



HELPING SERVICES

for Youth & Families

Spring/Summer 2022

NEWSLETTER

Learn More About the Family Education & Support Program at Helping Services

Do you want to know if your child is on track developmentally or have questions as to why they are not sleeping through the night yet? You can call the Helping Services Office at 563-387-1720 and ask for the Family Education & Support Program. This free service utilizing the Parents as Teachers(R) program serves families with children prenatal/birth to age three in Allamakee, Clayton, Howard and Winnebago counties.

The Family Education & Support program receives referrals from OB units, doctors serving young children, preschools, daycares and will also take self-referrals. Many people just want to be sure they are giving their child every opportunity to be ahead of the game when the child starts pre-school.

From Margarta:

I have been in the Helping Services' Family Education & Support program for many years. This program provides information for the care and development of your child. It is important to have a program like this in our community to assure your child is hitting their developmental goals and provide resources if you need further assistance. Family Educators are able to provide information in English and Spanish. It was wonderful to have the information provided in my own language.

Family Educators schedule family playgroups where you are able to meet other families and learn from group activities. I remember these playgroups well and some of the best memories are from these events in the park.

I consider Lillian a close friend of mine. She has been with me during difficult times, such as when my husband was in the hospital.

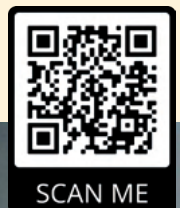
Family Educators meet you at your home or where it is best for you. Thank you very much for everything! (More on page 5) ►

Helping Services Family Education & Support has earned the Iowa Family Support Credential. The credential is awarded to family support and parent education programs that are validated through an external evaluation to be in substantial adherence to the Iowa Family Support Standards.

The standards indicate that the program is providing high quality services that will result in positive outcomes for young children and families.



Watch a video to learn more!



Margarta's family enjoying a visit with their Family Educator at Helping Services



State Opioid Response 2 Grant Updates

The State Opioid Response Grant (SOR2) aims to provide prevention and treatment support for Opioid and Psychostimulant Use Disorder. Helping Services For Youth & Families provides the prevention support under this grant, while Northeast Iowa Behavioral Health provides the treatment portion of the grant.



Prevention seeks to educate the public in the five counties of Northeast Iowa, including Howard, Winnebago, Allamakee, Clayton, and Fayette. The education materials for this grant have been provided by the Iowa Department of Public Health. Education topics include: Opioids, Psychostimulants, Stigma, Stigma in the Healthcare Field, Behavioral Health Equity, Harm Reduction, Substances of Abuse 101, Addiction 101, and Overdose. SOR2 has been providing this education to the area since the beginning of 2021. Since that time 417 individuals in varying fields from health care and social services to youth and the general public have received education. The media campaign has reached thousands of individuals through facebook ads, billboards, posters, Drug Take Back Day Partnerships, and print advertisements. The goals for the rest of the year of this grant is to reach 30 trainings or 300 individuals. So far 139 individuals have been reached through 6 trainings that have been offered. Upcoming trainings will be taking place with Elevate Mobile Crisis, Guardians Of Northeast Iowa, the North Fayette Valley Community Coalition, Clayton Ridge Schools, and Decorah Schools, with more in the process of being scheduled.

The other important concept of prevention is to promote and educate on the resources available in the area. The SOR2 program promotes and educates the area on Narcan (Naloxone). Narcan is a nasal spray that can be administered to stop and bring a person out of an Opioid Overdose event. More and more law enforcement and health agencies carry Narcan to help in those situations. The State of Iowa has a standing order for Narcan, so any person is able to get that life saving medication without needing to go through their own doctor, and can get the medication online or through the phone.

