



Preparing all youth and families
to realize a brighter tomorrow.

CARING FOR KIDS - January 2024

Hello Anna,

The start of the year may offer a fresh start and optimism for what they year may bring, but it can also bring increased symptoms of anxiety and depression as the winter weather sets in and the days are often darker. If you or your child is experiencing increased symptoms of seasonal depression, help is available. Caregivers and parents can reach out to the BHR Youth Connection Helpline for resources. It's open 24/7 at 314-819-8802. Adults can call 988 for 24/7 mental health support.

In 2024, the CCRB and service providers are working hard to increase services available to the families and youth in the County. To learn more about CCRB-funded services, follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, or visit our [website](#).

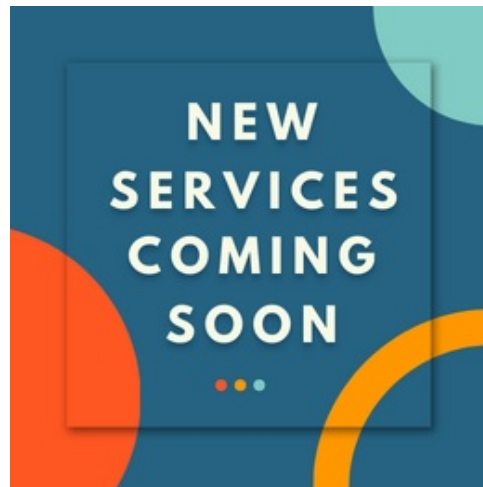
What's Happening at the CCRB?

Kicking Off a New Funding Year

We hope your year is starting off well and that you found some time for self-care and reflection during the busy holiday season and end of year demands. The new year is generally a time of planning and anticipation, and we are facing extensive growth and change at the CCRB in 2024. Our talented and dedicated staff embraces the opportunity to turn these changes into chances!

- The **2024 CCRB Services Budget** was approved for \$14.5 million, allowing us to expand services to 37 nonprofit with 64 programs in St. Charles County. This means approximately 95% of all CCRB revenues goes directly to youth-centered services.
- In December, the Board approved funding for **6 new programs**, which includes 4 new agency partners. We are excited to welcome them to the CCRB family and are looking forward to expanding services to more St. Charles County youth.

- **American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA)** funds have made a difference for our providers and their clients by improving service delivery and staff retention.
- **Michelle McElfresh** (Director of Contracts and Compliance) and **Jeanne Spencer** (Program Specialist) are hard at work streamlining the grant management process and building personal relationships with our agency partners and in the community.
- Our **custom grant management system** will be fully implemented beginning in February with the new 2024-2025 contracts. We look forward to using our efficient data processing system for billing, reporting, and applications.
- Bruce Sowatsky (Executive Director) is planning for his retirement in the summer of 2024. The search for a new Executive Director launches in Spring.
- The CCRB's 2023 **revenues increased 7.3%** over 2022, allowing for greater investment in youth mental health and substance use services through supplemental funding opportunities and program expansions.



Welcome New Service Providers!

For 2024, the CCRB added four new service providers and two new programs to our list of funded programs. We welcome them to the community, as they establish services for St. Charles County youth and we look forward to seeing the impact their services make in the lives of youth and their caregivers and families.

New Providers

- **Chestnut Health Systems** funded for counseling services at Duchnese and St. Domenic high schools.
- **Kids in the Middle** funded for group counseling services centered around children of divorce in Fort Zumwalt, Orchard Farm, and Wentzville school districts.
- **Crisis Aid International** funded for crisis intervention services involving youth at risk for or involved in child sexual exploitation or trafficking.
- **Partners In-Kind** funded for psychological evaluation services.

New Programs

- **Megan Meier Foundation** funded for school attendance intervention services in St. Charles City School District.
- **Community Living, Inc** funded for after-school and break program for youth with developmental disabilities.



Honorable Jon Cunningham Joins the CCRB

The CCRB is pleased to announce the appointment of retired **Judge Jon Cunningham** to the Board of Directors. His appointment fills a vacancy and his term will expire in December 2025. We look forward to working with him.

