

# the Resource



MENTAL HEALTH & RECOVERY BOARD OF PORTAGE COUNTY

*A publication to increase awareness of mental health and substance use disorder issues in our community.*

Welcome to our February edition of the Resource e-newsletter. Please feel free to share with your friends and colleagues.

## Crisis Intervention Team Officers of the Year

Officers Bill Atha of the Kent State University Police Department, Chris Hartlaub of the NEOMED Police Department, and Ryan Wolf of the Streetsboro Police Department were recognized as Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Officers of the Year by the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County and the Portage County Police Chiefs Association.

The officers were awarded for practicing the communication and de-escalation techniques they learned during their CIT training. In the training, officers learn to safely work with people in crisis who may have a mental illness or be experiencing a traumatic event.



*From left: Streetsboro Police Chief Darin Powers; NEOMED Police Chief Kali Meonske; CIT Officer of the Year Chris Hartlaub, NEOMED; CIT Officer of the Year Ryan Wolf, Streetsboro; William Nome, MHRB Chairman; Sheriff Doak; CIT Officer of the Year Bill Atha; Kent State Police Chief Dean Tondiglia; John Garrity, PhD, Mental Health & Recovery Board Executive Director.*

Officer Atha responded to ten mental health crises as a primary officer and assisted on many more in 2018.

“As former Division 1 college football player, Officer Atha is a large and imposing man,” commented Assistant Chief Bill Buckbee who nominated Atha for the award. “However, he is well known for his patience and empathy, especially when dealing with people in crisis.”

Last year on two separate occasions people observed Atha in action and contacted the department to compliment his interaction with persons in crisis.

“Bill is a model of the competence and caring that signifies an accomplished CIT officer,” said Buckbee.

Officer Hartlaub of NEOMED was honored for his response during a welfare check at an on-campus apartment. The individual expressed thoughts of hopelessness and articulated a plan of ‘suicide by cop’.

“Officer Hartlaub utilized his CIT skills to de-escalate the individual, and eventually convinced the individual to voluntarily go to the hospital,” stated NEOMED Police Chief Kali Moenske.

At the Streetsboro Police Department, Officer Wolf volunteers to respond to calls involving kids and citizens with special needs.

Chief Darin Powers described one incident when Wolf helped resolve a domestic dispute involving an autistic child. Wolf spent extra time explaining what the child did was incorrect and how to correct his behavior moving forward. “He was both caring and compassionate the entire time,” stated Chief Powers.

Another example was given of Wolf taking the time to work with a mother on how to access resources to get her distressed son the help he needed.

“The Board thanks the officers not only for doing such an outstanding job of practicing CIT skills, but also for everything they do daily to help the community,” stated John Garrity, PhD, executive director of the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County. “CIT training offers police officers the unique opportunity to acquire skills to better understand those with mental illnesses and to work collaboratively with the professionals and community to help our residents who are in crisis.”

Since 2006, more than 250 officers have completed the class in Portage County. Every law enforcement agency in the county has CIT officers. The course is supported nationwide by the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

## Opioid Recovery Clinic Opens at Townhall II

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Community members have another option available for treatment at Townhall II's new Opioid Recovery Clinic. The clinic offers medication-assisted treatment, counseling, and support all at their downtown Kent location. Medicaid and insurance accepted, as well as a sliding fee scale.

**To schedule an appointment, call 330.678.3006**

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## Recovery Outreach in Portage County

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Recovery Outreach in Portage County is an effort to help those who are struggling with any type of alcohol or drug concerns and connect them to resources.

The Recovery Outreach team (typically a peer supporter and a 1st Responder) follows up with those who have experienced a recent overdose or incident with law enforcement that is drug or alcohol related. The team will also respond to community referrals from law enforcement, hospitals, and family members. **To make a referral, contact Bridget, the Recovery Outreach Coordinator at 330.842.4800.**



Given the devastating effects, including death, that heroin, opiates, alcohol, and other substances have caused so many – our community member's health and recovery is our primary concern. Our goal is to provide as much help and support as we can.

Recovery Outreach in Portage County is funded by the Mental Health & Recovery Board. The Peer Supporters are employed by not-for-profit behavioral health agencies: Townhall II, Family & Community Services, and Coleman Professional Services.

