



The Digest

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The Community Comes Together to Address the Increase in Heroin Use

PRISM Makes an Impact

PRISM: Prevention, Recovery, and Information on Substance Abuse and Mental Health

is a group striving to provide an opportunity for a better life and healthier communities by changing current attitudes towards substance abuse.

PRISM is a collaboration of Lee County, Illinois providers including the Lee County Health Department, Lee County State's Attorney's Office, Safe Harbor of Lee County, KSB Hospital, Lee County Sheriff's Department, Dixon Police Department, area churches, Sinnissippi Centers, and many others. As a partner in PRISM, Sinnissippi Centers is dedicated to the community and helping those who are affected by substance abuse issues.

PRISM got its start as the Lee County Heroin Task Force in March 2015, in response to the rising use of heroin locally and in response to the tragic overdose deaths of three individuals in a two week period. As the group met and quickly began to organize, they changed their name to PRISM to better reflect their overall mission.

Unfortunately, the rise in heroin use is not unique to this area. According to the Department of Justice's "Addressing the Nation's Heroin Crisis", over 160,000 Americans tried heroin for the first time in 2013, including over 20,000 children between the ages of 12 and 17. Also, according to the same report, the problem affects not only inner cities, but also rural areas.

Heroin is often cheaper and easier to use than prescription drugs, some of which have become more expensive, harder to obtain, and harder to abuse due to the passage of new laws as well as changes in manufacturing. An August 2012 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration study found that people aged 12 to 49 who had abused prescription pain killers were 19 times more likely than those who hadn't to try heroin in the previous year.

PRISM is working towards creating

a climate where those who are suffering from an addiction will be able to receive the help they need, when they need it. The group recognizes that many substances, not just heroin, cause addiction, and they hope to address substance abuse as a whole, while addressing any underlying mental health issues which often co-occur.



Members of the community attend the Lee County PRISM Anti-Heroin Forum in May. Photo by Alex T. Pascal, courtesy Sauk Valley Media

Natalie Andrews, Adult Services Director at Sinnissippi Centers says, "The group has a lot of work ahead of them, but they have already made great strides in increasing community awareness."

In May, around two hundred individuals attended a seminar entitled, "**Heroin in My Neighborhood**". On June 5th, an opioid training was sponsored by Sinnissippi Centers to help educate others on opioids and the use of Narcan to help overdose victims. The use of life saving drugs to help combat overdoses has become imperative as community members continue to lose their lives to drugs such as heroin.

Community education and awareness is the most impactful avenue to reduce stigma in Lee County, not only for those with substance abuse issues, but also for their families. Many family members struggle with the knowledge their loved one is suffering, not knowing whether to help or not, and how to help.

The proposed changes by PRISM of Lee County will affect not only those with substance abuse issues, but also their families. Those who want help overcoming their addiction will be able to reach out without fear of arrest. Instead, they will be taken to an appropriate provider to receive help.

Andrews adds that, "This change in attitude will lessen stigma for users and their families. The lack of fear to receive help will allow those who may otherwise forego assistance to help themselves." Several area providers have made promises to increase the availability of care, for those who are currently incarcerated and for post incarceration care coordination.

Learning Life Skills

By Adam Zuck, Sinnissippi Centers

The Sinnissippi Centers' Youth Garden Project is in full swing, making the summer months a fun experience for all that are involved. Starting June 3rd, the garden was tilled, weeded, and planted, creating the perfect atmosphere for plants to thrive. The garden, which is supported by proceeds from Distinctive Gardens' Gardenstock Art & Music Festival (see story on page 3) and the Sinnissippi Foundation, is a learning experience for all involved.



Adam Zuck, Court Services Specialist at Sinnissippi Centers, is working to make sure that the garden and its crops fill more than just stomachs. Zuck explains, "Each adolescent who works with in the garden is here to do so much more than till and work with plants. They learn important life skills that they can use well into adulthood." These skills include the value of hard work, time management, money management, and most importantly, the role of responsibility. "Each garden youth has to be here on time and ready to work. It is a real job and is an opportunity to learn from their decisions," Zuck adds.