Judge Cunningham is an alumni of Truman State and University of Missouri - Columbia and served over 31 years as a judge of the St. Charles County Circuit Court. He presided over thousands of civil motions and bench trials, both civil and criminal. He currently serves on the Mediator and Senior Arbitrator panels of United States Arbitration & Mediation (USA&M), the leading provider of mediation and arbitration services. Prior to being elected judge, Judge Cunningham practiced law in St. Charles, MO in a general civil practice.

Mental Health News

Human Trafficking Awareness Month

National Human Trafficking Awareness Month

Survivors of human trafficking are often overwhelmingly traumatized both physically and also mentally. This brutal treatment can create ongoing psychological and mental conditions.



January is **Human Trafficking Awareness Month** and our partners at **Gateway Alliance against Human Trafficking** work to increase awareness about the prevalence of trafficking in our community. They share these misconceptions about human trafficking:

- False: Human trafficking does not occur in the United States.

- False: Human Trafficking is always or usually a violent crime.
- False: Only undocumented foreign nationals get trafficked in the United States.
- False: Immigrants are causing human trafficking in the U.S.
- False: Human trafficking only happens in illegal or underground industries.
- False: All human trafficking involves commercial sex .

Gateway Alliance against Human Trafficking also offers training and education to various community groups, organizations, businesses, faith congregations, and civil and social justice groups.

Request More Info

Using Mindful Activities as a Coping Skill



Mindfulness refers to giving your full attention to the present moment without judgment. Many activities can be done mindfully, such as exercise, painting, coloring, and fishing. There are also specific mindfulness exercises and techniques that are suitable for teens, including paced breathing, grounding and body scans.

What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the intentional act of giving your undivided attention to the present moment (vs. the past or future) without judgment. The nonjudgmental attitude is key, because we tend to judge our own thoughts, and simply being aware of our thoughts can bring a radical change. Mindfulness for kids and teens can be a wonderful strategy to help aid in development and as a coping skill for difficult times.

Breathwork is a classic mindfulness activity, which typically refers to purposefully manipulating the breath while mindfully focusing on it. This particular activity refers to deep, slow breaths (sometimes called belly breaths) that use the diaphragm. This encourages your body to relax.

Research has shown the following benefits of mindfulness for teens:

- Increases optimism
- Improves social behaviors
- Improvements in attention
- Improves self-control
- Reduces bullying
- Decreases teen stressors and teen anxiety
- Improves compassion toward oneself
- Improves emotion regulation
- Improves school behavior

<https://www.choosingtherapy.com/mindfulness-for-teens/>

Your Friend or Family Member Starts Using Again: Now What?



By Mental Health First Aid USA on December 11, 2023

Recovering from a substance use challenge, whether it's drugs or alcohol, is a process with ups and downs. It can be a rollercoaster ride for the person in recovery as well as their family, friends, peers and colleagues. Unfortunately, people in recovery from a substance or alcohol use disorder often return to using the substance. This used to be referred to as a "relapse."

[Read the full article](#)

Community Resources

The CCRB's service providers offer support groups, training classes, and other opportunities to learn about mental health conditions, LGBTQIA+ resources, parenting education and other topics.

[Connect](#)



Family-to-Family Mental Health Education

NAMI St. Louis offers FREE mental health education classes for families called Family-to-Family (F2F) and they have two classes that will start soon.

NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 8-session educational program for family, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions. It is a designated evidenced-

based program. This means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition. NAMI Family-to-Family is taught by NAMI-trained family members who have been there, and includes presentations, discussions and interactive exercises. Please contact programs@namistl.org if you have any questions or need assistance with registration!

Registration open until 02/24/2024 or class is filled.

Virtual

Tuesday Evenings, click to [register](#)
Start date: 01/23/2024
End date: 03/12/2024
Time: 6:00pm-8:30pm
Location: Zoom

In-Person

Saturday Afternoons, click to [register](#)
Start date: 02/10/2024
End date: 03/30/2024
Time: 4:00pm-6:30pm
Location: New Hope United Methodist
3921 Jeffco Blvd
Arnold, MO 63010

Tips for a Happy, Healthy New Year

As the New Year unfolds, ensuring children's mental health should be a top priority for every parent. To assist families in addressing this important issue, **Lutheran Family and Children's Service** offers a concise Children's Mental Health Checklist.

