

How to Keep Kids Talking



02
2026



Christopher Lloyd
Vice President of Marketing
& Communications



Tiffany Whisner
Marketing Content Manager



Cheryl Berry
Marketing Creative Manager



Jaclyn Saunders
Marketing Coordinator



CéAira Waymon
Marketing Creative Associate



Rich Trotman
Multimedia Content Producer

Table of Contents

How to Keep Kids Talking
[page 3](#)

Annual Report: Fulfilling Promises
[page 7](#)

Employee Spotlight: Stacie Crouch
[page 8](#)

Social Media Hits
[page 11](#)

Aspire News
[page 12](#)

Great Job!
[page 13](#)



How to Keep Kids Talking



According to the Indiana Department of Child Services, Madison County has one of the highest rates of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect per capita in Indiana. On August 1, 2014, Kids Talk opened its doors in Anderson, Indiana, to serve the needs of that particular population as well as the greater Madison County community.

Kids Talk’s core service is forensic interview – providing children affected by sexual and physical abuse, neglect, or those who have witnessed violent crimes, a safe environment to talk to an adult they can trust. The forensic interviewer is specially trained to listen and specifically ask non-leading questions about

the incident the child has experienced or witnessed.

“We do these interviews for investigative purposes to ensure the kids don’t have to go to the Department of Child Services (DCS) and then to the police station, and then to the prosecutors office to repeat their story over and over again,” says Kids Talk Director Denise Valdez. “The interviews are kid-friendly but



Valdez

intensive enough to make sure we have all the information needed for the investigation.” Additionally, victim advocates work with non-offending caregivers to provide resources and education to support the children.

“Kids can appear to be resilient, but there can be long-term effects to trauma if it’s not properly acknowledged and addressed,” Valdez says.

TO SERVE AND PROTECT THE CHILDREN

While the core mission is to provide the forensic interviews, Kids Talk serves the kids and families they work with in several ways.

Before a family comes in with their child for a forensic interview, the victim advocate will call ahead to find out what questions they have, explain what is going to happen when they arrive, how to prepare their child, and remind them what to say and not say to the child. Throughout the process, victim advocates work with the non-offending parent to assess what resources the family may need: clothing, food, counseling or medical care. Occasionally, Kids Talk can also help families connect with housing and daycare services.

Once the initial interview is complete and the family has been connected to various resources, the victim advocates follow up within a week or two to find out if the family has been able to connect with the various resources and if they need additional assistance.

Behind the scenes, Kids Talk is working with Madison County law enforcement and prosecutorial teams to gather the necessary details for the investigation. Collaborating with police and prosecutors, Kids Talk facilitates case review, where each discipline provides an update to each case and ensures each area is on the same page regarding the information.

Comedian Eric O’Shea Headlines 2026 Stand Up for Kids

Kids Talk and Aspire Indiana Health are proud to announce Eric O’Shea as the featured comedian for the 2026 Stand Up for Kids fundraising event. Stand Up for Kids is celebrating its 10th annual comedy show later this month at The Crystal Coop in Anderson.

[Eric O’Shea](#) is an award-winning comedian celebrated for his unique blend of clean stand-up comedy and family-friendly humor, influenced by his everyday life with his family. A comedian for more than 25 years, O’Shea has performed at thousands of college campuses and corporate events and has been a part of the National Association for Campus Activities (NACA) since the 1990s. His work has appeared on VH1, ABC, Disney, America’s Got Talent, and many other feature venues.

“It is absolutely my honor to be a part of this beautiful cause and bring some laughter,” O’Shea says. “For me personally, as a performer, my life significantly changed for the better when I stopped looking for love, and simply became love for others. See you all soon!”

O’Shea will be headlining Stand Up for Kids on Friday, February 27. Purchase your tickets today: <https://e.givesmart.com/events/MxP/>.



