

Joint Juvenile Justice Council of Iroquois County Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2025

I. WELCOME

The Juvenile Justice Council of Iroquois County held a meeting on Friday, June 20, 2025. The meeting commenced from 10:00 a.m. - Noon in the EMA/EOC room at the Iroquois County Courthouse in Watseka. Coalition members and potential members were invited by email, radio, social media, and website to attend this meeting either in person or via Zoom. The email invite included a Zoom link.

In-person guests were given a meeting agenda and reminded to sign-in. Barb King, JJC Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Verbal introductions were heard from both those present at the meeting and those attending virtually.

Members present at the meeting were:

- Barb King - Iroquois County Probation Department, Iroquois County Juvenile Justice Council Chairperson
- Jenni McTaggart - Iroquois County State's Attorney Office, DFC Grant Project Coordinator
- Sarah Pree - Iroquois County State's Attorney Office, DFC Grant Communication Campaign and YPE Coordinator
- Clint Perzee - Iroquois County Sheriff
- Jed Whitlow - Iroquois County Opioid Coalition Co-Chair, Iroquois County Board Member, Retired Police Officer
- Kira Ebert - State Representative Jason Bunting's Chief of Staff
- Amy Zabel - Iroquois Mental Health Center, Executive Director
- David King - Carle Addiction Recovery Center, Community Outreach Manager
- Taylor Roche - Iroquois County Public Health Department, Health Educator

II. JJC INFORMATION/GRANT UPDATES

A. Iroquois County Opioid Coalition Update - Opioid Communication Campaign

The Iroquois County Opioid Coalition continues to work closely with both the Juvenile Justice Council of Iroquois County and the Iroquois County Sheriff's Department on numerous initiatives. A separate Opioid Coalition meeting will soon be scheduled.

B. IL MAR Grant Update

The STARR Program Medication Safety tri-fold brochure developed by the Sheriff's Department, JJC, and Opioid Coalition continues to be distributed by numerous agencies. This brochure provides information on the proper use, storage, and disposal of medications, as well as a list of safe medication disposal drop-off sites in Iroquois County. They were recently updated to include both CVS locations in Gilman and Watseka as safe medication disposal drop-off sites. Partnering agencies assisted with

the cost and labor associated with printing this brochure, as well as distributing it. Sheriff Perzee will reach out to our partners to determine how this initiative is going and to find out if anything else is needed. He also plans to contact Gibson Hospital, Carle, and perhaps local pharmacies to see about helping to distribute this messaging.

The Recovery Resource Card put together by the Sheriff's Department, JJC, and Opioid Coalition continues to be handed out to those being released from the county jail as well as at various events. The QR code on this card can be scanned with a smartphone and connects to the JJC's TIP the Scale's website which lists the up-to-date contact information for various helpful resources.

Last year the Sheriff's Department, JJC, and Opioid Coalition created a STARR Program Pull-Tab Flyer resembling the Recovery Resource Card. The pull-tabs at the bottom of the flyer have the same QR Code that links to TIP the Scale's website. These flyers were printed in-house by the Sheriff's Department and JJC while a JJC Student Ambassador, Hudson McTaggart, cut the tabs. In a group effort, the Iroquois County Sheriff, Clint Perzee, and JJC members (Kira Ebert, Jenni McTaggart, and Sarah Pree) distributed the flyers in January to more than 130 bars, restaurants, community centers, gas stations, grocery stores, post offices, etc. across the county. They were warmly received and hung in prominent places at each establishment.

Sheriff Perzee noted that 6 of their 18 current inmates attend Smart Recovery meetings with IMH's Behavioral Health Specialist Chris DiGiovanni. (Smart Recovery is an evidence-based, secular-based online program in addiction recovery.) He stated that Chris is doing an excellent job with the program.

Sheriff Perzee also informed the group that his department has just been awarded a \$10,000 grant from HMA and he is in conversations with the Iroquois Mental Health Center on collaboration efforts regarding meeting and medication follow-up for persons released from jail. He said that the planning is in the infancy stage and they are working out the details.