Open communication.

1. Encourage honest conversations in a judgement-free zone where children can share their concerns.



[Children's Mental Health
Checklist](#)

IS CHILDCARE UNAFFORDABLE?

The Sparrow's Nest can help!



Childcare Cooperative at The Sparrow's Nest

Finding affordable childcare can be difficult or even impossible. The Sparrow's Nest is a Childcare Cooperative that offers NO COST childcare to families. Our program requires participation that is designed to empower families to succeed. Enrollment starts with the interest form at this link <https://buff.ly/3LS7IQG>.

The Sparrow's Nest has a community resource room fully stocked with diapers, wipes, cleaning products, toilet paper, and paper towels? These resources are available at no cost to all community members but an appointment is required. Please call 636-336-2534 Monday through Friday 9-3 to schedule and appointment.



Looking for Parenting Support?

Join us for an upcoming **FREE DRIVE-THRU DIAPER GIVEAWAY!**

For St. Charles County Families with children birth through 12.



St. Charles - January 12th

12:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Wentzville - January 26th

12:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Diapers, wipes, formula, food bags,
miscellaneous items

To register, call 636-940-0742 and leave a message, event location will be given upon confirmation of reservation.

We believe in families! The Crisis Nursery's **FAMILY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM** offers a range of **FREE** services for children, ages 0-12 years old, and their parents:

- Parenting Support & Education
- Crisis Intervention & Stabilization
- Art & Play Therapy for Children
- Family Counseling
- Help with Basic Needs Supplies

Generously funded in part by:



PSYCHIATRY FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS



844-853-8937

www.compasshealthnetwork.org

MINDREACH for Mental Health

The CCRB launched MINDREACH, a mobile phone app that combines self-assessments, access to mental health hotlines, definitions, parent support, and some fun into a single location. Developed for youth in grades 5 to 12 living in St. Charles County, this FREE app bridges the gap between technology and existing mental health resources. Find it on your system App store. It's compatible with Apple and Android devices.



Download App

Food Finder by Operation Food Search

Does your family need food or do you know someone who could use community support? Operation Food Search recently updated their resources tab on their website. Check out their resource hub.

<https://www.operationfoodsearch.org/resource-hub/>

They also help individuals and children find food in their neighborhood with their Food Finder search.

<https://www.operationfoodsearch.org/find-food/>



The Emergency Weather Response will begin November 19th, 2023 through March 15th, 2024, if temperatures are predicted to be 20 degrees or below overnight, the Continuum of Care will activate a Free Warming Center Response to provide safe sleeping accommodations for the night.

To locate the nearest warming center, **call the hotline number at 636-395-0328.** Transportation services may be available.

Volunteer Dispatchers will return calls later in the day to arrange transportation to the open shelter. You can find out if the program is activated by calling (636) 395-0328 after 3:00PM on the night that you will be a safe sleep location. The recording will provide the location and time the location is open for safe sleep.

For those wanting to learn more about volunteering with the program, contact Dawn Tegeler at dtegeler@sccmo.org

Important Dates

January 2024

- 1/1 - CCRB office closed for New Year's Day
- 1/15 - CCRB office closed for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 1/24 - CCRB Board Meeting, 8 AM, hosted by Gateway Alliance against Human Trafficking at Lake St. Louis Police Dept. 200 Civic Center Dr, Lake St Louis.

February 2024

- 2/19 - CCRB office closed for President's Day
- 2/26 - CCRB Board Meeting, 8 AM, Location: DDRB, 1025 Country Club Rd, St. Charles.

News from the Field



Celebrating 50 Years!

Youth In Need is 50 years old in 2024, and they are celebrating 50 years of impact, community and potential! Do you have a story, a connection, a memory about Youth In Need . . . or even a wish for their collective future?

Share With Youth In Need



FamilyForward's Chief Executive Officer, [Karen Nolte](#), celebrated 39 years at FamilyForward!

Karen started her career with the agency as a pregnancy counselor at the Children's Home Society of Missouri and became CEO when Children's Home Society and Family Resource Center merged in 2017. Through nearly four decades of service, Karen has shaped the trajectory of FamilyForward and has played a pivotal role in advancing our mission. Happy work anniversary, Karen!



