

[View this email in your browser](#)

Our March Newsletter Has Arrived!

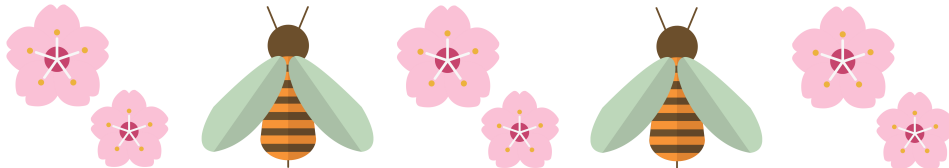


WORD OF THE MONTH



*Perseverance*

Persistence in doing something despite difficulty  
or delay in achieving success.



## My Piece in the Puzzle 2022

Addressing equity is paramount to establishing a children's mental health system of care that meets the needs of all youth and their families. This past October and November, Project SUN held its first round of My Piece in the Puzzle, a program that

consisted of four weekly 2-hour sessions to prepare individuals who were willing to make a long-term commitment to navigating difficult conversations aimed at racial healing.

Project SUN is launching the second round of the ***My Piece in the Puzzle*** program to create stepping-stones towards racial healing and equity in our community. Sessions will take place on Tuesday evenings between March 22 - April 12, 2022.

To register for My Piece in the Puzzle follow this [link](#).

## Interested in promoting racial healing? Learn more about **My Piece in the Puzzle**



My Piece in the Puzzle is a program that consists of four weekly two-hour sessions to prepare individuals who are willing to make a long-term commitment to navigating difficult conversations aimed at racial healing.

This program is intended to create shared language, knowledge, and experiences related to systemic racism through the lens of three affinity groups: Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and White/Caucasian.

Participants will have the opportunity to build a shared understanding of what the terms racial construction, racial identity development, diversity, equity, and inclusion mean. There will also be an opportunity for individuals of similar racial/ethnic backgrounds to share their lived experiences in a safe environment.

This program is intended to be a stepping-stone to prepare participants to engage in dialogue about race in Kankakee County, as well as to become Racial Healing Ambassadors helping to lead this initiative.

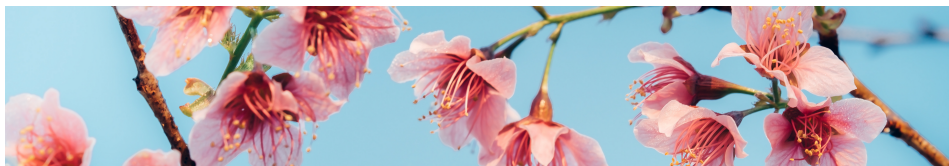
### **For more information:**

Email [projectsun@cfkrv.org](mailto:projectsun@cfkrv.org)

Call 815-304-5933



Learn more by  
scanning the  
QR Code.



## **Self-Harm Awareness Month**

Self-harm awareness month is recognized during March. This month it is important to create awareness about the symptoms of self-harm and ways to cope with it.

Self-harm affects individuals of all races, ages, and genders. It is the act of hurting oneself on purpose. The act or thought of hurting oneself is a sign of emotional distress. Self-harm itself is not classified as a mental illness instead it is considered a behavior used to cope by individuals who are not sure how to deal with their emotions. Symptoms of Self-Harm to be aware of are:

- Fresh cuts, burns, scratches, or bruises
- Wearing long sleeves or long pants, even in hot weather
- Difficulties with interpersonal relationships
- Behavioral and emotional instability, impulsiveness, or unpredictability
- Saying that they feel helpless, hopeless, or worthless

Parents who are concerned about their children can start by asking them how they are doing and be prepared to listen. Let them know you will be there to help, but do not make them promise you to stop. Instead, let them know that self-harm is not uncommon. Offer to find a doctor or therapist that can help.

There are treatments to help individuals feel in control of their emotions again. Reach out to a medical professional who is familiar with the subject. A diagnostic interview will take place in which your child will be asked questions about their health, life history, and any injurious behaviors in the past and present. Depending on the underlying illness, a doctor may prescribe medication and/or recommend therapy.