Amy Zabel, the Iroquois Mental Health Center's Executive Director, stated that as of June 30th, 2025, the 988 crisis line contract will be terminated through IMHC in Iroquois County due to its lack of feasibility in our small rural area. They will still provide crisis services, just not through 988 24/7. Anyone in crisis after hours/overnight will need to call 988. She spoke about their reorganizing staff for peer support and crisis and one person staying on for the jail's reentry program. She also spoke about the synergy with Jill and the jail program and that she will be doing therapy and now adding internal time spent with those in jail. Zabel also stated that IMHC would like community feedback if the national 988 line is not meeting their needs.

C. DFC (Drug-Free Communities) Grant Status

McTaggart shared that the Drug Free Communities Year 6-10 Grant Application has been submitted. The notice is due to arrive mid-September with the current grant year ending September 29, 2025 so it will be a last-minute update to the JJC. She shared that the JJC has been looking for other avenues for funding in case the federal funding is not renewed.

Barb King, JJC Chairperson, stated that she is re-looking into applying for 501c3 status for the JJC. The short version would be great, but she thinks we may need to complete the long version instead due to the amount of funds needed per year. She asked the members present if they knew an entity that would be a good fit to be the fiscal agent for the JJC's 501c3 status as it cannot be The County of Iroquois (the current fiscal agent for the DFC Grant). Members present said they would think on it.

Kira Ebert, State Representative Jason Bunting's Chief of Staff, shared that she had been sending Sarah and Jenni grant opportunities for agencies that have a 501c3 status. She said that the status will open the JJC up for numerous funding opportunities outside of federal funding. She will continue to do so in the anticipation that the JJC will be granted the new status.

III. YOUTH PREVENTION EDUCATION UPDATES

A. Too Good for Drugs

Pree shared that the JJC's 7th grade, 8th grade, and high school Too Good for Drugs (TGFD) youth prevention education programming taught at public schools in Cissna Park, Donovan, and Milford, as well as at all area parochial schools, including St. John's, St. Paul's, and Christ Lutheran High School was finished for the 2024-2025 school year. This programming was implemented by trained teachers in each school. These educators were once again given a \$30 Amazon gift card as a thank you for teaching this important curriculum. All materials have been collected from these teachers and is back in the JJC offices for replenishing for next school year. Pree noted that the Mendez Foundation will not be updating their Too Good programming until 2026 and 2027.

B. Life Education Center programming

McTaggart reported that the JJC continued to partner with the Iroquois-Kankakee Regional Office of Education and the Pledge for Life Partnership to bring Life Education Center (LEC) youth prevention education to K-6th grade students throughout Iroquois County for the 2024-2025 school year. LEC programming just wrapped up for the school year and the lessons went very well. (They visited every school in the county except Chebanse which takes part every other year. I-KAN helped deliver the programming the last two schools (Glenn Raymond and St. Paul's Lutheran), as McTaggart was recovering from surgery. The JJC puts out a follow-up Facebook post letting parents know that their children have received this prevention programming and that they should check their backpacks for additional information, follow-up activities, and contest(s).) McTaggart stated that I-KAN will need to rethink how this is implemented if the JJC does not receive funding for next year as a reminder of the necessity of the JJC for future programming.

IV. COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN UPDATES

A. Updated JJC Brochures and Rx Safety Inserts

McTaggart shared that each LEC student is given the JJC's tri-fold brochure and medication safety insert. The pamphlet was updated in September and tells what the JJC and its TIP the Scale campaign are all about. The brochure includes some different

graphics/colors and wording, as well as new Illinois Youth Survey stats. It was passed around for member feedback and will be sent for print.

The medication safety insert was updated in August and lists all current medication disposal site locations in the county as well as helpful tips for safely handling medicines.

B. Onarga Theater Ad & Prize Donation

Preem reminded members that the Onarga Theater is the only remaining theater in the county. She shared that the JJC is running an ad on their big screen only during the theater's busiest months (½ November, December, ½ January, June, July, and August). She added that the JJC is once again sponsoring the Spin the Wheel Prize Game during each movie's intermission. We donated prize bags which included plush owls resembling our mascot, as well as JJC information/prevention messaging and swag. If your ticket is pulled, you get to spin their giant wheel and see what goodies you have won from one of their many sponsors.

