



HELPING SERVICES for Youth & Families

SPRING & SUMMER 2020

“Rock ‘N’ Bowl” Bowl-A-Thons Support Youth Mentoring

In March, youth mentoring participants and community supporters expected to pump up the jams at the 2020 Rock ‘N’ Bowl Youth Mentoring Bowl-A-Thons. The Bowl-A-Thons are the biggest fundraiser for the mentoring program to support youth ages 6–16 in Allamakee, Delaware, Howard, and Winneshiek Counties. Local youth develop positive relationships, increase self-esteem, are able to say no to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, and become more hopeful about their future through the Youth Mentoring program. The money raised from the Bowl-A-Thons supports important needs such as mentor activities, mentor recruitment, background checks, events, and training opportunities.



Thank you to the bowlers from Dupaco Community Credit Union for joining us!

The dollars raised at the Bowl-A-Thons support our nearly 90 mentor/mentee matches throughout the four counties the program serves. Delaware County raised over \$7,000 dollars at the Bowl-A-Thon on Saturday, March 7, and had 42 bowlers participate. Unfortunately the Bowl-A-Thon benefiting Allamakee, Howard, and Winneshiek Counties scheduled for Saturday, March 21, was postponed due to health and safety issues centered around COVID-19.

Thank you to
the Iowa Mentoring Partnership
for supporting Youth Mentoring!



Although the event in Waukon has been postponed, presently just over \$7,000 has been raised through sponsors and donations. Those wishing to contribute online should go to <https://charity.gofundme.com/en/campaign/rock-n-bowl-waukon>. Donations can also be mailed to: **Helping Services for Youth & Families, Attn: Youth Mentoring, PO Box 372, Decorah, IA 52101**. There is a great deal of excitement for the event to take place in Waukon at Arrowhead Lanes at a future date.

The Bowl-A-Thons would not be possible without generous sponsors throughout each county. We appreciate the support from so many businesses and individuals to help make the fundraising a success and building awareness of the needs of Youth Mentoring. Additionally, bowlers also raised funds through the help of family, friends, and neighbors. Youth Mentoring is beyond grateful for our sponsors and bowlers. ■

If you want to learn more about Youth Mentoring, please contact **Kathy, Colinne or Tessa** at 563-387-1720 or mentoring@helpingservices.org. You can also go to our youth mentoring website: www.helpingservices.org/services/youth-mentoring

Area Couple Inspires Hope While Mentoring

Mentoring a youth is a very fulfilling way to give back to your community, building supportive relationships, and providing youth with new experiences. It can be an enriching and gratifying adventure for both the mentors and the mentees. As a mentor, you have the opportunity to be a positive role model for a youth, instill hopefulness within them, and help shape their future.

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Xander, Ed, and Vickie





Partnership Helps Train Volunteers

Every January we are fortunate to partner with the Luther College social work course, "*Crisis Intervention*", and provide our Victim Counselor Training. This collaboration came about as a way to offer the participants firsthand experience with crisis intervention through volunteering with a victim service agency. While not all participants may pursue this volunteer opportunity after the course, it is also a great way to provide students with knowledge about the dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault. Additionally, the course provides information on how to respond to friends and loved ones who may be struggling. With both of these issues being highly relevant on college campuses, we hope that this training will encourage more positive bystander intervention and referrals to the appropriate victim service agency.

Helping Services' Domestic Abuse Resource Center and Riverview Center, the sexual assault advocacy agency for our service area, partnered together to bring this 30 hour training to Luther College. The Volunteer Coordinator from each agency took part in coordinating the training, recruiting guest speakers, and providing interactive crisis intervention activities. This year we were able to bring in a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, an investigator from the Decorah Police Department, the Stewards of Children training, the Luther College Title IX Coordinator, Luther Head of Security, and a human trafficking specialist. All of these guest speakers were able to present on the aspects of the training that they are experts, and give the students the opportunity to ask follow up questions.

