



To the Chair, Senator Brenner, Vice Chair, Senator Blessing, Ranking Member, Senator Ingram, Senator Cutrona (author of SB 156), and the Senate Finance Committee: The Ohio Adolescent Health Centers, OAHC, support positive family formation and poverty prevention by encouraging youth to follow the “**Success Sequence**” of high school graduation, full-time employment, marriage, and children within marriage.¹ A February 2025 report, “Hope and a Future, Forging strong and stable families in Ohio,” indicates that Ohio ranks 15th in child poverty nationwide and only 47.6 % of teens are currently raised in intact families.² OAHC programs aim to equip youth with the tools to follow this sequence. These programs have been active since 1987 and began collaborating in 1998.

The **Success Sequence** emphasizes personal responsibility and financial fidelity by helping youth develop fiscal responsibility early in life and weigh the costs of experimenting with risky behavior during their teen years. For example, according to the Ohio Department of Health between 1991 and 2010, teen births cost Ohio taxpayers \$9.8 billion. There are many factors that contribute to total costs. Ohio has witnessed a significant decline in teen births from 2011-2025 saving the state millions of dollars. OAHC provides helpful education to Ohio youth encouraging them to make healthy decisions and value marriage and family by avoiding risky behaviors. A recent Return on Investment report demonstrated that for every \$1.00 spent on OAHC programs there is a \$18.63 to \$20.00 return saving the state of Ohio \$185,087,706.00.³ Many Ohio youth are practicing the **success sequence** due to OAHC teaching the success sequence and it’s benefits. New specific success sequence modules were developed in our curricula in 2020 and 2021, but several of our nine organizations have taught the importance of education, marriage and family and the avoidance of unhealthy behaviors since inception.

Since 2016, the OAHC collaborative has served 563,973 youth—approximately 65,000 annually in 68 of Ohio’s 88 counties including over 450 middle and high schools. With additional funding, OAHC has the capacity and the expertise to serve 250,000 youth annually and did so in 2006 and 2007 until funding was cut. OAHC is poised and ready to serve students by teaching **more** students the success sequence. OAHC is prepared to offer training for instructors presenting the success sequence.

The OAHC collaborators serve youth of all ethnicities and socio-economic status in grades five through twelve and their families. Programs are offered in suburban, urban, rural, and Appalachian public and private schools and community organizations. The collaboration of nine organizations include 1) Alliance for Healthy Youth, Akron and east Appalachian counties, 2) Common Sense Culture, Columbus, 3) Elizabeth New Life Center, Dayton, 4) Family and Youth Initiatives, New Carlisle, Springfield and surrounding counties, 5) Healthy Visions, Cincinnati, 6) Maximum Freedom, counties surrounding Cincinnati, 7) OK, Inc., Youngstown, Cleveland, and surrounding counties 8) Relationships Under Construction, Columbus, southern Appalachian and rural counties and 9) Stand Up for Youth, Canton, Ohio. Thank you for your kind attention. I am available to answer questions.

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¹ Wang, W., Wilcox, W. B., 2017. The Millennial Success Sequence: Marriage, Kids, and the ‘Success sequence’ among Young Adults. American Enterprise Institute, 2017. <https://tinurl.com/WilcoxgM6x>. Hope and a Future, Forging Strong and Stable Families in Ohio, 2025. Center for Christian Virtue and Institute for Family Studies, pp. 14, 42.

² Wilcox, W. B., Zill, N., Huber, C., Smith, A., 2025 . Hope and a Future, Forging Strong and Stable Families in Ohio, 2025. Center for Christian Virtue and Institute for Family Studies. Pp. 14, 42.

³ Gluck, A., 2020. Overall Randomized Controlled Trial Report, Ohio Adolescent Health Centers. Social Capitol Valuations, p. 1, 38.

[OAHCyouth.org](https://oahcyouth.org)

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