C. Toilet Times

Preem informed members that the spring edition of the Toilet Times focuses on Teen Dating Violence stats and prevention TIPs, the physiological sigh (a healthy coping strategy), the truths about underage vaping and a QR code for help quitting. It also contains the QR code that links to the Recovery Resource Page on the JJC's website. This publication hangs in all junior/senior high school bathrooms, youth centers, etc.

Content for the fall issue was discussed. Suggestions included sharing more new Illinois Youth Survey data, working on erasing mental health stigma, encouraging kids to ask for help and utilize the many healthy resources available (including 988 and Safe2Help), a QR code that links to "How We Feel" app that provides TIPs and strategies after a person checks in twice that day regarding their feelings, a QR code that links to Online Calming Rooms (relaxing sounds/music/visual scenes, live nature cams, coloring, yoga, etc.), and a tie in to the burnout video that Flourishing Lifeway is creating for students. Harbor House stated at a previous meeting that they are always willing to provide additional information on Teen Dating Violence. They had also suggested to use anime characters and "teen speak" on future bathroom readers in order to be more relatable to students with phrases such as "Vaping is Cringe", "In my Mental Health Era", "It's Giving Healthy Lungs", and "Vaping is Chuegy".

Preem asked for any additional suggestions. She will move forward with the above suggestions.

D. Prom TIPs/Promo Item & Announcement

Preem stated that the JJC had delivered 566 postcards (containing Prom Safety TIPs) and Tape Measure Keychains (reminding students to make good choices) to students attending prom/post prom across the county. The message was as follows: "You're Smart Beyond Measure! You know YOUR CHOICES MATTER. Ensure your actions measure up. Keep a firm GRIP on life by choosing positive ways to cope with stress. It's KEY to a successful future."

Pre also shared that an announcement reminding students to celebrate prom night safely was also sent to each school to be included in each school's morning announcements. It is as follows: "The Iroquois County State's Attorney Office, the Juvenile Justice Council of Iroquois County and the TIP the Scale campaign would like to wish all students attending prom a fun evening! They would also like to remind students the importance of celebrating safely without drugs and alcohol, as underage consumption is illegal and harmful. It's sure to be a great night that you will always want to remember. So, enjoy looking fabulous as you pose for pictures and dance and laugh the night away with friends. For prevention TIPs, visit TIPtheScale.org or TIP the Scale on Facebook."

E. WACC Connections Newsletter Ad

Pre stated that the JJC's yearly membership in the Watseka Area Chamber of Commerce includes 4 free quarterly ads in their Connections Newsletter that is emailed out to all chamber members. Our April advertisement was a promotion for Alcohol Awareness Month giving tips to parents on how to navigate this issue. It began with - "Parents play an important role in shaping their children's attitudes about underage drinking." The four main points that followed with detail were to discuss the many dangers, remind them it's illegal, encourage healthy alternatives, and to be a good role model. The July advertisement will be a promotion for families to visit the JJC's Iroquois County Fair booth. It will highlight the activities and contests being held at the booth.

F. WGFA Hotline Interviews

Sarah shared that the JJC contracted for 4 hotline interviews with WGFA Radio throughout each grant cycle. Jenni McTaggart, JJC's DFC Grant Coordinator and LEC Educator, did the first interview in October on the JJC's Red Ribbon Week activities, its significance and why everyone should be involved. Stephanie from Harbor House took part in the JJC's second WGFA Hotline Interview in February. She shared with listeners what the JJC, Life Education Center, Harbor House, and Iroquois County Sheriff's Department are doing to combat bullying in the area and promoted the collaborative JJC/Harbor House Bowling Against Bullying event held at Lucky Lanes in Iroquois.

The JJC still has two Hotline Interviews remaining this fiscal year. The subjects of these interviews will be Iroquois County Fair activities and Back to School TIPs. Amy Zabel volunteered to discuss the Iroquois County Fair Activities for our 3rd Hotline Interview while a suggestion to ask RaDonna Hasselbring to discuss Back to School TIPs for the final Hotline Interview for the grant year was made.

