environments that are meaningful, structured, supervised, and aligned with the needs of the youth and families they serve.

Youth Peer Support may look different across organizations — but every placement should provide purposeful service activities that support the host site's population and mission, with the member fully integrated into the team.

WHAT GREAT LOOKS LIKE

Five Pillars of a Strong Host Site



Intentionality

Meaningful service opportunities that let members use their training, lived experience, and skills.



Belonging

Members are welcomed as part of the team — not guests, not interns, not temporary add-ons.



Consistency

Clear expectations for schedule, activities, supervision, timesheets, data, and protocols.



Authenticity

Respectful, genuine, recovery-oriented engagement that honors lived experience.



Psychological Safety

Proactive communication where members can ask, share, and raise concerns safely.

Host Site Responsibilities



Meaningful Service

Provide sufficient service activities averaging 20–22 hours per week in a supervised, safe environment.



Supervision

Identify a primary and alternate supervisor to oversee activities, hold check-ins, and approve timesheets.



Timely Communication

Raise concerns to GCYMHC leadership promptly and partner on resolution.



In-Kind Support

Provide workspace, technology, equipment, training, and tools needed for the role.



Onboarding Plan

Address badges, orientation, background checks, system access, and site policies before placement.



Program Partnership

Participate in check-ins and site visits with the GCYMHC Supervisor and/or Director.

INVESTMENT

Host Site Fee

\$2,500

per AmeriCorps member

“It is an investment — but a worthy one.”

What the fee supports

Recruiting, training, and placing members

Supervision, coaching, and member support

Program oversight and compliance support

Ongoing coordination throughout the year

Benefits of Becoming a Host Site



Stronger Support for Youth

A trained near-peer supporter helps youth feel understood, build trust, access resources, and engage in their own goals.



Expanded Capacity

Members bring reliability, perspective, and meaningful support to youth, families, and staff teams.



Workforce Pipeline

A structured way for young adults to explore behavioral health careers, earn certifications, and connect with mentors.



More Responsive Services

Lived experience makes organizational services more responsive, relevant, and impactful.

In Their Own Words



Peer Support Specialists add value to host sites. They bring so much to support clients and are very punctual and hardworking.



This is a great partnership that will add so much to your organization. Having the Youth Peer Support Specialists' voice and experience has helped improve our organization.



Hosting an AmeriCorps Peer Support Member was an incredible asset. Their lived experience built trust with youth and families and strengthened partnerships across our region.

Asked what they would tell a prospective host site about joining the program, this is what current partners said.

HEAR IT FIRSTHAND

Host Site Panel

While we can share the structure and benefits of the model, it is most meaningful to hear directly from partners who have lived it.



Dr. Maria Piombo

Director, Child and Family Treatment Center
Central Clinic Behavioral Health

The host site experience from the perspective of a current partner.



Yonnae Hobbs

AmeriCorps Member & Youth Peer Support Specialist
Found Village

What the service experience looks like in practice for youth, sites, and members.

NEXT STEPS

Ready to Become a Host Site?

1	Express Interest	Email Nichol.Boberg@talberthouse.org to begin the process.
2	Complete the Readiness Survey	A brief questionnaire about your organization, service opportunities, and target population.
3	Participate in Leadership Review	Program leadership reviews the survey and connects with you to evaluate readiness and alignment.
4	Review the Host Site Agreement	Approved organizations receive the 2026–2027 Host Site Agreement for review and signature.
5	Begin Specialist Matching	Once the agreement is final, Youth Peer Support Specialist placement interviews and matching can begin.

Not ready this year? Future opportunities may be available — we're happy to help you plan for readiness.

THANK YOU

Questions & Discussion

Host sites play a critical role in expanding youth access to peer support, strengthening prevention efforts, and preparing the next generation of behavioral health professionals.



Nichol.Boberg@talberthouse.org

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