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Our April Newsletter Has Arrived!

PROJECTSUN

Helping children flourish



WORD OF THE MONTH

Courage

Strength in the face of pain or grief.



Alcohol Awareness Month

Alcohol Awareness Month revolves around increasing outreach and education regarding the dangers of alcoholism and issues related to alcohol. The theme for this year's Alcohol Awareness Month is "Changing Attitudes: It's not a 'rite of passage,'"

with the target audience of youth and their parents.

Each year, an estimated 88,000 people die from alcohol-related causes annually and approximately 5,000 youth under the age of 21 die each year because of drinking.

Parents should be aware of the signs and symptoms of a possible alcohol dependency from their child.

- Decreased personal hygiene
- Marked behavioral changes
- Sudden, inexplicable need for money
- Unusually passive or argumentative behaviors
- The smell of alcohol on breath or clothes
- Glazed, bloodshot eyes
- Appearing intoxicated
- Coordination problems

To learn more visit the resources below:

[Causes, Symptoms, and Effects of Alcohol Abuse](#)

[April is National Alcohol Awareness Month](#)



Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM)

April is also Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Sexual violence happens in various forms throughout all communities and affects people of all ages and genders. Sexual violence is any type of unwanted sexual contact.

Forms of sexual violence include:

- Rape or sexual assault
- Child sexual assault and incest
- Sexual assault by a person's spouse or partner
- Unwanted sexual contact/touching
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Exposing one's genitals or naked body to other(s) without consent
- Nonconsensual image sharing

Sexual violence can affect parents, friends, partners, children, spouses, and/or coworkers of the survivor. As they try to make sense of what happened, loved ones may experience similar reactions and feelings to those of the survivor such as fear, guilt, self-blame, and anger.

Schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, campuses, and cultural or religious communities may feel fear, anger, or disbelief when sexual assault happens in their community. Violence of all kinds destroys a sense of safety and trust.

If you are wondering what you can do to help, consider volunteering, donating or attending events hosted by the Clove Alliance here in Kankakee County.

Visit www.clovealliance.org

Additional Resources:

[About Sexual Assault \(NSVRC- National Sexual Violence Resource Center\)](#)

[RAINN \(Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network\)](#)

Establishing a Kankakee NAMI Chapter

Project SUN is partnering with community members to help establish a Kankakee County Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). We invite you to participate in a NAMI Support Group session and take our survey to let us know if you would like to have similar support groups available in-person and/or online in Kankakee County. If you would like more information reach out to Rhonda Showers, rhonda.showers@gmail.com.

Free Mental Health Support Groups



NAMI exists to support individuals with mental illness, and their families, through advocacy, education, and outreach.

NAMI Connection Peer Recovery Support Groups

NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is a free, peer-led support group for any adult (18+) who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition. A structured model is followed to ensure you and others in the group have an opportunity to be heard. The group is led by people with mental health conditions and no specific medical therapy or treatment is endorsed.

NAMI Family Support Groups

NAMI Family Support Groups are for those who love and care for someone living with mental illness. These free groups provide a safe forum for family members who have a loved one with mental illness to express your feelings, share your challenges with people who encourage you, give you ideas, and share strategies to support you.

Participate in-person or online from your computer or phone using Zoom. For more information about meeting days and times as well as groups for parents and the LGBTQ+ community visit the NAMI Illinois and Will-Grundy sites below. Pre-registration is required.

Use the QR Codes or links below to register for a NAMI Support Group!

[NAMI Will-Grundy \(namiwillgrundy.org\)](http://namiwillgrundy.org)

[NAMI Illinois \(namiillinois.org\)](http://namiillinois.org)



Attend a NAMI Support Group session and take our survey to help establish a Kankakee County NAMI Chapter.



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 projectsun@cfkkrv.org  (815) 304-5933



Use the QR Code (left) or link (below) to complete a brief, 2-minute survey
surveymonkey.com/r/VMLZRYG

Interested in helping bring NAMI Support Groups to Kankakee County?

Contact Rhonda Showers at rhonda.showers@gmail.com to connect with local efforts to host NAMI groups in our community.



Kankakee Forgives

"A city that forgives is a city that can heal." - Aaron Clark

Kankakee Forgives is a campaign aimed at increasing awareness about the impact forgiveness can have on communities as a whole.

The campaign began with a simple teaching on forgiveness at City Life Center. It opened a massive doorway into the hearts and minds of youth who recognized the potential to break the cycle of anger and violence in their lives and in their community.

The impact of forgiveness so far?

- Increased program attendance
- Significant progress
- Decreased incidents of fighting
- Improved morale
- Higher retention rate
- Improved parental relationships
- Reduced stress for the CLC team

The Forgiveness Campaign is passionate about engaging the community's youth and adults in practicing forgiveness. Look for upcoming events and tailored interventions at the start of the school year to encourage less anger and more forgiveness!

The next phase of the campaign will be to hold group therapy sessions. Project SUN commits to financially support this phase by paying licensed counselors and therapists for youth group therapy.

Resources:

[PROGRESS: Aaron Clark is facing violence head-on](#)



CYNDI'S CAREGIVER **CRAFT CLASSES**



Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers are invited to join us on April 25, 2022, from 12:30 - 2:30 PM or from 6:00 - 8:00 PM for a fun activity to help with stress reduction for caregivers of Kankakee County children receiving mental, emotional, or behavioral health services. This is an opportunity to meet other caregivers and provide support to each other. Classes are led by Cyndi Brown, a grandparent raising her grandchild and caring for her elderly father.

This April we will be making dream catchers! Cyndi has picked out the brightest and prettiest pieces of yarn for this activity. Come spend a few hours out with the Project SUN Team. This is the perfect

opportunity to connect with other caregivers and learn more about Project SUN's initiatives. We look forward to seeing you at one of these sessions!

Register here for the class on March 26 - 12:30 - 2:30 PM

Register here for the class on March 26 - 6:00 - 8:00 PM

System of Care Community Navigator On-Demand Training Coming Soon!



Big changes have been made to this training to make it more accessible to you. This program helps participants learn more about Project SUN and how to assist families in identifying community resources to meet their needs. Join our team of locally certified System of Care Community Navigators by completing this training.

Watch for details about the new on-demand online SoC Community Navigator training.

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a SoC Community Navigator, email rhonda@cfkrv.org.

Project SUN monthly newsletters are intended to inform family members and those working with families. You are all valuable members of the **Strong and Unified Network (SUN)** being built to support the children's mental, emotional, and behavioral health system of care in Kankakee County. You are encouraged to invite others to become involved in these efforts to help children flourish. Please share this newsletter with those who may find this information useful. Suggest they visit projectsunkankakee.org and sign-up to receive their own copy and become a member of the Network.



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