There is a Crisis Text Line that can help individuals who deal with self-harm. **Text a Crisis Counselor at 741741**

Learn more about Self-Harm Awareness Month using the following links:

[How to Deal with Self-Harm](#)

[NAMI: Self-Harm](#)

---

## 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](mailto: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.



**PROJECT SUN**  
Helping children flourish

✉ [projectsun@cfkvr.org](mailto:projectsun@cfkvr.org) ☎ (815) 304-5933



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

Interested in helping bring NAMI Support Groups to Kankakee County?

Contact Rhonda Showers at [rhonda.showers@gmail.com](mailto:rhonda.showers@gmail.com) to connect with local efforts to host NAMI groups in our community.



## CYNDI'S CAREGIVER CRAFT CLASSES



Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers are invited to join us on March 28, 2022, from 9:00 - 11:00 AM 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.

Prepare for your Easter egg hunt with us! We will be coloring Easter eggs that can be used year after year. Join us to help clear your mind, and enjoy a few fun hours out connecting with the Project SUN team and other caregivers.

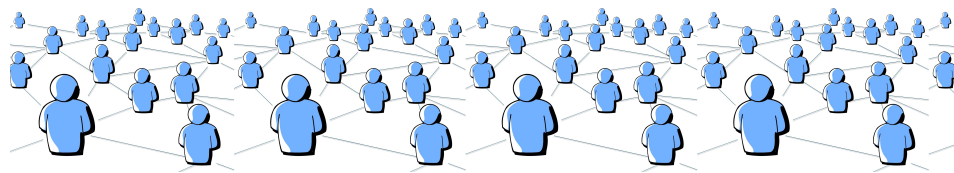
#### Special Free Event

Prior registration is required by 8:00 PM on Sunday, March 27, 2022.

If assistance is needed with childcare expenses, please note that on the registration form.

**Register here for the class on March 28 - 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

**Register here for the class on March 28 - 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM**



## 2022 Partnership Commitment Forms Due

Project SUN has several important activities coming up this year. We want to make sure you are included in the planning. The best way to stay informed and to help shape the Kankakee County Children's Mental Health Network is to sign an annual Partnership Agreement to serve as a member of the Community Planning Team.

Organizations and individuals interested in applying for System of Care Implementation Grants or Purchase of Service Contracts must have a signed Partnership Agreement with Project SUN for the year beginning January 1 and ending December 31, 2022. Community Planning Team members are expected to meet the requirements and expectations listed in the agreement.

To obtain an individual or an organizational form click [here](#). Signed forms are to be returned to [projectsun@cfkrv.org](mailto:projectsun@cfkrv.org) or mailed to 701 S. Harrison Avenue, Kankakee, IL 60901.



**Project SUN Sets**

# System of Care Funding Priorities for 2022

In April, Project SUN will be releasing a request for proposals from its partnering organizations and individuals interested in securing 2022 System of Care Implementation Grants and Purchase of Service Contracts. Awards will cover June 1 – December 31, 2022, and will be required to address one or more of the following priorities.

- Resuming in-person caregiver engagement activities to cultivate new relationships and grow the number of parents and other caregivers participating in Project SUN leadership activities.
- Continuing efforts to address systemic racism and promote equity in access to mental/behavioral health services for all children.
- Increasing mental health service provider participation in Project SUN leadership activities through efforts to identify barriers to their participation and ways to be more effective in meeting their needs.
- Supporting schools as mental health service hubs through opportunities for all classification of staff (i.e., teachers, school nurses, office secretaries, classroom aides, and food service personnel, in addition to social workers, counselors, and psychologists) to lead support groups and other types of group interventions for students and families with low-level behavioral health needs, as well as increase partnerships with mental health service providers.
- Expanding the children's mental health workforce through training for frontline personnel (i.e., pediatric and family practice staff, school personnel, law enforcement personnel, and faith leaders) to recognize early signs of mental/behavioral health concerns and where to refer families to connect with local resources, as well as to increase their capacity to provide group interventions.
- Providing law enforcement with alternatives to incarceration through funding for the increased use of crisis response teams and other partnerships with mental health service providers.
- Engaging caregivers and community members in efforts to support passing a referendum to establish a Mental Health Board (708 Board) to help fund local mental health services.

---

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



## COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR TRAININGS



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 [louisiana@cfkrv.org](mailto:louisiana@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](http://projectsunkankakee.org) and sign-up to receive their own copy and become a member of the Network.



---

*Copyright © 2022 Project SUN, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)  
Project SUN · 701 S Harrison Ave · Kankakee, IL 60901-4255 · USA

