

COUNTY OF KANE



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Kane County Health Department Launches New Mental Health Campaign

“Connect with Kane: Learn, Grow, Thrive” aims to raise awareness, reduce stigma and promote access to mental health and substance use services

MEDIA RELEASE (4/3/25) The Kane County Health Department (KCHD) has launched **Connect with Kane: Learn, Grow, Thrive**, a year-long campaign to raise awareness about the importance of mental health, and help residents learn how to access local mental health and substance use resources.

The campaign will provide informational resources for residents, including myths and facts about mental health, how to access care in the community, affordability strategies, and tools to support family and friends in prioritizing their own mental health. In addition, toolkits for community partners will focus on combatting stigma, connecting people with professional care or self-help options, and fostering a supportive environment. Over the course of the year, the department will focus on key issues like youth mental health, suicide prevention, substance use treatment, and harm reduction.

The cornerstone of this campaign is a free website, **Behavioral Health 360**, that serves as an education and resource hub with hundreds of screening and assessment tools, informational articles and self-help guides on a wide range of topics, as well as a resource guide of local Kane County based providers. Visit **kanehealth.com** to access the site.

“While the reasons behind the increased need for mental health services may be complex, the trends are clear, residents are reporting increasing levels of stress, anxiety, and other challenges that can be indicators of mood disorders,” said Michael Isaacson, Executive Director of the KCHD. “This year, the Health Department plans to double down on communications around mental health to inform residents about the importance of this aspect of health and all the different resources available to access help for themselves and their loved ones.”

Mental health concerns have surged since the COVID-19 pandemic, with Kane County seeing a 31% increase in adult depression rates from 2020 to 2022, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Suicide mortality rates are up over the same period. While overdose deaths have declined since 2021, they remain higher than pre-pandemic levels.

“Mental health is every bit as important as physical health. It impacts how we sleep, build relationships, make decisions, cope with stress and contribute to our communities,” Isaacson added. “The bottom line is this: improving understanding and access to mental health services can save lives and is the right thing to do.”

Research also shows that mental health and substance use issues impact everyone regardless of race, income level, gender, or social status.

“Mental health and substance use impact more than individuals and families, they have a huge impact on entire communities,” said Lore Baker, President & CEO of the Association for Individual Development (AID). “When children and teens are struggling, it impacts their school performance and learning; for adults, mental health issues can significantly impact work performance and productivity. The consequences of ignoring these issues are far reaching for our county and region.”

"This is such an important campaign, and I'm thrilled that the Health Department is working to foster more conversations around mental health," said Amber Peters, Executive Director, Elgin Partnership for Early Learning. "We want people to know that effective treatments are available, and cost should not be a barrier to care. Equally important, mental health care includes prevention and wellness opportunities. There are steps individuals can take to build resilience and reduce the risk of developing mental health challenges."

Additionally, KCHD offers personalized support to help individuals meet their health and social service needs. For assistance with mental health, substance use, housing, or financial support, residents can contact KCHD's Information and Referral Specialist at **331-312-0060** or **garciatoni@kanecountyil.gov**.

KCHD is also committed to making mental health care accessible. Most insurance plans, including Medicaid and Medicare, cover services, and many providers offer free or low-cost care. For help, call **331-312-0060** or email **garciatoni@kanecountyil.gov**.

"Seeking support is a sign of strength and hope. Checking in with family, friends and loved ones on their mental well-being shows you care about them," said Dana Slowinski, Co-Owner, Family Recovery Centers. "I'm grateful to Kane County and the Health Department for prioritizing this critical issue."

Funding for the campaign comes from federal American Rescue Plan funds allocated by the Kane County Board in 2023.