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W.I.N. fighting drug use in Pettis County

By Faith Bemiss

fbemiss@sedaliademocrat.com

W.I.N., Wanting Involvement Now, spearheaded by Sarah Rea, is making strides against the opioid crisis and drug use in Pettis County.

Information in a February Democrat article said W.I.N. was originally started by Rea's father, Ed Broyles, in the 1980s at Smith-Cotton High School. Rea reestablished the group in 2018 when she saw a need to generate more conversations about the drug problem in Pettis County. She wanted to continue her father's legacy because her family had a personal experience with the issue after her son suffered a traumatic brain injury brought on as a result of drug use.

"We are basically an organization of citizens in Sedalia that get together probably twice a year and brainstorm projects, ideas, events, or anything we can initiate to help (stop) drug trafficking in Sedalia," she explained.

The organization isn't a 501(c)3 and doesn't accept donations, but W.I.N. does address three major areas in the prevention of drug



PHOTO COURTESY OF W.I.N.

W.I.N. volunteers Andrea Gaspard, left, and Kim Huddleston hold a magazine that talks about fighting drug abuse. W.I.N. introduced the Nar-Anon program to Sedalia, a support group for family and friends who have a loved one with addictions.

abuse and addiction — Prescription Drug Take-back Day, Nar-Anon and the Nosey Neighbors project.

Oct. 24 was Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Rea said W.I.N. members participating in the event were Andrea Gaspard, Cassandra Craighead, Megan Page, Brenda Sleeper, Sharon Spillers, Robin Balke

and herself.

"The Prescription Drug Take Back Day is really the biggest contributor to the community, I think," Rea noted. "This is our third year helping the (Pettis County) Sheriff's Department, but this is the first year that we have a mobile unit.

"Because of COVID-19,

we weren't able to have Prescription Drug Take Back Day at the last event," she continued. "We get to do it twice a year."

Due to the pandemic, W.I.N. was approved to have a mobile unit this fall that would pick up prescription drugs from homes if individuals couldn't get out to drop them off. Pettis County Deputy Coroner Brian Morley and two Whiteman Air Force Base Military Police oversaw the mobile unit.

Rea said the organization only provides the service in conjunction with the DEA. According to the DEA website, the next prescription drug take-back day will be in April.

"The Prescription Drug Take Back Day is when the DEA helps us, they help Pettis County," she explained. "One of the deputies has to distribute all of the prescription drug collection to them (DEA) to incinerate it. So, it helps the county to not have that cost of incineration and we get it all out of our town."

Rea said W.I.N. brought Nar-Anon to Sedalia. Nar-Anon is a support group for anyone who has a loved

one with an addiction. Due to the pandemic, the weekly meeting has been canceled for the last several months. They will resume meetings again at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 3 at LifePointe Church, 2921 W. Broadway Blvd.

"I wish I would have had Nar-Anon when I was going through addiction in my family," Rea noted. "Because, in Pettis County, there was not a support group for the family members or the loved ones, there was only support groups for the addicts."

She added when she was able to attend Nar-Anon, she found those coming to the meetings understood what she was going through.

"Just based on everybody else's experiences, it's just good to share," she said. "I learned I was not alone, that there are other people who go through this."

Nar-Anon doesn't offer advice or mental health counseling; it is solely a support group.

"When I leave Nar-Anon, I feel so much better about my hope for others, who have had sobriety in their journey," Rea said.

The Nosy Neighbor project provides cards for people to fill out if they see suspicious activity in their neighborhoods. Cards may be picked up at the west Woods Supermarket, filled out, placed in the return envelope and mailed. The cards go to a P.O. Box and members of W.I.N. pick them up and deliver them to law enforcement.

Rea added she welcomes any new project initiatives or ideas at W.I.N.

"If something works in another county and they'd like to see it here, we're the people," she noted. "Bring it to us and we'll try it."

She also is planning to begin a W.I.N. Institute for young adults and is hoping to have the idea in place for 2021. The institute would provide education on drug awareness, drug prevention and Narcan. The program will provide therapists to teach classes, along with law enforcement and an attorney who will talk about the consequences of drug use.

For more information about W.I.N., call Rea at 660-553-8186.

Faith Bemiss can be reached at 660-530-0289 or on Twitter @flbemiss.



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Compass Health Network provides variety of services for residents

By Democrat Staff

Compass Health Network is a staple mental health resource in Missouri with locations found across the state.

Compass Health Network “is a nonprofit health care organization that provides behavioral health services and supports, primary, and dental health services,” according to its website.

Compass provides a variety of services, including ones dealing with substance abuse.

“Our treatment services work on the specific and individualized needs of each person and their family,” reads Compass’s website. “We work closely with community resources, recovery support providers, and experts within our organization to provide whole-person care for everyone. Treatment levels range from early intervention to residential services, but might be intensive outpatient programming or day treatment programming based on a personal

assessment.”

Services include adolescent and adult outpatient treatment services, including a comprehensive assessment, co-occurring mental health services, psychiatry services, individual, family and codependent counseling, group counseling, group education, peer support and person-centered integrated care.

Another program called Navig8 “serves adolescents and families whose lives have been impacted by the use of alcohol and/or other substances,” according to Compass’s website. The program serves adolescents ages 12 through 17 and is structured to meet their needs and their families’.

Significant community and family members are incorporated in the program. A treatment team approach is used and teams are composed of professionals from all degrees, licensures, and certifications. The program is based on the “8 Dimensions of Wellness” emotional, environmental, spiritual, financial, intellectual, social, occupa-

tional, and physical and utilizes a variety of services to meet these needs.

Compass Health Network also provides early intervention for adults which includes three levels: Level 1 Brief intervention made up of a four-week individual program, brief screening, and four individual counseling sessions; Level 2 Alcohol and Drug Awareness made up of a five-week group program, brief screening and 10 hours of group education; and Level 3 Choices Program made up of an eight-week combination of the group and individual program, a brief screening, two individual counseling sessions and 16 hours of group education.

Residential services for adults is another service offered, which provides a “safe, comfortable, and healthy environment,” according to Compass’s website. This includes a comprehensive assessment, co-occurring mental health services, psychiatry services, group counseling, peer support and more. Five adult treatment centers are located across Missouri in Linn Creek, Clinton, Columbia and Warrensburg.

