



Artwork by: Ella Vokes, 11th Grade, Yale High School

Annual Report

2025



St. Clair County
Community Mental Health
Providing Opportunities for Health, Wellness, & Connection

STRONGER TOGETHER

YOU ARE NOT ALONE



DEBRA JOHNSON
Chief Executive Officer

A Message from Our CEO

At St. Clair County Community Mental Health, our mission has always been rooted in one simple truth: the best care happens when it's local, personal, and guided by the voices of the community it serves.

This past year brought significant change and uncertainty to the behavioral health landscape. Federal Medicaid funding discussions and proposed changes from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services challenged long-standing systems of care across our state. In response, SCCCMH remained steadfast in its advocacy, working alongside partners, legislators, and community members to protect access to services that are responsive, accountable, and locally governed.

Behavioral health is not one-size-fits-all. Our community's needs – whether in the City of Port Huron, our rural communities, schools, or family homes – require solutions shaped by local knowledge, trusted relationships, and experienced staff who live and work here. It is the strength of our community-minded, highly qualified local leadership and staff that ensures services are not only clinically sound but also culturally informed, accessible, and grounded in the realities of our county.

This annual report highlights the strength of that local approach, from innovative adult services and community-based supports to youth engagement, workforce development, and efforts to expand equitable access to care. As we look ahead, we remain committed to protecting and strengthening a system built on local voices, local care, and a shared responsibility to one another.

CASE MANAGEMENT:

Helping People Build the Life They Want

Case Management at SCCCMH is more than coordinating services; it's about removing barriers and creating opportunities for individuals to live the lives they choose. Through personalized support and strong community connections, Case Managers help individuals navigate systems, access resources, and build meaningful, independent lives.

For Kortney, that support has made all the difference. With guidance from her Case Manager, she has been able to identify her goals, build confidence, and take meaningful steps toward greater independence, rather than being directed on how to live her life. Kortney has been empowered to make her own choices, shaping a life that reflects her interests, strengths, and aspirations.

Using a person-centered approach, Case Managers partner with individuals and their support systems to develop an Individual Plan of Service (IPOS). This process focuses on what matters most to the individual - what they enjoy, what they hope to achieve, and how they want to be supported. These conversations center on strengths and possibilities, helping individuals take an active role in shaping their future.

That partnership evolves over time. As individuals build skills and confidence, they begin to rely more on natural supports and community connections. For Kortney, this has meant growing more independent while still knowing support is there when needed; a balance that fosters both security and self-determination.

Over time, that support opens doors. Individuals are able to become more engaged in their communities through volunteering, employment, education, and social opportunities. These connections encourage confidence, purpose, and a sense of belonging; key elements of long-term success and well-being.

Stigma can still present challenges, but community understanding continues to grow. When individuals are supported by informed, compassionate communities, they can thrive. As independence increases, Case Managers intentionally step back, ensuring that natural supports and community relationships become the foundation for continued success.

Case Management reflects the heart of Community Mental Health: empowerment, inclusion, and opportunity. For individuals like Kortney, it's not just about receiving services, it's about building a life filled with choice, connection, and purpose.



“Case Management helped me find my voice and believe in what I can do. With the right support, I’ve been able to keep moving forward and create a life that feels right for me.”

TREATING THE WHOLE PERSON:

Helping People Build the Life They Want

Recovery rarely follows a straight path. For one individual in SCCCMH's Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment (IDDT) program, the journey has been defined by commitment, growth, and a renewed sense of purpose.

After entering treatment, he decided to invest in his recovery fully. Through consistent participation in services, he has worked to understand his past better, confront challenges honestly, and apply new coping skills in his daily life. Today, he has been sober for more than a year, a milestone that reflects both persistence and resilience.

Recovery has extended beyond treatment sessions. He has reconnected with his faith and continues to strengthen his role as a husband and father. He also gives back to others in the recovery community, sharing his experience and encouraging peers through Alcoholics Anonymous. His journey reflects not only personal growth but also a commitment to helping others find their own path forward.



