



CARING FOR KIDS – October 2021

Greetings!

The CCRB is dedicated to increasing awareness and access to mental health services for children in St. Charles County. Keep reading to learn what's happening in our county.

To learn more about CCRB-funded services, follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), or visit our [website](#).



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Monday, October 25, 2021
8:00 a.m.

MEETING LOCATION:
CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER
989 HERITAGE PWY
WENTZVILLE MO 63385

ALL CCRB MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

- Letter from the Executive Director
- Early Substance Use Prevention
- 'Ending the Silence' for Youth
- Community Services Summit
- CCRB Welcomes New Board Member, Matt Pirtle
- F.A.C.T. Virtual Classes
- October Prevention & Awareness
- Child Advocacy Center Opens New Therapy Offices
- News from the Field

Learn more about our monthly Board meetings here.

Bruce's Thoughts: A Letter from the Executive Director

At the start of 2021, there was renewed hope that we would see the end of this pandemic with the availability of life-saving vaccines and a return to normalcy. In June, we thought we were over the hump, and our country began to reopen. However, the debate over vaccine and mask efficacy, inflation, and product shortages have increased the stress levels of families once again. It appears to be leaking out everywhere, at public meetings, on television, social media, and unfortunately, at home.

October promotes awareness about Domestic Violence and Bullying Prevention efforts. It seems appropriate that given these recognitions, that we take a moment to remind ourselves that while our stress and fears are real, how we handle stress impacts our

children and youth. They are watching and learning how we respond. While it is obviously damaging when children are directly victimized by abuse or bullying, it can be equally damaging to witness abuse.

Our elementary and middle school children benefit from anti-violence programming provided by our partners at Compass Health Network. These programs teach and model healthy ways of managing stress and anxiety, and how to handle difficult and threatening situations. These positive coping strategies are put to the test when they see their caregivers or other adults acting to the contrary. It can be confusing for a child to be taught to cope one way, but see the opposite in someone they love.

Our youth are learning to resolve problems non-violently, to listen to what their peers are saying, to speak with someone when they feel scared or anxious, and to be respectful of diversity and differences. Perhaps it's time for us to step back, take a deep breath, and listen to the lessons our children can teach us?

You can watch Compass' Prevention Videos [here](#). I hope you will take the time to watch them with your children and discuss ways you can put into action the strategies they offer.

--Bruce Sowatsky, CCRB Executive Director

Substance Use Prevention Should Begin Early

by Kasey Harlin, Achieving Recovery Through Creativity (A.R.T.C.) Program Director at Preferred Family Healthcare

For many parents substance use is that ominous bogeyman we are always aware of hiding in the shadows, but do not think needs our attention until our kids hit the teenage years. In reality, effective substance use prevention begins when our children are young. Building internal and external developmental assets such as support, empowerment, boundaries and



expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competence, and positive identity has been shown to have a role in the reduction of youth substance use.[\(source\)](#) Open communication from an early age, coupled with the encouragement of positive interests, awareness of peer relationships, and setting boundaries while being empathetic and validating their feelings are all things that can be integral to insulating youth from potential substance misuse.

In the 2020 Missouri Student Survey, the age of first use of substances ranges from 10-14 years old. Once that ominous bogeyman peaks around the corner, there are some specific things parents can look for to determine if their kids may be using substances:

- Changes in mood or personality (withdrawn, less motivated, depressed)
- Changes in behaviors (skipping school, disappears for long periods of time, change in peer group)
- Changes in hygiene and appearance (poor hygiene, unusual smells)
- Physical health issues (unusually tired or lethargic, frequent sickness, nosebleeds)

There are more comprehensive [list of signs and symptoms](#) parents can use if they suspect their child is using drugs or alcohol.

Both our awareness of signs and symptoms AND attitudes towards substance use are integral in the prevention of our kids becoming harmfully involved with substances. Almost 40% of students surveyed in the 2020 Missouri Student Survey indicate that alcohol had been given to them by a family member.