While this training may be presented on campus to the "*Crisis Intervention*" course, it is also open to community members who would like to participate. This is our 17th year offering this training, and we hope that this collaboration between agencies and Luther continues for many years to come. ■

If you are interested in participating in this training, or others of this type, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, *Brittany McIntyre* at 563-380-4976 or bmcintyre@helpingservices.org.



Luther College students attend a training facilitated by Brittany McIntyre, Volunteer Coordinator.

Partnership Helps Families Thrive

My name is Madi Brauer (they/them) and I joined the Helping Services team this fall as a family educator serving in Allamakee, Howard, and Winneshiek counties.

Part of my duties as a family educator includes recruiting families to join our program and to educate families on child development. One of my favorite ways to do this is through Story Time at the library. Currently, I have been going to the libraries in Decorah and Waukon.

Story Time brings new experiences and challenges every week. You never know who's going to show up, or how long the kids want to be read to that day. We read through a few books and then do an activity together. To keep it centered on child development, I try to find crafts or other things that work on any cognitive or motor skills. The goal is to promote interaction between the parent and child, and give the parents some simple ideas/activities that they can use at home.

My favorite part of story time is finding an activity that the kids get excited about, even if it's for a few minutes. I have really enjoyed getting to know community members that come to story time. ■



If you have questions or would like more information contact me at 563-387-1720 or mbrauer@helpingservices.org. Make sure to check our Facebook page for future events.



Everyone having a great time at story time!

Partnerships Support the Domestic Abuse Resource Center

We are grateful to our community for partnering with the Domestic Abuse Resource Center (DARC) to help raise awareness and funds to support survivors of domestic violence. Among many other generous donors, we would like to thank PIVO Brewery, Blepta Studios, Reefuel, Pulpit Rock Brewery, and Upper Iowa University SAAC students for recently partnering with us!

First, thank you to Pivo Brewery and Blepta Studios in Calmar for hosting a painting party during October's Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This year's event was so popular they added a second class. This event helped to raise \$330 for the DARC. When we asked Sara Neuzil why this was important to their business she shared, "PIVO Brewery and Blepta Studios is excited to host a painting party to support the Domestic Abuse Resource Center. Making art can be very therapeutic for many people, and several people from last year mentioned that someone close to them or they themselves had experienced domestic abuse. It is important to bring awareness to the seriousness and prevalence of domestic abuse so that we as a community can be more encouraging and supportive."

Second, Reefuel and Pulpit Rock Brewery hosted Reefuel on Tap. This was an all levels sculpt class led by Reefuel's owner, Laree Schouweiler. The class was free, but people provided a donation to attend. The class was attended by over 30 people raising over \$800 to divide between Helping Services and Kadens Kloset.

Finally, the Upper Iowa University Student Athlete Activity Council organized a Thanksgiving basket drive for the DARC. They provided 30 bags of food that were handed out throughout the holiday season. ■

We are grateful for these community partnerships to help raise awareness for the DARC. If you are interested in how to host an event like this or partner with Helping Services, please contact us at [563-387-1720](tel:563-387-1720) or info@helpingservices.org.

Thank you to all for supporting the Domestic Abuse Resource Center!

Helping Services for Youth & Families

563-387-1720 | PO Box 372, Decorah, IA 52101





Over the holidays the Helping Services' Domestic Abuse Resource Center (DARC) staff worked with clients to identify the wants and needs for them and their children to have a wonderful holiday season through an initiative called The Giving Project. The gift requests ranged from car seats, toys, clothing, and everything in between.

Due to the generosity of businesses and individual donors the DARC team was able to deliver gifts to 28 parents and 76 children! This is the highest number of gifts provided to children in The Giving Project history. We are grateful for each donor and what they were able to provide to these families.

Year-round our DARC team serves seven counties in northeast Iowa and has clients with needs such as gas gift cards, grocery store gift cards, and basic health items as they are transitioning to a safe environment. ■

Our 24-hour resource line is available for anyone experiencing domestic violence. Give our staff a call at 1-800-383-2988.



