



Ogle County Mental Health Board

AGENCY REPORTS FOR FOURTH QUARTER 2020



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) recently expanded its prevention programs for youth violence and substance use to Carroll County with the addition of two new prevention specialists. Funding for the programs, Project LEAD (Leaders Encouraging Abstinence from Drugs) and Youth WORKS (Wellness, Opportunities, and Resources for Key Services), comes through grants from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS). The programs partner with youth serving organizations and area schools to serve middle school youth and high school students.

Legend Nelson is the designated prevention specialist for Youth WORKS of Carroll County. Nelson and the Youth WORKS program work with at-risk youth to reduce adolescent dating violence, abuse, crime, and bullying. "The goals of Youth WORKS are accomplished by teaching social



Legend Nelson,
Prevention Specialist
for Youth WORKS

potential," Nelson said. In her role, Nelson provides local students with educational presentations, group discussions, and lessons from the Too Good for Violence curriculum through partnerships with area schools.

Lindsey Hayes is the Prevention Specialist for Project LEAD of Carroll County. Hayes provides youth with lessons from Too Good for Drugs, an evidence-based curriculum that focuses on social and

and emotional skills to improve decision making and help youth reach their full

emotional behavior, and the prevention of substance use. "Educational materials are supplemented with fun, interactive activities that build the self-confidence that young people need to make healthy choices and achieve lifelong success," said Hayes.

Project LEAD and Youth WORKS are currently developing plans for how the four county region can be best served with prevention services. Due to COVID-19 safety guidelines, in-person access to youth has been limited. Youth WORKS and Project LEAD

continue to conduct those activities that are in compliance with local and state guidelines, while also planning for the future when in-person activities can resume.



Lindsey Hayes,
Prevention Specialist
for Project LEAD



Serenity Hospice staff are currently in the process of being vaccinated by the health department which gives us all a renewed sense of hope!

Another new program for 2021 is being offered to employers and will address how to help a co-worker who is grieving. The Shed is slowly getting back to normal as much as possible and they are looking forward to when Illinois moves to Tier II so that they can offer classes once again.

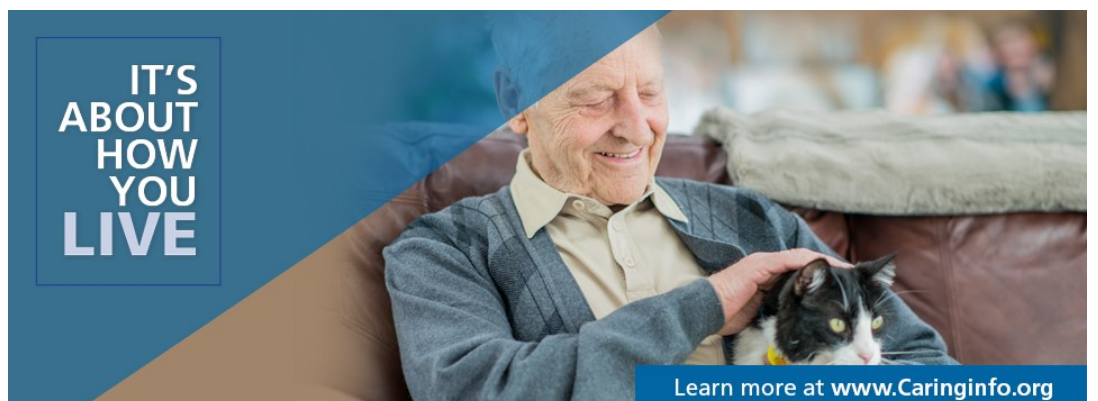
Serenity has hired a new social worker to help with the high demand for social services that we have experienced through the pandemic.

Serenity offers bereavement resources to anyone in need -- free of charge and without any type of reimbursement -- so fundraising is important.

Neighbors Antiques in Conover Square is closing and they are generously hosting a huge sale in which all items must go and all proceeds will benefit Serenity Hospice. (January 21-24 & January 28-30).

We have a new bereavement group starting in February for young widows (age 55 and under). Serenity is also now offering one-on-one sessions for the family and friends of someone who is grieving and we plan to start groups as well.

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LSSI:

Contact: Jeremy Hooker 815.284.7796

Serenity Hospice & Home:

Contact: Lynn Knodle 815.732.2499

Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling:

Contact: Erica Engler 815.636.9811 (24-hrs)

Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling (RSAC) has continued to provide all of our key services to survivors of sexual assault and abuse, their significant others, and the community. RSAC key services include 24-hour crisis intervention in the hospital and on the phone, legal advocacy, counseling, prevention education and professional training in Ogle, Boone, and Winnebago counties.