G. TIP Radio Advertising

Pre stated that in addition to our Celebrity TIP PSAs playing on WGFA/The Buckle, the JJC also has four special radio PSAs running during certain months on WGFA/The Buckle, WIQI/WHPO, and WVLI/WFAV/WIVR. Pre provides the volunteers with scripts and directions for recording. The first PSA was in October for Red Ribbon Week, the second was recorded by JJC member, Jed Whitlow in April and focused on Alcohol Awareness Month, and the third was in May recorded by JJC member, Sherri Hendricks and focused on graduation. Pre stated that there is one PSA remaining which will

focus on the JJC's fair activities prompting people to visit the JJC booth for games, information and contests. She asked if anyone would like to record this or if they knew anyone who would like to do this and Kira Ebert volunteered. Listen to WGFA/The Buckle in July to hear her recording.

H. TIP the Scale Tuesday Celebrities on Facebook and WGFA/The Buckle

Pree reminded members how successful our TIP the Scale Tuesday Celebrity Facebook posts have been in reaching more of the county's population and spreading our prevention messaging. To date, we have featured approximately 212 celebrities for their efforts in our community and have celebrities scheduled out to October 2025. These local celebrities share a TIP (or advice) with area families. Some of the individuals that we have recently featured include: Tammy Marcotte (Success By 6 at United Way), Jamie Bakken (101 Country WHPO 100.9, WIQI Classic Rock 95.9, CJ's Boutique and Coffee Bar, Iroquois County Republican Women and Iroquois County Board), Angel Crawford (Iroquois Economic Development Association), Holli VanHovel (Donovan Grade School), Kristin Marquis (Crescent City Grade School), Kacie Claire (Ford-Iroquois Farm Bureau), Sarah Winkel (Project Sun), Anissa Galyen (First Trust and Savings Bank), and Senator Chris Balkema.

We also post these celebrity TIPs on our TIPtheScale.org website. Many of our featured celebrities record their TIPs to be played as PSA's on WGFA/The Buckle. Pree reminded those in attendance that we welcome name suggestions for potential future celebrities.

I. Teen Mental Health PSA Contest

McTaggart stated that the JJC's second annual Teen Mental Health PSA Contest was a great success! 74 entries were submitted involving 150 students and 13 teachers. It started on March 3rd and ran through April 4th and was open to 6th-12th grade students across Iroquois County. She noted that this was such a wonderful opportunity for students and stressed that one advantage is that teens are teaching their peers about this important subject and breaking the stigma of mental health in general. We need teens to be able to talk openly about their mental health as good mental health is vital for teens to make good choices concerning drugs and alcohol. Having good coping skills to navigate poor mental health situations is also vital. These teens touched on these topics in very thoughtful and impactful ways.

Each entry was amazing, but one winner from each junior high school and each senior high school was chosen to record and air their winning PSAs on WGFA and The Buckle. The winners are: 1.) Iroquois West High School – Miley McGehee and Eduardo Diaz about Bullying, 2.) Cissna Park Jr. High School – Jadie Neukomm and Kara Walder about Cyberbullying, 3.) Milford Grade School – Jackson Johnson, Jackson Mann and Michael Blucher about Screen Time Abuse, 4.) Milford High School - London Clark about Depression, 5.) St. John's Lutheran School – Tinley Eichelberger about Body Image, 6.) St. Paul's Lutheran School – Emmaline Hildenbrand, Aubrey Robinson, Cadence Tammen about Goal-Setting for Good Mental Health, 7.) Iroquois West Middle School – Ellie Matthews, Ayla Nichols, Tessa Pankey, Harley Valentine about Stress and Anxiety, 8.) Watseka High School – Sophie Deem about Body Image, 9.) Watseka Jr. High School - Gracie DeLahr about Body Image, 10.) Donovan High School - Hutson

Sanders about Your Mental Health Matters, 11.) Central High School – Hailie Renollet, Abby Hansen about Depression. These winners each received an award certificate, a \$10 gift certificate to a local eatery, JJC sunglasses and stress ball. Each entrant plus their assisting teacher received a cookie, hand-written thank you card, TIP the Scale bracelet and a pen.

This contest was viable due to the generous donation of Robinson Chiropractic of Watseka LLC. These PSA's will continue sporadically on WGFA/The Buckle Radio Stations until April of next year. Shoutout to Stacey Smith at WGFA/The Buckle for making this contest happen.