Programs like IDDT are designed to support individuals facing both mental health and substance use challenges at the same time. By providing coordinated care through one team, individuals receive integrated support that addresses the full scope of their needs. This approach reduces barriers, builds consistency, and supports long-term success.

Using a stages-of-change approach, IDDT recognizes that recovery is not linear. Individuals are supported at every stage, with progress measured not only in outcomes, but in effort - showing up, building skills, and continuing forward even during difficult moments.

At the core of this work is trust. With consistent, nonjudgmental support, individuals are able to rebuild confidence, strengthen connections, and rediscover hope. For those engaged in IDDT, recovery is not just possible; it becomes a reality shaped by choice, support, and the belief that change can last.

“

“I’ve learned to face my past, use the tools I’ve been given, and keep moving forward. One day at a time.”

- IDDT program participant

OUTPATIENT SERVICES:

Flexible Care That Strengthens Individuals and the Community

When people hear “outpatient services,” they may picture a weekly therapy appointment. For many individuals at SCCCMH, the journey is far more comprehensive and deeply personal.

For one individual, seeking help began with a simple goal: to feel more in control of their daily life. At the start, symptoms made it difficult to maintain routines, manage stress, and stay connected to work and relationships. Through Outpatient Services, they began meeting regularly with a therapist, working to understand patterns, build coping strategies, and take small, consistent steps forward.

Over time, support expanded to include medication management and skill-based groups, creating a more complete treatment plan. During more difficult periods, services increased to provide additional stability. As progress continued, supports adjusted, allowing for greater independence while maintaining a strong foundation of care.

Outpatient Services bring together therapy, psychiatric care, skill-building, crisis support, and case management in a coordinated, person-centered approach.



“

“I didn’t realize how much support was available at CMH. Having a team that adjusts with me has made all the difference in my recovery journey.”

- Outpatient Services program participant

Clinicians use evidence-based practices such as cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, and trauma-informed care to help individuals manage symptoms and navigate real-life challenges.

Recovery extends beyond clinical care. With support, individuals can address barriers related to housing, transportation, and daily responsibilities, factors that can significantly impact long-term stability. As confidence grows, so does the ability to engage more fully in work, relationships, and community life.

Strong outpatient care benefits more than the individual. Consistent, accessible services help prevent crises and reduce hospitalizations. By supporting people in community-based settings, Outpatient Services promote stability, independence, and meaningful participation in everyday life.

When individuals have the right support at the right time, recovery becomes possible, and entire communities grow stronger.

CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIP, IMPACT, AND COMMUNITY

Each year, St. Clair County Community Mental Health recognizes individuals and organizations whose partnership, advocacy, and compassion strengthen our work and the well-being of our community. These honorees reflect what is possible when services, systems, and people come together to support recovery and connection.



COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Honors an individual with a passion for serving others and strengthening community partnerships.

Exceptional collaboration. Sheriff King has demonstrated steady support for initiatives such as the Mobile Crisis Unit and continues to advocate for improvements in the public mental health system. Since taking office, he has made training a priority, reinforcing his commitment to an effective, compassionate response. His active engagement in trainings and partnership efforts reflects a deep commitment to strengthening the connection between law enforcement and behavioral health systems. His leadership shows a genuine and lasting dedication to the well-being of our community.



COMMUNICATIONS AWARD

Recognizes media leadership in raising awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting a positive recovery environment.

A voice for community impact. Matt consistently uses his platform to raise awareness, support local causes, and highlight important issues, including behavioral health. Through ongoing involvement in fundraisers and community events, he helps connect individuals to meaningful resources and conversations. His work fosters a more informed, compassionate, and supportive community.



ORGANIZATION AWARD

Honors an organization advancing systems that support individuals and families.