This year, the produce from the garden will go to benefit the Dixon Food Pantry, as it has in years past. However, there is always room to grow. Zuck hopes that, "If there is enough produce, I would love to start participating in local farmers markets. I think the experience of having them help grow the plants is only part of the bigger picture that we are trying to create. The impact of the project is not just on the youth, but also those who benefit from their work." Healthy Families Illinois, a Sinnissippi program that helps expectant and new mothers, also receives pumpkins in the Fall season for their young families.

"I think it is important for those who are working in the garden to understand that their actions impact more than just themselves, which as adolescents, I think they forget." He adds, "We are supported by so many in the community. The support that we receive, especially from Distinctive Gardens, is seen by the youth in the project and it helps them understand that others believe in them." For information on the Youth Garden Project, please contact Adam Zuck at 815-284-6611.

"Together creating the highest level of care, empowering people of all ages to find joy and hope."

Respect ✧ Integrity ✧ Compassion ✧ Humor ✧ Collaboration ✧ Acceptance ✧ Quality



SINNISSIPPI CENTERS

Sinnissippi News

Youth Mental Health First Aid

A Youth Mental Health First Aid training was held June 22nd in Mount Carroll. The training was sponsored by the Savanna Women's Club and instructed by Janice McCoy, County Director, University of Illinois Extension and Laura Smith, Family Care Coordinator, Sinnissippi Centers. Twenty community members attended. The purpose of the training was to prepare attendees to assist adolescents who may be experiencing a mental health issue or crisis.

Welcome Back to Stacie Kemp

Stacie Kemp recently re-joined Sinnissippi Centers to become Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer. A native of Mt. Carroll, Kemp has her Master's Degree in Social Work and previously worked at Sinnissippi's Mt. Carroll office prior to working in Milwaukee, Wisconsin for a number of years. Kemp's duties will include day to day oversight of the agency's divisions; Adult Services, Child & Adolescent Services and Healthcare Innovations.



The Return of Dr. Daly

Sinnissippi Centers is pleased to welcome Dr. James Daly back to the role of Medical Director. Dr. Daly will be providing supervision for mid-level providers and will also be assisting with provision and improvement of services to clients. Dr. Daly last worked for Sinnissippi in 2009, and also currently is on staff at FHN in Freeport.



Making the Choice - Thrivent Choice

Qualifying Thrivent Financial members have the ability to direct Thrivent Choice dollars to one or more of their favorite charities at no additional cost. As of Spring 2015, Sinnissippi Centers, Inc. is one of those charities that can benefit from the Thrivent Choice program. For more information ask your Thrivent representative or visit the Thrivent website and look for Thrivent Choice under "Making a Difference".

First Annual NAMI Sauk Area 5K

Sinnissippi Centers participated in NAMI Sauk Area's first annual "5K Run & Walk Beside Us" event. It was held Saturday, June 20th at Sterling's Roscoe Eades Stadium. Organizers were pleased with the turnout. Sinnissippi had a team of four runners, pictured here.



Team Sinnissippi from left to right: Alison Boothe, Anna Hendrix, Keenan Moen, and Emma Sintich

By Kimberly Crump, Sinnissippi Family Services Supervisor

Heathy Families Success

As a Supervisor with the Healthy Families Illinois Program at Sinnissippi Centers, I see our staff working with expectant and new mothers every day. It is our goal to see them have healthy pregnancies and to thrive once the child is born. We host outings and events throughout the year to help them enjoy themselves and learn important skills to reduce stress.

Seeing mothers and children grow is a part of our work, but it is also why we love what we do. However, the most rewarding part of our jobs is seeing successes that will effect not only the mother's life, but the life of their child.