Community Support for Nicotine Free Parks & Trails

Many communities have adopted nicotine free parks and trails over the past several years, including quite a list we have worked with from our corner of the state. The Prevention 5 Coalition in Howard County along with the Crestwood HEROES High School leadership group wanted to add Cresco to this list. Community support started to pour in for nicotine free parks and trails with an overwhelming response including over 200 signatures in support, statements of support, and letters of support from the Howard County Board of Supervisors, Regional Health Services of Howard County, Prairie Springs Trail Board, F.I.T. Running Club of Cresco, and Kessel Kids Child Care.

In November, the Prevention 5 Coalition, Crestwood HEROES, and community members presented to the City Council and those in attendance shared why they believe nicotine free parks and trails is important. The Council ended up adopting a resolution at the December meeting and now all five parks and the trail that runs through Cresco are nicotine free. This accomplishment was truly a community effort!

Do you want your community to have nicotine free parks and trails? Helping Services is able to provide coordination of efforts, a sample resolution, and no cost signage. ■

Visit our website and/or contact [Tessa at twillie@helpingservices.org](mailto:twillie@helpingservices.org) or 563-387-1720 to learn more.



Thank you to Crestwood HEROES for sharing their support for nicotine free parks and trails!





The Role of Community in Prevention

Each county has unique needs, culture, and desire for change. To address this, we participate in coalitions within each of our service counties.

Community members, law enforcement, social service agencies, and healthcare agencies come together to focus on making their home towns safer and stronger. This can be a concern with the latest drug trends in the area, underage drinking, and focus on positive activities for youth. If you have an interest in seeing positive change in your community, consider joining forces with like-minded groups.

Below is a list of the community coalitions in our service area. If you are passionate about prevention, please reach out to the coalition in your community to get involved! ■

Allamakee Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (ASAP) • www.allamakee.us/asap5

Contact: Jean Bossom, Ph: 563-568-2204

Clayton County Community Collaboration Council (5C) • claytoncountyyccc.weebly.com

Contact: ClaytonCountyCCC@gmail.com

Delaware County Drug Abuse Coalition (DDAC)
sites.google.com/a/helpingservices.org/ddac/

Contact: Jen Stolka, jstolka@helpingservices.org

Fayette County Substance Abuse Coalition (FCSAC)
sites.google.com/a/helpingservices.org/fcsac

Contact: Jen Kimber, jkimber@helpingservices.org

Howard County Prevention Five Substance Abuse Coalition • sites.google.com/a/helpingservices.org/prevention5

Contact: Jen Kimber, jkimber@helpingservices.org

North Fayette Valley Community Coalition (NFVCC)
www.nfvcc.org

Contact: Stacie Schroeder, nfvcommunitycoalition@gmail.com

Winneshiek ERASE Substance Abuse Coalition
sites.google.com/a/helpingservices.org/erase

Contact: Jen Kimber, jkimber@helpingservices.org

Family Educator Home Visits

Have you ever wondered if your baby/toddler was meeting their milestones of development? Do you have parenting questions or concerns, but don't want to ask your friend/relative because you are afraid they would think you should know this?

Family Educators at Helping Services for Youth & Families can assist with your questions or concerns. Family Educators cover Allamakee, Clayton, Howard, and Winneshiek Counties. Here is a highlight of one of our Family Educators, Lori Barry:

My name is Lori Barry—I am a Registered Nurse & Certified Parents as Teachers Educator. I have been a Family Educator for 20 years, assisting families prenatally through age three, in Clayton County.

As a Family Educator, I partner with you using the Parents as Teachers Curriculum, focusing on your child's healthy growth & development. These appointments take place in the ease and comfort of your home, the information brought to you is personalized to fit your needs, concerns, and hopes (goals) for your family.

The parent & child activity is an important element of the home visit. These activities can promote a boost in child development and strengthen parent & child bonds. In addition, a health history is obtained, vision & hearing screenings and developmental screenings to monitor the child's milestones. Parents are their child's first and most important teacher.