Due to Covid-19, we continue to offer counseling services in-person, by secure video, and by phone. Prevention programs for the schools continue through a combination of in-person and live streaming options. We want our clients and our community to feel comfortable and stay safe in accessing our services so we are grateful we can offer a variety of platforms. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you are in need of any of our services!

If you need services or would like more information, you can find us at rockfordsexualassaultcounseling.org, on Facebook, or call us at (815) 732-0000 or our 24-hour crisis line (815) 636-9811.

Easterseals - Family Support Services

Contact: Patti Mook/Kathleen Kurtz 815.965.5069

On October 24th, we collaborated with Florissa and the Dixon Park District to host a family day at Lowell State Park. Families decorated pumpkins, made friendship bracelets, participated in a “spooky” Storybook trail and had s’mores. We limited the participation numbers by offering time slots and adhered to all COVID safety protocols. The families couldn’t thank us enough for having this event. One parent said they had felt so isolated, that coming out with her family to an event was just what they needed.

November 27th and 28th, we teamed up with Florissa and the Oregon Public Library for a Sensory Friendly Santa event. Each child was given a goodie bag of treats and a craft to take home and make. Santa spent extra time with each child to make sure they had a memorable experience.

Easterseals received a food donation of ham, potatoes, onions, and fruit for families. We were able to distribute to several families in Ogle County during the month of December.

Sinnissippi Centers:

Contact: Patrick Phelan 815.284.6611

Once again this quarter our major focus has been continuing to provide services via technology (*as we saw spikes in COVID-19 cases*) to keep our clients and employees safe. The vast majority of appointments continue to be through tele-health with limited in-person appointments as needed.

One area that continued to receive extra attention was keeping staff and residents safe in our apartment sites and recovery homes and we are glad to say have achieved that goal. Sinnissippi’s Intact program expanded to Ogle County this quarter with staff based at our Ogle County offices. Intact connects families to services to provide support to mitigate stressful situations, allowing them to provide care and support for their children and to maintain safety in their lives.

Sinnissippi started a parenting group for COVID-19 support to help address “mom stress”. This was a success so we will open it again in January.

Sinnissippi also conducted our annual Christmas Food Basket project providing a Christmas meal box to client families following COVID-19 safe practices. This year a total of 53 families (around 202 individuals) requested a basket. Out of that total 14 boxes (around 36 individuals) went to Ogle County client families.

Finally, Sinnissippi appeared on Ogle County radio to update residents on our COVID-19 operations, but also talked about National Medicine Abuse Awareness month in October and in December, National Impaired Driving Prevention Awareness Month. During the pandemic substance use has spiked across all categories and travel, while reduced, is still happening during the holidays.

Village of Progress:

Contact: Brion Brooks 815.732.2126

As winter arrives, the Village is working to maintain our current level of service. The workshop, that fulfills our assembly contracts, is operating at about 70% of its pre-covid level. We continue to staff and provide services to 21 folks that reside in the two residential homes in our area. Zoom meetings are held for those that cannot attend the Village in person. The Village Bakery uses its drive thru window to offer a wide variety of fresh baked good, delicious coffees, and mouthwatering soups, sandwiches & salads to our faithful customers. The Village Cleaning Service is proud to report the ability to maintain services to all cleaning contracts. This has been a difficult time for the Village – as it’s been a difficult time for all – but we are continuing to move forward....as a community.

HOPE of Ogle County:

Contact: Ruth Carter 815.562.4323

HOPE of Ogle County created two virtual support groups this past quarter. A Tuesday evening support group for adults and a Monday support group for teen clients. Services continue to be offered in person with COVID provisions and through secure, video remote counseling and telephone counseling. HOPE of Ogle County provided services to 458 survivors of domestic abuse in calendar year 2020, supporting survivors with 6,583 hours of direct services. Throughout the pandemic HOPE continued to provide on-site shelter and limited hotel shelter stay for survivors and their children. HOPE served 74 survivors and their children with shelter services in calendar year 2020.

The Annual From the Heart Gala moved over to a live event and raffle and an on-line auction through Bearrows Real Estate and Auction. The Facebook Live Event is on Sat., February 6th 2021 and the live auction begins soon in January. See the From the Heart Facebook Page for tickets for the Raffles and the live event.

<https://www.facebook.com/ANNUALGIVINGGALA> and the Bearrows bidding site for to bid on the online auction. <https://bearrows.hibid.com/> Please spread the word.