



Mid-Valley Mental Health Partnership Meeting April 11, 2025

Welcome & Introductions

- Welcome!
- [Mid-Valley Mental Health Partnership Directory](#) (please add your information to the directory if you have not done so already)
- Let's welcome NEW Members to our team today!
- Alicia Frantzen is also a private practice and community partner!
 - Alicia will share an excellent resource for students and families!
 - Unplugged Family Roots- self-paced courses for over-stimulated families to decrease screen dependency, strengthen family bonds, and cultivate more meaningful, present relationships
 - <https://www.aliciacollettfoundations.com/>
 - The current report with new updated information is linked here:
<https://www.common sensemedia.org/sites/default/files/research/report/2025-common-sense-census-web-2.pdf>
 - I referred to the 2017 Census:
https://www.common sensemedia.org/sites/default/files/research/report/csm_zerotoeight_fullreport_release_2.pdf
 - The link to the Phone Free Schools Training I Attended:
https://www.cartwheel.org/resource/phone-free-schools-exploring-impacts-on-student-mental-health-learning-and-connection-2?utm_campaign=6370574-Jan%20Webinar&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_49BkF5NtNNDInruCDenGPjr0kMAXh3kLwguenYmxspoQzhR1wWalFifP9xhtO61EqWM0oT41ZPZo4x2dz5ucP9_QieQ&_hsmi=349892265&utm_content=349892265&utm_source=hs_email

➤ Mid-Valley Team & District Representatives

- Mid-Valley- Lisa Palese
 - ARPA Grant - We have been able to purchase flexible seating options, sensory supports, games, and activities, contribute to DHH movie nights, bring in outside counselors to support students, and provide support for truancy.
 - Have this grant for this year and next year.
 - A HUGE thank you to our district liaisons and board for approving our new staffing plan.
 - We feel incredibly supported by them.
 -

- Batavia- Catherine Murray
 - Offering an on-campus health clinic for families next week (4/18)
 - District-wide committee focused on revamping our multi-tiered prevention system for social emotional and behavioral needs district-wide (engaged in redefining SEL as a district, standards alignment under our district's Portrait of a Grad framework), inclusive of adult SE professional learning standards/priorities
 - Adopted Panorama as a screener
- Central- Sarah Nolan
 - At the end of year 3 with the current SEL Screener, we have one more year and will consider whether to continue.
 - In the upcoming school year, a new SEL tool will be introduced to support students.
 - Thank you to the partnerships that have occurred this year between the district and the partnership
- Kaneland
- St. Charles
 - Atlee Smith- D303 Community Liaison
 - Works with students experiencing homelessness, supporting students, and working with the EL families to support and create connections
 - Has been helping to work on new Cell phone policies
 - Elementary- no devices allowed the whole school day
 - Middle School- no devices allowed during bell to bell
 - High School- devices must be in pockets during class hours, devices are allowed during passing periods, and lunch
 - Very focused on attendance this year, putting in more proactive supports, looking to adopt new administrative procedures to support families,
 - Currently planning a registration week for families that struggle with registering their children online
 - Partnering with Project Backpack to support families
 - Community and mindset shift
 - Student Support Fund- to support students in a more fluid way. Creating a Fun Run during Scarecrow Fest, to raise money for the St Charles learning community, to help at-risk students.
 - Katherine Bell- back for another 4 years on the school board
 - Hoping to get some new SEL supports implemented with the new board.
 - Excited for all the new things they will be doing and excited to have Atlee Smith with the district
 -
- Geneva
 - Anne Scalia and Jamie Benavides, Jen Leibforth
 - SPS presentations
 - The number of referrals and hospitalizations has gone down
 - Lots of great connections with resources from the partnership
 - Taking a close look at attendance regarding the impact it's having on their classrooms

- Creating supports and consequences to increase attendance
- Students are being inundated with missed work due to absences
- Teachers have to monitor excused work and its effect on grades and passing classes
- Creating a presentation on outside evaluations]
 - Wants to work as a partnership team to collaborate and identify ways that we are working together and on the same page
 - As a district, they are working on reduction goals and increasing student capacity. Having too many supports and accommodations can, however, prohibit the increase in student capacity.
 - Wants to partner with outside evaluators to strengthen the partnership
- Shared resource- Raquel Hopkins, The Capacity Expert
- West Aurora HS - Michelle Voris (Student Assistance Program Coordinator)
 - We conducted our Signs of Suicide program for the 10th year. This program is facilitated in 9th-grade Health classes each semester, with about 400 students per program. We tend to see a “need for follow-up” rate of about 20-25% each year, so it always feels like an important program to continue.
 - We initiated a monthly Wellness Series this year, which I mentioned to this group during the planning stages. This has gone well this year with topics ranging from Substance Abuse to Stress Management to Healthy Relationships. Community partners join us on Wednesdays in the cafeteria with an information table and engaging activity for students.
 - Our Wellness Center has been increasingly used by students this year as a quiet space to escape the crowded hallways and relax, which is exciting to see.
 - We’ve continued our Drug Diversion program (now in our 5th year) for students in possession or under the influence of a drug. We’ve seen a significant decrease in the number of students using the service at school this year. Curious about treatment numbers in the community?
 - This is the second year of our Too Good for Drugs Ambassador program, where I take a handful of high school students quarterly into 6th and 7th-grade health classes to facilitate games related to gateway drug trivia and peer refusal skills. The staff and students have received this very well in our four middle schools.
 - We’re in the midst of our 3rd annual “Gotta Be Drug Free” contest, where students submit videos or digital designs to be used for next year’s communication campaign. Winners are chosen at the end of this month.
 - We’ll hold our 5th semi-annual “Take Back Your Vape” event on Friday April 25th. We’ve collected 275 vapes since starting the event in Spring 2023.
 - Our 3rd annual Mental Health Awareness Fest will take place on Thursday, May 1st, with staff, students, and community wellness partners hosting tables with activities related to healthy coping strategies and overall wellness.
 - In the process of updating our MTSS process at the high school level, we are including a mentor program that has been intermittently facilitated over the past few years.
 - Alternative ed programs PLC model - outside our district to collaborate further?

