



## Mid-Valley Mental Health Partnership Meeting January 10, 2025

**Mid-Valley Representatives:** Lisa Palese, Melissa Mills, Mindy Kaplan, Lexi Cazzato,

**District Representatives:** Catherine Murray, Michelle Voris, Kristen Nowicki, Anne Scalia, Jennifer Leibforth, Kimberly Holstein, Jamie Benavides, Kate Bell, Kari Ruh, Laurel O'Brien,

**Community Partners:** Tina Koral, Jillian Barker, Mary Kim, Kari Glenn, Amber Evans, Alejandra Moreno, Kim Peterson, Maria Leon, Gilda Ross, Courtney Duran, Michelle Voris, Cheryl Curry, Araceli Ascencio, Carly Quick, Jennifer Benjamin, Jules O'Neal, Odaly Medina, Kim Boatner, Megan Schmitz, Kimberly Holstein, Michelle Clark

### Welcome & Introductions

- Welcome!
- [Mid-Valley Mental Health Partnership Directory](#) (please add your information to the directory if you have not done so already)
- Mid-Valley Team & District Representatives
  - Mid-Valley
    - We are doing fantastic things with our Kane County Health Department ARPA grant!
      - Several Providers from this group will present at our Kane County Institute Day: Dr. Megan Schmitz, The Center for Independent Living, Carly Quick, Kim Boatner, Dr. Ann Weller, Cheryl Curry, and Beth Plachetka.
      - Thanks to Dr. Megan Schmitz, Cheryl Curry, and Kim Boatner (now through the ROE), we are providing direct mental health support to Mades Johnstone School students.
      - We have purchased SEL books, materials, curriculum, and incentives for students throughout the Cooperative.
      - We provided driving lessons for a student who was unable to get to work on his own and was struggling with anxiety over the possibility of losing his job.
      - We have provided specialized Professional Development and consultation to several staff members who work directly with students who struggle with mental illness.
      - More to come!
  - Batavia- Catherine Murray & Kari Ruh
    - Targeting attendance through the January parent workshop, focusing on belongingness throughout the district.
    - Great partnership with local therapists to support students whose families cannot access mental health support.
  - Central- Kristen Nowicki

- The district is receiving support and partnering with Megan Schmitz and Kim Boatner.
  - Incredible partnerships to support our students who are struggling with anxiety, school avoidance, and more!
- Geneva- Anne Scalia, Jennifer Leibforth, Kimberly Hostein, Jamie Benavides
  - Preparing for the annual Signs of Suicide Prevention Program, middle school teams did an excellent job supporting the students and staff after a tragedy; Fox Valley Therapy Dog Club <https://fvtherapydogs.org/> provided support to students and staff
  - Great success partnering with ATSA (advanced therapeutic solutions for anxiety) for supporting a student with selective mutism
  - We created a crisis response template for when tragedy occurs and how to respond. (letters to the community, letters to students, letters to staff, etc). Reach out if you are interested in this resource.
  - Shout out to SPS- working directly with students, very responsive, and always available.
- Kaneland-
- St. Charles- Kate Bell, Laurel O'Brien
  - Has similar resources for crisis response, have found them to be very helpful when managing any crisis (Kate)
  - Anyone wanting a simple way to refer families to Thrive can also find us on the KCHD IRIS system, or we can send you some info you can email families. We also have digital flyers. <http://www.thriveparentingproject.com/>
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- West Aurora- Michelle Voris (see below)
- Let's Welcome NEW Members to our team today.
  - Tina Koral- Kane County Health Department- involved with the ARPA funds
    - Those who would like events promoted to the County are invited to add events to our Kane County Community Event Calendar: <https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/Calendar.aspx>
  - Jillian Barker- first time working in Kane County; I'm excited to join this group!
  - Mary Kim- Community Organizer with the Fox River Valley Initiative
  - Kari Glenn- ROE- moved into a community intervention specialist position. Working hard and preparing for Institute Day. Youth Voices forum coming up on Feb 7th. I began doing agency tours and visits to explore new partnership options to help students—I Series conference in March.
  - Amber Evans- ROE
  - Alejandra Moreno- ROE Family counselor
  - Kim Peterson, Health Department—Youth Voices Forum: The goal is to get every district to participate in some capacity. Contact Kim if you are interested.
    - <https://kanehealth.crediblemind.com/>
  - Maria Leon- Contact directly for information about the Youth Voices Forum; <https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/YVF.aspx>
    - Please contact me at [LeonMaria@KaneCountyIL.gov](mailto:LeonMaria@KaneCountyIL.gov).
  - Gilda Ross- GPS Family Series- last month 7 Steps to College Success for Students with Disabilities. Next week, on Wednesday, Bruce Perry will talk about brain science, which occurs when a child does not feel accepted and secure, and how it affects their learning. Check out the YouTube channel of past events. Free!