Substance use prevention begins when our children are young. Both awareness and positive action by parents for kids of all ages is essential for reducing their risk of becoming harmfully involved with substances.

*Kasey Harlin, MA CADC CCDP-D, is a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor and Certified Co-occurring Disorders Professional-Diplomat in the state of Missouri. She has 21 years of experience working with adolescents with substance use disorders and is the Founder and Program Director for Preferred Family Healthcare's **Achieving Recovery Through Creativity A.R.T.C.** program.*

NAMI St. Louis is 'Ending the Silence' for Youth and Mental Health Conditions

Ending the Silence is an engaging presentation that helps audience members learn about the warning signs of mental health conditions and what steps to take if you or a loved one are showing symptoms of a mental health condition.

According to research, 1 in 6 youth ages 6-17 experience a mental health condition each year and 56% of Missourians ages 12-17 who have depression did not receive any care in the last year. In 2018, NAMI St. Louis began providing Ending the Silence (ETS) to the St. Louis region. ETS teaches youth ages 10-18 valuable information about mental health, warning signs for mental health conditions; as well as suicide, the specific steps to take to help themselves or their classmates, and local resources available to them. After viewing ETS, more students sought help for themselves and their friends as well as increased their knowledge around mental health conditions.

NAMI St. Louis also recognizes families and staff that work with these youth also gain knowledge about mental health to provide the best possible support. Presentations for caregiver and staff are available, in which NAMI teaches the importance of early intervention and how to work together to meet the needs of a young person living with a mental health condition. To date, ETS has reached over 7,000 individuals with the ETS program.

Community feedback includes:

- “I really liked how we went through the warning signs and were able to ask questions about it. I also like how they made me feel less embarrassed with my mental illnesses.”
- “This presentation made me realize that it's not my fault I have anxiety.”
- “Having an actual person with a real story was very nice to see. So often we just say that you should reach out and get a therapist and or whatnot, but we don't frequently see real situations and examples of what other people did to get help. By doing this, the negative connotation that reaching out to an adult has started to go away”

If you would like more information about ETS or would like to schedule a presentation, contact Jessie Brown jbrown@namistl.org.

Join us at the Community Services Summit on October 21

The Community Services Summit is a collaborative training at which educators, social workers, first responders, health/mental health professionals, and others serving children and families attain information about issues affecting our community and the local resources available to help. Over 500 professionals participate

annually in the Summit, learning about substance abuse, suicide prevention, trauma informed, human trafficking, homelessness, child abuse, therapies and interventions, and more.

[Read more...](#)

Click [here](#) for the full schedule and to register. CEUs and scholarships are available. Exhibitors must register by October 8.



CCRB Welcomes a New Board Member

The CCRB is happy to announce the addition of a new board member, Matt Pirtle. Matt has a background in Marketing and Communication and has been in the fitness industry for 20 years, 14 years the owner of Emerge Fitness Training in St. Charles and Wentzville. Matt and his staff also operates Emerge EveryOne, an nonprofit that provides services to exercisers with intellectual disabilities and disabled veterans free of charge.

Matt and his wife Angie are the parents of four children, ages 6-11. He earned a degree in Journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and a Masters in Communication from the University of Texas-Austin.



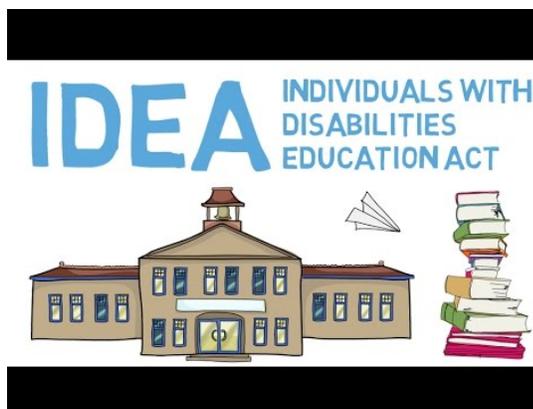
F.A.C.T. Offers Virtual Classes for Families

