



## Asante Sets Out to Implement ASPIRE for Local Youth *After School Program Interventions and Resiliency Education®*

Oregon has the highest rate of mental illness of any state in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, one in five children ages 13-18 have, or will have, a serious mental illness at some point in their lives.<sup>2</sup> To combat these staggering statistics, Asante is setting the stage for **one of the most transformational mental health projects** in our region.

ASPIRE is a key facet of this initiative – and a nationally-adopted program – that is based on dialectical behavior therapy. DBT focuses on helping children improve their emotional reactions by teaching them new coping mechanisms. This intensive outpatient mental health program will extend arms beyond a hospital environment; **ASPIRE will impact at-risk youth and their families.**

Through the ASPIRE program, Asante clinicians will help equip at-risk youth with skills to tolerate and control their emotions in different situations they experience. **There is strong evidence** for the effectiveness of DBT for patients with mood and anxiety disorders, in addition to more serious conditions such as borderline personality disorder, post traumatic stress disorder and eating disorders.

Beyond a child, ASPIRE recognizes that family members greatly influence this healing process. Thus, parents and guardians also receive DBT **education and support**, including multi-family group therapy sessions.

### TARGET OUTREACH



LOCAL  
MIDDLE AND  
HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS



3-4 SESSIONS  
PER WEEK FOR  
8-10 WEEKS



*This program expands beyond an inpatient facility. It's an opportunity to provide hope and healing for families in our community.*

To implement ASPIRE in its first two years will require \$400,000. **With you**, we can address a critical issue in Southern Oregon and **elevate our community's overall wellbeing.**

Learn about the AsanteForward Behavioral Health Initiative at:  
[http://bit.ly/ASPIRE\\_ASANTE](http://bit.ly/ASPIRE_ASANTE).

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1 <https://www.nami.org/learn-more/mental-health-by-the-numbers>  
2 <https://www.nami.org/NAMI/media/NAMI-Media/Infographics/Children-MH-Facts-NAMI.pdf>



## ASPIRE Lifts Jade Out of Depression; Teaches Her Healthy Coping Habits

When Jade was in sixth grade, she started feeling depressed. As an adolescent, the thought of seeking help or opening up about a behavioral health issue created fear. While her depression symptoms subsided, by eighth grade they came to a head again, but this time more severe and she began using self-harm as a coping mechanism.

Her parents discovered she was physically harming herself, and it was then they knew that they needed to find a solution to address her mental health. “At that time, I was finally ready to say, ‘I need some help’,” says Jade.

As a family, they turned to their community hospital for a treatment option.

“At first I was nervous because they told me about a patient program through the hospital. I was thinking of the stereotypical behavioral health unit – staying in the hospital,” Jade says. “But it wasn’t that at all – it was an afterschool program.”

Jade began participating in ASPIRE – After School Program Interventions and Resiliency Education® – every day. She says **her whole perception of mental health treatment changed because of this program.**

“It helped me see that I wasn’t alone. All of the people in the program with me were trying to get help, too.”

In addition to receiving professional treatment and participating in a variety of group activities, ASPIRE participants learned specialized cognitive skills through dialectical behavior therapy. DBT helped Jade take a moment to reflect on her feelings when she felt depressed or the urge to harm herself.

“DBT reminded me to stop and ask myself, ‘What emotions am I feeling right now?’ ‘Why do I want to self-harm?’ ‘Is there something else I can do to cope?’.”

For Jade, DBT was all the difference in helping her push past urges, address her emotions and be open about how she was feeling.



The 8-week outpatient program also recognizes that the entire family plays a role in behavioral health and includes parents as part of the education. Jade’s parents, Laurel and Mick, attended group sessions with her, every week. “ASPIRE helped us [parents] understand how our own responses were helping or hurting the overall situation.”

Parents have the opportunity to converse with other families; share their stories and challenges. “We were taught the same skills Jade was learning so that everyone went home speaking the “same language”,” says Laurel.

When Jade graduated from ASPIRE, she started to see hope. She gained confidence. She understood herself better.

***“Without that program [ASPIRE], I don’t know where she would be. I think that she could have done irreparable harm to herself.”***

Today, 19-year-old Jade is a thriving college student who juggles school, work and figuring out what her future career looks like.

**Like Jade’s experience, ASPIRE has the potential to positively change the lives of many youth in our community.**