

# Healthy CASS COUNTY

## New \$4,000 Volunteerism Opportunity for Cass County Organizations

Healthy Cass County is partnering with the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service to help local organizations strengthen volunteer programs and expand community impact.

### Opportunity Highlights:

- \$4,000 funding for participating organizations
- Open to nonprofits, schools, government agencies, and community groups in Cass County
- 12 hours of in-person volunteer management training
- Optional one-on-one coaching for your organization
- Help plan and participate in a county-wide Day of Service
- Opportunity to grow your volunteer base and build partnerships

Application Deadline: April 1, 2026 at noon.

[-----Volunteerism Application Link -----](#)

## Behavioral Health System Update

Lisa Carstens from ZION Integrated Behavioral Health provided an update on Iowa’s new Behavioral Health Service System (Iowa Primary Care) and how it will improve access to services.

### Key Highlights:

- Behavioral Health Service System (BHSS) launched July 1, 2025
- Combines mental health, substance use, and problem gambling services into one coordinated system
- Focus on prevention, treatment, recovery supports, and crisis services
- Your Life Iowa helps individuals find services and connect to support

The goal of the new system is to make behavioral health services easier to access and better coordinated across Iowa.

BHSS Presentation Survey - <https://tinyurl.com/mrw6jz7b>

### Attendees:

Gina Moulas (Veterans Affairs), Christina Bettini (RSVP), Kamryn Ryan (Volunteer Iowa), Karman Roland (Senior Life Solutions), Amanda Wahlert (ZION IBH), Bernard Pettinger (Cass County), Erica Bengel (Partnership for Progress), Shelly Haines (WISC), Lora Kanning (Cass County Conservation), Tabetha Smith (Cass Health), Jamie Mullen (Iowa Primary Care), Sue Riggs (Local Food Policy Council), Erika Kirchhoff (Thriving Families), Allison Andersen (NAMI), Kelly Boucher (YMCA), Wendy Richter (Family Crisis), Lisa Carstens (ZION IBH), Michelle Hartfield (CCCMW), Elaine Otte (City of Atlantic), LaVon Eblen (ARISE), Chelsie Rush (A Community for Kids), Kelsey Beschorner (Atlantic Area Chamber), Emily Warner (West Central), Miranda Wachter (Iowa Primary Care), Grace McAfee & Megan Robert (Public Health)

**Our Vision** is to be the healthiest country in the state of Iowa.

**Our mission** is to be a community-focused network promoting the health & well-being of Cass County residents.

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**Meeting:** March 9, 2026, from 12-1 PM.

- The March Healthy Cass meeting was held in person at Cass County Community Center.
- Topic: Volunteerism Taskforce Recap & Iowa’s Behavioral Health Prevention Service System

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Iowa Primary Care Toolkit Flyers: This flyers can be used in different organizations to help individuals with barriers that are preventing their mental wellness progress.

[Community Partners](#)

[Law Enforcement](#)

[Individuals & Caregivers](#)

[School-Based Staff](#)

[Jail Staff](#)

[Hospitals](#)

[Individuals Leaving Jails & Hospitals](#)

## Community Wellness Updates:

**April – Make It Okay Training:** Join us on April 13th at the Healthy Cass meeting for a FREE Make It Okay Ambassador Training. This is a great opportunity to build awareness and momentum as we head into Mental Health Awareness Month in May. The training is open to all community members—please feel free to invite friends, coworkers, and others who may be interested.



**Mobile Food Pantry Calendar:** Please click to download the flyer below to hang up in your offices or hand out to neighbors.

[Mobile Food Pantry Calendar](#)

**Grow Another Row:** Grow Another Row season is almost here! Stands will start coming back out of their winter storage around April 20<sup>th</sup>!

**Cass County Thrive Program:** Miss the Thrive Introductory Meeting on Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>. Here is a link to the recording along with flyers for the program.

[Thrive Meeting Recording Link](#)

[What is Thrive Flyer](#)

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## Coalition Member Updates:

**Lisa Carstens, ZION IBH** - ZION's Chasing Wellness and March Toilet Talk Newsletters are attached below.

[ZION Toilet Talk](#)

[ZION Newsletter - Chasing Wellness](#)

**Allison Anderson, NAMI Southwest Iowa** - NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is a free, peer-led support group for any adult who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition. NAMI ReConnect Support group for those supporting a loved one with both mental health and substance use challenges.

[Peer Support Classes Flyer](#)

[ReConnect Flyer](#)

**Amanda Wahlert, ZION IBH** - Understanding Addiction & Recovery - Information for Family, Friends, & Caregivers Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup> @ 12 PM.

[Webinar Flyer - Addiction & Recovery Information for Loved Ones](#)

[Cass County Snapshot](#)

**Chelsie Rush, A Community for Kids** - Easter activities are popping up across the area! If you have an upcoming event to share, please send details to [acomunityforkids@gmail.com](mailto:acomunityforkids@gmail.com) to help keep families informed.

The Nishna Valley Family YMCA is hosting an exciting Undersea Quest: Mermaids & Pirates event. They are currently seeking fun pirate-themed props to borrow, as well as volunteers to help run the loot station during VIP night. If you're interested in contributing or volunteering, please contact Allison at the YMCA.

Don't forget about the Adventure Pass program available through the Atlantic Library! Two new destinations have been added, offering families even more opportunities to explore local attractions for free by simply checking out a pass. Please help spread the word about this incredible program and the generous businesses that make these fun, accessible experiences possible.

[Easter Flyer](#)

[Mermaid Swim at the YMCA](#)

[Adventure Pass](#)

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## Coalition Member Updates (Continued):

Erika Kirchhoff, Thriving Families Alliance - National Home Visitor Celebration Week - Atlantic 4/20 at 4 - 6 PM. Parent Cafe - March 26<sup>th</sup> from 12-1PM.

[Home Visitor Celebrations](#)

[Parent Cafe Flyer](#)

**Ciara Hoegh, Produce in the Park** – Celebrate the Spring Celebration Market on Saturday, April 4 from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM at the Nishna Valley Family YMCA (free entry). This Easter-themed market will feature fresh local foods, baked goods, handmade items, and fun for the whole family—including bounce houses, face painting, and visits with baby lambs, Kit and Kat from Hoopy Hallow Ranch.

[Spring Celebration Flyer](#)

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[Healthy Cass 2025-26 Meeting Schedule](#)