Communities in Portage County that are interested in learning more about this program can attend a presentation on March 12 at 4pm at the Kent Free Library. Contact [karynk@mental-health-recovery.org](mailto:karynk@mental-health-recovery.org) or 330.673.1756 for more information.

## Gender & Sexual Minorities Topic at School Roundtable

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"Gender & Sexual Minorities: Relating in the School Setting" was the topic of our Portage County School Mental Health Roundtable.

Thanks to Kat Holtz from Portage County Health District and Jen Anders from Children's Advantage, for presenting - and to all the school counselors, administrators, and agencies for participating.

For information on counseling services for children and families, contact Children's Advantage at 330.296.5552 or Coleman Professional Services at 330.673.1347.

## Suicide Prevention Coalition Updates

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The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Portage County hosted Allison Esber from the Stark County Mental Health Addiction Recovery Board to present on the postvention suicide response following the record high youth suicides in Stark County. She shared some lessons they learned and highlights from the CDC report to over 50 area counselors and professionals in attendance.

The Grief After Suicide Loss group meetings are now being held at a new location - the Kent Free Library, 312 W Main Street, on the last Wednesday each month from 6-8pm.

The Suicide Prevention Coalition meets the third Thursday of each month at the Mental Health & Recovery Board office located at 155 E Main Street in Kent Meetings are open to the public.

## Joel Mowrey's Retirement Reception

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A reception was held for retiring Mental Health & Recovery Board Executive Director Joel Mowrey, PhD. All former MHRB executive directors - Sue Hetrick, Roberta O'Keefe, and Hal Farrier were in attendance.

View photo gallery & Record Courier article featuring Joel and new Executive Director John Garrity, PhD

[www.mental-health-recovery.org/single-post/2019/02/20/Retirement-Reception-Joel-Mowrey-PhD](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org/single-post/2019/02/20/Retirement-Reception-Joel-Mowrey-PhD)

*From left: Hal Farrier, Roberta O'Keefe, Joel Mowrey, John Garrity, and Sue Hetrick.*

## Upcoming Events

Feb 27: Addiction & the Drug Epidemic, Crestwood Primary School, 6pm

Mar 4 & 5: Mental Health First Aid, Coleman in Ravenna

Mar 12: Introducing Recovery Outreach, Kent Free Library, 4pm

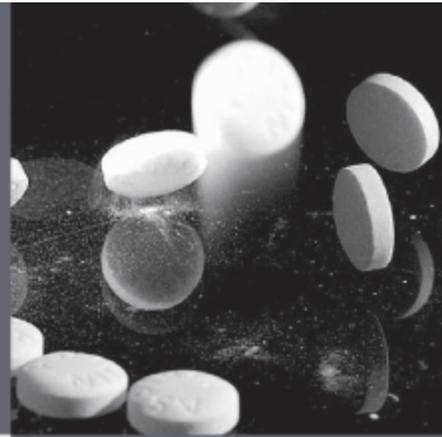
Apr 13: Mental Health First Aid, Coleman in Ravenna

Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour course. \$25 per person.

Register for Mental Health First Aid at:

[www.mental-health-recovery.org/mental-health-first-aid](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org/mental-health-first-aid) or call 330.673.1756

# COMMUNITY AWARENESS: ADDICTION & DRUG EPIDEMIC



Drug and alcohol addiction is one of the most significant health-related problems across the nation and here in Portage County.

Attend a community awareness event to learn about:

- The Addiction Process
- Medical Marijuana in Ohio
- Opioid Overdose Signs & Project DAWN
- Area Resources
- Recovery Story

Attendees from Portage County will be able to receive a free naloxone overdose response kit through Project DAWN. Naloxone (Narcan) is a medication that can reverse an overdose caused by an opioid drug.

Sponsored by:

**Start Talking!**   
PORTAGE



**WEDNESDAY  
FEBRUARY 27  
6:00-8:00PM**

Crestwood Primary School  
11256 Bowen Road  
Mantua, OH

*The event is free and open to the public.*

Addiction Helpline  
Call 330.678.3006

For resources visit:  
[www.mental-health-recovery.org](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org)

For more information about this  
event call 330.673.1756