Compass also has a Substance Awareness Traffic Offender Programs (SATOP)

which include an Offender Education Program, Weekend Intervention Program, Clinical Intervention Program, and Level IV or Serious and Repeat Offender Program.

Other services include behavioral health services that help enable balance and healthy futures in communities.

“Through a process of continual improvement, we move beyond health to a lifestyle of wellness,” reads the website. “By providing exceptional care and meeting the unique health needs of each community that we serve, we improve lives — one person, one family, one generation at a time. As a vital and customer-centered health provider of choice, we ensure that everyone — without exception — has the ability to reach his or her full health potential.”

Compass Health Network also offers pediatric and family medicine as well as dental care.

For more information on Compass, visit compasshealthnetwork.org or call 844-853-8937. Compass has locations across Missouri. Compass is also providing a COVID stress line at 888-237-4567. Para Español, por favor llame al 636-445-7177.

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D.A.R.E.: Making a difference in the lives of area youth

By Hope Lecchi

hleccchi@sedaliademocrat.com

For two local law enforcement members, the D.A.R.E. program has been an important part of their work but, more importantly, their lives.

Sedalia School District 200 Security Officer and former Sedalia police officer Rodney Collins has been with the program for 30 years. His friend Sgt. Brad Beard, who is currently a member of the Sedalia Police Department, has been with D.A.R.E. for 24. Each has stories to tell of the program.

Both said they feel it is important to tell the reasoning behind the program and that story begins prior to 1983.

“... drugs in the Los Angeles area were more than just prevalent,” Beard began. “California was the home of the music scene, some of which was drug induced (Jim Morrison, Jefferson Airplane, Mommas and the Papas, Jimi Hendricks, Janis Joplin, and more), and designer drugs had become something of the norm.

“Drugs had started to get into the mainstream society and the police had to deal with the side and after effects,” he continued. “One of the things found was that youths that started drugs early on were having more problems with the police as young adults and the correlation between using drugs and crime was obvious.”

Beard explained LAPD Chief Daryl Gates saw that the police needed to reduce drug use in youth so they were not getting into trouble later on. The way to reduce drug use was through

education. Gates got with his department, the Los Angeles Unified School District and other educators to start a program where officers could get into the schools and inform the youth why they shouldn't use drugs.

It was the beginning of the D.A.R.E. program.

According to Collins and Beard, D.A.R.E. was about learning why youth

should not use drugs, not just about don't use them. Since the program began in Sedalia in 1989 when the first officer went through training, D.A.R.E. has gone through at least four different updates.

“D.A.R.E. wasn't something that was a fad,” Beard said. “It wasn't something that the police did just to get into the schools. This was something that the

department felt was important not only for the community but for the health and welfare of the youth.”

Since the program began, D.A.R.E. officers have been in every Sedalia public school building, except for the high school. The pilot program began at Heber Hunt Elementary with one instructor, Cmdr. (Ret.) Cendy Harrell-Carson. The program expanded to each



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Sedalia School District 200 elementary school with the addition of Collins as an instructor. Collins is one of perhaps only three officers in Missouri who will achieve the 30-year mark in teaching D.A.R.E. when he retires at the end of the school year. From there, Sacred Heart Elementary and St. Paul's Lutheran School were added to the program along with additional D.A.R.E. officers.

According to Beard, more than 14,000 fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade students have participated in Sedalia's program. He said that doesn't include the kindergarten lessons officers taught over the first 15 years of the program or when SPD helped Pettis County teach D.A.R.E. in La Monte for a year.

SPD currently has four D.A.R.E. officers: Beard, Collins, Detective John Fellows and Officer Derick DeSalme. Their key goal is to get the students to "think."

"D.A.R.E. wanted the youth to grasp the understanding on why drugs were bad and why they should say 'no,'" Beard explained.

"D.A.R.E. has now progressed to teaching critical thinking: what is the problem, what are my choices, picking which choice looks the best, and evaluating the choice prior to institution to see if it really is the best choice – if not, do we need to re-define the problem or just pick a different choice."

According to Collins and Beard, this all goes back to the first day of D.A.R.E. when the students are asked three questions: "What is your name?" "What do you like to do for fun?" and "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

"Every one of our students are unique and we point them out," Beard said. "We have yet to have a student say that they like doing drugs for fun and we have yet to have one of the students say that they want to be homeless, worthless, or a drug dealer when they grow up."

"Each one of the students has a dream," Beard said. "We want them to think how each of their decisions will affect that dream."

To illustrate his point, Beard tells the

students the story of someone he knows who had a full-ride scholarship to Mizou, but because he and some friends burglarized a house before graduation, he lost his scholarship and dream.

"Is it as relevant today as it was 30 years ago?" Beard asked. "Absolutely — how many decisions have led lives towards a dream and how many have led lives away from their dreams? D.A.R.E. is still trying to get the youth to think about their decisions, whether it is about drugs or life or both."

Beard and Collins have each been named D.A.R.E. Officer of the Year by the Missouri D.A.R.E. Officers Association. Collins also received the Lifetime Achievement Award. Both have been asked to become Mentors/D.A.R.E. Officer Instructors.

"Our biggest achievements are not the awards or the titles," Beard said on behalf of him and Collins. "We were able to teach your own children in school. We were able to teach your friend's kids. ... Throughout a D.A.R.E. career, as former students come up to

you asking if you remember them, you realize that you must have done something right in their eyes and a smile spreads across our face."

There is also the thrill of seeing the kids of former D.A.R.E. students in their classes and reminding them about their parents going through the program.

"We as D.A.R.E. officers are part of that child's development; we are part of their ability to make good, responsible, and healthy decisions," Beard reflected. "We are role models and have a responsibility to live up to that status but we are not alone."

"We couldn't do this without the other role models in these student's lives, the parents," he continued. "We couldn't do this without the help of the school. We couldn't do this without the help of the community. We realize that there are a number of people that really care about the youth of our community, that has affected us so much."

Hope Lecchi can be reached at 660-826-1000 ext. 1484.



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'You OK Today'

DeFeet T-shirt campaign offers message of hope

By Hope Lecchi

hleccchi@sedaliademocrat.com

Three simple words, "You OK Today," printed in white lettering on black T-shirts carried a powerful message of hope and encouragement to all those who saw them in recent weeks, especially for those

struggling with depression or mental health issues.

The shirts let others know the first step in wellness often is found through a conversation and reaching out to another, according to DeFeet President Anne Ramey Townsend.