J. Press Releases

Preem reminded members that we must submit at least four news releases each fiscal year to act as match for our DFC grant. We may write and submit more than four, depending on our future initiatives. These news releases are sent to the 3 local newspapers - The Cissna Park News, The Times-Republic Newspaper and The Clifton Advocate. The Daily Journal has recently been added. To date this fiscal year, we have written and submitted three news releases focused on Red Ribbon Week activities, area bullying prevention efforts, and the teen mental health PSA contest winner announcements. These press releases were also shared with WGFA/The Buckle so that a snippet could be pulled and read during local radio news broadcasts. Our next press releases will focus on our summer activities and Iroquois County Fair booth promotion.

K. Newspaper Ad

The JJC placed one ad in each of the local newspapers' printing of graduate photos. This ad provided Parenting TIPS for a Safe Graduation Season and was based on our graduation Facebook ad. This ad also ran during the Illinois Spirit's printing of the Valedictorian/Salutatorian speeches. The ad was shown on the screen during the meeting.

L. Facebook Ads

Preem shared that the JJC had budgeted \$130 for Facebook ads this fiscal year. She shared a slide showing the Alcohol Awareness Month, Prom, and Graduation Facebook advertisements. She stated that advertising prices stayed true to what was projected with the exception of the Alcohol Awareness Month and Prom TIPS for Parents ads - they were both a tad less which was very unexpected since we ask to spend the full amount. See the pricing structure here:

- Red Ribbon Week Door Decorating Contest (\$25)
- Alcohol Awareness Month (\$24.94)
- Prom TIPS for Parents (\$24.95)
- Graduation (\$25)
- Iroquois County Fair Activities/Contests (2 ads x \$15 each = \$30) This is a projected amount.

M. Graduation Fans

Pre shared that the JJC once again distributed fans for use at Iroquois County school graduation ceremonies to remind families to safely celebrate this milestone. She told them that a lesser amount was given for each graduation this year as we had used up our supply. We have ordered and received new fans which will last for some years yet with a new design which was shown on the screen. These will also be handed out at future events such as the fair.

N. Baseball/Softball Sponsorships & Vape Signs

McTaggart shared that our baseball/softball sponsorship signs are on display again at ball diamonds across the county. We are advertising with the following leagues: Ashkum Athletic Association, Buckley Youth League, Cissna Park Recreation Board, Clifton Little League, Chebanse Lion's Club, Iroquois West Youth Baseball/Softball League, Milford/Sheldon Little League, Watseka Girl's Softball, and Watseka Youth League.

McTaggart reminded the group that several area parks and ballparks will be displaying our No Smoking/No Vaping signs. These signs thank park visitors for not smoking or vaping because there are young lungs at play. Parks boards that took signs to hang are located in Ashkum, Beaverville, Papineau, Sheldon, Watseka, Gilman, Crescent City, Thawville, Cissna Park and most recently Haun Park. There is one remaining sign if anyone knows of a park in need of one. McTaggart had shared our sign's design with other coalitions on CADCA's (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) national message board.

McTaggart stated that she has seen these signs up at some of the parks in prominent locations. She suggested that the JJC should somehow honor these parks and its members for helping to spread the messaging about substance use. She suggested taking pictures of the JJC's mascot visiting these parks and signs in the parks and using them in a contest at the fair similar to the "Where's Harold?" contest they held years ago. Members present agreed so the plan is in motion.

O. Stickered TIP Silverware Donation

The JJC has given out 16,500 stickered packets of silverware throughout Iroquois County to numerous agencies, schools, groups, etc. the last few years to help to spread the JJC's messaging and contact information. The JJC just recently donated their last 481 packets to the Crescent City Fireball Festival for their Woodworth Fish Fry night. These packets are stickered with a TIP prevention message on how to talk to your kids about underage substance use. A shoutout was given to the Iroquois County Probation Department for their assistance in labeling the packets in utilizing service worker hours.

P. Fair Promos

Pre shared a slide showing the fair promo items that will be dispersed at the Iroquois County Fair booth this July. She noted that we still have JJC pens, Ollie the Owl tattoos and stickers, Smarties with prevention postcards, and magnetic family picture frames with prevention messaging left over from last year's events that will be handed out as well. But she was excited to share the pizza cutters the group voted on at the last meeting. These pizza cutters are already labeled with the pizza stickers that we had paid

to have professionally designed several years ago that contain prevention TIPs for parents. She reminded members that we always try to offer something different and worthwhile to draw fairgoers to our booth, as the topic of underage substance use is not always a “fun” topic to discuss.

