



## ILLINOIS HEALS - Helping Everyone Access Linked Systems

*An OVC Linking Systems of Care for Children and Youth Demonstration Initiative*

Welcome to the **Illinois HEALS CONNECT** newsletter! This issue features Illinois program updates and new resources applicable for serving victims of crime.

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## Celebrating Demonstration Site Accomplishments

The demonstration site held its final internal advisory board meeting in August. **Matt Buckman** of the Stress and Trauma Treatment Center, and **Elaina Cullers**, Egyptian Public Health Department's IL HEALS Systems of Care Coordinator, provided an overview of the site's successes, challenges, and lessons learned.

Over the past three years, Egyptian Public Health Department and its partners took a "no wrong door approach" to providing care and services to children,

youth, and families impacted by victimization. Utilizing the Recognize, Connect, and Engage Framework, they built upon existing systems of care and coalitions to connect and enhance coordinated service provision in Southern Illinois.

The partners' accomplishments include:

- Increasing the number of contracted service providers from 2 to 9.
- Providing extensive training and support on topics such as screening and recognition, protocols, and self-care.
- Expanding the pool of providers trained in trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-CBT) from 39 to 111. parent-child interaction therapy (PCIT) from 17 to 29 eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy (EMDR) from 0 to 35. and trauma-informed managing and adapting practices therapy (MAP) from 28 to 65.
- Growing the number of trained and rostered providers from 78 to 117.
- Reaching 378 users with their online resource guide.
- Educating 153 people on their electronic referral process and platform, resulting in 2,278 referrals.
- Providing 65 people with TF-CBT. 23 people with PCIT. 21 people with EMDR. and 425 people with trauma-informed MAP.

Throughout program implementation, the team identified important lessons, strengths, and areas for growth. Increased collaboration, ongoing referral relationships, higher reimbursement rates, and access to training and consultation reduced staffing changes, strengthened the capacity of providers to meet complex needs, and increased the number of clients and families receiving services. Despite challenges, such as staff burnout and turnover, barriers to making referrals, and COVID-19-related obstacles, the increased ability to provide services and collaborate will continue to be a strength for their organizations and communities. ♦

## Welcome, Karen!

**Karen Galbraith** has signed on as IL HEALS Project Coordinator and will be working on the workforce development plan and toolkit. A licensed social worker, Karen has over 25 years of local and state victim services experience, serving most recently as the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape training projects coordinator. Karen's efforts have focused on strengthening collaborative responses and integrating trauma-informed practices. In addition to supporting the IL HEALS team, Karen is the Penn State Dickinson Law social work supervisor and an adjunct instructor. ♦

## Program Spotlight: A Safe Place

Recently, **Maria Escobar**, director of La Paloma Cares at A Safe Place, shared how IL HEALS has helped them increase services and outreach.

Through IL HEALS, La Paloma has provided services to the Latinx community and expanded counseling access for intimate partner violence and human trafficking survivors. Adjusting to meet the demand for services and address the complex needs of survivors and their families, La Paloma offers innovative in-person and virtual services. Recognizing that transportation and childcare cost barriers to accessing care, they provide telehealth options and are working to address childcare challenges for in-person clients.

Solutions have included meeting with clients in satellite locations to reduce transportation barriers, offering on-site childcare during appointments, and providing services that include both the parent and child. The grant also enabled them to strengthen community collaborations for increased outreach and programming.

### Efforts included:

- Providing wrap-around services and resources to clients through A Safe Place programs, such as emergency shelter, housing, legal advocacy, and family visitation services.
- Offering emergency shelter and transportation.
- Back-to-school programming that created important connections with children, families, and school personnel while increasing service awareness.
- Community outreach in the wake of the Highland Park mass shooting, providing support and counseling services in Spanish to those affected by the violence.
- Creating partnerships with local vendors to support a holiday event for 80 individuals and 20 families.
- Collaborating with Rosalind Franklin University to provide flu and COVID-19 vaccines and wellness checks via bus in a local community.
- Forming connections with HEALS partner sites and other providers to support survivors and their families with mental health, immigration, and legal services.
- Growing the number of trained and **rostered providers** from 78 to 117.◆



## Self-Care Kits + Resources

### **University of Buffalo School of Social Work Self-Care Starter Kit**

Relevant to all victim service providers, the [\*\*Self-Care Starter Kit\*\*](#) offers a variety of tools that social work professionals can use to develop effective self-care plans and practices. Additional resources and links are provided.



### **Vicarious Trauma Toolkit: Blueprint for a Vicarious Trauma-Informed Organization**

Offered by the U.S. Office for Victims of Crime, this toolkit provides a blueprint for organizational strategies to prevent and respond to vicarious trauma in victim services organizations. Their compendium of resources includes over 500 links to additional information and research.

### **Harvard University Anti-Racism Resources & Resources for Self-Care**

Harvard University offers links to a wide variety of self-care resources for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and BIPOC communities.

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## Other Resources

**Measuring Safety: Gender-Based Violence in Illinois:** This report, developed by The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence, provides an assessment of gender-based and domestic violence in Illinois. The report incorporates survivors' experiences and provides insight on how systems and service providers can better respond to survivors, provide paths to healing, and prevent violence and harm.

**Childhood Trauma, Changing Minds** is a project of Futures Without Violence. This online resource offers tools and strategies for building awareness and capacity for individuals and communities to support children and teens who have experienced or witnessed violence.

Do you enjoy podcasts? Here are a few that might be of interest:

- Center for Court Innovation's [\*\*New Thinking Podcast and In Practice Podcast\*\*](#)
- OVC VOCA Center's [\*\*The Survivor's Series Podcast\*\*](#)
- The Center for Victim Research's [\*\*Get Connected Podcasts\*\*](#)