RAISING FUNDS, SHARING LAUGHS

From day one, Kids Talk has always operated as a nonprofit while being a program of Aspire Indiana Health. Kids Talk has been wholly funded through grants and donations, with the primary funding being DCS grants and the Victims of Crime Act grants.

Yet, with an ever-changing funding landscape, some funding is starting to disappear – Kids Talk is expecting to lose up to 40% of their funding later in 2026.

“Losing that funding will translate into us having to reconsider which kids we serve and which kids we don’t,” Valdez says. Currently, any kid who experiences any type of crime – whether sexual or physical violence, witnessing domestic violence, drug usage, or neglect – can be served by Kids Talk. But if funding is lost, Kids Talk will have to reconfigure a way to prioritize certain cases.

“Not having as many people to serve those kids and those families is terrifying to us,” Valdez says. “How do you pick which kids you can serve and which kids you can’t?”

On February 27, Kids Talk hosts the 10th annual Stand Up for Kids, a yearly comedy event to help generate revenue. And securing funding has never been more imperative.

Featuring a stand-up comedian to headline the event, Stand Up for Kids started as a dream of a fun night to shed light on a serious topic that has bloomed in the last decade to become a staple event in Madison County, bringing together people from various professions and corners of the community to donate to Kids Talk.



Davis

“The event has become a must-attend event in Madison County over the last nine years, and we are excited about the 10th anniversary of this fun evening,” says Aspire Director of Philanthropy Kasey Davis. “We hope it provides an opportunity for more people to learn more about the critical work at Kids Talk.”

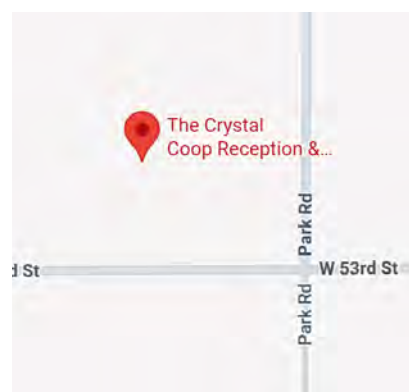
Donations and proceeds raised at Stand Up for Kids are fully utilized to service the kids impacted by abuse in Madison County. Come share some laughs while supporting a great cause. Get your tickets here: <https://e.givesmart.com/events/MxP/>.



Friday, February 27 at 7 p.m.
The Crystal Coop, 3400 W 53rd St
Anderson, IN

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with Auction, Bar Service and Dinner Buffet; Program begins at 7 p.m.

[Purchase tickets and browse for auction items!](#)





**Friday, February 27 at
The Crystal Coop in Anderson**

REGISTER HERE



Tickets: \$50

Can't make the event? Support Kids Talk
through a sponsorship or donation.
For details, contact us at giving@aspireindiana.org.

Limited seating available - get yours today!

