

# System of Care



## Youth Voice is Vital, But Not Simple

by Lincoln Arneal, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation

One of the most important lessons when working with young people is realizing they are not mimes.

Not to degrade the subtle magic of those silent performers, but young people can't just put on a physical show when meeting with professionals. They need to have their voice heard when professionals make decisions affecting their well-being.

In the System of Care world, this means being patient and understanding their needs. Work with the young people to engage them and ask direct questions to elicit feedback. They may not understand the acronyms or impact of some governmental policies, but when given the time, background and opportunity, chances are they will have an opinion.

When working with young people, here are some important reminders to help reach toward more authentic, meaningful youth engagement.

- 1. Physical presence at the meeting does not mean they are engaged.**  
Young people need a real opportunity to have their voice heard and not just serve as a filled in line on the attendance sheet.
- 2. Meet them on their own terms.** Meeting in a sterile office building might not seem like a big deal, but it can be intimidating to people who don't work in that environment every day. If you want authentic youth voice, go to the organizations they are involved with and let them be the majority instead of a handful of young people attending a meeting room full of professionals.

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## 5 FREE OR AFFORDABLE MENTAL HEALTH APPS

by Megan Jerabek  
SOC Community Youth Leader  
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[Gluemagazine.co](http://Gluemagazine.co)

Sometimes all someone needs in the moments that they are struggling with their mental health is a little guidance and support. Now you can have that bit of extra help with you, available anywhere at the touch of a button. Enjoy these 5 mobile applications that can help make your mental illness a little more manageable.

**Calm Harm** is an award-winning app created with the intention of helping people manage their urges to self-harm. This mobile app contains many options, making it more easily personalized. Six activity types are offered; comfort, distract, express yourself, release, random, and breath. General advice and hot line numbers are also available. This app can be locked and secured with a password.

**Mood Path** was created to become a mental health companion to anyone. Within this app, you can track your feelings and your state of mind. After using the app consistently for fourteen days, it claims to offer a "full analysis." This analysis is offered with the intention of educating people about the detection and treatment of

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# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND THE SYSTEM OF CARE

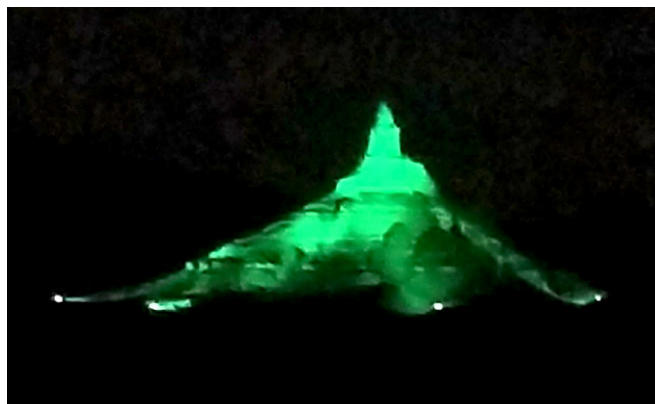
by Susan Feyen-Reay, LICSW

The Nebraska System of Care serves as a framework to help state agencies and private providers work in partnership and deliver mental health services and supports. The behavioral health workforce is often strained by system fragmentation and siloed services. The system of care functions to stimulate collaboration and communication in order to overcome some of these barriers to workforce development. In turn, providers are better able to serve youth and families through enhanced coordination of care.

Moreover, the System of Care seeks to promote workforce development through training and education. Training and education in evidence-based practices is essential for the provision of ethical and efficient services for youth and families. The Nebraska System of Care website offers free webinars and training opportunities in areas such as youth and family partnerships, integrated systems of care, culturally appropriate services, and community-based services. To learn more about training and education opportunities visit <https://www.unmc.edu/bhecn/education/nebraska-system-of-care/index.html>. ■

## Residents of the Panhandle Show Up and Prove They Care about Mental Health

When thinking of how to better your community, many things come to mind, but mental health often gets overlooked. Thankfully, Nebraska and several other states understand more and more that services for people who experience behavioral health challenges should have help that is readily available. Since May, the public has been involved in many events – including those coordinated by Region 1 and its community partners in the Panhandle.



