

Education is Key

Letter from the Coordinator

As we move forward into the New Year, let's make a resolution to learn from this past year. We all have different viewpoints on so many things, and that's okay. It's what makes our nation so awesome. But, when our viewpoints infringe on others safety and wellbeing, we have to ask ourselves if our need for being right is more important than another's needs for personal safety, mental health, and self-worth. We can agree to disagree with someone and still be kind and empathetic. Whether it be the current pandemic, political climate, religious beliefs, or yes even our beliefs concerning substance use disorder, we can choose to be kind. We don't know everyone's personal story and the negative attitudes we can display towards people who view things differently can cause more damage than we realize. It can feed into existing feelings of lack of self-worth caused by past traumatic events. Words have the power to hurt. If actions speak louder than words, what then are the consequences of our actions towards others? It's less about being "politically correct" and more about being companionate and understanding. Everyone has a story and we can choose to be a hero in their story or a villain in their eyes.

Suzanne Prentice

The key to change is education and a better understanding of substance use disorder, co-occurring conditions, and recovery. Our Coalition strives to continually educate our members and our community. Coalition leaders attended many different trainings and webinars throughout the year. This last quarter, Coalition Chair Lisa Anderson and Coordinator Suzanne Prentice participated in and completed NMSAS's Recovery Coach and Ethical Considerations Training. In November, Suzanne attended the three-day virtual Cocaine, Meth & Stimulant Summit which focused on how these substances play into the current opioid epidemic and drug crisis, and changing practices and procedures in both the medical and judicial systems. Suzanne also became a trained Angel for FAN's Hope Not Handcuffs program, which is located at ATS's The Porch in Traverse City. Lisa as well as another Kalkaska resident have previously been trained in the program, making a total of 3 trained angels for the county of Kalkaska.

Youth Program

Youth probationers involved in the Youth Mentorship Initiative assisted in many community service projects over the last quarter, including the village cleanup, KAIR's food distributions and the Festival of trees fund raiser, as well as the Kalkaska Agricultural Fair's flag project. The program is designed to help build confidence



Students in the Youth Mentorship Program participated in the Village cleanup.

through participation in community improvement projects and by working side by side with vetted adult mentors. Twenty discs for disc golf were donated to the youth activities closet, disc golf along with many other activities is one of the engaging rewards for youth involved in the program. This program is designed to follow the Guiding Good Choices curriculum.

Helping those who help our community

Keeping connections with other community programs and lending a hand when needed is important to our coalition. KAIR (Kalkaska Area Interfaith Resources) continues to provide food and other resources to the needy in our community during these trying times. This last quarter the coalition was called to help with food trucks, labeling, and storage organization. Members Bobby Bishop and Suzanne Prentice are pictured helping out where needed. Cathy and her crew do an amazing job with the daily operation of this much needed food pantry, resale store, and recently added soup kitchen, Ladles of Love. Monetary donations are always welcome and needed, as well as gently used clothes and household items. Please contact KAIR to see how you can help and to get information about how to donate during Covid-19.



For additional information
about KAIR: 231-258-7836

<http://kalkaskakairs.com>

The 7th Annual Kalkaska County Serenity Vigil

Each December since we first started the Kalkaska Coalition in the spring of 2014, we have held our annual Kalkaska County Serenity Vigil to remember those in and around our community who we have lost their battle to substance use disorder or are still struggling. Last year we also began celebrating those in recovery and co-sponsoring the event with Celebrate Recovery, Kalkaska. This year looked a bit different for our cherished event, as Covid once again dictated our presence in the community. For a moment it looked as if we may have had to cancel, but thanks to a committed group of gifted Prevention Specialists from Catholic Human Services' Up North Prevention Initiative, we were able to continue this tradition. Although we were not be able to hold this year's vigil in person, we were able to bring it to even more people by offering it virtually. On December 20, 2020 we broadcasted our event via Up North Preventions YouTube channel and the Live Well Kalkaska Substance Free Coalition's Facebook Page.



*The Serenity Tree Lights up the
night on Kalkaska's KART Trail*

*Statue donated by Bobby Bishop
for the Serenity Garden*



The online event was about an hour long and offered a similar format as in past years. We provided educational information, along with a prayer by our local Pastor Andy Bratton of the Kalkaska Church of Christ. Local resident Wesley Mills told his personal story of his journey through substance use disorder and recovery. We walked a virtual candle lit walk followed by the hanging of ornaments on the Serenity Tree. Anyone could stop by the tree and add a personal ornament for a loved one. We also included clips of photos from past vigils, along with music by local musician Darrell Boger. At the end of the event we had a list of local resources available around our community. This is currently on our Facebook page also. Although we look forward to next year and gathering with the people in our community, we were thankful for the opportunity to share our event with more individuals and we hope they are inspired to join us at next year's event. If you would like to watch this event please follow this link.

<https://youtu.be/6ifYSQHLDKY>

Educational links:

ACE 101: Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences and Protective Factors**

January 20 from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Location: Online

MSU Extension will host an introductory webinar regarding Adverse Childhood Experiences, traumatic events that occur in childhood which can have an impact throughout a person's life. Attendees of this workshop will learn about ACEs and what steps can be taken to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors for youth.

[Click here](#) to register.

The Increase of Opioid Abuse and Overdose during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

January 29 from 12:00 PM to 1:15 PM

Location: Online

The Central Michigan University College of Medicine will host a webinar providing information about the observed increase in opioid use and overdose during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the need for evidence-based treatment models in the court system.

[Click here](#) to view the flyer

[Click here](#) to register here

Intro to Recovery Advocacy Training

January 9-10, 2021 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Location: Online

NMSAS will hold a two-day training describing advocacy for the recovery community as it used to be and what advocacy looks like today. Trainers Tom McHale and Joyce Fetrow will use this knowledge of past and present to develop a vision for the future of recovery advocacy. CEUs available through MCBAP. Space is limited.

To register, contact Tory or Kelly:

Phone: 989-370-7608

Email: twerth@nmsas.org

Recovery Messaging Training**

January 23 from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM

Location: Online

NMSAS Recovery Center will host a one-day training regarding the power of language in changing perceptions of SUDs and empowering others to seek pathways to recovery. The training will help participants to create a message of hope that promotes recovery and reduces stigma.

[Click here](#) to download the flyer.

To register, contact Tory or Kelly:

Phone: 989-370-7608

Email: twerth@nmsas.org

Recovery Coach Academy

February 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, and 14 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Location: Online

NMSAS Recovery Center will host a 5-day intensive training designed to provide individuals in recovery with the tools necessary to become a Peer Recovery Coach. Topics will include the roles and functions of a Recovery Coach, components and core values of recovery, and the process of building relationships with others to help them in their journey.

[Click here](#) to download the flyer

To register, fill out the application found on YouPickRecovery.org under the Recovery Coach Services tab.

For more information, contact Tory or Kelly:

Phone: 989-370-7608

Email: twerth@nmsas.org

Live Well Kalkaska Substance Free Coalition meets every second Monday of the month @ 3:30 pm Via Zoom until further notice.

Zoom Link:

<https://zoom.us/j/7483376657?pwd=WlI2RkFvYyttQ0dzYm1rdXJFWnRLQT09>

Meeting ID: 748 337 6657 Passcode: 248012

Visit us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LWKSFC>

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