Jennifer Deegan, St. Clair County Family Court
 Samantha Lord, St. Clair County Family Court
 Amy Sherrod, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
 Sarah Biscorner, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
 Mary Kelly, Guardian Ad Litem
 Sharon Parish, Guardian Ad Litem
 Michelle Easter, Attorney
 Mallory Schieman, Attorney
 Amy Goodrich, St. Clair County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
 Jodi Shinn, St. Clair County Community Mental Health
 Jen Fye, St. Clair County Community Mental Health
 Ashley Douglas, St. Clair County Community Mental Health
 Morgan Shafer, St. Clair County Community Mental Health
 Sarah Hammel, St. Clair County Community Mental Health
 Katie Janisee, St. Clair County Community Mental Health
 Theresa McKay, St. Clair County Community Mental Health
 Melissa Way, St. Clair County Community Mental Health

Transforming systems of care. The Early Childhood Court team has demonstrated exceptional collaboration and innovation in supporting families in St. Clair County. Grounded in the primary goal of preserving families and strengthening parent-child relationships, their work ensures that families receive the support they need to remain together and thrive. By creating trauma-informed spaces and strong partnerships, they ensure families feel safe, supported, and connected.



KAREN COLE AWARD

Recognizes leadership in advocacy, inclusion, and community connection.

Tireless advocacy. Rick and Lori Ames have shown a long-standing commitment to improving opportunities for individuals and families in St. Clair County. Their leadership and persistence, including their service as Board Members and Lori's role on the Recipient Rights Advisory Committee, helped bring meaningful programming to the community and continue to influence system-level change. Their work reflects a deep dedication to inclusion, connection, and lasting impact.

Denise Ellery, IMPACT



RIGHTS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR

Recognizes an individual or group going above and beyond their duties to ensure the rights of all individuals are respected, protected, and valued.

Dignity in everyday moments. Denise Ellery goes above and beyond to ensure the individuals she supports feel heard, respected, and valued, creating an environment that truly feels like home. Through thoughtful gestures, strong advocacy, and high expectations for staff, she works tirelessly to protect the rights and well-being of every resident in her care. As Denise shares, the most rewarding part of her work is “having residents smile, knowing I’m there to help them be their best selves.”

Teen Advisory Group (TAG)



LEARN
MORE

See page 14 to learn more about the work of this exceptional group of students!

DIFFERENCE MAKER AWARD

Honors those creating meaningful change through leadership and engagement.

Sophia Bajorek, Anchor Bay High School
 Nadine Cameron, Port Huron High School
 Jersey Hayes, Yale High School
 Izzy Kelly, Marysville High School
 Joshua Kriesch, Yale High School
 Jaycob Livingston, Memphis High School
 Eli Mayhew, Port Huron Northern High School
 Ethan Meyers, Port Huron Northern High School
 Isabella Nelson, Memphis High School
 Emma Rushton, Port Huron Northern High School
 Paige Voss, Port Huron High School
 Jillian Reece Zimmer, Virtual Learning Academy

Youth leading change. The Teen Advisory Group brings together students from across the county to promote mental wellness and reduce stigma among their peers. Through outreach, leadership, and engagement in their schools, they are helping important conversations take root. Their passion and commitment are shaping a stronger future for youth mental health.



SCCCMH TEAM OF THE YEAR

Recognizes outstanding teamwork in delivering coordinated care.

Nicole Abraham, Technician, Facilities Department
 Kristen Azzinaro, Clinician, Outpatient Department
 Leslie Brown, Supervisor, Mobile Crisis Unit
 Keith Gilbert, Peer Support Specialist, Peer Services Department
 Cheri Jessup, Supervisor, DBT and SUD Departments
 Jonathan Ledebuhr, Technician, Facilities Department
 Jason Marocco, Director, Adult Services
 Jacob Pelzer, Clinician, Outpatient Department
 Laura Sylvia, Peer Support Specialist, Peer Services
 King Thomason, Manager, Transportation Department
 Joe Windhorst, Supervisor, Outpatient Department
 Ann Marie Wrubel, Clinician, Mobile Crisis Unit

The power of teamwork. This cross-departmental team worked together to support an individual experiencing homelessness and crisis during severe weather conditions. They coordinated shelter, transportation, medical follow-up, and even pet care to ensure their safety and dignity. Their collaboration turned a moment of crisis into one of stability, hope, and recovery.

