
Prevention Action Alliance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT WELLNESS WITH 2024 STICK YOUR NECKOUT FOR PREVENTION AWARD

COLUMBUS, OH (March 13, 2025) — Prevention Action Alliance (PAA) is proud to announce the Springfield City School District as the recipient of the 2024 Stick Your Neck Out for Prevention Award. This award honors individuals and organizations that go above and beyond in advancing prevention efforts and making a lasting impact on their communities.

Springfield City School District was selected for its outstanding commitment to student well-being through its involvement in the Prevention and Wellness Academy of Ohio (PWAO). PAA launched the program in fall 2022 in partnership with the Education Development Center and Miami University's Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs, with generous funding from the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

The Springfield PWAO team has proven to show exemplary steps toward providing for and championing prevention and SEL strategies within their schools in order to benefit students with lifelong skills and strategies to put them on a successful trajectory into adulthood. The Springfield PWAO team has gone above and beyond to strategically communicate, support, and implement prevention and wellness needs in their district.

"Our District continues to be committed to fostering a culture of wellness and resilience by prioritizing prevention at every level. By mentoring middle school students in youth-led projects addressing critical issues like vaping cessation, gun violence, and digital well-being, we are empowering our students to be change-makers in their own communities. Through investments in supplies for prevention activities at the School of Innovation and distributing mental health resource pocket cards to families, we are ensuring that support is accessible to all. Additionally, by providing our District Prevention Team with the technical support needed to integrate systematic behavioral health and prevention services in a multi-tiered approach, we are building a sustainable model of care that strengthens our entire District. This award is a testament to the power of proactive, student-centered mental health initiatives," commented Dr. Martin Kyle Johnson who serves as the District Coordinator of Psychological & Mental Health Services at the Springfield City School District.

PAA presented the award to Springfield City School District during their board meeting on March 13, 2025, recognizing their leadership and commitment to student wellness.

"Springfield City School District has truly exemplified what it means to 'stick your neck out for prevention.' Their commitment to student well-being demonstrates a proactive and compassionate approach to supporting both mental and physical health. We are honored to recognize their dedication to prevention and the positive impact they are making in their community," said Fran Gerbig, Executive Director of Prevention Action Alliance.

Past recipients of the Stick Your Neck Out for Prevention Award include:

- 2022: Dr. Amy Acton
- 2023: The Ohio National Guard Counterdrug Program

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About The Prevention & Wellness Academy of Ohio

The Prevention & Wellness Academy of Ohio is a project of the K-12 School-Based Initiative at Prevention Action Alliance (PAA), in partnership with [Education Development Center \(EDC\)](#) and [Miami University's Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs](#). It is generously funded by the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

About Prevention Action Alliance

Prevention Action Alliance (PAA) is a statewide non-profit organization leading healthy communities in preventing substance misuse and promoting mental health wellness. PAA provides all Ohioans with opportunities for prevention education, resources, and advocacy, with the goal of empowering communities to create local solutions for local problems. Programs and initiatives include The G.A.P. Network, Know! Prevention Tips, the Ohio College Initiative to Enhance Student Wellness, the Ohio Youth-Led Prevention Network, Parents Who Host Lose The Most™ Campaign, School-Based Initiatives including the Prevention and Wellness Academy, and the Statewide Prevention Coalition Association. For more information on Prevention Action Alliance, please visit www.preventionactionalliance.org.