"While DeFeet is a small group — we have very

large hearts, but knew we couldn't be everywhere we were needed," Townsend said of the 1,000 shirts distributed to community members. "So I came up with the idea to give out these shirts to people in the community with the understanding that if someone came up to them, whether



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANNE RAMEY TOWNSEND

Numerous teachers and staff members at La Monte School wore "You OK Today" shirts to show support for DeFeet and those struggling with mental health issues.

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it be at Wal-Mart or a school function, and that person needed help or was struggling — the person wearing the shirt vows to get them assistance, whether it be through DeFeet, the national hotline, or some other resource.”

Townsend explained that like every other group or business struggling with COVID-19 restrictions, DeFeet struggled with how to keep the foundation active in the community. The organization couldn't have meetings, support groups or special speakers, and faced some speed bumps when it came to raising money.

After receiving a grant for 1,000 shirts, Townsend said members “started giving them away to family and friends, and within two weeks all 1,000 shirts were gone. We could not believe how fast the word spread about these shirts.”

September is National

Suicide Prevention Month. With that idea in mind, Townsend wanted to have a “DeFeet Suicide Day.” The organization spread the word to everyone who had a shirt to wear it Friday, Sept. 25.

“We asked that people take a picture wearing our shirts and post it on social media,” Townsend said. “Again the amount of businesses and individuals that posted to our Facebook page was incredible.”

“The next morning, I logged onto my computer and had almost 100 messages of people wanting one of our shirts that they saw on Facebook,” she continued. “There were lots of tears of joy when I realized what our foundation had done. DeFeet is a small group of less than 10 people but we recruited 1,000 people to advocate for suicide prevention in Pettis County. When I do presentations on suicide, I



Employees at Dugans Paints and Floor Coverings participated in DeFeet's first “You OK Today” T-shirt day in September.

always say that people who die from suicide have no idea how many people their death affects. And these shirts proved that.”

With success came challenges, according to Townsend.

“How can we raise more money to buy more shirts?” Townsend said. “Obviously these shirts mean a lot to people, no matter what their reasoning is behind it, because I had a double-sided notebook paper filled with names of individuals that wanted a shirt.”

“I expressed my concern

to my fiancé, Aaron Walter, and he suggested a business challenge,” Townsend continued. “He said, ‘You had so many businesses that participated in this day, maybe they will donate money towards buying more shirts.’”

Walter, the owner of Cabinetry Pros in Sedalia, was the first in line to donate. The business gave \$250 to get the project started. He challenged David Goodson at Impact Signs, who also donated \$250. From there, Parkhurst Manufacturing



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANNE RAMEY TOWNSEND

Wood and Huston Bank employees show off their DeFeet shirts to help advocate for suicide prevention and awareness.

and Heckart Funeral Home accepted the challenge, matching the \$250. Townsend commented several individuals have also donated through DeFeet's PayPal account.

“Hopefully we can raise enough money to purchase more shirts soon because my goal is to have a ‘DeFeet Suicide Day’ held on the last Friday of each month and ask everyone to wear their shirts on those Fri-

days,” Townsend commented. “Statistically suicide rates are higher at the end of the month, so hopefully folks will see our shirts and reach out.”

For more information or to make a donation, contact Townsend at P.O. Box 135, Sedalia, MO, 65302 or via PayPal at www.paypal.me/defeetsuicide.

Hope Lecchi can be reached at 660-826-1000 ext. 1484.

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Pettis County Sheriff's Office talks drug-related trends

By Emily Walton

emilyw@sedaliademocrat.com

Drug use across Pettis County has stayed fairly standard in recent months for the most part, but there are some drugs on the rise. According to Pettis County Sheriff's Office Captain Kip Bartlett, the office has begun to see a rise in methamphetamine labs since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Even though methamphetamine labs are down, we have noticed that meth arrests and meth seized 'weight' are higher than ever," said Bartlett. "Since COVID-19, however, we are starting to see a rise in meth labs, task force-wide. Recently, however, we have noticed an increase in heroin and fentanyl within Pettis County."

Bartlett said the office was also seeing a rise in marijuana, marijuana edibles and Kratom. He said the demographics for individuals arrested for drug offenses has

remained "basically the same."

"While demographics of the community may trend the same as prior years they are also affected by the predominance of prescription drug abuse and the current opioid crisis," Bartlett commented.

Drug use can result in other crimes as well, according to Bartlett. He said it was common for the sheriff's office and Mid-Missouri Drug Task Force to locate stolen property during the cases they work together.

"The MMDTF and the Pettis County Sheriff's Office frequently work together on narcotics and property crime investigations that result in not only arrests for drug-related crimes but burglary and other property-related crimes as well," Bartlett explained.

Bartlett said he believed law enforcement was doing a "good job with keeping a large portion of the drugs off the street." An issue he personally saw was early releases

through court systems for drug-related offenses resulting in officers dealing with the same people.

The Pettis County Sheriff's Office also tries to combat drug use and addiction through a variety of programs outside of the average patrolling the streets.

"Pettis County is heavily involved in the D.A.R.E. program," Bartlett said. "The Sheriff's Office has instituted School Resource Deputies in the public schools and community college which has resulted in several drug-related arrests on both public school property as well as on campus."

"(Additionally) Pettis County Crime Stoppers provides an avenue for citizens to provide information regarding illegal drug activity while remaining anonymous," he added. "We get a lot of good drug tips in the community that we might have not known about."

The office is also involved in the "Drug Take Back Program." The office supplies a location for individuals to drop off their unused medications to be "properly disposed of, which reduces the likelihood of their misuse and/or abuse." The kiosk is located in the lobby of the sheriff's office.

For those struggling with addiction, the office has a list of outreach programs that anyone can contact for help.

"These include hotlines to talk to someone or to get enrolled in a drug abuse rehabilitation program," Bartlett said. "The Task Force has even supplied transportation to these facilities in the past."

The Mid-Missouri Drug Task Force also

Offer a Tip

Anyone with information regarding criminal activity in their community is encouraged to contact the Crime Stoppers Tips Hotline at 660-827-TIPS (660-827-8477).

teaches classes for schools and civic groups throughout the community which focus on drug awareness. They work to educate the public of new and current drug trends in the community and give handouts to attendees containing mental health and drug use resources in the area.