Gloria Valentin



SCCCMH EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Recognizes exceptional compassion and commitment in service delivery.

Compassion in action. While answering the mainline phone, Gloria, a member of our clerical team, encountered an individual in serious distress and responded with remarkable care and composure. Drawing on her training and natural ability to connect with others, she offered reassurance, coordinated support, and remained present during the critical moment until help arrived. Her actions reflect the highest standards of service excellence and person-centered care.

MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE:

Delivering Behavioral Health Care Across Rural St. Clair County

In St. Clair County, access to behavioral health care is not one-size-fits-all. While services in Port Huron benefit from centralized resources and transportation options, rural communities like Marine City and Capac face very different realities shaped by distance, infrastructure, and daily barriers.

For many individuals, getting to an appointment is not a matter of convenience; it is a barrier that can determine whether care happens at all.

“Transportation in our catchment area has always been a barrier,” explains Jessica Schroeder, LMSW, Marine City Adult Services Supervisor. “Some individuals live as far as 16 miles away, and there is a significant lack of public transportation we can realistically expect them to use.”

This reality reflects a broader challenge: rural residents often face fewer providers, longer travel distances, and limited transportation; factors that directly impact engagement and outcomes.

That is why the presence of local service sites in Marine City and Capac is not just beneficial – it is essential. As need continues to grow in these communities, SCCCMH has expanded its footprint in Marine City, with one location on King Road dedicated to adult services and a second site

downtown on Broadway, focused on children’s services, increasing accessibility, and strengthening care for families. “Having services available locally means more care is accessible, timely, and realistic for individuals and families who might otherwise delay or forgo treatment,” says Merindar Grant, LPC, LLMSW, Capac Program Supervisor.

Without these access points, individuals without reliable transportation would face increased barriers, leading to missed appointments, gaps in care, and greater reliance on emergency services. Preventive care would be replaced by crisis response.

But access is only part of the story.

Being physically present in the community transforms how care is delivered. In rural settings, strong community partnerships are not just valuable - they are critical to achieving overall community well-being. Providers are not just clinicians; they are neighbors, collaborators, and trusted partners.

“Our staff has specialized knowledge of the community,” Schroeder notes. “They know local schools, law enforcement, and the barriers individuals face. That familiarity builds trust, and individuals often approach services with more transparency.”



In Capac, this is reflected in strong partnerships with schools, primary care providers, and community organizations, supporting earlier identification of needs and better coordination of care. “The close-knit nature of this community allows for stronger relationships and more personalized care,” Grant explains. “Staff have a deep understanding of local dynamics, which helps tailor services to individual needs.”

These challenges are compounded by funding models that often fail to reflect rural realities. Providing care in less densely populated areas requires more time, travel, and flexibility per individual, yet reimbursement structures do not always account for these increased costs.

This is where the importance of local, community-based decision-making becomes critical. Rural communities are not just smaller versions of urban ones; they require creative and tailored approaches.

Despite these challenges, the story of rural behavioral health care in St. Clair County is one of resilience, innovation, and deep commitment. Teams in Marine City and Capac are embedded in their communities, partnering with schools, law enforcement, and local organizations to deliver person-centered care.

Looking ahead, these sites will remain critical access points. Strengthening rural behavioral health care will require continued investment, flexible funding models, workforce development, and expanded transportation and telehealth solutions.

But most importantly, it will require recognizing what these communities, and the people who serve them, demonstrate every day: **meaningful care begins by meeting people where they are.**

These relationships also allow staff to adapt creatively. In Marine City, staff may assist with transportation, a support not typically required in areas like Port Huron. In Capac, flexibility in scheduling and coordination helps individuals stay engaged despite competing demands.

Still, rural behavioral health care comes with persistent challenges. Workforce shortages make it difficult to recruit and retain specialized providers. Limited broadband can hinder access to telehealth services. Stigma around seeking services remains higher in many rural communities.