Also, during home visits, we offer information and support on many topics such as breastfeeding, infant/child weights, child passenger safety (child car seats), and help connect families to resources that are available to them. ■

Helping Services for Youth and Families offers home visits in Allamakee, Clayton, Howard, and Winneshiek Counties. If you are interested in a home visit or have questions contact us at 563-387-1720 or helpingservices.org/family.



More Info: www.helpingservices.org | info@helpingservices.org

Mentoring...

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Spring Intern Laura Lehman from Luther College recently interviewed a couple who volunteer as mentors for a youth in Allamakee County. Ed and Vickie Staheli from Lansing have been matched with Xander in Youth Mentoring at Helping Services since 2017. Xander is 13 and lives in Waukon. He really wanted to join Youth Mentoring for all the potential fun. Some of Xander's favorite memories so far with Ed and Vicki include playing with their dogs, drawing with them, and using their go-kart! Through this mentoring relationship, Xander said he has learned the importance of a true friendship.

Vickie loves to see Xander helping other people of all ages. She tries to teach him the importance of serving others because as she says, "Life is not just about us and our own happiness". Reflecting on some of their favorite memories, Vickie recalls last summer when they got to take Xander to the Mississippi River to spend some quality time on their boat. They shared a day of laughs and tons of fun!

Ed enjoys when Xander comes to their house and they go hiking, make campfires, and eat s'mores! Another special moment was when Ed and Xander worked together to carve and engrave their own walking stick!

Vickie and Ed mentor as a couple. They have two daughters of their own, so this relationship with Xander has given them new perspectives on situations they previously thought they knew how to handle. Ed mentioned that it can be challenging at times, but overall, the efforts pay off when they get to see Xander develop interpersonal skills such as communication, honesty, and etiquette/manners.

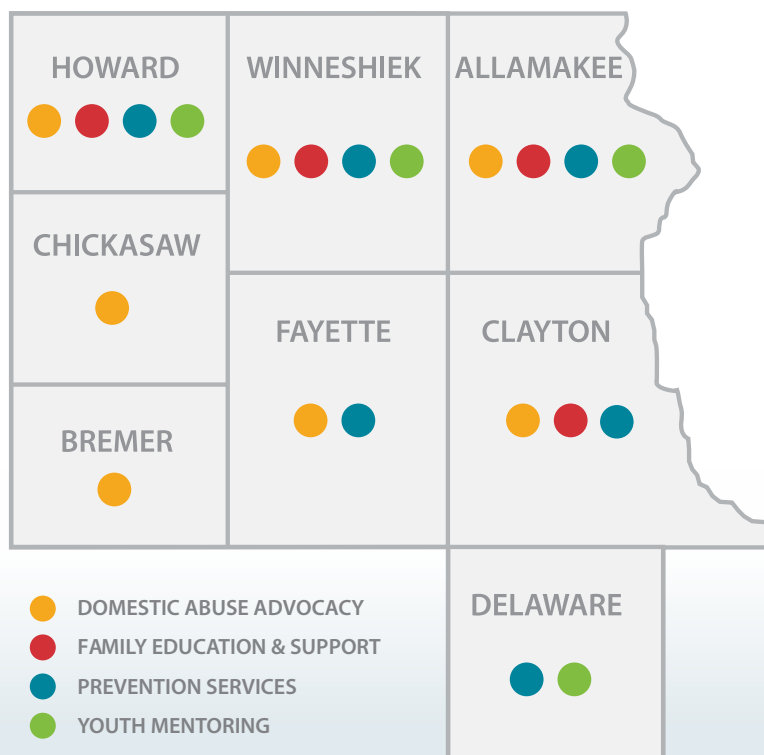
Why should you sign up to be a mentor? Vickie says "It's worth it. You take so much out of it as a mentor; getting to be a part of Xander's emotional and physical growth is truly heartwarming for us." Become like Ed and Vickie, find your own Xander and make the difference in the life of a youth. ■

Please contact **Kathy, Colinne or Tessa** at 563-387-1720 or mentoring@helpingservices.org. You can also go to www.helpingservices.org/services/mentoring



Thank you to Culver's of Decorah for supporting Youth Mentoring in January in recognition of National Mentoring Month! The restaurant donated 10% of its sales one snowy evening in January, which resulted in a gift of \$389.00!

