

The Essential Piece

701 S. Harrison Avenue, Kankakee, IL 60901 815-939-1611 www.cfkrv.org



April 2019

A Piece from Nicole



Dear friends,

Every year, I am renewed by the fresh beauty of spring – blue skies, milder temperatures, and the promise of summer.

As your comm**YOU**nity foundation, we have so much to “spring” into in the months ahead. Our Annual Awards Luncheon will take place on May 16, 2019. It is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the progress and successes of the many

organizations that your donations enable us to support.

Project SUN, under the leadership of Deb Baron, continues to make inroads, building a system of care with a community planning team to address the emotional health and well-being of the children of our comm**YOU**nity.

I’ve seen many walkers and cyclists enjoying the Riverfront Trailways path, and there will soon be lots of blooms in Grant Park.

All of these endeavors show the value and importance of a comm**YOU**nity that works together. Of course, **YOU** are at the very center of all of CFKRV’s goals, projects, and dreams. **YOU** are the essential piece of our united efforts, and I am proud to share this beautiful experience.

Nicole Smolkovich

Nicole Smolkovich
Executive Director



5-2-1-0: *Numbers to Grow Up With and Live By*



Calling all kids! The Kankakee County Health Department has your numbers: 5-2-1-0. And, it launched a healthy lifestyle initiative to reach kids where they live, go to school, and play.

5-2-1-0 *Let's Go!* is a nationally recognized campaign that encourages behaviors to prevent and address obesity and overweight in children. With a grant from Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley, the health department is on a mission to bring the

5-2-1-0 *Let's Go!* message to schools, childcare centers, and healthcare practices throughout the area.

5-2-1-0 *Let's Go!* is a healthy eating and active living message that gives kids numbers with meaning. It's easy for children to learn, understand, and do every day – at school and at home.

5- *fruits and vegetables*
2- *hours or less of recreational screen time*
1- *hour or more of active play*
0- *sugar-sweetened beverages*

The CFKRV grant provided two days of training from the program's founders to 17 community organizations. KCHD has already partnered with the YWCA, the Kankakee Area YMCA, and Headstart to become 5-2-1-0 *Let's Go!* registered sites and estimates that they will reach 728 students and their families in the first year.

- In a classroom with 28 children, five will be obese and four will be overweight.
- Childhood obesity has been called one of the most serious health challenges of the 21st century, affecting more than 30 percent of children.
- Over the last 30 years, the prevalence of childhood obesity (ages 2—19) in the U.S. has tripled from 5.5 percent to 17 percent.
- In Illinois, one in five children (almost 20 percent) is obese.
- Nearly 28 percent (1/3) of Illinois high school are overweight or obese.
- Obesity can profoundly affect children's and teen's physical health, social and emotional well-being, and self-esteem.

Illinois Department of Public Health, Chronic Disease Burden Update, September 2016

Helping Those Who Help Us

Healthy Heroes was launched in 2016 in memory of Zeb Pfeiffer, a Kankakee County deputy who passed away unexpectedly from a heart attack. He was 35 years old.

To honor him, Zeb's family partnered with the Heart and Vascular Institute of Riverside Medical Center to offer free cardiac screenings to local police and firefighters. The screenings include electrocardiograms, blood pressure and body mass index checks, and tests for cholesterol, peripheral arterial disease, and blood glucose.

In 2018, a grant from Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley enabled 108 volunteer firefighters in Iroquois County to be screened. It was discovered that four firefighters had abnormal EKG results. Importantly, a physician was onsite to discuss the diagnosis with each of them and to refer them to appropriate follow-up treatment and intervention.

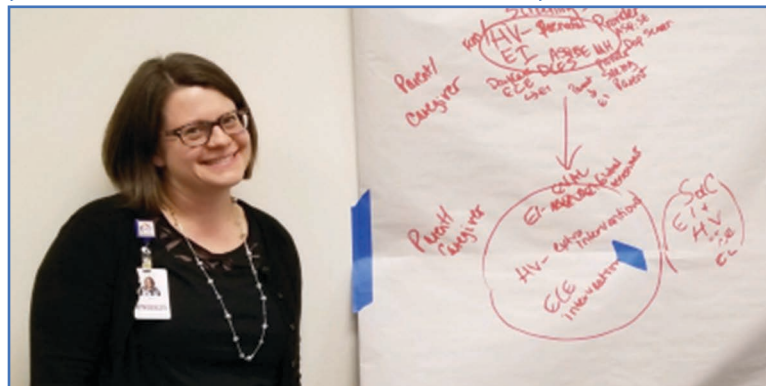
"Early diagnosis is key in helping local heroes like Zeb proactively manage disease and reduce risk of mortality," explains Lauren Short, annual giving manager, Riverside Healthcare Foundation. "By taking care of their personal health rather than facing a potential emergency event, police and firefighters can continue their noble work to keep our communities safe."



Project SUN (**S**trengthening and **U**nifying our **N**etwork) is moving forward in its efforts to reach adolescents and families who have firsthand experience with the local mental health system of care. Plans are underway to host focus groups and to recruit leaders of support and therapy organizations to assist in gathering input for the project's six-year implementation plan. One-on-one interviews and online surveys will be available soon.

School social workers and early childhood service providers have been asked to estimate the number of children who are part of the current system of care. The Community Planning Team defines a youth who is receiving behavioral health support from more than one provider as being in the mental health system of care (for example, when a school social worker or psychologist and a private counselor, doctor, hospital, and/or another mental health-related service provider work with the same child or adolescent).

The team's goal is to capture input from as broad a sample of youth and families utilizing the mental health system in Kankakee County. If you are working with parents or youth and would like to host a focus group or if you would like to share the online surveys and one-on-one interviews, please contact Dr. Deb Baron, Project SUN Director, at debra@cfkrv.org or 815-304-5933.



Recently, Dr. Laura Sztuba, Director of Community Outreach and Planning for the Kankakee County Health Department, led the Project Sun Community Planning Team in a mapping process to help them understand how families access mental health services for their children.

We Are All Vulnerable

A core component of the mission of The Helen Wheeler Center is to provide education, programs, and resources to enhance and support mental health awareness and stigma reduction in our community. A Communityworks grant helped two clinical professionals from the center advance this mission with training to become certified instructors of the Youth Mental Health First Aid curriculum.



With this training, they are teaching parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, social workers, counselors, and nurses how to help youth who are experiencing a mental health or addiction challenge or who are in crisis.

To date, the health department has certified 50 additional persons from the community as instructors, including the entire coaching staff of the Kankakee School District. Courses are also scheduled to be presented at churches, youth organizations, and the Regional Office of Education.

Jackie Haas, a certified Youth Mental First Aid instructor from The Helen Wheeler Center, explains, "This curriculum helps generate a better understanding of mental illness and a better level of comfort around these topics in order to reduce stigma, increase engagement in treatment services, and, hopefully, result in a reduced rate of suicide in our community."

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FOR GOOD. FOREVER.

Please consider including CFKRV in your will and estate planning. It is a wonderful way to continue your legacy and to ensure ours. For information, call Nicole at 815-939-1611.



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