

# Championing Equitable Mental Health Access for OH Students



Department of  
Behavioral Health



Hazel Health

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# Hazel powers “virtual student clinics” staffed by pediatric clinicians, designed to plug into the K-12 ecosystem

We bring healthcare directly to students, in a model designed to work with a district and community’s existing ecosystem of staff and supports — so schools can focus on their first priority: education.



**Any student enrolled in a partner district can easily access Hazel’s licensed therapists and pediatric clinicians.**



To minimize disruption to student learning and family schedules, services can be accessed before, during, and after school — on campus or at home.





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Ohio continues to be a leader in developing innovative solutions to help people, especially our kids, overcome mental health challenges so they can reach their full potential. This partnership [enables] us to provide real-time mental health therapy to children at home or at school, helping them access these crucial supports when and where they're needed.

**Governor Mike DeWine**

# A Shared Vision to Address the Needs of OH Youth

In the wake of the pandemic, Ohio faced a youth mental health crisis, and access to care remained a barrier in many communities. In 2024, OH DBH awarded a \$1.6 million SOAR Network Innovation grant to Hazel Health to expand the ecosystem of mental health supports across the state, providing access to school-based teletherapy to up to 200,000 students.



**Appointments in 10 days or less**  
before, during and after school hours



**OH-licensed pediatric therapists**  
expert care tailored for children & adolescents



**Virtual visits joined from anywhere**  
school or home



**Referrals from parents and school staff**  
the adults closest to a child's day-to-day



**All coverage types accepted**  
\$0 out-of-pocket costs



**Clinically significant improvements**  
after an average of 6 therapy sessions



**40% of Hazel providers are bilingual**  
240+ languages supported



**Integrate with district MTSS**  
strengthening existing school teams



# Demonstrated Demand Across Ohio

Close collaboration between OH DBH and DEW aligned funding, policy and outreach, and enabled Hazel to scale teletherapy services quickly. Now entering Year 2 of implementation.

## Partnership Highlights

- **39 districts** representing 200,000 students in urban, suburban and rural schools statewide.
- Maintained **an average referral-to-care time <5 days**.
- Achieved **>90% family satisfaction rates** with Hazel's services.
- Enabled districts to address chronic absenteeism and behavioral challenges with timely, school-centered care.

## HEART Program Impact



**1,100 unique students referred** to mental health program



**2,400 total visits** completed



**83% of visits at-home,**  
**17% at school**



**81% school staff referral**  
**19% family referral**



**11.6 average age**

## Top Referral Reasons

- Anxiety
- Family Concerns
- Sad anxious withdrawn
- Struggling in School
- Challenging Behavior
- Sadness
- Anger
- Peer Relationships
- Social Skills

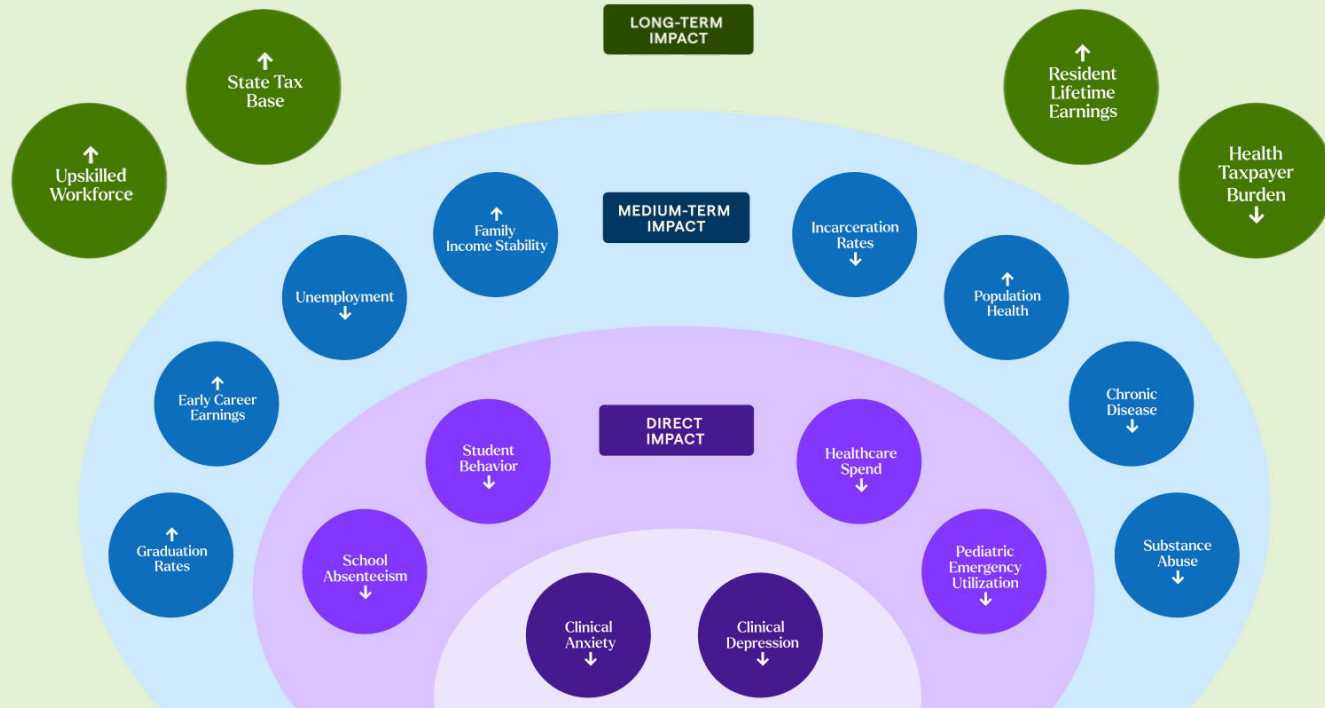
# Clinical Impact Story

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[The student] revealed a history of abuse, and an ongoing sense of emotional isolation due to limited social supports in his life. As the session progressed and the therapeutic space became more secure [...] he expressed relief in knowing that therapy could be a space where he could speak freely, without fear or judgment. It was in that moment – simple, yet profoundly vulnerable – that he realized someone was there to witness his story without trying to fix or rush it.

# A Happier, Healthier, and Wealthier Ohio

School-centered care is the most powerful and scalable tool we have to impact the clinical, educational, and economic health of our communities.





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Investing in the potential of our rising  
generation, together.