Bartlett encouraged the community to report things if they see them and to educate themselves on the topic of drug use and addiction issues.

"Educate yourself, if you're part of a civic group reach out to the Sheriff's Office and we will come talk to your group and update you on current drug trends," Bartlett said. "We will talk to you about warning signs to watch out for. The MMDTF frequently speaks to civic and school groups about the risks, dangers and hazards of substance abuse, even having the privilege of joining Congresswoman Vicky Hartzler in this effort."

The Pettis County Sheriff's Office is at 319 S. Lamine Ave. in Sedalia and can be contacted at 660-827-0052.

Emily Walton can be contacted at 660-530-0146.



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Pettis County Juvenile Office

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pettiscomo.com/juvenile-office

Pettis County Sheriff's Office

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Tips Hotline: 660-827-TIPS
(660-827-8477)

Recovery Lighthouse

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recoverylighthouse.org/sedalia

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W.I.N.

(Wanting Involvement Now)

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ON PAGE 12**

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RESOURCE GUIDE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Outpatient Substance Use and Behavioral Health Services (Compass Health Network)

1700 W. Main St.
Sedalia, MO 65301
844-853-8937

McCambridge Center (Compass Health Network)

Substance Use Residential program for women age 18 and older, mothers with young children and women that are pregnant.
201 N. Garth
Columbia, MO 65203
844-853-8937

Truman Lake Women's and Children's (Compass Health Network)

Substance Use Residential program for women age 18 and older, mothers with young children and women that are pregnant.
1800 Community Dr
Clinton, MO 65735
844-853-8937

Navig8 (Compass Health Network)

Serving adolescents ages 12-17 whose lives have been impacted by the use of alcohol and/or other substances.
1448 E. 10th St
Rolla, MO 65401
844-853-8937

Cedar Recovery Center (Compass Health Network)

Adult Substance Use Residential program.
1091 Midway Dr.
Lin Creek, MO 65052
844-853-8937

Clinton Recovery Center (Compass Health Network)

Adult Substance Use Residential program.
1800 Community Dr.
Clinton, MO 65735
844-853-8937

Warrensburg Recovery Center (Compass Health Network)

Adult Substance Use Residential program.
703 N. DeVasher
Warrensburg, MO 64093
844-853-8937

SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups for people trying to stop smoking, drinking or using drugs meet regularly in the area. Following is the contact information for those groups:

All day everyday: AA Hotline number is 660-826-9608.

Noon and 7 p.m. Sunday through Saturday: Alcoholic Anonymous 12x12 Non-smoking group at First Baptist Church Annex, 201 E. Sixth St., 660-829-2527.

7 p.m. Sunday: Narcotics Anonymous Because We Care; First Christian Church, 200 S. Limit Ave. For more information, call 660-221-2221.

6 p.m. Monday: NarAnon meetings at LifePointe Church, 2921 W. Broadway Blvd.

6 p.m. Monday: Cornerstone Celebrate Recovery. A Bible-based 12-step program for Hurts, Habits and Hangups; large group meeting at 7 p.m.; small groups at 8 p.m. Meal and child care provided; Cornerstone Baptist Church, 660-827-4833.

6:30 p.m. Monday: DeFeet.org, suicide prevention support group meetings at the Gathering Church, 314 W. Main St. For more information, call 660-596-5173 or visit www.Defeet.org.

7 p.m. Monday: Al-Anon, First Baptist Church Annex, 201 E. Sixth St. Call 660-473-0855.

7 p.m. Monday: Celebrate Recovery and Outreach 12-step Christ-centered Bible-based program for hurts, habits or hang-ups. Cornerstone Baptist Church, 19856 state Route Y.

6:30 p.m. Tuesday: Celebrate Recovery and Outreach 12-step Christ-centered Bible-based program for hurts, habits or hang-ups., River

Church, 28863 Commercial Ave. in Warsaw.

7 p.m. Tuesday: Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) is a 12-step fellowship of men and women whose common purpose is recovery from co-dependence at the First United Methodist Church Celebration Center, 1701 W. 32nd St.. For more information, call Barbara at 660-827-6522.

7 p.m. Tuesday: Celebrate Recovery 12-step faith-based recovery for hurts, habits and hang-ups., Crossroads Family Worship Church of God, corner of Ninth Street and Madison Avenue.

7:30 p.m. Wednesday: Narcotics Anonymous Because We Care; First Christian Church, 200 S. Limit Ave. For more information, call 660-221-2221.

8 p.m. Thursday: Sedalia Al-Anon Group, at 201 E. Sixth St. Annex. For more information call 660-473-1950.

6 p.m. second Thursday of the month: The Place at the Lake, Benton County's domestic and sexual violence abuse resource, monthly meeting, located at 201 E. Main St., Lincoln.

6:30 p.m. third Thursday of the month: NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, will host Family to Family Support Groups at Epworth United Methodist Church, 1124 E. Broadway Blvd. For more information, call Denise Woolery at 660-287-7718 or Tammy Pittman at 660-221-3616.

6 p.m. first Saturday of the month: The Place at the Lake, Benton County's domestic and sexual violence abuse resource, support meeting, at 201 E. Main St., Lincoln.

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SPD discusses summer increase in drug overdoses

By Emily Walton

emilyw@sedaliademocrat.com

After seeing an increase in drug overdoses in the community this summer, the Sedalia Police Department and other local agencies are working to provide education and resources on addiction, particularly opioids.

"The Sedalia Police Department has recently seen an increase in drug overdoses," SPD wrote on its Facebook page in mid-August. "SPD and other first responders have successfully administered NARCAN, a nasal spray that reverses the effects of opioids, to victims who otherwise would have died. However, some members of our community have not been as fortunate."

Sedalia Police Chief Matt Wirt explained the department does see overdoses but noticed in a period of about two weeks in August that the department was seeing "significantly more than we normally have."

Wirt said in the particular cases SPD is referring to, the overdoses encompass all ages and a consistent factor was the use of heroin or fentanyl, which comes in any form from powder to non-pharmaceutical pills. The department does not have a specific known reason for the increase.

"We're seeing an increase in mental health issues but we also have seen an increase in mental health issues during the pandemic," Wirt said. "One can make some assumptions. We've also seen the price of methamphetamine go

up which normally opioids were more expensive than methamphetamine, so there's a possibility of that being a factor. It's not the type of thing that, due to the nature of drug use, conducting some sort of scientific study to know for certain is very very difficult."

