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VALLEY VOICE

The official newsletter of Valley CSB

VCSB and Area Schools are Pro-active in Behavioral Health Services

As humans we have emotions and learn to cope with them throughout our lives. Children of all ages deal with emotions as best they can, but sometimes can need help learning healthy techniques.

Sarah Neilson, VCSB Child and Family Services Manager, said the School-based Outpatient Services program began in 2018 and helps kids find those ways to cope with tough emotions while at school. Through collaboration with school counselors, teachers, parents/guardians and the student, a plan is created to address disruptive behaviors.

A student may meet with a team member in weekly out-patient sessions during the school day. They go through the regular assessment process at the school or through Open Access at Sanger's Lane. Sessions typically take place over a six-month period, though some students may use the resource for several years.

Having a school-based outpatient counselor in the school is important to limit the amount of time students miss instruction. Transportation can be a barrier to accessing support services, and in-school sessions can save hours of time getting students back and forth from an office visit. However, some-times children are dealing with family stressors such as divorce or other problems.

Neilson said these issues are more often better addressed in sessions that take place in Child

and Family Services at Sanger's Lane.

"We always recommend parental involvement," Neilson said.

How much involvement may depend on the age of the child. Parents/guardians of elementary school students may participate by way of a virtual meeting or in person at the school. Middle and high school students take charge of how much family members are involved.

While there are some differences, VCSB school-based outpatient counselors and school counselors, there is a strong collaboration between the two that helps provide more individualized therapy to a smaller caseload. Team members typically have a caseload of 30-40 students versus upwards of 500 students for school counselors.

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Dr. Kimberly McClanahan

From the Executive Director

As Fall progresses, we experience the cooler weather, the turning of the leaves, and the anticipation of the upcoming winter holidays. On October 10th, we celebrated World Mental Health Day. The purpose of World Mental Health Day is to raise awareness of mental health issues and to mobilize efforts to support mental health.

The World Health Organization unites with partners to highlight the vital connection between mental health and work. Safe, healthy working environments can act as a protective factor for mental health. Unhealthy conditions including stigma, discrimination, and exposure to risks like harassment and other poor working conditions, can pose significant risks, affecting mental health, overall quality of life, and consequently, participation or productivity at work. With 60% of the global population in work, urgent actionis needed to ensure workprevents risks to mental health and protects and supports mental health at work.

It is essential for governments, employers, the organizations which represent workers and employers, and other stakeholders responsible for workers' health and safety to work together to improve mental health at work. Action to address mental health at work should be done with the meaningful involvement of workers and their representatives, and persons with lived experience of mental health conditions. By investing efforts and resources in evidence-based approaches and interventions at work, we can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to thrive at work and in life. Let's take action today for a healthier future. *World Health Organization*

Let us celebrate the amazing work that our employees perform every day to help ensure the mental health of those we serve.

Out of Darkness Walk to Prevent Suicide

Part of the 2023 VCSB team

In the annual Out of Darkness Walk that brings awareness about suicide and suicide prevention, friends, family members, neighbors and coworkers walk side-by-side, supporting each other and in memory of those who've been lost.

Valley Community Services Board participates with a team of walkers each year. In 2023 VCSB had 44 team members who raised $1,100.

The 2024 community walk will take place Oct. 19 in Gypsy Hill Park, Staunton. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

For more information on joining the walk, contact Carl Trost, 910-650-2069 or carl.trost1@gmail.com.

Developmental Services Day Program Reopens

The Developmental Services Day Program offers individuals with developmental disabilities an opportunity to take part in community activities each weekday.

There are five active participants doing a variety of activities including volunteering at the Disciple's Kitchen in Waynesboro and the Little Free Food Pantry at VCSB, visiting Sunset Park in Waynesboro and the Factory Antique Mall in Verona, and participating in activities at The Y, Frontier Culture Museum, the library and more.

By far the participants enjoy their duties for the Little Free Food Pantry. "This is my most favorite thing we do," one participant was heard saying. Three days per week they inventory and restock the food box at the entrance to VCSB. Lisa, a participant from Fishersville said she especially likes recording the amount of food distributed because it "improves my math skills."

Eythan, a participant from Waynesboro enjoyed the library outing where he colored pictures. Lisa chimed in that she liked doing that, too.

"I'm excited about providing opportunities for individuals to get back involved with the community and to do their part giving back to the community," said Krista Lynch, assistant director of Developmental Services.

CSB partnered with Vector Industries to use space in their Waynesboro center for day program lunch breaks in between community activities. A grant from the Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge helped equip the space with locking cabinets for program supplies, open shelves for games, a prep table, a microwave and refrigerator, as well as privacy curtains for a participant changing space.

Lisa wraps utensils at Disciples Kitchen.

Eythan packs food for pantry at VCSB.

School-Based Program

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"They're passionate about their kiddos," said Neilson about her team. "They're very resourceful."

When a student's goals are met, VCSB team members help them with resources such as clubs, sports, case management or medication management and other discharge plans put in place from the start.

*Team members are Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, or license-eligible Residents in Counseling and Supervisees in Social Work.

Valley Updates

Prevention Trainings

In fiscal year 2024 (July 2023 - June 2024) the VCSB Prevention Program offered numerous trainings for area residents.
Mental Health First Aid – 153 participants
Youth MHFA – 48 participants
REVIVE! - 175 participates trained in opioid overdose emergency response with Naloxone

Sponsored Residential Services Seeking New Sponsor Homes

The Sponsor provides a safe, family style home environment to individuals with a disability while providing daily assistance based on their individual plan for supports. This may include personal care, community participation, social skills, and other pertinent supports necessary to foster independence and the highest quality of life possible. For more information, go to www.vcsbsponsoredresidential.org

September was Deaf Awareness Month

- 2 to 3 of every 1,000 children in the United States are born with a detectable level of hearing loss in one or both ears.
- About 5% of adults ages 45-54 have disabling hearing loss. The rate increases to 10% for adults ages 55-64. 22% of those ages 65-74 and 55% of those who are 75 and older have disabling hearing loss.

VCSB offers services to persons who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Late Deafened or DeafBlind at 540-887-3200 or V/P: 540-416-0115.