

BEE Part of the Conversation

The Sheridan County Behavioral Health Coalition is having an OPEN HOUSE on Sunday, August 1st, 3 pm to 7 pm, at the Plentywood Town Square (change to Civic Center in the event of bad weather), with music by Sara and Martin from Sideways, free hotdogs, chips, bars, soda, water, and kettle corn! Drawings for prizes, games, kids' activities, and LOTS of information and interaction. The theme is "Bee part of the conversation". Everyone struggles with emotional, mental, and related struggles at some time in their lives. It is important that we be as open and accepting talking about these struggles as we are about physical health issues.

"Behavioral Health" is the scientific study of the emotions, behaviors, and biology relating to a person's well-being, their ability to function in everyday life, and their concept of self. It encompasses resiliency and wellbeing, treatment of mental and substance use disorders, and support of those who experience and/or are in recovery from those conditions, along with their families and communities.

In the fall of 2019 Frederick Lee, then from Wolf Point, presented QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Suicide Prevention instruction to a group of more than 70 at the Fellowship Hall at Plentywood Lutheran Church. It was an emotional presentation. Frederick had lost his son to suicide. In the weeks following a small group met to discuss the possible formation of an organization to promote education and work towards ending the stigma that surrounds mental illness, substance abuse, and suicide. Sheridan County Behavioral Health Coalition was the organization that stemmed from that collaboration.

The coalition is a 501c3 non-profit organization, made up of volunteers, serving as a community development group. The coalition is not a support group or provider of behavioral health services, but is able to provide information, to assist, and give direction. Current and future projects are driven by community involvement, interest, and needs. Projects include development of a resource listing, providing suicide prevention training and mental health first aide training, and collaboration with advocates and professionals on a local, regional and state level. The coalition strives to promote awareness and wellness, identify and educate the public about resources, engage Sheridan County communities in addressing mental/ behavioral health issues, and advocate for resolution of unmet needs and assist in strengthening services in Sheridan County.

There are many areas of unmet behavioral health needs in Sheridan County. It will take time, persistence, and hands-on work of motivated individuals and communities to create forward progress. It is important that the coalition represent all those in Sheridan County communities that are *interested in or impacted* by behavioral health issues. Individuals with lived experience and their families provide unique perspective. Involvement at the coalition's monthly meetings and activities can make a difference in our communities, in the lives of those we care about, and in our own lives. *Bee* part of the conversation!

View resources on our web page @ sheridancty.crcmontana.com

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Contact e-mail - scbhcoalition@nemont.net

Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of each month, 12:00 noon.

Sheridan County Courthouse Jubilee Room, downstairs from the library.