SPD Detective Mark Cherry added officers can also pick up on certain trends.

"You'll see things escalate or conditions happen and it leads you to believe that a new drug is in town or a bad batch is delivered or something like that," Cherry said. "You'll see a spike and it will go until that product is gone, used up, purchased and stuff. Then you'll see a decline."

Wirt said the department wants people to realize how dangerous the substance is and to stay away from it. He said the department has even changed the type of gloves officers wear when they're around it so it can't be absorbed.

"That's how dangerous it is," Wirt said. "The No. 1 thing is to know how dangerous it is and how addictive it is. When you understand that and you stay away from it that of course helps from even becoming something that people are addicted to."

Wirt and Cherry also explained how pills made outside of traditional manufacturing processes are particularly dangerous.

"When they make a pharmaceutical pill obviously they have to follow all of these guidelines and restrictions and rules and procedures and laws," Wirt

said. "When somebody is not making it as a pharmaceutical company, they're making it in their basement, garage, some illegal place, they're not worried about whether it has all the right ratios...So the strength and purity of them is completely and totally unregulated so you just don't know what you're getting."

Wirt said he would like to think the department has helped eliminate the spike by putting information out about it and treatment information. Wirt said hopefully people "take this as a wake-up call to get treatment, to end the addiction. Opioids are very, very, very addictive."

One new program the department has been made aware of is Engaging Patients in Care Coordination (EPICC), which is a coordinated effort between Burrell Behavioral Health and Compass Health Network and is specifically centered on opioid addiction.

"That program is pretty much peers that go and help the people that have overdosed and work on getting them connected to the resources," Cherry explained. "Get them rehabilitation and follow up and things like that to get them off that addiction...These are people that already accomplished that themselves so then they go back and help the ones that need that help."

Recovery coaches provide appointments for substance use treatment and screening as well as medications and education to assist a patient's recovery process. The program is self-paced and

comes at no cost to the patient. Coaches continue to provide engagement and assistance in each patient's journey. For more information, call 800-395-2132.

"A lot of times when we as law enforcement encounter folks with these conditions it's gotten to the point where they're in need of medical attention," Wirt said. "One of my goals and one of the department's goals is to get the resources out there and available and get people to use them before it reaches that level...."

"We're trying to get those resources out there and get people to wrap their head around, 'I don't always have to let my family member or my friend hit rock bottom to where they are wanting to hurt themselves or the addiction has taken over,'" Wirt continued. "What can I do to try to get them into treatment? Then it's trying to convince people also to go to the treatment."

Wirt and Cherry also emphasized the importance of the community working with the department to help address the issue by reporting suspicious activity or a known person who sells or illegally provides the substances to people.

Individuals are encouraged to contact the SPD Drug Enforcement Unit at 660-827-7823 ext. 1243 or DrugEnforcement@sedaliapolice.com. Tips can be made anonymously.

For more information on addiction resources, contact Burrell at 660-827-2494 or Compass at 660-826-5885.

Emily Walton can be contacted at 660-530-0146.

It's never too late to get a hand up in life. If you suffer from addiction, reach out. Addiction is one of the hardest battles one faces in life, don't try it, not even once.

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STEPPING UP

moves forward in mental health care

By Faith Bemiss

fbemiss@sedaliademocrat.com

Since its inception several years ago, the Pettis County Stepping Up Initiative is moving forward in the mental health field with the implementation of a boundary spanner position, Crisis Intervention Team Training and Community Connections.

Pettis County Sheriff Kevin Bond said the operation of Stepping Up has come together collectively as the Pettis County Mental Health Coalition.

Dawn Williams, the mental health coordinator at the Pettis County Health Center and PCMHC boundary spanner, is working with the program on a federally-funded grant position.

"(The grant) has been written primarily between the Health Center, Katy Trail Community Health and the Sheriff's Office," Bond said of the boundary spanner position. "It's to be able to link individual services, to make sure their mental health needs as well as their substance abuse issues are being dealt with."

Bond added Williams' job is to coordinate operations as well as people and services. Williams took the position in May 2018, and she oversees all the work Stepping Up does through its Community Connections program.

"She's the one coming into the jail facility, she's the one following up with individuals that have asked for services," Bond noted. "She coordinates those referrals and gets them to the proper programs ... to get them

on the right track."

Williams said a boundary spanner takes an individual who is in need and helps them connect with the mental health resources available in the community.

"So, I'm really in a sense the middle person doing the soft hand-off," she added. "Getting them into treatment, whether it's primary care, substance use or mental health treatment."

She also makes sure to take care of any barriers such as transportation or other issues that would prohibit an individual from getting treatment.

"I try to figure out a solution for it," she noted. "I think one of the big takeaways that's happened since we've started this, is the agencies are working together much better now."

She added when agencies were separate it was often difficult to navigate through the system for services.

"Now ... with the communication barriers being bridged, we are able to talk among those agencies," Williams said.

She added working with all the agencies provides a "wrap-around service" that assures every need is met.

"Of course, with mental illness and substance use, we can only fix certain things with medication," Williams said. "But if you don't have the basics, that medication doesn't mean a whole lot."

The program also helps individuals with housing and employment by directing them to resources.

"That's where the term boundary spanner

comes in," Bond explained. "We've talked about in the Stepping Up Initiative, how everyone operates in their own silos and we do our own specific disciplines. But, we don't always cross over well with those other agencies."

"So, Dawn spans those boundaries," he continued. "And is able to look at individual situations and say, 'I need to have this service from this agency and this service from this agency.' And be able to make those referrals to make it happen."

The boundary spanner makes sure services aren't duplicated as she "navigates" through all the available agencies.

Since July, the Community Connection program has received 108 individual referrals. Williams said out of the 108, 11 have moved out of Pettis County, leaving a current enrollment of 97. At present, there are 46 individuals actively participating in some type of service whether it's one or multiple agencies.

Four individuals are also participating in Judge Paul Beard's Mental Health Criminal Diversion Program, with a total of six having graduated from the year-long program.

"It's a four-phase program," Williams explained. "Each phase is a minimum of three months. Out of those six that graduated, they're all still maintaining services through one or multiple agencies."

Williams said her first step as a boundary spanner is to get the individual to Katy Trail Community Health.