Transportation, again and again, remains a defining challenge - one that underscores the need for continued innovation, investment, and community-driven solutions in rural behavioral health care.

SCCCMH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nancy Thomson | Chair
 Julie Jowett-Lee | Vice Chair
 Kyle Schieweck | Secretary/Treasurer
 Dr. Katherine Albrecht
 Lori Ames
 Dawn Davey
 Rosella Mirabelli
 Ken Nicholl
 Martha Partipilo
 Emily Vinckier Pierce
 Edwin Priemer
 Jessica Totty

SCCCMH ADVISORY COUNCIL

Nancy Thomson | Chair
 Dr. Katherine Albrecht
 Shane Chase
 Nora Condlan
 Rosella Mirabelli
 Judy Parker
 Martha Partipilo
 Trisha Pierce
 Cheryle Randall
 Cynthia Raymo
 Jessica Totty

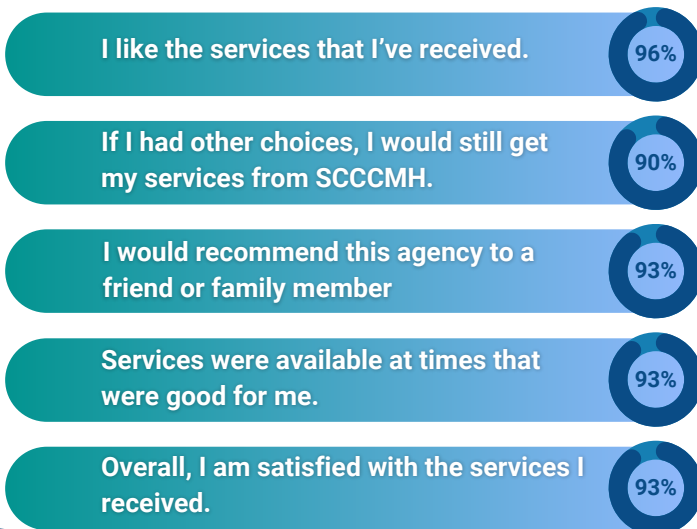
SCCCMH RECIPIENT RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Nancy Thomson | Chair
 Lori Ames | Vice Chair
 Dr. Katherine Albrecht
 Dawn Davey
 Paula Jowett
 Julie Jowett-Lee
 Rosella Mirabelli
 Jo Ann Wilton

SCCCMH LEADERSHIP TEAM

Debra Johnson | Chief Executive Officer
Telly Delor | Chief Operating Officer
Karen Farr | Chief Financial Officer
Kathleen Gallagher | Chief Clinical Officer
Dr. Brandon Moore | Medical Director
Danielle Hazlewood | Finance Director
Heidi Fogarty | Child & Family Services Director
Kristen Thompson | Adult Services Director
Jason Marocco | Adult Services Director
Stephanie Shank | Human Resources Director
Dann Hayes | IT & Network Security Director
Michelle Measel-Morris | Support Services Director