Recently, we had another one of those success stories. It was a new mom who not only graduated high school while pregnant but has grown to become a responsible and caring mother at a young age. When mom enrolled in the Healthy Families Illinois (HFI) program at Sinnissippi Centers she was 8 weeks pregnant. She had lived with both of her parents until she was 13, when her parents divorced. After that she lived with her mother.

The mother of the baby was 17 when the pregnancy was confirmed and turned 18 shortly after she enrolled in HFI. She continued to attend high school, graduating 3 months after enrollment in the program.

The pregnancy was uneventful. However, once the baby was born, mom realized something was not quite right. The baby's tongue appeared too large. With the support of her HFI home visitor, mom continued to ask questions of the doctor and saw specialists. Her persistence paid off. After several tests it was determined that the baby had a rare syndrome which causes an overgrowth of body parts. Mom worked diligently to educate herself and to provide her baby with the best care. She has done an excellent job of treating the baby as if the baby did not have the syndrome.

She enjoys her life with her baby, including playing with and talking to the baby. When mom attended an HFI group, her baby was full of smiles and quite happy. The baby smiled every time mom talked to her. The baby is about 9 months old at this time and is doing well. Mom's dedication and work with her baby is evident by the scores on HFI developmental screenings.

Another success: The baby will be able to have "tongue reduction surgery" at age one. Mom is actively trying to locate a surgeon and make financial arrangements to pay for the procedure.

Our HFI home visitor is proud of this mom for her dedication and maturity in dealing with the baby's health issue. HFI is proud of the mom for graduating from high school, and for being so dedicated to her baby's care and well-being. Her decisions now will have a profound effect on her baby's life in the future and we are excited to continue to see her and her baby grow.



State of the State Budget

by Patrick Phelan, President/CEO Sinnissippi Centers

Every year, Sinnissippi Centers and those served by the agency are caught in the midst of contentious budget negotiations. This year, however, the threat may be greater than ever before.

In February, Governor Rauner proposed a budget that would cut over \$1 million in funding from Sinnissippi in fiscal year 2016. The state legislature responded by stating that cuts this deep would decimate the community safety net system, and ultimately produced a spending plan that would lead to much less drastic cuts. As everyone in the State of Illinois recognizes, the current budget situation will require some decreases in spending, and more modest cuts to services could be tolerable.

Governor Rauner has stated from the beginning of negotiations with the House and Senate that he would not sign such a spending plan unless the legislature agreed to his turnaround agenda. This agenda includes term limits, right to work zones, workers compensation reform, pension reform and other hotly debated items.

At this writing, fiscal year 2016 has begun and there is still no budget and only limited contracts for agencies providing community services. In addition, the longer the state goes without a budget, it is more likely that providers will not be paid for services rendered before the budget is finalized. This step places agencies like Sinnissippi in a serious bind. The choices are to either discontinue critical services or provide those services without compensation. The solution has to be a combination of each, which will have very detrimental effects on our neighbors and community. Our deepest hope is that someday a budget deal will be struck that does not place our consumers between competing political agendas.



7th Annual Gardenstock Art & Music Festival August 15, 2015 Creativity Builds Community

On August 15, 1969, a sea of people from every walk of life gathered at Max Yasgur's farm in upstate New York for a three day festival of peace and music: The Woodstock Music & Art Fair.

Flash forward 40 years to August 22, 2009, when a smaller group gathered for the first Gardenstock Art & Music Festival. Gardenstock, while inspired by Woodstock, is unique in its own way. It grew out of the creativity and sense of community of dozens of artists and musicians and many others. Now jump to present day and that group has grown much bigger.

"We wanted to create an art & music festival that benefitted the community and brought people together," says **Bud LeFevre**, co-owner with **Lisa Higby LeFevre** of Distinctive Gardens. "Gardenstock has been the center of a growing and diverse community of people and has gone well beyond being merely an art and music festival," says Lisa.

In 2011, Distinctive Gardens was one of five winners, out of more than 10,000 entries, for American Express OPEN and Facebook's Big Break contest. That win was in no small part due to their work on Gardenstock.

