



Preparing all youth and families
to realize a brighter tomorrow.

CARING FOR KIDS

CCRB Monthly News & Updates

October 2025

October marks **Substance Use Prevention Month**, a time to raise awareness and strengthen our collective efforts to protect youth from the dangers of drug and alcohol use. Prevention isn't just about avoiding harm—it's about building strong, healthy futures. Young people face increasing pressures and challenges, and early exposure to substances can have lasting impacts on their health, relationships, and success. But prevention works. When youth are supported with education, connection, and care, they're empowered to make safe choices.

CCRB is proud to fund programs that help prevent substance use before it starts. Through school-based education, counseling, family support, and community outreach, CCRB invests in services that build resilience and promote mental wellness. These programs meet kids where they are by offering tools, guidance, and safe spaces to grow.

Prevention is a community effort. Parents, caregivers, and trusted adults play a vital role. One of the most powerful things you can do is **talk with your kids about drugs and alcohol** frequently. Honest, ongoing conversations help youth feel heard and supported, which means they are more likely to make healthy decisions.

This month, let's recommit to protecting our youth. By supporting prevention programs and fostering open dialogue, we can create a community where every child has the opportunity to thrive.



Melinda McAliney

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

✉ mmcaliney@sceekids.org

Staff Updates



Happy Bosses Day!

Melinda's dedication, energy, and talents are greatly appreciated by staff.



Happy Birthday!

Melinda and Taylor share a birthday, which makes the celebration extra fun.

Huesemann Joins CCRB Board

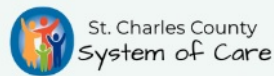
CCRB is honored to welcome **Vicky Huesemann** as the newest member of our Board of Directors.

Vicky is a lifelong resident of St. Charles, and she began her career in law, working with local attorneys and in real estate title insurance. She later transitioned into public service, managing district offices for two Missouri state senators and contributing directly to the legislative process at the State Capitol. Most notably, Vicky served for 16 years as the executive assistant to the St. Charles County Executive, a role in which she demonstrated exceptional leadership and dedication.

Vicky previously served on the St. Charles County TIF Commission and was an active member of the St. Charles Junior Service League for several years, further reflecting her commitment to civic engagement and community development.

Vicky's insight, experience, and passion will be invaluable as we continue to grow and serve our community.





Life Worth Living - Moving Suicide Prevention Upstream

NOVEMBER 5, 2025
9:00-11:00 AM
HOSTED BY F.A.C.T.



Youth mental health professionals, school counseling staff, and interested parties are invited to attend the November **St. Charles County System of Care** meeting for a conversation on suicide prevention. The presentation will include:

- Review current suicide data
- Expert presenters sharing program successes and barriers
- Practical tips attendees can use

Life Worth Living - Moving Suicide Prevention Upstream

November 5, 2025, 9 AM to 11 AM

Hosted by F.A.C.T. - 2240 Bluestone Drive, St. Charles MO 63303

Sign up for the System of Care newsletter to stay informed about their monthly meetings.

Monthly Board Meeting

The public and interested parties are invited to CCRB's monthly Board meeting on **October 27, 2025 at 8:30 AM**. The meeting is hosted by **Preferred Family Healthcare in St. Peters**.

The **meeting agenda** is available 48 hours in advance.

CCRB COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S RESOURCE BOARD

BOARD MEETING

OCTOBER 27, 2025

8:30 AM

PUBLIC WELCOME

HOSTED BY
Preferred Family Healthcare
2120 Parkway Drive
St. Peters, MO 63376

Services Spotlight

October is Substance Use Prevention Month, and findings from **CCRB's 2023 Community Needs Assessment** (published in April 2025) show mixed trends in youth substance use in St. Charles County. While juvenile treatment admissions and substance-related offenses have dropped significantly since 2009, recent data reveals a concerning rise: **drug-related offenses increased by 53% since 2020**, and alcohol-related offenses rose by 18% since 2019. Additionally, local school districts continue to report incidents involving vaping which is often appealing to youth due to its variety of flavors and discreet devices.

CCRB's commitment to prevention services ensures that youth and families in St. Charles County have access to essential resources that promote healthy choices and reduce the risk of substance use. Two CCRB Partner Agencies, **Preferred Family Healthcare** and **PreventEd**, offer specialized programs that educate, support, and empower youth to make informed choices. Their experienced professionals provide early intervention, foster open conversations about

substance use, and equip families with tools to prevent addiction before it starts.