SERVICE AREA MAP



How Can You Support Helping Services?



I was once asked the question by a friend, "how should I determine which charity to support with so many options to choose from?"

That's a tough question to answer, and one that is personal to each individual. However, my piece of advice used the words local and care to offer some perspective. Choose charities that impact your local community or a particular cause that you care deeply about. Those two guiding principles can help as you sift through a number of deserving charities to support.

In the case of Helping Services for Youth & Families, many of our donors do come from the communities that we serve in northeast Iowa. Other donors simply choose to give because they care very much about the resources we provide.

If this sounds too simple, it's probably because it is! Giving doesn't have to be complicated. For example, giving a specific dollar amount each month provides an easy way to support Helping Services. Head to our website at www.helpingservices.org/donate to set-up this donation method. Alternatively, perhaps you own a business that would like to sponsor Holiday Lights or a Bowl-A-Thon. Or maybe you enjoy the gift of providing a donation over the holidays through our annual appeal.

Adapting to Change

Like you, we are finding our way through the new normal. We certainly didn't anticipate using words like COVID-19 and Social Distancing in 2020. But adapting to change is something that our team is familiar with, so we press on to the best of our abilities.

Because our team interacts so much with the public throughout such a large eight county area, our Board of Directors agreed that closing our offices temporarily was the best way to do our part to prevent the spread of COVID-19. So, our team is working remotely until at least mid-April.

That does not mean services have stopped. The Resource Line (800-383-2988) is still operational and advocates are still able to provide important services to survivors. While we are asking that mentors and mentees do not meet face-to-face at this time, mentors are encouraged to reach out in other ways. And Family Educators are still connecting over the phone to ensure families are finding resources they desire.

Through it all, I have trust and faith in our team's ability to adapt. For the latest updates and news, please follow our Facebook page and blog. We are also still asking for your support to make it happen. Thank you for considering a gift this spring as we continue to provide necessary services to youth and families throughout northeast Iowa.

Be well, stay healthy, and thank you for continued support of Helping Services.

Regardless of how you give, or how much you give, it is important to recognize that your gift matters. The articles in this newsletter attest to the impact your dollars create. Thank you for continuing to believe in the mission and work at Helping Services.

— Carson Eggland, Executive Director

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HELPING SERVICES for Youth & Families

PO Box 372 • Decorah, IA 52101

Update your contact info at info@helpingservices.org



Striking a pose for the camera at the Bowl-A-Thon!

Thank You for **HOLIDAY** Your Support of *Lights*

Our team at Helping Services for Youth & Families wants to thank all of the volunteers, display sponsors, and visitors that made Holiday Lights another huge success. Having completed its 15th year, Holiday Lights continues to be a wonderful community event that also serves as Helping Services for Youth & Families' most important fundraiser. Helping Services for Youth & Families is a nonprofit organization with programs that promote healthier and safer families and youth residing throughout eight counties in Northeast Iowa.

Holiday Lights brought over 4,000 cars through Pulpit Rock Campground in Decorah, hosted 1,600 visitors for the opening Walk-through event, and enlisted the help of over 300 volunteers throughout the season.

If you are interested in ways to support Holiday Lights and/or Helping Services for Youth & Families, please contact us at info@helpingservices.org or 563-387-1720.

Thank you for making this year another success. Save the date for the 16th annual Holiday Lights opening Walk-through Night on Wednesday, November 25, 2020.

Learn more at helpingservices.org



Photo Credit: Photography by Brittany