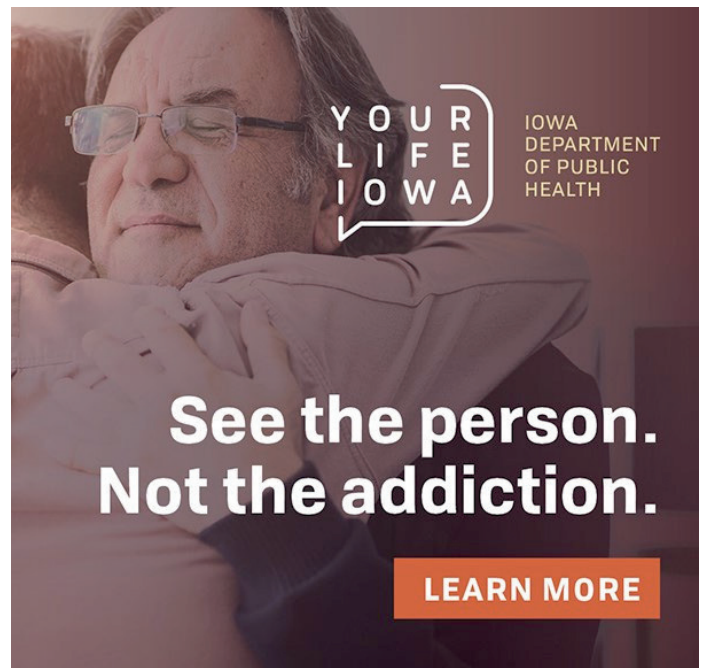
More information on this can be found at <https://www.naloxoneiowa.org/>. The local treatment center that is able to provide both counseling and medication assisted treatment is Northeast Iowa Behavioral Health in Decorah, IA. Other centers are located in Dubuque, Waterloo, and Mason City.

Yourlifelowa is another resource that is available in the area, and can help with substance use issues, mental health, and several other behavioral health issues. They can be reached online at <https://yourlifeiowa.org/> or through phone at (855)-581-8111.

For more information or to schedule an educational event please reach out to Jon Vagts, Prevention Coordinator under the SOR2 grant, at jvagts@helpingservices.org or 563-387-1720.

To learn more about prevention initiatives, visit www.helpingservices.org/prevention

Thank you to Northeast Iowa Behavioral Health for their partnership on this State Opioid Response 2 grant awarded to them through the Iowa Department of Public Health.



Thank you Terry!



Congratulations to Terry Casterton, Fiscal Manager, on her retirement after working for 24 years at Helping Services! The administrative team presented Terry with "The Last Receipt" plaque to honor her years of service.

Director's Message



It is hard to believe, but Helping Services for Youth & Families is approaching the big 5-0 next year. That's **50 years** of serving individuals, families, youth, and communities throughout northeast Iowa.

As I think about these 50 years, the first thing I think about is you. You the donor, you the community partner, you the business or church, you the volunteer. You have empowered and enabled Helping Services to support healthier and safer families and communities since 1973.

As we head into the next 50 years, it's important to consider ways that you can continue to help. As grants from the state and federal level continue to come and go, donations are ever more important to ensure stable staffing and resources. While we often think about giving around the holidays, I want to remind you of other ways to support Helping Services.

- **Recurring Donation:** Establishing a recurring donation on a monthly schedule that works for you provides reliable resources throughout the year.
- **IRA Charitable Rollover:** Once you turn 70 1/2 years old you can direct funds to a qualified charity while paying no income tax for this donation.
- **Planned Giving:** As you think about you or your family's legacy, consider including Helping Services in your will, trust or other transfer documents.

On behalf of our team, I want to thank you for your care and support of Helping Services throughout the years and into the future. We cannot be here for another 50 years without your help. **Thank you!**

