

# PROJECT RISE

## LEADER PROFILE: MARY JO MEYERS

**“We know our future is dependent on the investment in our youth. We have much more knowledge than ever before on what works and doesn’t work in helping youth grow and make good choices. We plan on putting that knowledge to work, investing in our youth to help rewrite their futures and ultimately build safe and healthy communities.” - Mary Jo Meyers**

Mary Jo Meyers, M.S. is the Director of the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). DHHS is a \$330 million organization employing 850 public servants with a mission to empower safe, healthy, meaningful lives for everyone in Milwaukee County. DHHS operates business lines in mental health, housing, energy assistance, disabilities and youth justice services. Meyers was confirmed as Director of DHHS in May 2018.

Mary Jo Meyers has worked in the field of children’s mental health and system reform for programs affecting children and their families for more than 34 years. Most recently, Meyers served as Director of Children’s Mental Health Services and Wraparound Milwaukee for the Milwaukee County DHHS Behavioral Health Division.

Wraparound Milwaukee is a community-based, behavioral-health managed-care entity that utilizes a strengths-based, individualized-needs approach. Over the years, Wraparound Milwaukee has been cited by the U.S. Surgeon General as a best practice model for youth involved in the youth justice system. In 2009, Harvard University selected Wraparound Milwaukee as a winner of the Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform.

Meyers was raised in a blue-collar family, and was first drawn to her work by observing the kindness of an Occupational Therapist working with her niece with complex needs. She is a staunch advocate for youth and family rights and has trained and consulted on the Wraparound Practice Model, Trauma-Informed Care and Community System-of-Care Development for more than 25 years to states and communities.

Meyers is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Allied Health and holds a Master’s of Science in Community Mental Health from Trinity College of Vermont.