ADULT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY




CHILD CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY



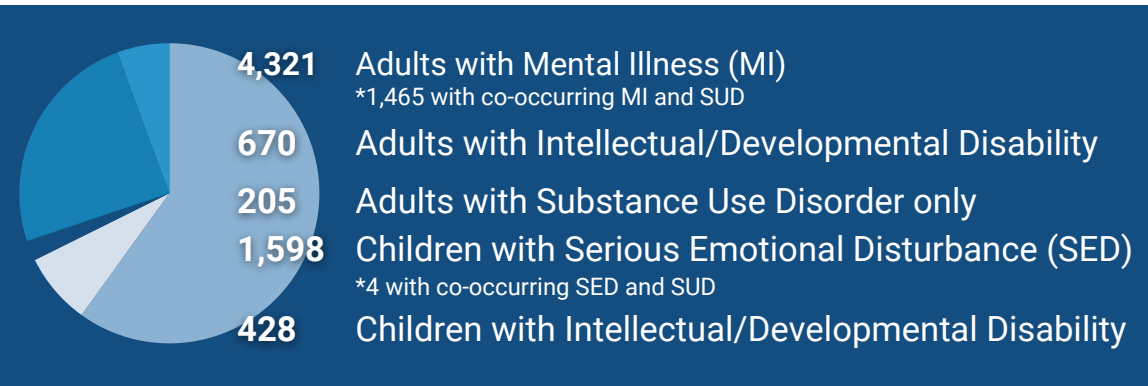
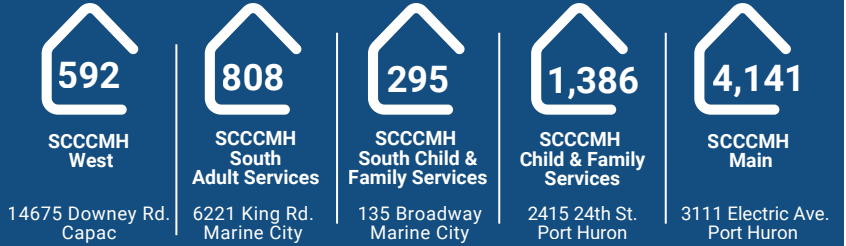
Who We Serve:

Mobile Crisis Unit provided emergency support to 1,565 individuals in FY25. 14% were not previously enrolled in SCCCMH services at the time the crisis occurred. Crisis response services are available to ALL St. Clair County residents 24/7.




Five locations in St. Clair County provide convenient, high-quality care to the community.

Number of individuals served at each location:




Served 7,222 individuals in FY25, a 2% increase from the previous year.



About Our Staff:

SCCCMH staff donated \$27,513 to 22 different charitable funds and local nonprofits through the "Casual for a Cause" program.



SCCCMH staff participated in 68 community events, such as open houses, health fairs, awareness events, and more!

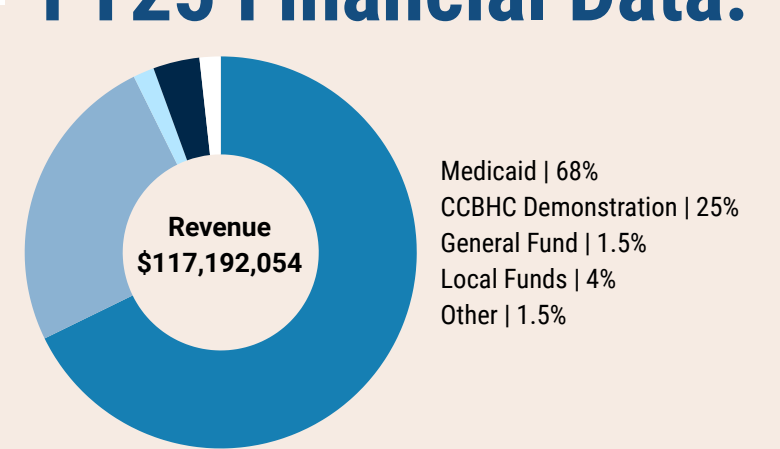
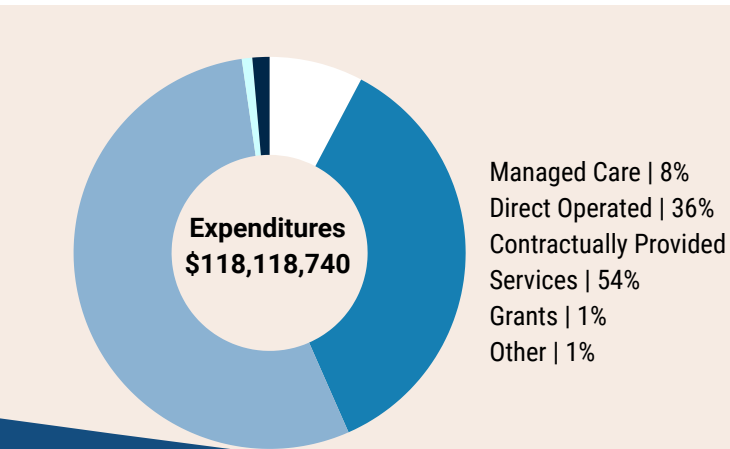


St. Clair County Community Mental Health employs **469** dedicated and highly qualified professionals.