Carson Eggel

Executive Director

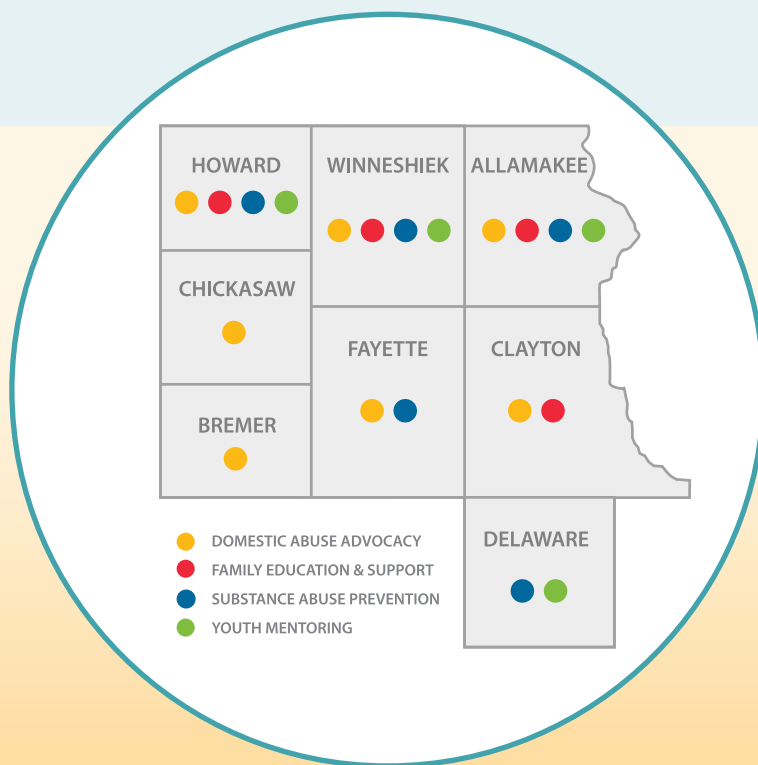
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Board Members at Helping Services can serve up to three consecutive two year terms.



Learn more at helpingservices.org



News from the Domestic Abuse Resource Center

When people think about advocacy services, and Helping Services' Domestic Abuse Resource Center, our primary victim services are likely what comes to mind. Providing supportive, helpful, and inclusive services to survivors of violence is of utmost importance to us, as we understand how crucial these intervention services are. We know that intervention is crucial when working with survivors, but prevention is key in our attempts to limit the number of individuals who will experience violence in the future. As our team has grown, and our services have expanded, we have made prevention a priority.

Domestic and dating violence is something that too many people will experience in their lifetimes. According to the Center for Disease Control, roughly 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men experience some form of domestic violence in their lives. As a result, we need to do whatever we can to try and limit this, and believe that prevention education has the potential to decrease these numbers. Our dating violence advocates offer free prevention programming to all of the schools in our seven county service area. Our programs are suitable for middle school, high school, and college age students, and can be tailored to fit the specific needs of the school district that we are collaborating with.

Many important topics are covered in our prevention education programs. Our advocates work with teens on identifying what dating violence is, what it can look like, and how to help a friend or family member who may be experiencing domestic or dating violence. We also discuss the importance of setting boundaries, consent, and who survivors can go to if help is needed. These are not always easy conversations to have, and we understand that students may have questions that they are afraid to ask, so we offer a question box, as a way for students to ask questions anonymously. These questions ensure that the students are receiving the information they find relevant, and also allows us to shape and improve our presentations for future presentations. We have received positive feedback from students and educators regarding the information we are providing, and we strive to continue improving these presentations moving forward.

At the beginning of the school year, we sent information packets to all of the schools in our service area. These packets included specifics of our domestic abuse advocacy program, services that we could offer, and an explanation of the different presentations we provide. As a result, we have received positive responses and we have connected with many students.



To date, we have provided prevention education to approximately 550 middle and high school students and 140 college students. We greatly appreciate the school districts who have allowed us to present in their schools, not only for their time, but also for recognizing the importance of sharing this vital information with their students. ■

This project was supported by Grant No. 2020-WR-AX-0025 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Volunteer with the Resource Center

We have volunteer opportunities. If anyone is interested in volunteering directly or indirectly with our Domestic Abuse Resource Center. Volunteering opportunities may include assisting with our 24/7 confidential crisis line, participating in supply drives, or being involved in community engagements and outreach activities. We also greatly appreciate donations of peanut free candy for our classroom presentations, gift cards to local eateries, gas cards, grocery cards, hotel gift certificates or monetary donations towards our Domestic Abuse Resource Center to help support local survivors. *Please call 800-383-2988 to be directed to Bethany for more information.*

Thank you to the Crime Victim Assistance Division of the Iowa Attorney's Office for its support of this project through the Victim Services Support Program grant awarded to Helping Services.