IDEA PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS:

Oct. 26th, 9:30—10:30 AM

Procedural Safeguards explain parents' and students' rights under the IDEA as well as other important processes. These are often overlooked but an important part in advocating for children on IEPs. Learn how the IDEA Procedural Safeguards can assist families in getting their child's needs met under IDEA. (1-hour)

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/93418158133>



October Prevention & Awareness Month

During October, organizations around the world and across the United States bring awareness to many conditions and social concerns.

- **ADD/ADHD Awareness** - A time to eliminate the myths and share the facts about Attention deficit disorder and Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Resources are available. The CHADD.org provides guides and access to information.
- **Bullying Prevention** - It's always important to talk about the dangers of bullying and the trauma it can bring to it's victims, but this month, use your voice to speak up extra loud. Research shows that bullying often leaves lasting negative effects on those who deal with it.
- **Domestic Violence Awareness** - For many, home is a place of love, warmth, and comfort. It's somewhere that you know you will be surrounded by care and support, and a nice little break from the busyness of the real world. But for millions of others, home is anything but a sanctuary.
- **Substance Abuse Prevention** - An observance to highlight the vital role of substance abuse prevention in both individual and community health and to remember those who have lost their lives to substance abuse.

Special dates during October:

October 2 - [Day of Non-Violence](#)

October 3-9 - [Mental Illness Awareness Week](#)

October 5 - [World Teachers' Day](#)

October 10 - [World Mental Health Day](#)

October 15 - [Pregnancy & Infant Loss Day](#)

October 17 - [Megan Meier Day](#) - wear black with white polka dots in her memory

Child Advocacy Center Opens New Therapy Location



The clients of The Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri now have a new, safe place to begin the healing process after experiencing abuse. In January, The Child Center expanded their services and staff to help accommodate the growing abuse case numbers.

Therapeutic Services allow children to process their experience in a safe, supportive environment. Children participate in evidence-based, trauma-informed therapy modalities to reduce the harmful effects of the trauma they have experienced. While working with their therapist, children develop healthy coping skills, gain self-confidence, learn to understand and effectively express emotions, and are able to identify and draw on their own strengths to leave them better equipped to handle life's challenges. Last year, The Child Center provided 1,525 client hours in therapy.

For more information on The Child Advocacy Center, please visit www.cacnemo.org

News from the Field

CHADS Coalition for Mental Health will host **ALL IN CONVERSATIONS**, a virtual meeting for parents, educators, counselors to discuss youth mental health, depression, anxiety, trauma, LGBTQIA+, and more.

Monthly sessions are available from September 2021 through June 2022. [All In Conversations](#) for a list of dates.

Did you know? You can become a **Big Brother Big Sister** by volunteering with your spouse. Mike & Monica signed up to *Be There* together for a Little Brother. Check out their story to see whether a Big Couple match could help you (and your partner) show up for youth!

[Apply](#) to be a Big today!



United Services for Children will have a team at the annual Autism Speaks Walk on Saturday, Oct. 9, in Forest Park. We would love to have you on our team! We will meet at 10 a.m. on the Upper Muny Lot. Come and show your support for people with autism!

You must pre-register at autismspeakswalk.org. Enter your ZIP code to find the St. Louis event, then use the search function to find the United Services for Children team. Our team captain is Leslie Tucker, the agency's Director of Therapy Services.

Our Lady's Inn announces the hiring of a new Child Advocate, Stephanie Merritt. We are excited to have Stephanie join our team and fill the position vacated by Kaitlyn Ashen, who begins her new role serving clients as our in-house Counselor."