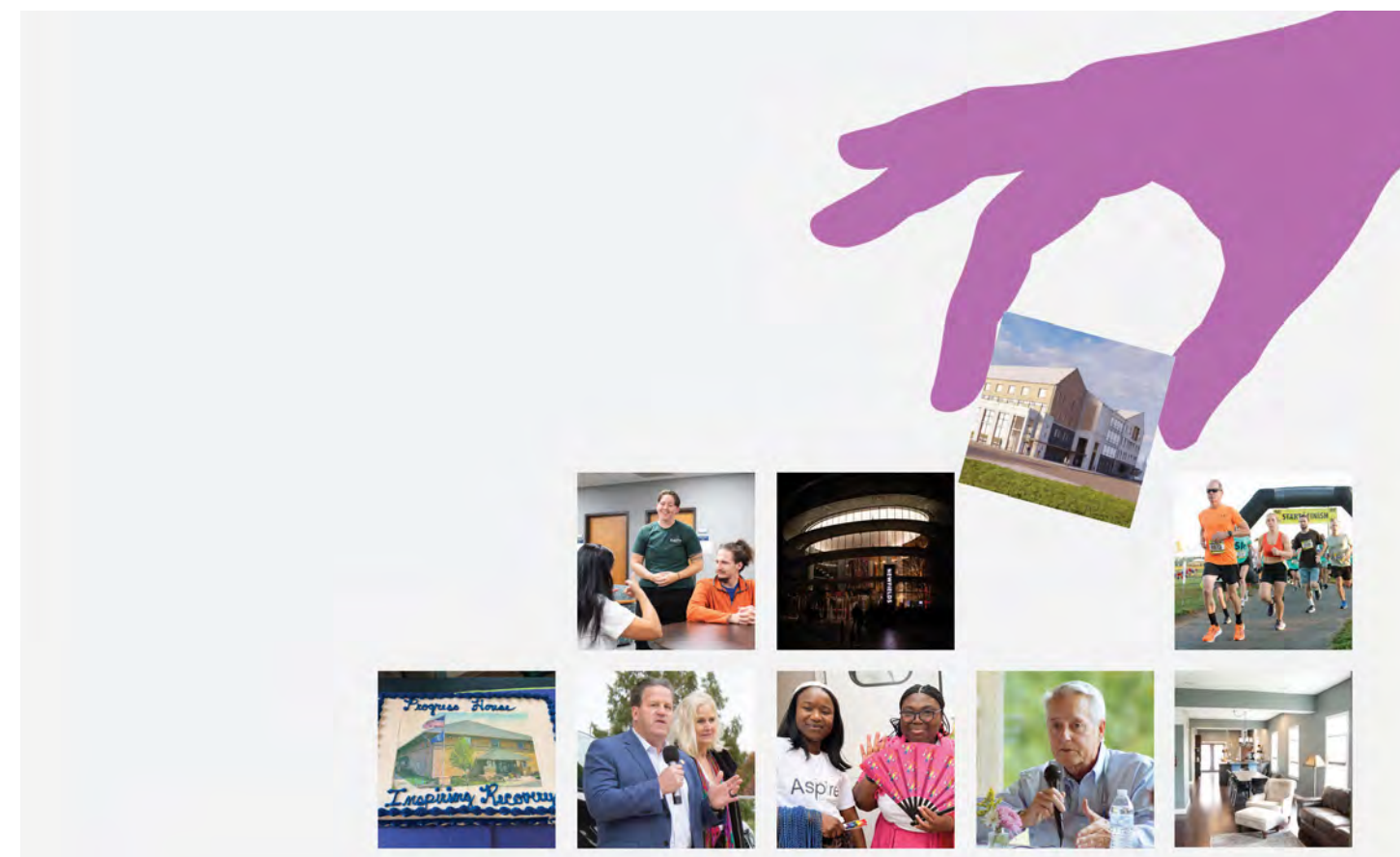


Annual Report: Fulfilling Promises

The 2024-25 fiscal year was one of promises made, and fulfilled. As we have striven to be more connected with our stakeholders about ways in which Aspire can better serve those most in need, it has organically led to new opportunities and partnerships. We serve with compassion, humility and respect, knowing our work is only possible because of the shared commitment of so many others who care deeply about the health of our communities.

Aspire Indiana Health stands as part of a long tradition of caring, born from a promise to be present, to listen and to act when our communities call. The momentum of this past year carries forward, as we continue to turn compassion into concrete action.

Check out Aspire's 2025 Annual Report, "[Fulfilling Promises for our People, Patients and Partners.](#)"





Employee Spotlight: Stacie Crouch

DIRECTOR, PRACTICE OPERATIONS



"I was solely responsible for the operational oversight and successful management of several specialized clinical services," she says. And that experience has set her up for success with Aspire's continuous growth.

"The Hoak location has been instrumental in expanding access to mental health services, establishing a partnership with LabCorp for the staffing of our lab at the Hoak office location, and successfully launching a new Aspire pharmacy to serve its patients," Stacie says. Understanding the importance of a strong team, Crouch has the utmost respect for her colleagues and the work they put into their respective roles each day.