Pree then shared a slide showing the activities the JJC will have at their fair booth in July. She reminded them that the JJC will once again hold their rock hunt twice daily during the fair which entails the placing of rocks with the JJC mascot, Ollie the Owl on them around the fairgrounds minus the parking lot or camper lots. When found, the rocks direct the recipient to bring the rock to the JJC booth in the south commercial building for a sweet prize. Prizes were discussed and amongst the members present the decision was made to offer Pop Rocks, Nerd Clusters, M&M's – both peanut and plain, and Airhead Extremes. There are 10 rocks which will be hidden before noon and after 3pm daily. This rock hunt brings so many families to the booth checking out who has “found” a rock daily or to see what new activities are happening.

Pree's slide also shows the kids' games that will be offered daily at the JJC's fair booth. These include Giant Jenga, a Cup-Stacking game, Basket Pong, Rings/Cones, Cornhole, Giant Connect Four, Coney Island Toss and our famous Bozo Buckets. Prizes for these games are stickers or tattoos.

In order to make all of this work smoothly, the JJC is asking for volunteers to work some of the shifts. The booth will be open 12-8pm daily from Tuesday until Saturday and then 12-6pm on Sunday. The day shifts are covered, but the night shifts from 4-8pm still need workers. The link to volunteer is in the JJC's meeting reminder email if anyone wants to work some of these activities. McTaggart also stated that the JJC booth is there for its members and if anyone wanted their information to be handed out at their booth to just reach out and we will make it happen.

McTaggart reminded members of the “Where's Ollie?” contest that was discussed earlier in the meeting which will showcase and “Thank” local parks who display their No Smoking/No Vaping signs provided by the JJC. She stated that the JJC will reach out to WGFA/The Buckle Radio Stations as they have donated prizes in the past to see if they'd be open to donating prizes to the winners of this contest as well.

Q. Student Spotlight Feature

At the last couple of JJC meetings, the idea was shared to feature junior and senior high students who model good behavior in a TIP Celebrity Junior or Teen Edition format. Pree stated that they had researched how to best go about doing this without placing too much burden on local school personnel to nominate and notify students and their parents. A suggestion was made to create something totally separate from our TIP Tuesday initiative. So... here comes STUDENT SPOTLIGHT! Pree shared a slide showing what this would look like. Instead of providing a TIP, we will focus on the student's involvement in school/community activities and keep it SIMPLE for the student. McTaggart has already penned an email draft to all middle school/junior high and senior high school principals to ask them to nominate one student to be recognized for making good choices and having a positive impact on their school or in their family/community. The principal is encouraged to ask fellow teachers/coaches/school staff to assist in the nomination process. These emails will be released twice a year – once at the beginning of the school year and once in January. This will allow the JJC to honor one student per

week similar to our local “celebrity” spotlights. The reason for each nomination will be showcased on the weekly spotlight.

Members thought that the honor should include some kind of reward, such as candy bar or shareable size of another candy. These will be delivered to the school office of the nominated student each week.

R. New Ideas

McTaggart reminded the coalition that we had discussed utilizing decals with prevention messaging inside school buses. She has been talking with bus drivers to determine if space exists inside the buses for such an initiative. Drivers have sent her photos of the inside of some of the buses to show available space. McTaggart shared that perhaps we could utilize some of the ideas shared during our discussion of the Toilet Times. No new progress was reported.

V. YOUTH GROUPS/ACTIVITIES

A. Lunchtime Trivia for Alcohol Awareness Month/Prom Safety/Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Pree shared that the JJC had visited all area high schools during the month of April to provide a trivia activity (focused on Alcohol Awareness Month, prom safety, and Distracted Driving Awareness Month), game, and prizes. JJC funds were utilized to purchase candy as a prize option for the activity. Pree stated that the activities went over very well at the schools and if the students were shy and didn't come over to play the activity, she and McTaggart went to their table to chat and give prizes instead. It was a win-win with a lot of prevention information delivered throughout the county.