Preferred Family Healthcare offers a range of substance use prevention and treatment programs for youth and families. Their **Addiction Recovery** program supports youth with counseling and life skills to promote recovery and healthy decision-making. The **Team of Concern** program educates K-12 students, caregivers, and professionals on the risks of substance use, offering tools for prevention and early intervention. The **Addiction is Real** program equips adults with strategies to recognize warning signs and talk with youth, featuring the interactive *Hidden in Plain View* exhibit.



PreventEd – Prevention First offers evidence-informed substance use prevention programming for students in grades K–12. Designed to build resiliency through skills like self-esteem and problem-solving, the program also delivers age-appropriate, drug-specific education. Interactive lessons have been shown to improve students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors around substance use.

Top 7 Teen Substance Use Trends Parents Need to Know in 2025



By Partnership to End Addiction, June 2025

Teen substance use trends are always changing, and staying informed can help parents have better conversations with their kids. The good news? According to the Monitoring the Future survey, fewer teens are drinking, vaping, or using drugs compared to previous years. So, the next time your teen says, “Everyone is doing it,” you can ask how they’re seeing substance use in their world and what their peers are saying. The truth is, most teens are making healthy choices.

That said, it’s still important to **keep an eye on emerging trends**. New products, shifting laws, and the influence of social media continue to shape how young people perceive and access substances. What was true when we were growing up may no longer apply today. This article breaks down the key trends for 2025—no scare tactics, just real information to help you **guide and support your teen**. Let’s explore what’s on the horizon together.

[Continue Reading](#)



The Effects of Cannabis on Developing Brains and School Performance

by PreventEd, July 2025

The Skinny: Even though attitudes toward cannabis use are shifting (including among teens, for whom it is illegal to use cannabis recreationally), using cannabis during adolescence can permanently impair attention, memory and learning skills, potentially leading to problems at school.

Teen Cannabis Use Today

Attitudes toward cannabis are shifting, not just for adults of legal age who can use it for recreational purposes, depending on what state they live in, but also for the youth for whom it is still illegal, no matter where they live in the country.

According to a [2021 Survey by SAMHSA](#), of the 52.5 million individuals aged 12 or older who reported using cannabis in 2021, youth aged 12 to 17 accounted for 10.5%. In a [2022 report from Monitoring the Future](#), it was reported that 30.7% of U.S. high school 12th graders reported using cannabis in the past year, and 6.3% reported using cannabis daily in the past 30 days.

[Continue reading](#)

Opportunities

PreventEd Podcast Inspires Conversations

PreventEd's **PrevenTable** podcast invites community members to listen to candid conversations about the intersection of alcohol, drugs, and mental health in everyday lives. The **In the Weeds - Through Their Eyes** episode features teens and their experience and insight about drug use in elementary, middle, and high school. They describe the attitudes and behaviors



around vaping and cannabis use as well as their understanding of how to help a peer that may be struggling with substances.



ADDICTION POLICY FORUM

Extent of Cannabis Use, State Laws/Policies, Potential Harms, Guidelines for Use

Tuesday, October 23rd | 12:00 PM CT
Registration

Cannabis use in the United States has increased significantly in recent years, alongside rapidly evolving state policies that permit medical or recreational use. These shifts raise important questions about public health, including the impact on mental health and substance use disorder risk, adolescent brain development, and the potential harms associated with regular or high-potency use. Variations in state laws create a complex landscape that can influence access, perceptions of risk, and patterns of use across different populations.

Presented by **Addiction Policy Forum**, this webinar will explore the current policy landscape of cannabis use across the country, highlighting laws and regulations for medical and non-medical consumption and their public health implications. Speakers will also discuss emerging research on the latest trends, potential risks, and harms, with a focus on adolescent use.

NO PLACE TO GO

A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION OF CRISIS SHELTER

Thursday, November 6 | 9:00 - 10:30 AM

St. Joachim & Ann Care
Service 4116 McClay Road
St. Charles, MO 63304



REGISTER NOW



communitycouncilstc.org/events

community council



Housing Crisis Intensifies with Shelter Closure

Professionals and interested parties are invited to join an upcoming conversation centered on the impact of the recent closure of the Salvation Army's shelter in O'Fallon. As the only general-admittance shelter serving families with children, the shelter's absence means approximately **200 children** and over **400 adults** now face winter without a safe place to sleep.

The **Community Council of St. Charles County** is hosting a Community Coffee Conversation focused on the housing shortage.

Thursday, November 6, 9:00–10:30 AM

The Care Service - St. Charles

Registration

To better understand the scope of this issue, we encourage you to read the County's official announcement: **Salvation Army Shelter Closure – St. Charles County Government**. It outlines the impact, the urgency, and the call for community-wide collaboration.