Advocates from Helping Services are available to provide prevention education programming throughout schools in northeast Iowa.

For more information on any of our services or to speak with an advocate, please call our 24 hour resource line at **800-383-2988** or chat with an advocate at www.helpingservices.org/chat. Services are provided in Allamakee, Bremer, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek counties.

Leaving a Legacy

As you think of ways to support Helping Services for Youth & Families consider making a gift through your will and/or trust. You are able to make gifts to support programs throughout northeast Iowa during your lifetime and beyond. Three common ways to make donations are:

IRA Charitable Rollover—If you are 70 ½ years old or older, you can make tax-free IRA contributions directly to Helping Services for Youth & Families & receive tax benefits.

Beneficiary Designation—This provides support using an IRA, life insurance policy, annuity, and retirement plan. This allows you to support causes' important to you after your lifetime.

Wills and Living Trusts—Designate a percentage or dollar amount through your will or revocable trust.

If you would like more details on options visit HelpingServices.org/Donate and please contact **Ben at 563-387-1720 or benkg@helpingservices.org**.

Each donation to Helping Services allows services throughout northeast Iowa to thrive and assist more clients in your community.

We Need Mentors! We Need You!



Become A Mentor today!

Contact us at
mentoring@helpingservices.org
or **563-387-1720**

Watch a video to learn more!



SCAN ME

Family Education and Support Program

(Continued from page 1)

From Samantha:

I was at my son's well child check-up when my Doctor told me about the Home Visiting program at Helping Services for Youth and Families. He told me they (Home Visiting Staff) would be able to make sure my son was meeting his milestones and give me information on my child's growth and what he should be doing or what he would be doing next. I decided that I would like more information about this.

I received a call from Lori, a Family Educator from Helping Services, and we set up a time to meet. She explained the home visiting program and brought information on activities to do with my son, Anson. She explained this was to help with his development and a fun activity for Anson and I to do. Lori, answered my questions about starting solids and she brought a handout that I was able to look at as I started feeding solids, for an example. I have been connected to resources as well.

It is a great program, not only do I get information about Anson, they come to my house for our visits, and it is free! ■

Lane, Samantha, and their son, Anson





The Ripple Effect of Youth Mentoring

There are a variety of benefits that come with being part of a youth mentoring program; for both the mentor and the mentee. Something perhaps less talked about is the long lasting benefits that youth mentoring can have. To shine a light on some of these positive ripples of youth mentoring, we decided to collect some quotes from those who have participated in the program as both mentee/mentor, matches who have stayed in contact after their time in the program is up, and those who have made long lasting friendships from the friends they've made in the Youth Mentoring Program.

"The mentoring program made our friendship happen when we met each other at an event that they put on. We started talking and getting to know each other. We both asked our moms if we could have a sleepover and it went from there."

—Savannah



Thank you to the Iowa Department of Public Health for its support of this project through the "Improving Tomorrow: Prevention Focused Mentoring" grant awarded to Helping Services.

"Spending time with my mentor was always something to look forward to no matter if we were making dinner at their houses or going out on an adventure. I chose to become a mentor because I wanted to bring that same excitement and anticipation to the life of a youth. I know the time I've spent with the mentoring program has been beneficial no matter my role."

—Alison

"My mentee and I have spent many years enjoying new experiences and sharing life. We're just continuing our friendship!"

—Colleen

"I am in contact with my mentee after our time together ended 3 years ago (She aged out at 17). We spent 5 years together doing events and getting to know each other. Mentoring offers a lifelong connection for both of us. I have supported her as a young adult and she supports me with hearing about my grandchildren and my life during retirement. Both in different places but friends always."

—Denise

Become a Mentor!

Mentors and mentees experienced The Sound of Music live on stage in December at the LaCrosse Community Theater.