B. Summer in the Park

The JJC is asked yearly to provide prevention programming for the Summer in the Park youth camp by Deanna McIntyre, the program director. The JJC delights in participating every year with different activities. This year, the JJC has decided to take on 3 days of activities all focusing on spreading kindness to one another and throughout our communities as the mental health of our families and friends in our community is of upmost importance. The act of spreading kindness and in receiving kindness affects us physically and emotionally making us capable of making good choices for ourselves and with those around us. We ultimately want the kids to learn to make healthy coping strategies in low times and to stay away from the things that can hurt them like the use of drugs and alcohol underage.

Therefore, we have created 3 activities to carry out with the Summer in the Park campers. The first activity took place on June 18th at The Garage Community Center as there was a heat wave and temperatures were too hot for outdoor activities. The JJC collected 1,058 paintable rocks from various donors (Morrison Benoit – Jill Tarro, Mylee Rabideau, Kim Rader and Susan Wynn Bence with her granddaughter, Scarlett (a JJC Youth Ambassador)). Another JJC Teen Ambassador, Hudson McTaggart, spent countless hours hand-washing and drying all of those rocks for use. These rocks were brought to SIP to be painted by the campers with pictures or positive messages. They were then taken by Jenni McTaggart who wrote on the back of each rock a message to Keep or Hide the rock, but to please tag a picture of the rock on Facebook with the hashtag #JJCSIPROCKS so that the SIP kids could track where their rocks had ended

up and how they spread kindness to someone else. The kids were told about how the act of sharing kindness can create a ripple effect by inspiring others to share kindness. The students are looking forward to seeing how their ripple effect is working with the kindness these rocks are spreading. Their rocks will be returned to them at the next SIP activity on June 24th.

The Iroquois County Sheriff's Department was also at the SIP program on this day allowing kids to play golf with the Sheriff and peruse the county police vehicles and learn about their equipment and how it works and why. It was a very fun and educational day for the campers.

The second activity will be on June 24th at The Garage again due to the heat wave continuing. At this program, the JJC plans to bring their oversized games and disperse them throughout The Garage. The plan is to have the kids practice kindness while playing the many different games and activities while taking turns and sharing compliments and smiles. The same games that will be at the fair booth will be shared this day with the addition of the Limbo.

The third activity will be on July 1st at Durham Park in Onarga. This will be a combined effort between the JJC and Harbor House called Kites for Kindness. Harbor House had hosted a similar activity in Kankakee County and it went over very well. The JJC purchased plain white kites that come with markers so the kids can create kites of kindness possibly with positive quotes or words or pictures or whatever they would like. We will then fly them in the open area away from trees.

VI. OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

A. School Policy Changes Regarding Vaping

At the last JJC meeting, Pree noted that the trend is to offer an alternative to school suspension for students being caught vaping/smoking. She noted that vaping is extremely addictive and teens are being targeted by vape companies. When these students are suspended, they are often unsupervised at home (which for some is an unsafe environment) and have the opportunity to vape more. Teens may need help to quit and a safe environment to do so.

Barb King sent an email to school officials and counselors encouraging them to consider changing their school policies to educate and support teens who have been caught vaping in addition to punitive measures. We decided to share links to such programs that schools can research. We are hoping that schools will choose an option that will work best for their students based on cost, staff time constraints, etc. The five programs mentioned in the email were:

1. INDEPTH (Intervention for Nicotine Dependence: Education, Prevention, Tobacco and Health)
2. MyPrime
3. Healthy Futures
4. UTURN
5. Caron Connect 5: Find the NicoTEEN - Nicotine Cessation Program

McTaggart stated that we plan to follow up with the schools once school is in session again to see which programs they proceeded with and if any schools need assistance or advice. We look forward to hearing the progress.

B. Toxic Stress and Trauma Training for HS Students

McTaggart stated that at past JJC meetings, we have discussed hosting a training for high school students on the subject of toxic stress and trauma. We have since signed a contract with Kate Reed and Flourishing Lifeway to develop a video recording (one hour in length) on this topic so that schools can show it to their students on whatever day/time works best for them. The JJC has the option to create two more videos on burnout prevention in the upcoming year at a discounted price. Future topic examples include: How to Be Present and Productive When There Is Never Enough Time and The Peace Index.