Stephanie describes herself as an innate caregiver and educator on a mission to love well and play an integral role in helping to break generational poverty and familial instability, in order to transform one life, one family, one community for generations to come. She has over 25 years of experience in Education and Nursing, was most recently a teacher of At Risk Teens at Liberty High School, and is the founder of Teen Impact, an at-home learning lab for alternative learners. She looks forward to the working with the phenomenal team at Our Lady's Inn-Defiance.

Epworth Children & Family Services is thrilled and honored to announce that its *Family Support Network* has been selected to receive a \$50,000 grant from MLB and Major League Baseball Players Association!

The grant supports FSN's work to build and improve relationship skills within families to prevent child abuse and neglect. Epworth was one of six organizations nationwide chosen in this round of funding. MLB/MLBPA's joint "Healthy Relationships Community Grant" initiative is intended as a prevention strategy to empower the next generation to understand the components of a healthy relationship.

On October 8th from 10-1 **Nurses for Newborns** is coordinating an opportunity for families to receive food boxes and diapers at our location in Maplewood, located at 3 Sunnen Drive.

Families can also arrange for delivery of food boxes and diapers to families enrolled in any Nurses for Newborns' program. Call (314) 544-3433 to sign up or for more information. BJC staff will be on site from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. to provide COVID vaccinations and flu shots

Nurses for Newborns serves pregnant or parenting mothers and their infants, up to 2 years of age, in 19 Missouri counties.



We're Hiring! \$15-17/hour

Community Living's Respite Center

Weekends: Mornings, Evenings & Overnights

APPLY ONLINE: COMMUNITYLIVINGMO.ORG

Community Living envisions a community where ALL people lead fulfilling lives.

That counts for our employees, too! When you join the Community Living team, you open yourself up to a fulfilled life. As a Community Living employee, you can look forward to gaining skills and knowledge to help you grow in your career while enjoying competitive benefits. Community Living, Inc.'s Respite Center is hiring for weekend shifts starting at \$15-17/hour. [Apply here.](#)

Epworth Food Pantry Change

Epworth Food Pantry will now be open every 3rd Saturday of each month from 10am-1pm until supplies last. In addition to dry goods, fresh, perishable goods such as produce, meats, milk and cheeses will also be provided.
7500 Natural Bridge Road

Food can soothe the soul and bring relief from stress. Let's cook together! Join **Nurses for Newborns** for a virtual cooking class on October 24th to prepare & enjoy a 3-course dinner developed by David Schwartz, owner of J David Events.

Depending on your budget, you can either have the ingredients shipped directly to you (\$150/ticket) or buy them yourself (\$50/ticket).

Enjoy a relaxing dinner in & maybe learn a new favorite recipe along the way!
[Register here.](#)



Compass Health Network has community-based behavioral health programs designed specifically for children and their families.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO EXPLORE OUR PROGRAMS:
WWW.COMPASSHEALTHNETWORK.ORG

CALL US TODAY TO BEGIN YOUR RECOVERY JOURNEY
888-237-4567



Coalition CareLine

Help for Foster, Adoptive, & Guardianship Families

Contact us at [800.FOSTER.3](tel:800.FOSTER.3) or www.foster-adopt.org/careline



NAMI St. Louis Online Family Support Group

Monday's 6:00pm-7:30pm & Bi-weekly
Thursday's 7:30pm-9:00pm
Register at: <https://www.namistl.org/online-programming/family-support-group/>




For 24/7 linkage to children's mental health resources, call the BHR Youth Connection Helpline at 314-819-8802 or text BHEARD to 31658

Services Funding Meetings Publications



The CCRB receives money from a dedicated fund for children's mental health services in St. Charles County. Through a local sales tax, over 70,000 children and youth receive prevention education and mental health supports annually. The CCRB is proud to administer these funds, ensuring our youth and their families have the resources they need to realize a brighter tomorrow. All funds provide services for St. Charles County residents.

Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County

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(636) 939-6200

Contact Us