To become a mentor contact us at mentoring@helpingservices.org or call 563-387-1720



Thank You Volunteers!



Decorah High School Silver Cord Volunteers

HOLIDAY *Lights*

Holiday Lights has a Banner Year!

Helping Services for Youth & Families thanks all volunteers, sponsors, and visitors that made the 17th season of Holiday Lights another banner year! The Holiday Lights opening Walk-Through Night had record attendance of over 2,500 visitors who walked through the campground enjoying soup, cookies, music, and more. Open from Thanksgiving through Christmas for drive-through traffic, over 4,500 cars visited the campground to view the displays over the course of the season. In addition, there was a vibrant fireworks show hosted at the Decorah Vikings Football Stadium to celebrate Holiday Lights.

Holiday Lights has become a tradition for many in our region and Helping Services' is grateful that this event brings joy to so many. Holiday Lights serves as Helping Services' most important fundraiser supporting programs such as Domestic Abuse Advocacy, Family Education & Support, Substance Misuse Prevention, & Youth Mentoring. Your contributions to Holiday Lights allow Helping Services to support a team of 25 staff who work tirelessly in northeast Iowa to support healthier and safer families and communities.

Connect with Ben Krouse-Gagne, Director of Community Engagement to reserve your spot as a sponsor for the 2022 Holiday Lights event. Ben can be reached at: benkg@helpingservices.org or 563-387-1720.

Save the date for the opening Walk-Through Night at Holiday Lights on Wednesday, November 23, 2022.

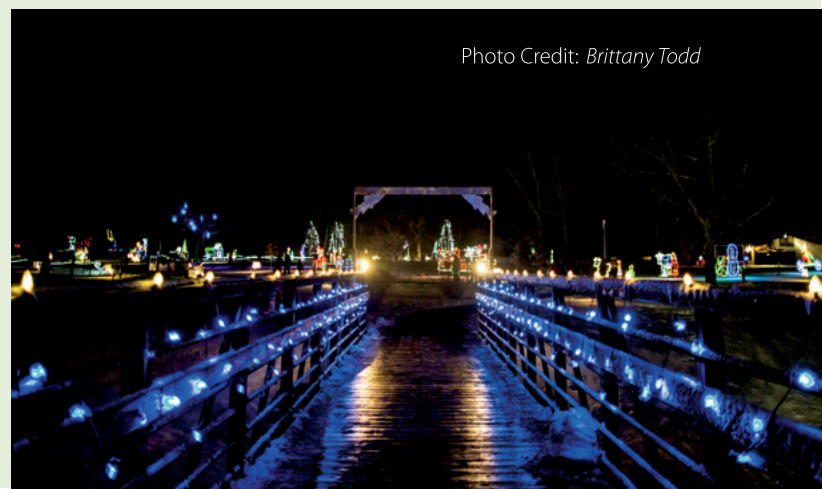


Youth Beef Team Volunteers



Decorah Prairie Lakes Church Volunteers

Photo Credit: Brittany Todd





HELPING SERVICES for Youth & Families

PO Box 372 • Decorah, IA 52101

Update your contact info at info@helpingservices.org

*Thank you to our teams of bowlers
for making the event a success!*



Youth Mentoring 2022 Bowl-A-Thon a Success!

On Saturday, March 19, Youth Mentoring held its annual Bowl-A-Thon at Oneota Lanes in Decorah. 58 bowlers joined in on this amazing event and supported youth mentoring in raising funds. Sponsors, donors, and bowling teams over \$7,000 to support youth mentoring. These funds will support things like: mentor/mentee activities, background checks, mentor recruitment, group mentoring events, trainings, and staffing support. **Thank you** to our sponsors, bowlers, and volunteers the day of the event for making the 2022 Youth Mentoring Bowl-A-Thon such a great success.



Contact us at 563-387-1720 today to become a Mentor!

Learn more at helpingservices.org



Thank you to CUSB Bank for wearing blue to recognize April as Child Abuse Prevention & Awareness Month!