"They do a primary care appointment," she explained. "And they go over all the needs that individual has. They offer everything there except the substance use treatment. It's up to the individual if they take advantage of it there or if they'd rather go to Burrell and get some of those same services."

After the primary care appointment, the individual may get referred to another agency. Since the agencies work together, it

minimizes the paperwork done by clients.

"The agency getting the referral has basic demographics, contact information and a little bit about self-disclosed issues," she said. "So, they already have an idea of who is coming in. It lessens the time process — it's proved to be very beneficial."

Besides the boundary spanner program, Bond said mental health is also addressed through Stepping Up's CIT program for law enforcement, which is headed up by Sedalia Police Detective Mark Cherry. Stepping Up also has a state-funded Community Mental Health Liaison, Courtney Johnson, who helps at both the law enforcement level and the judicial level.

"To coordinate situations that happen in the field, that don't quite reach the point of the boundary spanner," Bond explained. "(The CMHL is used) to link services early on. So, it's a multi-pronged approach."

Williams added the CMHL works through Burrell Behavioral Health and covers a six-county area.

"I've seen the work that Sheriff Bond, JoAnn (Martin) and Chris (Stewart) have done," she said. "And I think across the board, stigma is a huge thing."

"I'm seeing how from that leadership down, that stigma is slowly getting chipped away," she continued. "To where people are getting OK with opening up about problems that they're having or that they're experiencing with a loved one. I think everybody realizes somewhere along their life someone they care about will have some sort of (mental health) issue."

She added it's OK to ask for help.

For more information about mental health programs affiliated with the Stepping Up Initiative, call Bond at the Pettis County Sheriff's Office at 660-827-0052 or Williams at the Pettis County Health Center at 660-827-1130.

Faith Bemiss can be reached at 660-530-0289 or on Twitter @fbemiss.



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Burrell provides mental health, substance use resources

By Emily Walton

emilyw@sedaliademocrat.com

Burrell Behavioral Health has been a mental health leader in Sedalia and surrounding communities for several years but some residents may not be aware of everything Burrell has to offer.

"Burrell is a certified community behavioral health organization. Because of that certification, we're fairly unique when it comes to the array of services and care that we provide. So you're going to find at Burrell that we serve individuals across the live continuum..." Burrell Central Region President Mathew Gass told the Democrat.

"There's really not a lot in which we don't have a specialist to be able to either consult or directly provide that care," he continued. "Within the Sedalia building what people have to come to expect and what we provide as a community behavioral health center most commonly are psychiatry services, outpatient therapy, and then community support."

Burrell provides a variety of services geared toward children and teens, adolescents, adults and families. Services include therapy and counseling, psychiatric services, residential treatment, addiction recovery, crisis intervention,

case management, developmental disability services, integrated services, evaluations, autism services and online support.

Within Burrell's system, the mental health center provides access to treatments for individuals within a reasonable drive. Mental health professionals look at all of the factors an individual brings when they come to Burrell for an assessment and an individual's preferences.

"What we do is we make sure that people have access to care and then we offer them a range of services to meet their needs," Gass explained. "Then they get to choose which services that they would like out of that menu. So that service could be a psychiatrist who is versed in both mental health and co-occurring substance use treatment."

"Many of our outpatient therapists have specialty substance use credentials along with their professional licenses," he continued. "Within that, we also provide case management services for individuals with co-occurring disorders, so an individual who has a mental health condition that qualifies for the case management service. We provide some additional information around how they navigate the world with both a mental health and a substance use disorder."

Gass said after an individual

completes Burrell's eligibility determination within 45 minutes to an hour, the individual will be leaving with a list of options and resources that will benefit them.

"We at Burrell as a certified community behavioral health organization, we provide that full array of services for individuals," Gass said. "That full array of services includes outpatient substance use counseling. It's also for us able to access our telehealth network to be able to provide services for psychiatry specializing in co-occurring mental health and substance use treatment. It would also be making sure that people have access to medication first treatment."

Gass said the center's most utilized services are its psychiatry and outpatient services, followed by case management programs. The center has also seen an increase in individuals seen during the COVID-19 pandemic but does not think this is 100% due to the pandemic since there are a lot of needs.

"What we're seeing around physical distancing, societal factors to reduce the pandemic, runs the potential of compounding an individual's risk for mental health and substance use needs," Gass said.

Gass also asked individuals to take care of one another and to

check in with people. He encouraged individuals to make connections with each other while still maintaining physical distancing and being safe.

Another service Burrell provides, which can be seen in Pettis County, is integrating mental health resources into schools. Burrell has partnered with the Sedalia School District 200 and Smithton R-7 School District for the last three years. Burrell has implemented a three-tier school-based approach: outpatient therapy, case management, and consultation training around mental health needs for kids.

"The reason that we do this is several fold, but a couple things are when we provide care to kids in schools that is where families often think that services should be delivered," Gass explained. "So a child is most likely to receive care for things like this if they can get that in their schools. You often see organizations provide dental care in the school system because it's convenient and it's accessible and it's very effective. In the same way in which schools will support their students by providing physical health services there at varying times of the year, we're also there on a regular basis to provide mental health support and intervention."

Gass said this is important be-

cause it is often several years from the time a problem is identified until services occur. The school-based services model reduces that time significantly because it's just a part of a child's regular day.

"We're all about creating hope and changing the narrative," Gass said. "If we can normalize a mental health need in the same way we normalize a physical health need, that's going to make a significant impact on that child's wellbeing."

Gass said the challenge Burrell faces and its ask of the community "sort of go hand and hand."

"The challenge right now is as much as we and others have worked to decrease stigma around accessing mental health care, we're not there yet," he said. "One of the things that we see is that people even today wait too long to get mental health treatment and so what we're asking is that individuals who may be questioning whether or not they should get care, to go ahead and make that connection with us or another organization which they trust."

For more information, contact Burrell Behavioral Health in Sedalia, 201 W. Third St., at 660-827-2494 or visit www.burrellcenter.com. The crisis line is available for 24/7 support at 800-395-2132.

Emily Walton can be contacted at 660-530-0146.



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF SEDALIA DISTRICT 200

Dante Arnwine joins fellow battalion staff members on stage during the Smith-Cotton JROTC Awards Night event in April 2017 in the Heckart Performing Arts Center. Earlier in the evening, Arnwine received the American Legion Award for Scholastic Excellence.