Spooktacular Family Fun with Boys & Girls Clubs

Join **Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Charles County** for a spooktacular evening of family-friendly fun at their **FREE Trunk or Treat Events!** Bring your little goblins and witches to see creatively decorated trunks or tables, each offering a sweet treat. This safe and festive community gathering promises a night of laughter, costumes, and plenty of treats for all to enjoy.

Friday, October 24, 6:00 to 8:00 PM
St. Charles Unit - 1211 Lindenwood Ave,
St. Charles (indoors)

Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Charles-County Presents:
Sponsored by:

   Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital
Progress West Hospital



Trunks - Games - Treats

October 24, 6-8 PM **October 25, 5-7 PM**
Indoors Outdoors
St. Charles Unit O'Fallon Unit

Sign up to host a Trunk



Learn More Online: [BCCSTC.ORG/Events](https://www.bccstc.org/events)

Saturday October 25th 5:00 to 7:00 PM
O'Fallon Unit - 1 Club Way, St. Peters
(outdoors)

Want to connect with hundreds of local families? There's still time to host a trunk or become an event sponsor. **Sign up today!**

Get Your Teen Talking about Social Media



A free workshop for parents who want to build trust and break down barriers

A free workshop for parents who want to build trust and break down barriers.

Friday, Oct 24, 2025
10:00 AM CT - Virtual
Registration

This interactive workshop provides parents of teens with the foundation to have successful conversations about social media. No shaming, no scare tactics, just helpful strategies that emphasize connection and support parents in understanding their teen's social media use.

Participants will leave this workshop with:

- Evidence-based information about how teens use social media
- A new framework and mindset to successfully discuss healthy social media use
- Resources for additional information and support to build on themes from the workshop

Presented by *Kaleigh Cornelison, LCSW*. Learn more at www.k-cornelison.com

United for Neurodiversity

EMPOWER • EDUCATE • ADVOCATE

October 25, 2025 | 8:30 AM - 1 PM | 3998 Mid Rivers Mall Dr, St. Peters, MO 63376



presented by



United Services
for Children



United for Neurodiversity is a bold new conference bringing families, professionals, and advocates together to build inclusive communities where neurodivergent children thrive. Presented by **United Services for Children**, the conference is the organization's signature 50th anniversary initiative, reflecting their continued leadership in early childhood inclusion.

October 25, 2025
8:30 AM to 1:00 PM
St. Peters, MO
Registration



Explore the findings of *America's Favorite Charities*, an exclusive Chronicle of Philanthropy report that showcases the 100 charitable organizations that earn the most support from Americans.

Tuesday, November 4, 2025
1 PM CT - Virtual
Registration

What sets apart those charities that earn the most support from donors? Flexibility, experimentation, and stewardship.

In this free online forum, you'll hear directly from fundraising leaders at several organizations on the list who have recast giving strategies, events, and communications — and are reaping the rewards despite economic headwinds.

Nominate a Champion Today!

Do you know someone who has made an impact in the world of mental health?

Each year, **Missouri Mental Health Foundation** honors three outstanding individuals as Missouri Mental Health Champions! These individuals are selected based on the following categories: mental illness, developmental or intellectual disabilities and substance use disorders.



Nominations will be accepted until **November 14, 2025**.

MMHF is looking for nominees who:

- Display courage and resilience
- Make positive contributions to their community
- Inspire others with similar mental health conditions to increase their potential for independence

Nominees will be judged based on the criteria submitted by the nominator, so please be sure to answer each question in detail. Help us recognize someone truly inspiring today — cash prize included!

Questions?? Contact the Missouri Mental Health Foundation at (573) 635-9201 or mmhf@missourimhf.org.

[Learn More & Nominate](#)

A purple graphic titled "STL Regional Suicide Prevention Coalition" lists upcoming meetings. It includes a Zoom logo with the text "Zoom Register on our website". The meetings are: Oct 9th 9 am: Coalition Updates & Committee Breakouts; Nov 13th 9 am: Community Speaker & Coalition Updates; Dec 11th 9 am: Coalition Updates & Committee Breakouts. The graphic also features a logo for the St. Louis Regional Suicide Prevention Coalition and the website address www.stlsuicideprevention.com.

The **St. Louis Regional Suicide Prevention Coalition** wants your input on their meeting structure. **If the meeting time, day, length, or frequency hasn't been working for you**, they would like to learn what changes they can make to better fit your needs. The **survey** should take less than 5 minutes.