"What I look forward to most about my role is collaborating with an exceptional team across both of my office locations," she says.

"We work together to drive positive patient experiences, foster a strong, mission-driven culture, and contribute to community health within an integrated healthcare setting."

Stacie Crouch is Aspire's Director of Practice Operations for both the Hoak and Elwood Health Centers and has been with Aspire for the past 16 months. Previously with IU Health – and with more than 15 years in healthcare – Crouch has had a plethora of experience managing pivotal moments.

Crouch also has a deep understanding of the impact her role plays on her colleagues and the community.

"It is profoundly rewarding because of the direct, positive impact it has on our patients, as it allows me to actively work toward advancing health equity and addressing health disparities. As a key leader and strategist, this exceptional position allows me to directly influence the future of healthcare delivery within the safety net. Bringing innovative ideas drives continuous quality improvements, workflow optimization and the implementation of innovative care models. These efforts transform patient care and contribute to building healthier communities."

When she is not working, Stacie volunteers for the Board of Advisory for Healthcare Administration for Purdue University. She also enjoys spending time with her family and is looking forward to her son's wedding in April and her daughter's wedding this upcoming September.



KNOW YOUR NUMBERS!

High blood pressure often has no symptoms so, even if you feel fine, it's important to get checked regularly.

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by **Tiffany Whisner**, Marketing Content Manager



Social Media Hits

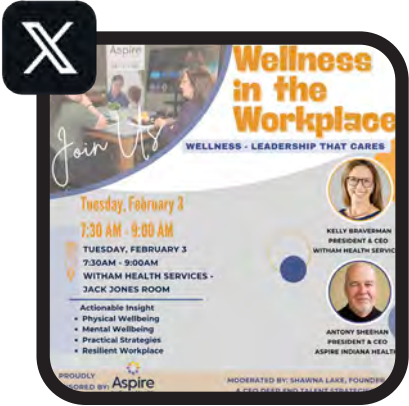
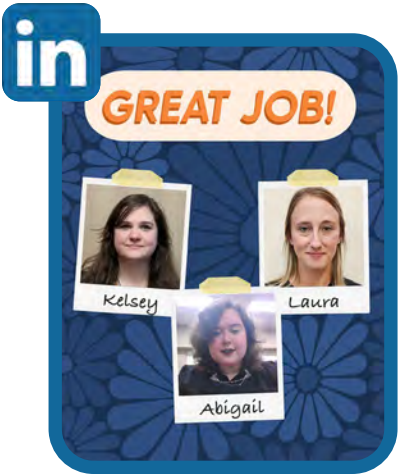
A LOOK BACK AT OUR TOP SOCIAL MEDIA HITS IN JANUARY!

SIGN UP FOR THE
RECOVERY RISING NEWSLETTER!



Help us celebrate the strengths and successes of people in recovery who are working every day to put their lives back together and overcome the specter of addiction.

CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP!





Aspire News

A VIRTUAL WALKTHROUGH OF RELY CENTER



What can you expect at Aspire's Rely Center? Psychiatric urgent care. Crisis stabilization. And support.

In this video, take a virtual walkthrough of this comfortable, caring space dedicated to people experiencing a mental health and/or substance use crisis. Learn more about the process from walking in the door and registration to meeting with our triage and treatment teams and then next steps and after care.

Are you interested in supporting Aspire's crisis services and crisis continuum?

- [Click here to make a financial gift](#). (In the dropdown box for "Donation Designation," choose "Mental Health & Crisis Services.")
- [Click here to donate to the crisis services Amazon wishlist](#).



HOW TO LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE:

- Eat more fruits, vegetables, & whole grains
 - Cut back on sodium (salt)
- Get at least 30 minutes of activity most days
 - Reduce stress through mindfulness, breathing, or counseling
 - Take medications as prescribed
 - Avoid tobacco and limit alcohol

NEED TO SCHEDULE?

