

Healthy CASS COUNTY

Healthy Cass County Hosts “Make It OK” Training

Healthy Cass County recently hosted a “Make It OK” mental health awareness training, bringing community members together to learn how to reduce stigma and support those experiencing mental health challenges.

This free training was generously provided by the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative and Healthy Cass County, making it accessible to all who wanted to participate.

A total of 30 individuals attended the training, representing community members and local partners committed to improving mental health in Cass County.

The training focused on building understanding, encouraging open conversations, and giving participants tools to respond with confidence and compassion.

Attendees described the training as a great first step in learning more about helping others in their mental well-being journey, and many shared that they plan to continue these conversations in their workplaces and communities.

As we approach Mental Health Awareness Month in May, Healthy Cass County encourages everyone to keep the conversation going—because it’s always OK to talk about mental health.

Make It  .org

Learn More About the Make It OK Initiative: <https://makeitok.org/>



Healthiest State
INITIATIVE

Mental Health
Month Toolkit

Looking for a simple way to show your support during Mental Health Awareness Month? Healthy Cass County is offering yard signs to display in your yard or window to help raise awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding mental well-being in our community.

If you’d like to reserve a sign for May, contact Grace at mcage@casshealth.org or 712-250-8170.

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: April 13, 2026, from 12-1 PM.

- The April Healthy Cass meeting was held in person at Cass County Community Center.
- Topic: Make It OK Training Provided By Iowa Healthiest State Initiative.

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Attendees:

Gina Moulas (Veterans Affairs), Christina Bettini (RSVP), Erica Bengel (Partnership for Progress), Shelly Haines (WISC), Tabettha Smith (Cass Health), Jamie Mullen (Iowa Primary Care), Erika Kirchoff (Thriving Families), Allison Andersen (NAMI), Wendy Richter (Family Crisis), Michelle Hartfield (CCCMW), Kelsey Beschoner (Atlantic Area Chamber), Miranda Wachter (Iowa Primary Care), Grace McAfee & Megan Robert (Public Health), Jennifer Arp (Cass Health), Sam Schwartz (ZION IBH), Barry Antisdell (Community Member), Lisa Antisdell (Cass Health), James Northwick (Atlantic Community Schools), Kim Brown (REM), Mady Tibken (Cass Health/Thrive), Vicki Williams (Cass Health/Thrive), Amanda Keierleber (ZION IBH), Megan Kleen (ZION IBH), Aubury Kutchara (Connections Area on Aging), Jenna Grossman (Partnership for Progress), Christine Blanchard (Community Member), Danielle Hadley (Partnership for Progress), Cyndi Ferguson (Partnership for Progress), Elaine Otte (Atlantic City Council), Ardy Gillespie (Community Member), Michelle Hartfield (CCC4MW), Jeff Christensen (ATL Parks & Rec), Maggie Robinson (ATL Parks & Rec).

Community Wellness Updates:

May - Family Oriented Full Circle Resource Navigation - From Crisis to Careers - Discuss how we work together to move families to stability.

- **State Priority Alignment:** Focus Area 1.3: Non-Traditional Delivery of Services - Expand existing behavioral health programming in rural areas through innovative partnerships.

Community Baby Shower - The Community Baby Shower will be held on April 18th from 10:00 - 11:30 am at the Cass County Community Center.

[Learn more about the baby shower here:](#)

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 May 1st!

Coalition Member Updates:

Erica Bengel, Partnership for Progress: Strike Out The Stigma - Pickleball Tournament on May 11th from 4:00 - 6:00 pm. Registration is reserved for individuals with disabilities 18+. However, the event is open to all to attend, cheer on players, and join us in support of Mental Health Month!

[Strike Out the Stigma - Pickleball Tournament](#)

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Coalition Member Updates:

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

[ZION Toilet Talk](#)

[ZION Newsletter - Chasing Wellness](#)

Allison Anderson, NAMI Southwest Iowa - NAMI Walks Southwest Iowa will be held on Wednesday, May 27th at 6:30 pm at the Page County Courthouse Lawn in Clarinda, IA. Flyer attached below. Free training for Mental Health & Peer Support in Disaster Response on Friday, March 20th, from 9:00 am - 11:00 am in Neola, IA. Flyer attached below.

[NAMI Walks Southwest Iowa](#)

[Resilient Responders Flyer](#)

[ReConnect Flyer](#)

Colleen Brazil, Project Harmony - Project Harmony is offering free Safe & Together Model training thanks to funding from the Iowa West Foundation. This nationally recognized approach helps professionals keep children safe, support protective caregivers, and hold those causing harm accountable.

Two training options are available:

- Core Training (4 days): June 8–11 (Atlantic) and Oct 7–8, 14–15 (Denison)
- Overview Training (1 day): July 15 (Council Bluffs) and Sept 16 (Virtual)

[Safe Together - Project Harmony Training Flyers](#)

Crisis Stabilization Service - When a youth is experiencing a mental health crisis but does not meet criteria for inpatient hospitalization, first responders and hospitals need a safe, immediate alternative. CSI's Crisis Stabilization provided 24/7 short-term crisis stabilization for Iowa youth ages 8-18.

[Child Saving Institute Flyer](#)

Sam Schwartz, ZION IBH - ZION Integrated Behavioral Health Services, will be hosting a Mental Health Event on May 13th. If you have any questions, please contact sschwartz@zioniowa.org or 712-254-3968. Flyers attached below.

[ZION Mental Health Event Flyer](#)

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