➤ **Veteran Members - Is there anything you'd like to update the Partnership about?**

- Cheryl Curry, LCPC, Plum Tree Child & Adolescent Psychology Services, St. Charles: FYI from the private practice end of things...we are noticing a high number of sophomores and juniors who are experiencing higher than normal levels of stress, excessive worry, and pressure related to the need to know what they are expected to major in/know what to do by the time they hit junior year. The source of the pressure is misinformation from peers, family, and the belief that college is the only acceptable option. I've been conducting a fair amount of parent education and coaching to bridge that gap, collaborating with the school counselors and social workers of these clients to identify more targeted support. They've been fantastic!
- Beth Plachetka, LCSW, EdD, Safe Harbor Counseling, 6 S Main St, Sugar Grove. Our therapists continue to see clients aged 6 and above, including those who are retired. Issues are most often related to anxiety and/or trauma. We continue to offer CEUs and are currently working on the Workplace Bullying presentation. Please contact me if you would like to provide a CEU presentation.
 - Would love to support the collaboration between districts and outside evaluators to educate and strengthen the process
- Katherine Bell-
 - Shared that getting student buy-in was very important during the implementation of the new phone use policy.
 - <https://thriveparentingproject.com/love-%26-logic-classes>
 - See the link for details
- Josh Axelsen- shared resource on new legislation regarding phone use in schools
 - <https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=2427&GAID=18&GA=104&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=162470&SessionID=114>
- Carly Quick- added to outside evaluation discussion. Suggested a liaison to collaborate with the outside providers and the school districts to help close the gap and align what educational needs look like today.
- Megan Schmitz's goal is to educate parents early on regarding school avoidance. Wants to empower parents with how to speak with their children. Aligning with the schools to partner with parents to create community-level supports.
- Toni Garcia- Health Department
 - Shared that many parents have reached out who are at a complete loss, because there is a disconnect between the outside evaluations and the school recommendations.
 - Free evaluations are being done by Plum Tree and Mathers Clinic
 - The Plum Tree is full, but Mathers Clinic has a few slots available for 10 and up.
 - 988 Supports
 - Tobacco Support Services
- Michelle Clark- Tri-City Family Services
 - Current low waitlist for taking on new clients
 - Emotional Wellness Programs
 - Presentations via Zoom are coming up for high schoolers and/or parents-
 - April 28th- how to handle anxious feelings
 - May 5th- how to handle angry feelings
 - Summer Programs

- Eating Disorder support programs
- TriCity Family Services information:
 - Counseling currently has a very low waitlist, so we can quickly schedule appointments for families. We consider all aspects of a client's life when making a diagnosis, and we encourage families to work with schools positively and collaboratively to help their children thrive in school.
 - Emotional Wellness Programs – 2 flyers are attached
 - Presentations via Zoom for High Schoolers and Parents/Guardians
 - 4-28-25 from 7:00-8:00 PM on “What to Do with Anxious Feelings”
 - 5-5-25 from 7:00-8:00 PM on “How to Handle Angry Feelings”
 - Project Self-Compassion for 6th-8th Grade (*grade for Fall 2025) Girls from 6:15-7:30 PM on Tuesdays, 6-3-25 through 7-8-25 in our St. Charles satellite office, 2570 Foxfield Road, Suite 101, St. Charles, IL 60174
 - The high schooler and parent presentation flyer is here:
 - <https://tricityfamilyservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Anxious-4-28-25-Angry-5-5-25-HS-and-Parent-Flyer.pdf>
 - The Project Self-Compassion Group flyer is here:
 - <https://tricityfamilyservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Project-Self-Compassion-MS-Girls-6-3-25-to-7-8-25.pdf>
- Courtney Duran- Health Department
 - April 25th- Autism Spectrum 101 Training- Virtual
 - Behavioral Health 360- self-help website
 - Great resource for finding various resources throughout the county
 - Information to self-screen
 - Over 100 topics to read about
 - <https://kanehealth.crediblemind.com/>.
 - <http://kanehealth.com>.
 - Mind Matters Monthly Behavioral Health Training Series information and sign up here <https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/BH-Training.aspx>. These are free trainings for anyone in the community and free CEUs, as well as interpretation, are provided!
 - Information and Referral Services through Toni information here <https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/Case-Management.aspx>.
 - Inquiry form here <https://redcap.dph.illinois.gov/surveys/?s=8EDPRCTM44CKDDFC>.
 - FREE Narcan/Naloxone for community members, organizations/businesses information here <https://www.kanehealth.com/opioid-awareness/Pages/What-is-Naxolone.aspx>.
 - FREE Firearm Restraining Order Training information here <https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/FRO.aspx>.
 - Drive-through event on April 25th

- Alejandra Moreno-
 - Partnering with agencies outside of Kane County

Mariah Kuick, Outpatient Mental Health Director, Ecker Center for Behavioral Health

- Continuing to provide an array of behavioral health services, including mental health and substance use services, along with crisis services. We have an office in STC.
- Offering a Positive Parenting Therapy group at our Elgin location for both English and Spanish speakers.
- One of our newest programs is Supported Employment, which aims to support adults with mental health challenges find fulfilling and sustainable employment.
- Offering a Recovery Café at our STC office on Wednesdays, 3-6 pm. This provides a safe, drop-in space for those needing any support on their recovery journey. Open to anyone.