

Aspire Johnson County  
April 26, 2017

Kent welcomed everyone and held a round robin role call. Kent thanked Jeff for his service as co-chair and introduced Steve Jarosinski as new co-chair

Erica Garrity panelist:

Systems of Care is a grant through the state working on mental health and coordinating care for Johnson County residents for mental health and drug use. The county can work and clean up the drugs, but the underlying cause is still there. This is what the panelist is focusing on .

What does mental health/ substance abuse mean in your role and what does it mean as a community. Why is this important?

Probation: grew up in a bubble and didn't know what this was until began career in probation. It has changed over the years. It was good old fashioned thugs and troublemakers, now it is most kids experiencing some form of trauma and having mental health issues or substance abuse issues. There are kids sleeping on couches and not even having sheets. Not sure if trauma and mental wasn't there or we weren't aware of it. Consensus was we weren't aware of it. Now kids get a mental health screening when they enter and most have alerts in the area. Depression, anxiety, sexual trauma, substance abuse. Most stems from what they have seen from their parents or lack of parents being there. Kids get treatment but go back home and are back in the same situation. Don: mental and substance abuse are the same. They are causing pain and suffering but no one knows where to go for help. People are reluctant to ask for outside help if they feel it is a mental issue. Drug use is a symptom of what is going on. It is just like overeating, driving too fast, taking risks etc. you can take away the drugs and they will just find something else because the underlying issue isn't being addressed. Jennifer: used to be that you can't treat them until they are sober. That has changed since the realization is that the drugs are a symptom and without healing the trauma the drug use can't be treated. It is a multi-generational issue and a culture to that family. The risks are increasing. DCS: they are now seeing adults with their children who were once the children being abused. It is becoming a second and third generation issue. There is so much stigma and shame around mental health that people won't get the treatment they need. Prosecutor: at the juvenile level, it is all about rehab. Usually there is family trauma and parents are often addicted themselves. More and more kids are the dealers themselves.

What are barriers to service and care:

Insurance doesn't always pay for care and many times the government doesn't have funds to pay for programs. Most people don't know where to go to and often the counselors are not able to understand the need that is there. There are programs but they are not well known and often the parents don't know about them and can't find them to get the help the child needs. Kids often need an inpatient facility but they are many time too full or closed down due to lack of funds. Average cost is \$30,000 a month for in patient care. Another

barrier is the person themselves. If they are not ready for help they won't receive it. Often it is the home life as well. That isn't addressed so the home life doesn't change and the circumstances continue. Through the court system you can't pick your therapist, so many times there is not a good connection and nothing is ultimately accomplished. There are also a lack of qualified and dedicated therapists. Not many people are even going into this field. Time is also a factor. Many times the meetings are scheduled during the day when they need to be at work. Transportation is also an issue for many. Relapse is another issue. They give up and when they do, they don't try again.

What can we do as a community to help:

Spread awareness, encourage organizations to be more open and outspoken about their services. Advocate to your state and federal elected officials to provide more funding for these programs. Encourage more groups to have task groups to implement mental health care in the county. Partnership for Healthier Johnson County is looking at this issue and may consider a sub-team to work on this. The funding is an important issue. JHMH foundation is working on a web page that provides information on where to find care.