If you already completed the survey, this poll is slightly different. The most important new question will help us determine a central location for in-person meetings. Thank you for your time and input! <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7XHXJK8>

The Suicide Prevention Coalition meets monthly on the second Thursday at 9 AM. All interested parties are invited to attend. Dates for the remainder of the year are:

- Nov 13, 2025, 9:00 AM
- Dec 11, 2025, 9:00 AM

Questions?? Contact Hannah Schleicher at hannah.schleicher@umsl.edu.

[Register to attend](#)

Community Resource Fair - Vendors Wanted



Francis Howell
Learning Resources

**2025
COMMUNITY
RESOURCE FAIR**

Learn about the supports and resources available for individuals with disabilities!

**Saturday,
December 13,
2025**

**Start at 10:00 a.m.
Ends at 1:00 p.m.**

Discover Support and Services for All Ages
The Francis Howell School District's Alternative Learning Department hosts organizations that support people of all ages. Attending agencies provide services in assistive technology, recreation, mental health, behavior support, transition planning, and more!

**Francis Howell
North High School**

Athletic Commons
2549 Hackmann Rd. St
Charles, MO 63303

For questions
Contact Joseph Henke
636-851-4034
joseph.henke@fhsdschools.org

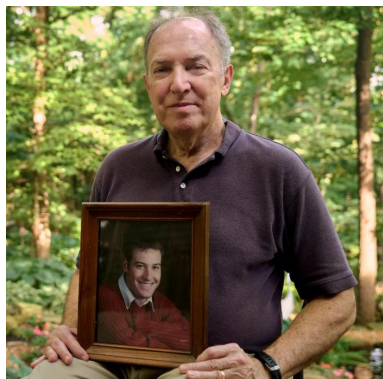
Francis Howell School District is excited to host its annual **Community Resource Fair** on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at Francis Howell North in St. Peters.

The event will be held in conjunction with the Special Olympics basketball tournament and will be open to the public from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm.

Vendors are wanted to provide resources to families. Contact Joseph Henke at 636.851.4034 or by email joseph.henke@fhsdschools.org with any questions.

[Register here](#)

CHADS Founder Awarded AARP Purpose Prize



CHADS Coalition for Mental Health announced Larry McCord, Co-Founder of CHADS, was named a 2025 Purpose Prize Winner by AARP. The AARP Purpose Prize award supports AARP's mission by honoring extraordinary people ages 50 and older who tap into the power of life experience to build a better future for us all.

Behind this honor is a story of profound loss and bold hope. Following their son Chad's death by suicide, Larry and Marian McCord refused to accept silence or stigma surrounding suicide. Instead, they built a nonprofit that now operates in over 380 schools in and around St. Louis, providing suicide prevention

presentations, counseling, mentoring, crisis response, and more to youth and their families. CHADS has been a CCRB Partner Agency since 2014, serving thousands of St. Charles County youth through three programs.

[Read the full story](#)

Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Charles County Welcomes New CEO

Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Charles County, a CCRB Partner Agency, announced **Scott Myers** as its new Chief Executive Officer. Scott brings more than 20 years of nonprofit leadership experience across local, regional, national, and international organizations, with a career rooted in youth development. Most recently, he served as the Executive Director of SADD - Students Against Destructive

Decisions, a national youth prevention and education nonprofit.

BGCSTC remains committed to providing safe spaces, meaningful programs, and life-changing opportunities for the youth of St. Charles County, and the organization looks forward to Myers' leadership in shaping a bright future for the Club and its members.



Chestnut Health Systems Names Puneet Leekha, J.D., as CEO

Chestnut Health Systems, a CCRB Partner Agency, welcomed Puneet Leekha, J.D., as its new Chief Executive Officer. Leekha has served in key leadership roles for over a decade, including Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel. His strategic vision and commitment to nonprofit healthcare make him well-positioned to lead Chestnut into the future.



About CCRB
Contact Us



Using a voter-approved 1/8 cent sales tax, the **Community and Children's Resource Board** (CCRB) funds local nonprofits to provide essential mental health and substance use treatment services for children 19 years of age or younger in St. Charles County. Our mission is to build and sustain a comprehensive system of services for children and families in need, preparing them for a brighter future.

CCRB-funded programs and services aim to:

- Improve child emotional and mental wellbeing
- Strengthen and stabilize children and families
- Respond to the shifting mental health needs of youth

Over the past two decades, key indicators of youth and family health in St. Charles County have shown positive changes. We are committed to continuing our investment in effective mental and behavioral health services. Together, we are creating a community where every child and family can thrive.

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