The video production on this first video has been in progress for a couple of months now with Pree and McTaggart conversing back and forth with the creator, Kate Reed, to make the videos most impactful in our rural communities. We plan to release this video link to the schools in the Fall for their use.

VII. AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Iroquois County Sheriff's Department (Sheriff Clint Perzee) - Sheriff Perzee filled the coalition in on activity in the Iroquois County Jail scene regarding the SMART Recovery Program. He also spoke about the partnership between the local hospital, healthcare facilities, and mental health facilities working hard with the Iroquois County Jail to provide services. He once again voiced his favor for Iroquois County to look into the IRIS program to complement these collaborations. Perzee shared a story with the group about the importance of helping those in need, rather than showing apathy.

B. State Representative Jason Bunting's Office (Kira Ebert) – Kira stated that Bunting's office is very excited about the Imagination Library by Success by Six at United Way and encouraged everyone to share that opportunity with as many families as we can.

She told us that State Representative Bunting is out of session now which gives her more time to catch up on her emails – 500+/day so if you had sent something and haven't received an answer, it should be coming soon. She said that Representative Bunting is preparing to take tours around the district very soon. She said they are also gearing up to host their fair booth once again which is always right across from the JJC booth. She also advised the group that she is now an Iroquois Memorial Hospital Board Member and hopes to have a positive impact in that arena.

C. Iroquois Mental Health Center (Amy Zabel) – Amy stated that their Manteno facility is selling and their team is moving to Kankakee. Their teams are making moves to be more active locally. Their crisis team will be working diligently during the day and calls will be sent to 988 teams at night. (This is part of what was discussed earlier in the meeting.) They have 2 full-time employees who will be the new Watseka Schools Guidance Counselors. They look forward to their new jail opportunities they are in planning stages

with the Sheriff's Department. They have a new focus to build a new VA and are looking to see how they can fund the project and bill services through IMHC.

- D. Jed Whitlow** - Whitlow shared that the county board is keeping busy. He continues to serve on the public safety and judicial committee. He is also on the 708 board. Whitlow shared a feel-good story about the rewarding work he did at Nexus Academy. He noted that two students from 20 years ago still call him today. He stressed that we can and do make a difference in the lives of others.
- E. Iroquois County Public Health Department** (Taylor Roche) – Taylor introduced herself as the new Health Educator for their department. She informed the group of their CPR classes, Safe Sitter classes (next Tuesday/Wednesday and 1 in July and 1 in August), and Summer in the Park activity at The Garage Community Center on June 30th which will be about the importance of hydration and they will hand out Ice Pops afterwards. They're also participating in the fair again this year, they're offering Vaping Cessation classes in August called "Courage to Quit", and they will hold Back to School Immunization Events and a Diaper Drive this year. She was most excited to inform the group about the return of WIC starting July 2nd. It will be the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays every month. She promised to get us fliers to hand out.
- F. Carle Health Addiction Recovery** (David King) – David immediately offered his congrats to the JJC and the Opioid Coalition for their prevention efforts for such a rural community. He commented that we are local champions. He then went on to tell about the Vermilion County mobile harm reduction unit being operational and how they are staffing it with plans to start Telehealth in July. He reminded the group of an upcoming webinar on Wednesday (which Barb will send out to everyone) on pharmacists and their role in recovery and medication distribution.

He commended Sheriff Perzee on his MAR program (STARR) in the jail as stated that his program is a beacon for them in Vermilion County to strive for. Sheriff Perzee said that Iroquois County Correctional Officer Andrew Medina was at the latest seminars with them. David went on to say their Recovery Ally Program focuses on awareness and sensitivity to addiction and recovery stating that every person makes a difference to these people – every single contact in their actions and words both.

VIII. MEETING ADJOURNED

Barb King thanked all for taking part this morning. Our next meeting is scheduled to take place on Friday, September 12th from 10:00 a.m. to noon in the same location. She reminded members that both full JJC and committee meeting minutes will continue to be shared via email. Full JJC meeting minutes are also posted on the TIPtheScale.org website.

Meeting adjourned.