

We assist families and their children who have mood, emotional, and behavioral challenges to understand and navigate services, advocate effectively, and achieve their potential.

Raising kids can be tough. If you need help . . . **JUST ASK**

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ASK Staff

Tina Robbins, *Executive Director*
 Christine Eckrich, *Program Manager*
 Kim Beachy, *Administrative Assistant*

Family Support Partners

Corrie Petersen
 Pam Waterman
 Robin Hicks
 Lana Needham

Youth Voice

Kaley Ford, *Youth Involvement Coordinator*
 Alex Cicalese, *Youth Engagement Specialist*
 Jamie Hotrum, *Youth Peer Mentor*

We are Here to Listen

We are here to listen...
 Not to work miracles.

We are here to help people discover what they are feeling...
 Not to make the feelings go away.

We are here to discuss steps with people...
 Not to take steps for them.

We are here to help people discover their own strengths...
 Not to rescue them and leave them still vulnerable.

We are here to help people discover they can help themselves...
 Not to take responsibility for them.

We are here to help people learn to choose...
 Not to make it unnecessary to make difficult choices.

We are here to provide support for change!

~ Adapted from an Anonymous Poem

Introducing Our New Staff

Lana Needham, Family Support Partner



What is your role at ASK?

I am a Family Support Partner at ASK. My role is to support and empower families who are experiencing challenges that arise when a child or children in the home have severe emotional disturbances. I help families connect to community resources and navigate the various systems of care with which they are involved.

Why did you choose this particular profession?

I feel as if this profession chose me. Many years ago I adopted a child with a history of trauma and abuse which left her emotionally wounded. Through the years of caring for my beloved daughter, I discovered the pain and stigma that families experience in the journey of trying to find appropriate mental health care and educational services for children whose challenges are not always recognizable or easily treated. I have watched my own daughter struggle to overcome and rise above the stigmas that society blatantly waves with regard to mental health. I have come to realize how much courage it takes to stand against these stigmas and I feel as if my calling is to help others find the care that their children need and destroy the stigmas that create barriers for them.

What is your favorite part of your job?

My favorite part of this job is watching families become empowered. This process is

slow and steady. It requires building trusting relationships. Sometimes it is just about being empathetic and sharing a family's burdens and pain. Sometimes it is celebrating the baby steps. Sometimes it is about being creative. Always it is about growing stronger and striving for better. Ultimately it is about being empowered and finding your voice!

What is your favorite quote and why?

Throughout my own journey I discovered Brené Brown, an author who has taught me about the gifts of imperfection, how to dare greatly, how to live wholeheartedly and how to rise strong. My favorite quote comes from her *Manifesto of the Brave and Brokenhearted* :

“We craft love from heartbreak,
 Compassion from shame,
 Grace from disappointment,
 Courage from failure.”

Robin Hicks, Family Support Partner



What is your role at ASK?

I'm a Family Support Partner, my job is to assist parents or caregivers of children with mood, behavioral or emotional challenges by equipping them with the necessary tools, trainings, or individual supports they may need to advocate for their children.

Why did you choose this particular profession?

I have a passion and need to help people. My passion stems from years of advocating for my own children by searching for the right therapist to help my son deal with his ADHD,

and in working with the school system to get the right plan put in place for him to be successful. I feel the need to help comes from knowing that changing the world starts with helping one person and being able to empathize with them. I have been in their shoes.

What is your favorite part of your job?

I enjoy talking to parents and caregivers at day to day or week to week visits about what progress they've made or things they are still working on. The parents are working hard with many organizations,

teams, and doctors and they need someone to encourage, and motivate them along the way.

What is your favorite quote and why?

I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13). This quote tells me that no matter what barriers, decisions, or obstacles I may have there is a way to persevere through it.

Tina Robbins, Executive Director



I joined the Advocacy Services for Kids (ASK) team on January 18, 2016 and have been so expressed by the warm welcome that has been extended to me by the Kalamazoo Community.

I completely believe in the mission of the agency and the

empowering nature of the services provided by ASK's dedicated staff. I am very excited to be part of the ASK team and look forward to working with the community to increase family and youth voice.

Please don't hesitate to give me a call if you or someone you

know is interested in being part of improving the lives of youth and family in the Kalamazoo area. I look forward to meeting you soon.

Kaley Ford, Youth Involvement Coordinator



What is your role at ASK?

I am the Youth Involvement Coordinator at ASK. I work with a group of high school aged teenagers called C.A.Y. M.O.V.E. This group works alongside service providers and other adults to create change within the System of Care. I will also be supervising two Youth Peer Support Specialists beginning in March.