A life ended far too soon

Local father deals with life after son's suicide

By Hope Lecchi

hleccchi@sedaliademocrat.com

How does a parent say goodbye to a child who has died? It is a question no parent wants to answer, but one Guy Arnwine has been trying to answer for the last five months.

For Arnwine, the loss is even more profound as his son, Dante, died after taking his life in May.

"For almost 21 years, it was pretty well defined who I was supposed to be," Guy Arnwine said with tears in his eyes. "I was always Dante's father. Now I have to find out who I am... I miss my buddy so, so much. He made me a better person."

The loss is especially difficult to bear as Arnwine had a special bond with his son. The two moved back

to Sedalia from Colorado when Dante was 1, following Arnwine's divorce from Dante's mother, Shannon Strong. By all accounts, Dante was a well-liked and well-respected young man who, according to Arnwine, did all the typical things kids do.

"He grew up pretty much a normal kid," Arnwine said. "I was a single dad who had a lot of help from my sister-in-law raising Dante when I was at work or when I needed some help.

"We spent a lot of time together and I went to all of his stuff when he was younger," he recalled fondly.

Dante played soccer and football for a few years until he decided his interests were elsewhere. According to Arnwine, he emphasized to his son, "I just want you to be happy no matter what you do."

And by almost every account, he was.

"It wasn't in a pressure sense," Arnwine recalled. "But everybody expected a lot of Dante to do great things because of how smart he was. Maybe everybody expected too much of him because of that."

According to his dad, Dante struggled with a few classes during

junior high and high school. Admitting he wasn't the type of parent who went to many parent-teacher conferences, Arnwine said when he saw his son was having difficulty in a class, he would contact the teacher.

"Dante never asked for help with his schoolwork — everything came so easy to him," Arnwine explained. "He felt like he was the one who should always try to help others. He was the one everyone came to for help."

"I talked to a few of his teachers about Dante not asking for help; they said he never did," Arnwine continued. "At one time after he was struggling — actually failing

"Suicide is the end to the pain, but depression is what killed him. I do know that if someone is thinking about suicide, please know it doesn't end the pain, it just transfers it to someone else." — Guy Arnwine, father of Dante Arnwine



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a class — he said he was going to kill himself.”

Arnwine recalled getting to his son before anything happened. It was then Dante began to see a counselor.

“We decided that the one class wasn’t going to affect his life or his plans,” Arnwine explained. “After he went to counseling for a period of time, the counselor released him saying they thought Dante was ‘good to go.’”

At the time, according to Arnwine, life started “going on.” Dante was doing well in his classes, was a captain in JROTC and advanced to Battalion Staff, and was named captain of Team SCREAM during his senior year.

When not doing schoolwork, Dante could be found playing paintball with friends or competing with friends he made across the world playing online video games.

Arnwine explained his son loved making people laugh and being goofy. Dante was a natural at being quick to share a smile or trying to cheer someone up.

“Dante was the biggest geek but yet he had so many friends from his buddies on Team SCREAM and in JROTC to friends he kept from football,” his father recalled. “Dante didn’t have a bad word to say about anybody.”

Following his graduation from SCHS in 2018, Dante was accepted into the computer programming department at Missouri S&T. During his first semester, Dante began to miss some classes and did not ask for help when he was



Members of the Drive team of Team SCREAM head to a match at the FIRST World Championships Competition in 2018. Many of Arnwine’s closest friends were members of Team SCREAM and JROTC. Arnwine found joy in helping other people and making them smile, according to those who knew him.

struggling.

“We talked often and he admitted he wasn’t doing well,” Arnwine remembers. “I told him it was OK and maybe he didn’t have to go to college... maybe there is something else for you... but I think he felt disappointed.”

Arnwine suggested maybe he could teach a trade or become an electrician and perhaps take over Arnwine’s business. He said Dante did not want to choose that path and mentioned he would like to enter the Navy. Both his grandfather and Arnwine had served.

They met with a recruiter and

Dante started working with a personal trainer who helped him begin a nutrition program. Soon he lost 40 pounds.

“He was feeling good about himself and he said he thought it was his job to get into the Navy,” Arnwine said. “I supported him, but I asked him, ‘is this what you really want to do or are you doing this for me because you think it is what I want you to do?’ You don’t have to do this for me, that’s the reality of it... I told him he could stay here with me forever. I wouldn’t have cared.”

A medical condition brought the

father and son closer together.

“Dante got me to the hospital when I was having a heart attack,” Arnwine explained. “He was the picture of calmness and took care of me.”

Arnwine said his son performed under pressure, but Dante admitted Arnwine’s heart attack scared him.

Dante decided to stay in Sedalia and began work at Staples.

As May 30 drew near, everything seemed normal. There were no indications of what Dante was contemplating.

“That night, Dante was getting ready for work,” Arnwine said. “I had decided I was going to try to go out with some friends. It was when places were just starting to open up during the pandemic.

“Dante had talked to his older brother in Colorado that day,” he continued. “That night before I left, I said ‘I love you,’ and he said, ‘love you too, dad.’”

Those were the last words Arnwine heard his son say in person.

Arnwine said while he was out, he noticed two missed calls from Dante. When Arnwine got home, he went to Dante’s room to talk, as they often did.

Arnwine said he noticed Dante had texted his friends, telling them, “sorry guys – I love you.”

One of his friends had texted back, “Dude I don’t know what you are sorry for. I love you too.”

As Arnwine went into his room, he found his son.

“It is the worst thing that can ever happen to a parent,” Arnwine said. “He wanted me to find him.

He wanted to make sure that he thought this was the only way he had to stop the depression that he hid so very well.”

Arnwine said there was no note and he is still trying to make sense of it all.

“It’s not about being sad... there is something that lives inside them,” Arnwine said, trying to find the words. “It is a darkness they can’t escape on their own.

“After talking to counselors after this, they have said at that moment there is a pain that is so unbearable — they are not thinking about anything but how to stop the pain.”

Arnwine said his son showed no outward appearances of his depression.

“Dante didn’t care about a lot of little things such as what kind of car he drove or being into fashion or name brands,” Arnwine said. “I think it was a cumulative effect of several little things that contributed to his suicide.”

Arnwine believes the community must find a way to end the stigma of mental health issues, especially in young men. He commented if a person’s body hurts, they go to the doctor. The individual should also seek treatment if the mind is in pain.