In October, **NAMI St. Louis** was awarded the Youth Mental Health Champion Award at NAMI Missouri's Annual Meeting. It was an honor that our program's team, specifically *Ending the Silence* (ETS), was recognized for its successes.

From 2018 to September of 2023, our ETS program was presented 1,109 times to a total of 30,997 attendees! Just in 2022 alone, there were 9,238 attendees.

Some of the feedback our ETS presentation has received over the years is:

"I wish I had this 3 years ago."

"More serious signs are shown here, which shows how my anxiety may be a bit more than anxiety."

LFCs Achieves COA Accreditation

We are proud to announce that LFCs has achieved COA accreditation, a service of Social Current. We are so proud of our team for this amazing accomplishment. COA Accreditation means that our organization's programs, services, administration, and management have been rigorously evaluated and meet best practice standards. Accreditation is generally a 12-18 month process.

To learn more about COA Accreditation, please visit www.social-current.org.



Justice for Children Conference

The Child Advocacy Center of Northeast MO would like to invite you to attend their **Justice for Children Conference on September 11 & 12, 2024** at Water's Edge Banquet Center in St. Peters, Missouri. The goal of this conference is to bring together local and national speakers related to the field of child protection to you at a low cost or no cost.

Scholarship Application should be submitted by Friday, March 15th. If you should have any questions please reach out to Michelle Stille at mstille@cacnemo.org and we hope to see you in September!



CCRB in the Community

CCRB staff were out and about in the community in December. We participated in Helping Hands for the Holidays, a wonderful event sponsored by the St. Charles Convention Center and We Love St. Charles. During the event, sponsors, donors, volunteers, and exhibitors welcomed more than **750 guests**, 60% of which were from right here in St. Charles County! 763 people took home new-to-them coats, and over **3,500 personal care items** were handed out.

If you are hosting a resource event featuring youth mental health, and would like a representative or a speaker, please reach out to the CCRB office at 636.939.6200 or info@scckids.org.



Support Group Facilitator Training

NAMI St. Louis will host a LIVE virtual (Zoom) Connections Support Group Facilitator training on 02/24 – 02/25/2024 from 8:00am-5:30pm.

NAMI **Connection Recovery Support Group** is a free, peer-led support group for any adult who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition. You will gain insight from hearing the challenges and successes of others, and the groups are led by trained leaders who've been there.

In order to attend, you **MUST** complete the **Volunteer Application** (select Connections Support Group as your area of interest) below by 02/20/24 and meet with NAMI St. Louis staff to become a volunteer. There are additional steps that will be needed to be complete **PRIOR** to attendance and we want to ensure there is time to do so!

Additional trainings scheduled for 2024
Connections Support Group Facilitator Training:

- Virtual via Zoom, Feb 24th and Feb 25th from 8am-5pm
- Virtual via Zoom, Aug 3rd and Aug 4th from 8am-5pm

Family Support Group Facilitator Training:

- Virtual via Zoom, June 8th and June 9th from 8am-5pm
- Virtual via Zoom, Dec 7th and Dec 8th from 8am-5pm



Family-to-Family Teacher Training:

- Virtual via Zoom, April 6th and April 7th from 8am-5pm
- Virtual via Zoom, Oct 5th and Oct 6th from 8am-5pm

Family Support Group Facilitator Training:

- Virtual via Zoom, June 8th and June 9th from 8am-5pm
- Virtual via Zoom, Dec 7th and Dec 8th from 8am-5pm

Family-to-Family Teacher Training:

- Virtual via Zoom, April 6th and April 7th from 8am-5pm
- Virtual via Zoom, Oct 5th and Oct 6th from 8am-5pm

Services

Funding

Meetings

Publications



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



The CCRB is dedicated to maximizing community resources to build and sustain a comprehensive system of services for children and families in St. Charles County. We accomplish this by allocating a sales tax fund to mental health and substance use treatment service providers. The CCRB is proud to administer these funds, ensuring our youth and their families have the resources they need to realize a brighter tomorrow.

Contact Us



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