

# PATH 2 PARENTING NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2023 EDITION

## FOCUSED ON AWARENESS

This month we are focusing on National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week. You will find valuable information scattered throughout the newsletter as we bring awareness to this topic, starting with the message from our Executive Director all the way down to our resources. In between you will also find all of our usual organizational and program updates. Thank you for your support!



## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This month we are taking the time to focus on a serious crisis, not just locally, but nationally. Opioid use has led to the death of thousands of young people; some of whom I have known personally. Drug abuse disorders have stolen sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, friends and neighbors from many of us. We never think it will happen to ours, it's 'those' kinds of people, or it's 'their' problem; but the truth is, it affects each and every one of us. There's no "type" of person who becomes addicted. Addiction can happen to anyone, regardless of how they look, where they live, how much money their family has, etc. In total, there were 492 adolescent overdose deaths in 2019 and 954 in 2020, with data indicating another 1,146 in 2021. We have to do something!

We can't ignore the problem and keep our heads in the sand; assuming it won't happen to us or ours. While substance abuse can happen at any age, the earlier in life an individual begins using a substance, the more likely they are to develop a substance use disorder later in life. In large part, this is because teenagers' and young adults' brains are still developing into their mid-twenties. As a result, teens and young adults are more susceptible to becoming addicted to drugs and alcohol than are adults whose brains are fully developed.

Therefore, it's vital to understand the [warning signs](#) that indicate a teenager or young adult may be struggling with addiction. Many of these signs of addiction in teens and young adults are the same as signs of addiction in older adults, however, there are a few subtle differences to be aware of.

Over the course of this month, PATH, Inc. will be sharing valuable information related to substance use disorders, the opioid crisis and warning signs to be aware of on our social media pages and our website. Our website offers valuable resources and if you need help, call us, we'll connect you with local resources.

Join us for our Lunch Tables webinar – One Pill Can Kill – Wed, March 22 @ 11:00 am.

If you can't join us live, make sure you register and a recording will be emailed to you. For registration information, please see below. We have to be willing to have the conversations, to break down the stigma related to substance use disorders. We can be the difference between life and death for someone.

**Donna Golob**

Executive Director

Thank you for your support. To help us continue our mission, consider [donating](#) to the cause.

# PATH UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Staff Spotlight!



This month we want to recognize the amazing support we have which helps make our mission possible. Payton Smith and Clayton Lembcke, our AmeriCorps members, as well as Carissa Herendeen, our intern, work hard every single day to advance our mission and support our work. The commitment, dedication, and diligence of this small group of individuals is unmatched. They are all assets to the team and bring useful skills to the table, not to mention they are all a joy to be around. We are thankful to have them at PATH!

## THANK YOU!



## FUNDRAISER RECAP

A huge THANK YOU to our friends, families, and community partners for attending our Panera Bread fundraiser last month; it was a huge success! We appreciate you bearing the cold weather and choosing to support our organization. Your support empowers youth across the region to make healthy choices through life skills, relationship, and character-building education. Thank you for making a difference!

## LUNCH TABLES

Thank you to everyone who came out to our Lunch Tables last month to learn about co-regulation strategies. Sheila Cavallo did an excellent job breaking down the topic and we are thankful for her and all of the attendees for making it a great event!

Join us on March 22nd for "One Pill Can Kill" presented by Greg Czaczkowski. In order to register, find out more, or view recordings of past events, visit our [Lunch Tables](#) page.



## HANGOUT HOUSE

### Parenting Tip

Jeremy Serrano, a parent from California, put out a series of informational videos on why he aims to be the house all of his teens and their friends hang out at. In [this article](#), which summarizes the videos, he also explains how you can become that house. This is a great read for anybody who supports teens and is looking for ways to stay involved as a source of support for them and their friends.

## VOLUNTEER WITH US

We appreciate all the people who come and support our mission, which includes our volunteers! The volunteers for PATH help us to extend our reach and meet more needs in the community. If you are interested in volunteering, visit [our website](#), fill out the information, and someone will be in contact. If you have any questions about volunteering with PATH, reach out to us at [info@positiveteenhealth.org](mailto:info@positiveteenhealth.org).

# PROGRAM UPDATES



Horizon is running on all cylinders in two schools. We are currently serving students at Eggers Middle School in Hammond and River Forest in Hobart. We are looking forward to serving more students in the Northwest Indiana area as we prepare to finish out the second half of the school year!

**Dionna Warren**  
Horizon Team Lead



LivTrue is going wonderful with our mentees at the Michigan City middle schools! The sessions this month cover topics such as understanding anger, bullying, mindfulness, and peer pressure.

**Payton Smith**  
LivTrue Coordinator



Life Lanes would like to send a special thank you to Kayla Golden, formerly our Team Lead, for the lasting positive impact she has had on our youth and wish her all the best in her upcoming endeavors. As I take on this new role as Team Lead, I am excited to continue serving and empowering youth throughout the community!

**Natalie Dimovski**  
Life Lanes Team Lead



We have had a great time with our mentors and mentees at River Forest and Morton. Our greatest celebration of late is all of the mentees who are connecting within their mentor teams and opening up to the peer mentor coaches. We also have amazing mentors across the program who are very invested in the work they are doing. We are so lucky to have this opportunity to work with and support the youth in our community!

**Stephanie Lenckos**  
RELENTLESS 2.0 Team Lead



We are weeks away from finishing up our last cohort of students at Hammond Central & River Forest. These schools have been absolutely amazing to work with! We have one more school to serve before the end of the school year.

**Jason Kegebein**  
Love Notes Team Lead



We've started implementing our program at Hammond Central High School. Students have been extremely engaged and show a great interest in preparing for their financial futures.

**Jason Frederick**  
Money Momentum Team Lead



Life Lanes 2 is doing great! We have reached the halfway point of programming and have received positive feedback from students and teachers about the life skills program we provide the high school students at Merrillville High School and Gary West Side.

**Jamiya Hunter**  
Life Lanes 2 Team Lead

To learn more about our programs, visit our website at [positiveteenhealth.org](http://positiveteenhealth.org).

# RECOMMENDED READING

To continue reading, head over to the [blog](#) on our website.

## PARENTING CORNER

The PATH website has many great resources which includes a plethora of information about parenting teens in today's world created especially for PATH by the talented Lisa Raftery. Use the buttons on the right to navigate to the different types of parenting content!

BLOGS

VIDEOS

## INTERRUPTING MISINFORMATION

In her [blog post](#), Payton discusses the prevalence and risks associated with the spread of misinformation surrounding drugs and alcohol. She dispels some very common myths for NDAFW while providing great resources for further research on the topic.

“It is and will be a constant challenge to understand the real facts about drugs and alcohol. . . . [A]ccess to up-to-date and accurate information is critical.

## IN THE KNOW: RESOURCES OUR STAFF LOVE

We have a resource for parents, caregivers, and youth-serving professionals alike that puts the information you learn during National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week into action! Check out [Get Activity Ideas](#) by the National Institute on Drug Abuse to get some great ideas for activities that are both informative and easy to implement.

## Contact us:



[positiveteenhealth.org](http://positiveteenhealth.org)



[info@positiveteenhealth.org](mailto:info@positiveteenhealth.org)



219-254-2678



3391 Airport Rd  
Portage, IN 46368

## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

For those we support and for those who support us

Shoutout to our donors who utilize the Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP). Your generosity forever changes the lives of local youth.

If you are interested in utilizing NAP tax credits and getting part of your donation back as a tax credit, [visit our website!](#)

Connect with us:

