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**For Immediate Release**

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### **Butler County Family YMCA Introduces New Group Youth Mentoring Program**

The Butler County Family YMCA is excited to introduce a new group youth mentoring program called **Reach and Rise®**.

**Reach and Rise®** was created as a pilot program by the YMCA of San Francisco in 1992. The program grew to 5 regions in the United States in 2009 and in 2012; the YMCA of the USA expanded it to 38 states.

This new group model will help empower youth ages 8 – 15 in overcoming challenges that are prevalent in today's society such as low self-esteem, poor academic progress, peer difficulties and/or poor decision making skills.

**Reach and Rise®** will run in conjunction with the YMCA's one-to-one youth mentoring program, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Butler County (BBBS). The first group to benefit from this new program will be those currently unmatched in the one-to-one program.

The program will be led by Rachel Pazzaglia, MEd.

Rachel earned her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and her Master's Degree in School Counseling from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Her experience includes work as a School Counselor for the Indiana Area School District, and Lead Therapist for The Program for Offenders, followed by a promotion to Clinical Supervisor for The Program for Offenders.

"I am very excited to lead this new group youth mentoring program," says Rachel Pazzaglia, **Reach and Rise®** Program Director. "This program will add a new option for young people to interact with their peers and help to improve decision making skills, school performance and relations for participants."

**MORE**

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The program is evidence-based, which means it has proven outcomes. These include:

- Improved school functioning
- Improved ability to relate to guardians, peers and authority
- Increased productive use of afterschool hours
- Involvement in two or more community activities yearly

Applications are being accepted for Adult Volunteer Mentors for the program. Mentors should be at least 21 years old with a desire to work with youth ages 8-15 years old in a group setting for two hours each week.

Mentors must obtain background clearances and attend 15 hours of mentor training.

For more information on **Reach and Rise**<sup>®</sup>, to refer a child to the program or to become a trained volunteer mentor, contact Program Director Rachel Pazzaglia MEd, at 724-287-4733, ext. 136 or by email at [rpazzaglia@bcfymca.org](mailto:rpazzaglia@bcfymca.org).

**Reach and Rise**<sup>®</sup> is a free program that is financially supported by the YMCA's Annual Support Campaign.

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