- 69 Care Managers
- 128 Clinicians
- 45 Mental Health Assistants
- 10 Peer Supports & Recovery Coaches
- 41 Medical Service Staff
- 86 Other Direct Service Supports
- 90 Administrative Staff

FY25 Financial Data:



TEEN VOICES SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MENTAL HEALTH

SCCCMH Teen Advisory Group

SCCCMH is addressing youth mental health needs by listening directly to teens. The Teen Advisory Group (TAG) brings together students from across St. Clair County to share their experiences, identify challenges, and help shape solutions that resonate with their peers.

The inaugural group comprises 14 students, aged 14-18, from eight local high schools. Developed after discussions with SCCCMH staff and using local MiPHY (Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth) data, the group reflects the real concerns and experiences of area youth. Rather than creating a program for teens, SCCCMH built a platform with them, one where youth voice leads, and adults provide support, structure, and resources.



TAG members meet monthly and collaborate on projects that meet teens where they are at, including youth-led Mental Health Minute radio spots, a Facebook and Instagram presence, school-based “mental health moments,” and a digital resource hub accessible on student Chromebooks. In 2026, TAG will also launch The Resilience Blueprint, a podcast developed in partnership with The Athletic Factory in Port Huron, exploring real-life teen experiences around stress, resilience, and mental wellness.

TAG demonstrates the power of youth voice and collaboration – and what’s possible when young people are trusted to help shape the future of behavioral health care in their community.



Follow TAG on Social Media:

Facebook



Instagram



LOOKING AHEAD

Rebuilding a Critical Level of Care for Children

For children experiencing significant behavioral challenges, access to the right level of care at the right time is essential. Therapeutic group homes have historically played a vital role in Michigan's public mental health system, offering structured, community-based environments where youth can receive intensive treatment while building stability and life skills.

Over time, many of these programs were reduced, creating gaps in the continuum of care and leaving families and providers with limited options between outpatient services and hospitalization. With recent legislative changes, St. Clair County Community Mental Health is making this level of care a priority and is developing plans to open a therapeutic group home for children. This effort reflects a commitment to expanding local options and ensuring youth can access appropriate care close to home.

These homes provide 24-hour supervision, clinical support, and a consistent, trauma-informed environment. Unlike inpatient settings, they offer a more home-like atmosphere where children can continue developing social, emotional, and daily living skills while remaining connected to their community. This balance is especially important for youth who cannot safely remain at home but do not require hospitalization.

Expanding access to therapeutic group homes strengthens the entire system of care. It reduces reliance on emergency departments, supports earlier intervention, and creates more stable pathways to recovery. Most importantly, it ensures that children receive compassionate, developmentally appropriate care that helps them heal, grow, and build a foundation for long-term success.

HERE WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

Immediate Support. No Appointment Needed.

In moments of crisis, timely support can make all the difference. This year, SCCCMH strengthened access to care by launching behavioral health urgent care services that provide immediate support with no appointment needed.

From crisis stabilization and emotional support to connection with ongoing care, our team meets individuals where they are at and helps guide the next steps toward recovery.

Behavioral Health Urgent Care Services

3111 Electric Ave., Port Huron, MI

Hours: Monday - Friday | 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Access to Services: 810-488-8888

Hours: Monday - Friday | 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

24/7 Crisis Line: 810-966-2575

Hours: 24/7 by-phone and in-person crisis support



Mission

Providing opportunities for health, wellness, and connection.

Vision

St. Clair County Community Mental Health will remain the leader in integrated behavioral healthcare.

Values

- C ompassion
- A ccessibility
- R elationship
- E mpowerment
- S ervice Excellence