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www.aspireindiana.org/



Great Job!

GREAT JOB RECOGNITION FOCUSES ON OUR PEOPLE, PATIENTS & PARTNERS.
TO SEND IN YOUR NOMINATION, CLICK THE BUTTON BELOW.



Anna Marhoefer, License Eligible Therapist-Y&F Home & Community, was recognized in court by a family recovery court

participant. She said therapy with Anna has been the best part of her treatment, and when the judge asked what she would rate it out of 10, she gave it a 10 without question. Anna is showing the good work Aspire can do and continuing to show the impact Aspire has on the people we serve.



Kenzie Moore, Patient Access Specialist, is ready and willing to help both patients and coworkers. She asks the right questions and

relays that to her peers. Her training is outstanding with great new ideas for managers to contemplate. Every new coworker can come to her with anything at any time without feeling like you're asking too much. Great face and value to this company.



Lori Nichols, Supervisor-Crisis Response, is my 1st shift supervisor. She recently took on the role to provide leadership for the 2nd shift

as well. Lori constantly reassures both teams that she's "here if we need her." Lori has also been working a lot of the on-call weekend shifts for our crisis team. Even though she is spread thin, she walks in the room with a huge smile every time!



Madison Teskey, Behavior Health Consultant-LCSW, was so helpful in providing support to a client in need as well as to a new staff member

trying to provide crisis support. Madison did a great job with her assessment and coordination with crisis and treatment team members. She stepped in without hesitation, and we are so appreciative of her!



Victoria Tingler, Master's Level Therapist-Deaf Services, has shown remarkable clinical care in her short time as a therapist here at

Aspire! She has navigated multiple client crises with professionalism, critical thinking and compassionate care – all while still learning the nuances of her role. She goes above and beyond for her clients, and we are so thankful for her!



Eric Charleston, Certified Recovery Specialist-Adult Home & Community, has a commitment and passion for our clients and

team that make a true impact on care. He ensures clients are safe and incorporates his role as a certified recovery specialist to guide clients to whole health. Eric has been truly a great addition to the home and community based ACT team in Carmel.



Amanda Williams, Care Coordinator/Life Skills Instructor-ACT, has a profound impact on our clients and has great knowledge of

the best ways to coordinate care. This is especially recognized when clients need higher levels of medical care. She has been able to advocate care so the clients are taken care of.



Ryen November Crabtree, Patient Access Specialist, has an incredibly warm heart – something that she is kind enough to share with others.

No matter who the patients are, she always takes the time to speak with them and make them feel comfortable. More importantly, she makes them feel heard. For the population that we work with, that is very important.



Jenna Flanery, License Eligible Therapist-Youth & Family Home & Community, provides school based therapy at Alexandria-Monroe

Community Schools and does a great job! The school administration and staff often praise Jenna in Aspire's bi-weekly staffings with them for her great work and collaboration with the school staff. We are lucky to have her at Aspire!



Shantel Bryant, Care Coordinator/Life Skills Instructor-Youth & Family HCBS, began as a school based CCLSI in July 2025, and she

has done amazing work so far! Shantel is often praised by school administrators and staff during Aspire's bi-weekly staffing at the schools she works in for the great work she does with her clients and for how well she collaborates with teachers and staff. Aspire is lucky to have her!



Jerry Sheward, MD, Associate Medical Director-Psychiatry, always makes himself available to the staff members in the Crisis

Contact Center. His focus is definitely on serving our clients to the highest standard; he is also so respectful and helpful with the Crisis staff. I wanted to recognize that he exemplifies Aspire's values.



Opeyemi Adegunsola, Care Coordinator/Life Skills Instructor-Home & Community, has made an impact on collaboration with clients

as well as support. Clients trust her, and she ensures they attend all needed appointments. She is also a good support to her team members when things need to be completed.