*Chimney Rock bathed in green light for Mental Health Awareness Month in May*

A Children's Mental Health Awareness Month (CMHAM) planning committee was formed out of the Region 1 System of Care (SOC) Local Implementation Team. The committee organized training around Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), a breakout session at Nebraska Juvenile Justice Association (NJJA), Pony Express Ride Kick Off and letter collection, a four-film series on mental health at the Historic Midwest Theater, a mental health awareness Facebook page, promotion of existing services in the Panhandle, and a special display with Chimney Rock being lit in green. Goals were exceeded with over 300 people attending the ACE training and over 330 showing up for the film series. Not only were people participating in these events, but over 500 signed letters of support for Children's Mental Health were collected for the Pony Express Ride.

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## MENTAL HEALTH APPS

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depression, along with an explanation of what depression really is. You are able to manage your data, with the option of sending it to your practitioner, or simply using it as a “personal mood journal.” Information about the science behind Mood Path is offered on their website.

**Personal Zen** is a scientifically-validated app created to help people “reduce stress and anxiety.” This app is to be used for ten minutes at a time and for several days of the week. Personal Zen offers calming sounds and music, along with making setting your goals and reaching them into something that you can see. The visual experience helps people to get an idea of where they must go and how far or close they are to reaching their goals. This app is intended to be used for whenever you need a sort of mental vacation. This isn't something that must be used daily, but can be if needed.

**Pacifica** is an app that, according to their website, “integrates several widely-used and empirically-supported treatments for anxiety, depression, and stress more broadly. Its tools incorporate principles and practices from Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Mindfulness.” With this app, you can track your mood, set goals, complete relaxation activities, meditate, and make connections with peer support groups. Pacifica truly has a lot to offer those with anxiety, and with many other mental illnesses.

**Happify** is a science-based app that was created to help people “overcome stress and negative thought; build resilience.” Happify can be used for when you are feeling sad, happy, or anywhere in-between!

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# SUICIDE SPEAKS

to everyone

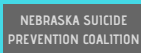
SEPTEMBER IS SUICIDE AWARENESS MONTH  
JOIN THE CONVERSATION.

Wednesday, SEPT 19, 2018  
Fremont Nazarene Church  
960 Johnson Rd. Fremont, NE

FREE SUPPER FOR ALL  
6 PM- 6:30 PM

Fremont  
Health

Presented by:



## ADULTS

SPEAKERS  
RESOURCES & NETWORKING

JANAE SHILLITO  
The Kim Foundation

DONNA WOLFF  
Nebraska Suicide Prevention Coalition

6:30 PM- 7:30 PM  
MINISTRY CENTER- WEST END

## YOUTH

SPEAKER &  
ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

DONNA WOLFF  
Nebraska Suicide Prevention Coalition

6 PM- 8 PM  
SANCTUARY- EAST END

## KIDS

AGES BIRTH- 6TH GRADE

ALL KIDS MUST BE  
CHECKED IN  
AND OUT THROUGH  
OUR SECURE SYSTEM FOR  
FREE ACTIVITIES

6:30 PM- 7:30 PM

## STOPPING STIGMA

by Kailey Kocourek, Project  
Coordinator, The Kim Foundation

I recently attended training for QPR: Question, Persuade, Refer: Suicide Prevention. In the course, we learned how to talk with someone going through a crisis and how to get them the help they needed. The steps were pretty straight forward: question if the person has suicidal intent, persuade them to get help, and refer them to someone who is trained to help in that kind of situation. But when it came time for role play to practice what we'd learned, it was hard for most people to get through the first step of questioning the person. When we discussed why it was so hard for so many in the class, the most common response was that it seemed so harsh to just come right out and ask, "Are you thinking of suicide?" because of the stigma surrounding suicide and mental health as a whole.

Stigma is when someone views you in a negative way because you have a distinguishing characteristic or personal trait that's thought to be, or actually is, a disadvantage. Stigma causes people to feel ashamed for something that is out of their control and it prevents them from seeking the help they need. Others' judgements almost always stem from a lack of understanding rather than information based on facts. Below are some ways that we can fight mental health stigma so it becomes as common to talk about as any other physical illness.

- Educate yourself and others. Whether you are sharing your personal experience or something you have seen happen to someone else, make sure people have the correct facts.

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## YOUTH VOICE

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3. **Work to reduce barriers.** Compensate them for their effort and time. It makes them feel more like a professional. Stipends and mileage help, but timing also matters. For a lot of young people, work and school are their biggest priorities. Make your meeting times and locations conducive to their attendance to ensure they don't have obstacles to attending meetings.
4. **If they can't attend meetings, provide them with other ways to participate.** Send out questions in advance so they can send in their thoughts.

When working within a System of Care it is vital to have young people participate because the decisions affect their well-being, their future, and their family. The young people are the experts in their own lives and know how the system affects them. They can help ensure that the SOC group is on the right path and if the decisions being made match up with what is going on in the real world.