“Suicide is the end to the pain, but depression is what killed him,” Arnwine said with tears again welling in his eyes. “I do know that if someone is thinking about suicide, please know it doesn’t end the pain, it just transfers it to someone else.”

Hope Lecchi can be reached at 660-826-1000 ext. 1484.



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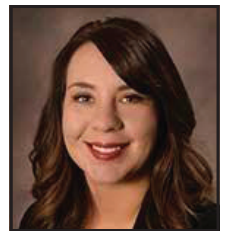
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Increasing drug overdoses reported in Pettis County

By Hope Lecchi

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In light of several summer opioid overdoses, the Pettis County Health Center is reminding citizens about the availability of Narcan.

According to a Health Center news release, the health center received reports this summer of increased overdoses and deaths related to the presence of misbranded, illegal drugs in the county. Reports have indicated that symptoms shown by the victims are the same as those from an overdose of opioids.

The Health Center has free Naloxone (Narcan) available for community members who may be at risk for an overdose as well as family and friends of those who are at risk. According to the Narcan website, the nasal spray is FDA approved for the treatment of known or suspected opioid overdose.

According to PCHC Administrator

JoAnn Martin, the Health Center wanted to “inform the community that the Health Center has a resource that is very important at this time.”

Martin added the center’s mental health coordinator has been working to assist those who are enrolled in Health Center programs to meet the challenges that isolation and disruption have caused.

According to Martin, the health center staff provides a brief training program to demonstrate when and how to use Narcan. There is no record kept of the names of those who request the medication.

Naloxone is provided through the MORE project, which is a Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services program. Individuals seeking Narcan can come to the Health Center, 911 E.16th St., and speak with a public health staff member. Those requesting the medication do not have to provide



their name.

“The COVID-19 pandemic is creating a great deal of stress for many members of our community,” Martin said in the news release. “There are resources to get help for a mental health crisis or a drug/

alcohol issue.”

For more information, contact the Pettis County Health Center at 660-827-1130.

Hope Lecchi can be reached at 660-826-1000 ext. 1484.



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Local provider offering mental health resources for teens, young adults

By Emily Walton

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Burrell Behavioral Health offers a specialized program to help youth to young adults with mental health issues or other problems such as substance use disorder.

Burrell's Assertive Community Treatment for Transitional Age Youth is an "evidence-based, specialized service which engages persons who have been unsuccessful, avoid or do not respond well to traditional treatment modalities," according to its website.

"(ACT-TAY) serves people ages 16-25 with a mental health diagnosis such as Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, Delusional Disorder, Major Depressive Disorder and Reactive Attachment Disorder as well as serious functional impairments such as maintaining a safe living situation, appropriate personal hygiene, inability to recognize or avoid dangers or hazards, and inability to maintain stable employment and or in a school setting," Burrell Director of Adult Services Glenna Wilson told the Democrat. "Often-times our clients also have a diagnosis of a substance use disorder as well."

Youth-specific programs

are incredibly important. According to Wilson, 1 in 5 individuals will experience a diagnosable mental health condition within a given year, and 50% of lifetime mental illness starts before age 14. The average gap between the first mental health symptoms and intervention is eight to 10 years.

"It's critical we intervene early to prevent mental health problems from getting worse," Wilson previously said. "Also, historically, mental health programs have been developed/planned for adult populations only and then applied to youth, but we know youth are a unique population, especially given family system issues, child development stages, etc. ACT-TAY really meets the unique needs of youth who don't quite fit into either the youth or adult world."

The transitional age youth is a speciality age group where individuals are beginning to age out of the youth system and are developing skills into adulthood, according to Burrell Central Region President Mathew Gass.

"The most valuable thing with that is the fact that they're doing transdisciplinary care where you've got a nurse on the team, a psychiatrist on the team, guiding

treatment," Gass said. "Your team leader, your employment specialist working towards the needs of a young person who's considering going to school or entering the workforce."

"(They're) helping that individual make those choices because what we often see is that individuals feel that life is limited and we, by supporting them in all of those life decisions, will help them understand that they've got value, hope and choice," Gass said.

Wilson also said that 2 out of 3 children experience at least one adverse childhood experience, according to the Adverse Childhood Experience Study. One in 5 reported three or more adverse childhood experiences. Early adverse experiences can have lasting impacts, which is why early intervention and programs specific to this population are so important and helpful, according to Wilson.

ACT-TAY utilizes a holistic team approach and provides a multi-disciplinary team that offers intensive treatment services including an intensive fidelity-based team.

"We noticed several years ago that there were higher rates of youth suicide in

Sedalia and Pettis County than what we had seen in some of those other areas," explained Gass. "So we partnered with the Department of Mental Health to create an assertive community treatment team in which the entire treatment team communicates daily about the individuals that are in that care."

Clients have access to a psychiatrist, nurse, community support specialist, peer support specialist, co-occurring disorder specialist, supported employment and education specialist, and the team leader, who is a licensed or provisionally licensed clinician to provide therapy.

"They're helping to make sure that they (adolescents) don't fall off the tracks," Gass said. "They're helping ensure that they remain housed. This population has a fairly high prevalence of being homeless or couch surfing.

They're also helping them walk through what strategies they may use to avoid substance misuse."

The services usually occur over a two- to three-year period.

"The team provides 24/7 coverage to clients and also provides crisis calls and interventions," Wilson said. "Clients are typically seen three to five times per week. ACT-TAY staff members will meet with clients in the home, the community or the office."

Wilson did not think there was one service the program offers that is more highly utilized than another, although she said "it is one of the only services in the area which provides the co-occurring therapy/service." ACT-TAY has also been found to decrease incarceration rates and inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations as well as reduce the need for inpatient

substance use disorder treatment facility stays, according to Wilson.

The Sedalia ACT-TAY team covers all of Pettis County. If a person is interested, they can contact the Burrell clinic in Sedalia, 201 W. Third St., at 660-827-2494, where they can be scheduled for an assessment.

"The ACT TAY team leader will meet with the person to determine their eligibility for services and, if eligible, will get them enrolled," Wilson said. "This holistic approach allows the client to be served by an entire team instead of just a sole provider. The client is typically seen three to five times per week and ACT-TAY provides 24/7 on-call services."

For more information on ACT-TAY, visit Burrell's page on the program on its website at <https://bit.ly/33cedkb>.

Emily Walton can be contacted at 660-530-0146.



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