- Consider having a watch party for any of the offerings.

➤ Veteran Members

- Courtney Duran- exciting news coming soon!- Kane County Health Department
  - Self-Help platform launching in February - Behavioral Health 360- has resources, practices, tools, screeners
    - Larger scale demos coming up in February in March will also provide private demos
  - Partnering with Plum Tree and Mathers Clinic to provide Free Neuropsych Evaluations- see flier
  - Behavioral Health 360 demo Registration links:
    - February 10th, 1-1:30 PM:  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/54RX1G5ESc26uXFu3NOQdw>
    - March 10th, 11-11:30 AM:  
[https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/\\_UA1RhKYRLGjXwp4rY-zFw](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/_UA1RhKYRLGjXwp4rY-zFw)
    - <https://www.kanehealth.com/Latest-News/Free%20Neuropsychological%20Evaluations%20Available%20for%20Adults%20and%20Children%20in%20Kane%20County.pdf>
- Michelle Voris- West Aurora School District- participating in the Youth Voices Forum (6th year participating). It is a great experience for the kids to have a voice and share their experiences. This has led to additional mental health initiatives at West Aurora High School (annual Mental Health Awareness Fest, monthly Wellness Series). Signs of Suicide program occurring at the end of next month. College Career and Wellness Fair on February 28th.
- Cheryl Curry- 16-19 year-old teen process group will be starting up for a new round Feb 27th at Plum Tree in St. Charles. Here is the link. Participants benefit from peer feedback, need more than individual therapy or school social work, require social skills, and are NOT looking for a structured skills-based group. Neurodiversity is embraced. The link to information is below, or they can email me directly at [cheryl@theplumtree.net](mailto:cheryl@theplumtree.net).
  - <https://www.theplumtree.net/chill-chat-and-challenge/>
- Araceli Ascencio- LifeStance Health- Oswego Office- accepting new clients for outpatient therapy in English and Spanish
- Carly Quick- Educator Wellness Support- reach out to anyone interested! Provides PD, direct support, and individualized support. Here is the link for the directory/resources we've talked about today....take a look and add/tweak as needed!  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1OkCB3kMRM0cGwlq2CVTdrqwU6b9k38oaA849dhDX06l/edit?pli=1&gid=987250810#gid=987250810>
- Jennifer Benjamin and Kate Bell- Thrive Parenting Project- are starting the parent support group next Tuesday. Send any parents her way! Tuesdays from 7-8:30- for parents to connect.
  - Anyone wanting a simple way to refer families to us can also find us on the KCHD IRIS system, or we can send you some info you can email families. We also have digital flyers
  - Here is the Google form we use for our online parent support on Tuesday.  
<https://forms.gle/dQzJx417ziCzD86o7>
- Jules O'Neal- Tri-City Family Services- has openings for new clients with little to no waitlist, Medicaid, private insurance, and sliding scale. 3 emotional wellness programs upcoming:
  - February 8th- True North Program- 6-8th graders- work on personal vision boards and insights, looking at values and emotions and what influences themselves

- February 8th- Compass Program- 4-5th graders- how to respond to anger, embarrassment, jealousy, navigating friendships/relationships, stress relief, yoga
  - March 15th- Star Program- 4 (before September 15th)- 5-year-olds- strengthening, wellness, friendship skills
  - TriCity Family Services has openings for our Eating Disorder Program-Family Based Treatment (FBT), and we will be beginning to look for participants for the Wilderness Challenge Program (Boundary Waters Canoe Trip)
- Odaly Medina- empowering individuals and connecting with community resources.
- Kim Boatner- Oakbridge Therapeutic Services- currently partnered with Batavia, Mid-Valley, U-46, D300, Dream, and D301. Work directly with students within schools and also private practice. Works with ROE to support students with truancy concerns.
- Megan Schmitz: I provide continuing education to several of our school districts. Recently, I presented to D303 parents about anxiety and school avoidance. I will return to provide follow-up and additional presentations (smartphones and the mental health crisis). I would love to provide parent education at the beginning of the year to teach them about the long-term effects of excessive absences. D303 is talking about bringing her in for a teaser at Freshman orientation.
- Kimberly Holstein- Fox Valley Therapy Dog Club <https://fvtherapydogs.org/>
- Outside Clinical Evaluations must include the input of the clinicians and the educational team to be genuinely comprehensive and best support every student.
- Michelle Clark- Tri-City Family Services is in a great spot with its waiting list, welcoming new clients.