Ensuring that youth voice is heard can take a lot of work. It takes time, energy and effort, but when done properly, it can be tremendously rewarding. ■



# BYU Quarterback Tanner Mangum delivers powerful message about behavioral health challenges and asking for help



Tanner Mangum (center) after his webinar along with emcee Alec Busch

On June 2, Tanner Mangum, quarterback for Brigham Young University, led a webinar titled “Overcoming Behavioral Health Challenges and Not Letting Behavioral Health Challenges Define You.” In the one-hour webinar, Mangum shared his history with depression and anxiety and how he finally asked for help. Since reaching out for help with his behavioral health challenges, Mangum has been sharing his story with audiences around the nation - including a segment on [CBS Sports](#).

For Mangum, it started in 2016. Despite a successful high school football career and stellar freshman season at BYU, including a school record for freshman passing yards in a single game, (You may remember Mangum from his 42-

yard “Hail Mary” as time expired to beat the Huskers in 2015), Mangum found himself constantly feeling stressed and worried. He felt on edge and had trouble sleeping. Eventually, it led to a crippling loss of motivation to do the things he had

**At the end of the day, people are gonna think things, gonna say things. You can’t control that. Try not to worry about that. Go do you. Go live your life and show them – hey, I’m okay. Yes, I deal with this struggle, but it doesn’t define me. It’s not who I am.**

normally enjoyed. It ended up isolating him and he suffered in silence. He put on a good face in practice or for friends. After eventually breaking down to his mom, she suggested seeing a professional. It was the beginning of turning things in a more positive direction. It wasn’t an overnight change, but a gradual improvement. It also allowed him to find a circle of trust and the courage to tell his story. To watch the webinar, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4TEGVzYpDM>. ■

## STOPPING STIGMA

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- Encourage equality between physical and mental illness. More Americans suffer from depression than coronary heart disease, cancer, and HIV/AIDS so it is time we start talking about it as if it were as normal as a physical illness.
- Be conscious of language. Treat everyone as human beings first. Their mental illness does not define who they are. They are not a depressed person; they are a person who is suffering from depression.
- Don’t isolate yourself. If you have a mental illness, don’t be reluctant to tell someone about it. Confiding in those you trust can help you move forward with your treatment.

Join a support group. Some local and national groups, such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), offer local programs and internet resources that help reduce stigma by educating people who have mental illness, their families, and the general public. ■

## MENTAL HEALTH APPS

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It consists of “effective tools and programs to help you take control of your feelings and thoughts.” This app has a goal of helping people to develop an overall better emotional state and well-being.

It’s always okay to ask for help. We can’t do everything on our own. Test out these apps for yourself to find the best option for you. These apps have you in mind, feel free to explore them and more apps meant to help your mental health. Take some time for your mental health. Take some time for you. ■

*This is one young person’s opinion. Nebraska SOC does not endorse any particular apps.*

# Nebraska Family Support Network supports Operation N.E.T.S.

by Eve Bleyhl, M.S., Nebraska Family Support Network

It was an exciting morning at Nebraska Family Support Network (NFSN) yesterday when Capt. Wayne Hudson of the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Battalion Chief Scott Fitzpatrick with Omaha Fire Department and Capt. Ken Kanger with the Omaha Police Department showed up to collect the sports equipment that filled the box that Marlon Wofford, NFSN Father Engagement Specialist, set out in support of Operation N.E.T.S. (see photo below) Please consider setting out your own box or drop some sports equipment off at NFSN – we are working on filling our second box. You can get more information on how to get a box by contacting Carey Pomykato, Executive Director Coalition RX and Dillon's House (402) 871-5622 or [execdirect@coalitionrx.org](mailto:execdirect@coalitionrx.org).

Operation N.E.T.S. (Neighborhood Engagement Through Sports) is a collaborative effort of the Omaha Police Department, Omaha Fire Department, Douglas County Sheriff's Office and Coalition RX. The program strengthens community partnerships with first responders and focuses on reaching the youth in our community through positive interaction and sports.

First responders working with Operation N.E.T.S. will visit neighborhoods across the metro to hand out basketballs, footballs, soccer balls and nets to kids with the goal of fostering stronger relationships. First responders may also meet a child during a call or investigation and be able to offer a ball as a way to comfort a child who may

be uncertain in a situation or scared of law enforcement.

Community donations make this Operation N.E.T.S. possible. ■



## Brenda Moes Named Administrator of Office of Consumer Affairs

The Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) has named Brenda Moes as administrator of the Office of Consumer Affairs, which ensures that consumers have a voice in service planning and delivery at DBH.