"The festival also helped spur something of a renaissance of local art and music in Dixon and the surrounding area," says Lisa. She adds, "We are experiencing a rejuvenation of culture in our area, it's an awesome thing to see."

This year Bud and Lisa estimate

that around 3,000 will attend the **7th Annual Gardenstock Art & Music Festival Saturday, August 15, 2015**, the 47th anniversary of Woodstock.

Gardenstock will start at **10:00 am and last until 11:00 pm**, and is held on the grounds of **Distinctive Gardens, 2020 Lowell Park Road in Dixon**. The festival showcases the local area's wealth of creativity, talent, and diversity in music, art, and more.

"Gardenstock 2015 is the year of the songwriter," says Bud. "All the bands will play a lot of original music." In what will likely be a bittersweet moment, The Dirty Beet Brothers will perform on the Gardenstock stage, this time without their beloved guitarist Al Repass, who died in a motorcycle accident May 29, 2015. There will also be a tribute to Repass at Gardenstock.

"The art festival has grown to include 42 of the area's best artists," says Lisa Higby LeFevre,

"Gardenstock is the lifeline for the Sinnissippi Centers' Youth Garden Program," says Patrick Phelan, Sinnissippi's President/CEO. "Without the support Gardenstock provides, the garden project, regrettably, would have been a victim of repeated state budget cuts," adds Phelan.

For more information visit online at www.diggersdelight.com, by phone at 815-285-0014, or on Facebook by searching for Gardenstock.



**7th Annual Gardenstock
Saturday, August 15, 2015
2020 Lowell Park Road, Dixon, IL**

Art Festival 10am-6pm

Music 11am-11pm

Food Vendors 11am-8pm

Raffles & Tie Dye Contest 11am-6pm

Advocating for Mental Wellness

State budgets are not just a jumble of hundreds of numbers and line items, and dry descriptions of programs. They are, in fact, a list of the impacts, positive and negative, on real people in the state of Illinois.

In April 2015, members of the **Better Living Focus Group** joined hundreds of other concerned citizens writing letters to their senators and representatives. Each letter was a little different, but the common element that ran through all the letters was the devastating impact that proposed cuts would have on them as individuals and on the entire system of community services.

With the latest news on the state budget, their advocacy is even more important (see story at left, "State of the State Budget"). While it is clear something needs to be done to get the state's fiscal house in order, it does seem that through the years, individuals like those served by agencies like Sinnissippi Centers have taken the brunt of the budgetary pain.



**SINNISSIPPI
FOUNDATION**

Foundation News

Expressions Art Sale & a Great Campaign

Many hardy souls braved a rainy night to attend the 11th Annual Expressions Art Sale and Reception. Held April 24, 2015, at the Next Picture Show, the event featured beautiful locally produced art and a large variety of silent auction items. Among the auction items; the chance to drive a sports car like a Ferrari or Porsche for three laps on an actual race track. Funds raised will help fund the Foundation's activities in the coming months. Shortly after Expressions, the annual Sinnissippi Foundation Employee, Board, and Alumni Campaign took place. The campaign was also a success. Thanks to the many who participated in both fund raising efforts.

The Digest Newsletter

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Contributors: Phyllis Berge, Joan Smith, Laura Smith, DeAnne White, Adam Zuck

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Donations

If you would like to make a donation to the Foundation send your gift to 325 Illinois Route 2 - Suite 100, Dixon, IL 61021. Please specify if you would like to give that donation in honor or memory of a family member or loved one.

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www.sinnissippi.com

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Mt. Carroll

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(815) 244-1376

Oregon

100 Jefferson Street, Oregon, IL 61061
(815) 732-3157

Rochelle

1321 North 7th Street, Rochelle, IL 61068
(815) 562-3801

Sterling

2611 Woodlawn Road, Sterling, IL 61081
(815) 625-0013

Additional Locations by Appointment

Dixon-Town Square Centre

24-hour Emergency Phone Number

800-242-7642



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