Why did you choose this particular profession?

I have always known that I want to work with youth. Initially I wanted to be a teacher but decided I could not

be in a classroom every day! I want to be out in the community working with youth helping them become the best people they can be.

What is your favorite part of your job?

My favorite part about my job is working directly with youth. I love getting to know each individual that I come into contact with. Working with youth is different than working with adults. Youth are so real and aren't afraid to be themselves. The youth in C.A.Y. M.O.V.E. are so authentic and passionate.

If you ruled the world, what would you change on day 1?

If I ruled the world the first thing I would do is provide everyone with free health care. In my opinion health care is something that everyone is deserving of and shouldn't have to pay for. So many issues would be resolved if everybody had equal access to health care. This would eliminate so much stress and barriers that people are faced with each day. Everyone would have an increase in their quality of life.

Schupan & Sons Youth Social Justice Award



Award Recipient Jamie Hotrum and Nominator Kaley Ford

Justice Award. Every year Kalamazoo County awards 4 youth recipients the Social Justice Award in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. week.

Jamie was nominated because of her commitment to bettering the community and making Kalamazoo a place that serves all youth equally. She was a member of Calling All Youth M.O.V.E. for 4 years and now serves as the programs Peer Mentor. Jamie is also a member of the Kalamazoo County Wide Youth Cabinet. Adults and her peers admire how she embraces diversity and how she continually seeks out opportunities to learn and grow.



Mayor Bobby Hopewell, Jamie Hotrum, Judy Woosley- Schupan & Sons Representative



On January 19th, C.A.Y. M.O.V.E. Youth Peer Mentor Jamie Hotrum was awarded the Schupan & Sons Youth Social



Kaley Ford, Jamie Hotrum, Alex Cicalese

Jamie encompasses so many of the qualities that MLK dreamt our youth would one day posses and is truly deserving of this award. Mayor Bobby Hopewell presented the award to her along with a \$200 gift certificate at a Town Hall meeting.



Youth recipients and company sponsors

C.A.Y. M.O.V.E. Holiday Project 2015



C.A.Y. M.O.V.E. Member, Tasha Beischl

Throughout the holiday season C.A.Y. M.O.V.E. hosted a supply drive and fundraiser to benefit The Ark Services for youth. These programs assist

runaway and formally homeless youth in our community. Disability Network, Community Mental Health, and Legal Aid partnered with the group for this event and donation boxes were placed in their buildings as well at the ASK office. We collected an assortment of items including clothing, non-perishable food, cleaning supplies, and

more. In addition to the donation boxes,

C.A.Y. M.O.V.E. hosted a fundraiser at Blaze Pizza to earn additional funds to purchase supplies. The event was well attended and the group was happy to be able to provide more items to The Ark.



Kaley Ford and Alex Cicalese



C.A.Y. M.O.V.E. Member, Zach Scott



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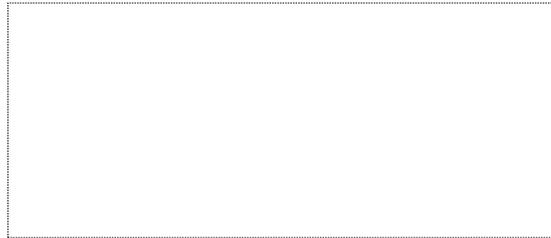
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Follow C.A.Y. M.O.V.E.
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Raising kids can be tough. If you need help, just ASK!



At least one child in 10 has a Serious Emotional Disturbance.

Without family and community support, these kids are overwhelmed at school and in social situations, and isolated by stigma putting them at risk for engaging in behaviors that are harmful to themselves and others.

What if your child were one in ten? Why should you care?

Because every child has value and potential that cannot be realized without their community's education, understanding, and support. **Because children's mental health matters, to them, to their families, and to all of us.**

ASK supports families, promotes awareness, and strives to improve the mental health system of care of children and their families. Please consider joining us in this important work by becoming a financial partner. For more information about how you can contribute to ASK, please contact Tina Robbins at (269) 343-5896.

Your contribution is an investment in the future of families and youth in our community; together we can change lives.

Name _____

Address _____

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Name(s) as you wish to be recognized in gift acknowledgement:

I wish to remain anonymous.

Thank you for your support.

Advocacy Services for Kids (ASK) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization; donations are tax deductible.

Donate online via PayPal at
www.askforkids.org

\$5 \$25 \$50

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\$100+ = Sponsoring Partner

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Advocacy Services for Kids is an affiliate of the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, and funded by the Greater Kalamazoo United Way, Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.