



NEWS RELEASE

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**Nationwide Children's Hospital Celebrates Opening of
the Big Lots Behavioral Health Pavilion**

America's largest behavioral health facility on a pediatric medical campus made possible by \$50 million gift from Big Lots, Big Lots Foundation



The Big Lots Behavioral Health Pavilion opens to the public on March 10 at 7 a.m.

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) – Nationwide Children's Hospital held a Community Dedication Celebration of the [Big Lots Behavioral Health Pavilion](#) on February 28. At nine stories tall, it is America's largest and most comprehensive center dedicated exclusively to child and adolescent behavioral and mental health on a pediatric medical campus in the United States. The Pavilion officially opens March 10 at 7 a.m.

“Nationwide Children's Hospital is committed to addressing our nation's mental health crisis through innovative programs, behavioral health research and the Big Lots Behavioral Health Pavilion,” said Alex Fischer, Board Chair of Nationwide Children's. “We are grateful to have a partner who had the innovation and the foresight to take a stand to advance the treatment, research and education associated with pediatric behavioral health. It was a gamechanger in 2016, when the

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Big Lots Foundation and Big Lots announced their transformational partnership and commitment to help us open the largest behavioral health facility on a pediatric medical campus.”

The Big Lots Behavioral Health Pavilion and Big Lots Behavioral Health services are named in honor of a transformational \$50 million gift from Big Lots and Big Lots Foundation – one of the largest corporate donations ever specifically devoted to a pediatric and adolescent behavioral health program. The Pavilion stands as an extension of Big Lots’ commitment to the lifesaving treatment and discovery happening at Nationwide Children’s.

“We’re a home store, and families build their lives around the home. That’s why Big Lots and Big Lots Foundation are extremely proud to support the care that will be provided to patients in central Ohio, and the research and learnings that will help children and youth across the country underscored by today’s dedication of the Big Lots Behavioral Health Pavilion. This issue is deeply important to our associates and customers,” said Bruce Thorn, Big Lots President and Chief Executive Officer. “Stacking hands to break the stigma of childhood mental health has never been more important, and our commitment to doing so is highlighted by the Pavilion’s dedication and opening.”

The 386,000 sq. ft., \$159-million Pavilion will help to meet a growing need, as 11% of children ages eight to 11 and 22% of teens ages 13 to 18 have a mental illness. It uniquely integrates acute behavioral health services and prioritizes patient safety in a colorful, friendly environment that is a sibling to the main hospital tower.

The project, [which has been four years in the making](#), was designed by NBBJ and architecture+. Features include:

- A **Psychiatric Crisis Department** with nine assessment rooms that are more conducive to working with pediatric patients and families in crisis than a typical emergency room. A 10-bed **Extended Observation Suite** allows for appropriate time to determine if a patient should be admitted to a higher level of care.
- A **Youth Crisis Stabilization Unit** with 12 beds designed for intensive mental health treatment for youth. [A 2019 study has shown this care model has significantly helped decreased suicidality.](#)
- Influenced by trauma-informed practices, **inpatient psychiatry units** are maximized for safety and comfort, from furniture and lighting, to considerations made for bathrooms and doorways. The Pavilion will ramp up to house 48 patient beds and will have a unique unit for patients with intellectual and developmental diagnoses.
- A **gym, fitness room and play deck** allow patients to run and play.
- **Outdoor fifth story courtyards** provide respite to families and to staff. The Ronald McDonald Family Room will open in summer 2020, operated by Ronald McDonald House Charities.
- **Common gathering places** on each unit allow patients and families to interact during the day in group therapy, and provide places for connection throughout the treatment journey.
- **Intensive outpatient programs**, including the Mood and Anxiety Program, Family-Based

Intensive Treatment, outpatient general psychiatry, and the Critical Assessment and Treatment Clinic.

- **The Center for Suicide Prevention and Research**, which is continuing its work to address the growing problem of suicide among youth.
- **Comfort rooms** throughout the Pavilion offer patients access to soothing spaces that give staff the ability to control lighting and provide music, complete with softer furniture. A sanctuary and quiet alcoves with views of nature and natural light will also provide places of respite. More than 10,000 people nationally made contributions to Project SNAP to create inspirational artwork for the pavilion.

“Behavioral health care is administered across a continuum, from prevention to crisis and services in-between such as inpatient, outpatient, community-based, school-based and collaboration with primary care. Nationwide Children’s and our community partners are working together to address many of these areas, but the Big Lots Behavioral Health Pavilion will allow Nationwide Children’s to significantly enhance our services for those who need acute care,” said [David Axelson, MD](#), Chief of [Psychiatry](#) and medical director of [Big Lots Behavioral Health](#) Services at Nationwide Children’s. “Our ability to share our care model with other providers across the country will establish Nationwide Children’s at the forefront of solving our mental health crisis.”

“Children’s mental health is just as important as their physical health, and the Big Lots Behavioral Health Pavilion emphasizes the hospital’s commitment to that balance as part of caring for the whole child,” said [Tim Robinson, CEO](#) of Nationwide Children’s. “This unique facility will help youth in crisis, but our care extends beyond its walls. We are also expanding the behavioral health programs and services we offer in collaboration with schools, primary care and community partners, and through the launch of the [On Our Sleeves™ movement](#), we are focused on education and advocacy to transform children’s mental health.”

If someone you care about is in an emergency, life-threatening situation, call 9-1-1 or go to an emergency department. For crisis situations that are not life-threatening, please call your county’s psychiatric crisis line number. In Franklin County, call (614) 722-1800 for youth and adolescents 17 and under. Ages 18 and older should call (614) 276-2273. If someone you care about is having thoughts of suicide or needs to talk, encourage them to contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. If you prefer to text, you can text "START" to 741-741 where a live, trained specialist will respond back to you.