"Brenda is a strong advocate and brings a commitment to helping others through connecting people to community services, educational opportunities and coordinating consumer and community efforts to improve communication around mental health and substance use disorders," said Sheri Dawson, director of the Division of Behavioral Health at DHHS, adding that Moes brings both professional and personal lived experience to her new role. Moes reports to Dawson. ■





# Families Turn to You for Help



## You Can Turn to Us for Resources

If you're a professional working with children and families, then you're the person they turn to when they need help. But sometimes you won't have all the answers or another professional may be better suited to help.

### **The Nebraska Family Helpline is here for you.**

Whether you want to refer someone to the Helpline, find resources you can pass on, or include us in a discussion with someone in crisis, the Nebraska Family Helpline's trained crisis counselors are **available 24/7** to provide support and advice at no cost. You may call anonymously, and your call will be confidential.

Learn more and order free wallet cards, brochures and magnets at **[NebraskaFamilyHelpline.ne.gov](https://NebraskaFamilyHelpline.ne.gov)**.



NEBRASKA FAMILY  
**HELPLINE**

**888-866-8660**

**Any Problem.  
Any Time.**



*Sheri Dawson, Director of the Department of Behavioral Health, and other DBH staff pose with members of the Eagle Riders at the State Capitol.*

## PANHANDLE

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One of the key events was the ACE training on June 20 at the Gering Civic Center. Dr. Vincent Felitti, co-author of the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study, presented to an audience from all parts of the Panhandle, eastern Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, and South Dakota.

The ACE questionnaire has 10 questions about traumatic childhood experiences. Studies have found the higher your score, the more you are at risk for conditions such as chronic health problems. Many participants said they would incorporate the lessons they learned into their work and home life.

A highlight of Awareness Month is always the Pony Express Ride. This motorcycle ride continued an 11-year tradition as the Eagle Riders took a 900-mile journey across the state, starting in the Panhandle. The purpose is to raise awareness for children's mental health by collecting letters of support from Nebraskans at many stops across the state. Hundreds of letters were delivered to Sheri Dawson, Director of the Division of Behavior Health on the steps of the Capitol. These letters are then shared with Governor Ricketts and other policy-makers to remind them of the importance of prioritizing children's mental health.

The Midwest Theater held a four-part summer film series to highlight mental health. The films were "Infinitely Polar Bear," about bipolar disorder; "Resilience," about childhood trauma; "Paper Tigers," dealt with high school students and trauma; and "Suicide: The Ripple Effect," the story of Kevin Hines attempting suicide from the Golden Gate Bridge and his current suicide prevention work.

I am proud to say that I was able to attend many of these events. As a 17-year-old, that is uncommon. It is rare that a teenager is so enraptured by what people in her community are doing to better it for her future. Several of my classmates and friends talk about how nothing gets done. We see this, we report it, and bring attention to it, yet it seems unresolved. Working with Region 1 and being part of the process, I see that things are not done overnight and people are constantly working to improve the lives of strangers. You may not see these results in person but know they are getting done and that the resources are available. ■

*– Zoe Knaub, Intern  
Region 1 Behavioral Health Authority  
SOC Local Implementation Team Member  
Senior, Scottsbluff Public Schools CHOICES.*

## NeSOC Collaborative

- Department of Health and Human Services
- Administrative Office of the Courts
- Administrative Office of Probation
- Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN)
- Children's Commission
- Nebraska Family Run Organizations
- Nebraska Department of Education
- Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
- Regional Behavioral Health Authorities
- Tribal Society of Care
- Youth Partners & Family Partners with lived experience

## NeSOC Priority Outcomes

- Decrease the proportion of youth who report living in a setting that is not their home (i.e. foster care, group home, detention, residential treatment, or hospital).
- Increase the number of children and youth who attend school regularly.
- Decrease costs per youth receiving services.
- Decrease in average age of first system contact.

## To learn more about NeSOC:

- [http://dhhs.ne.gov/behavioral\\_health/Pages/beh\\_systemofcare.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/behavioral_health/Pages/beh_systemofcare.aspx)
- Nathan Busch  
[nbusch@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:nbusch@nebraskachildren.org)
- Bernie Hascall  
[Bernie.Hascall@nebraska.gov](mailto:Bernie.Hascall@nebraska.gov)

**1-888-866-8660**

**Youth Mobile Crisis Response** supports youth and families who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis anywhere in Nebraska.

*Help is only a call away.*