

... and then there was Tanager Place.

Yes, even now.

Teletherapy services open to all ages.

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SPRING 2020



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Identifying Opportunities

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Much more news is on our website:
tanagerplace.org/2020springnews



From the CEO —

Each day our hope is to be a bright place. We work to help community members find their inner core of strength and hope. We nurture resilience by helping others view the challenges surrounding them as opportunities for growth and positive change.

Recently, we've been asking ourselves how we can better adopt our own advice and transform to better meet today's uncertainty. I'm proud to say teams throughout Tanager Place have risen to the challenge of our ongoing pandemic. They've forged new access points for treatment, implemented new programs and reimagined services. Many have done so while setting aside their own anxieties and fears.

Teletherapy sessions, which we expected to roll out in April to a limited audience, have become a standard method of care that we've opened to both youth and adults during these emotionally-charged times. We've launched free, virtual support groups for high school and college students, parents and caregivers. New safety precautions are in place at our Inpatient Program. And, despite the obstacles posed by social distancing, we rolled out resource videos and a new wellness podcast in conjunction with Mental Health Month.

We've done all of this and more because community matters.

Now more than ever, we have been called upon to make a difference.



Are you listening?

#WellnessWednesday podcast supports community resilience

For a lot of us right now, the world feels like it's been turned on its head. Life as we know it stopped sometime back in March when the coronavirus became a reality in Iowa, and has yet to go back to normal. Even now, with talk of lifting some restrictions on a national and state level, we don't really know what that will look like. It probably won't be life as we knew it for quite some time.

The unknown can be scary for children as well as adults. What we do know, however, is that while these current times can be sources of stress or triggers for trauma, especially for those who already struggle with mental health diagnoses, they can also be times to foster resilience and growth. We can emerge from this pandemic more resilient than we went into it.

May is Mental Health Awareness month. As part of our efforts to highlight the importance of mental health, we are bringing you a four part podcast in which we discuss four indicators of well-being. We can look for and foster these ourselves and our children to help

us through turbulent times with our mental health intact. The indicators come from RISE™, a model of resiliency we use.

The RISE model was developed by Vice President of Clinical Services Tonya Hotchkin. The four indicators are safety, belonging and connection, meaning and purpose, and efficacy. Each podcast focuses on one indicator, explaining what it is in detail and providing ways to encourage its development.

Our goal is to help you and your family be as mentally healthy as possible — something we all need help with from time to time. With that in mind, we also want to help you recognize when you or someone close to you should contact a mental health professional. There is never any shame in doing so. We have many skilled clinicians at Tanager Place who are currently providing telehealth.

Your mental health is important to us. There are practical things we all can do to develop our resilience. We hope you tune in to our podcasts.

We're here when you need us

Several therapy, support and training opportunities are available on virtual platforms so we can continue to provide mental health services and do our part to protect public health.

The annual Resiliency and Trauma-Informed Care Symposium has been moved to October, but a pre-symposium remains slated for May 22. The pre-event features messages from our internationally-known keynote speakers as well as training sessions designed to address current community concerns. While this event is free, registration via our website is required.

Throughout the month of May, Mental Health Awareness Month, we are providing activities and guidance to local families navigating the impact of the pandemic.

In addition, we've launched several virtual support groups. These offerings, tailored to meet the needs of specific population segments, offer professional

advice and peer support to those adjusting to changes and coming to terms with fears related to the coronavirus. All of the support groups are free and not limited to existing clients.

The adult support group meets on Tuesday at noon, parents and caregivers meet the same day at 2 p.m. High school students come together on Wednesday at noon, and a school staff support group meets Tuesday at 11 a.m. These four groups meet weekly and are free to the public.

High school seniors and their caregivers are meeting in a limited series of support groups this month.

We've also partnered with Kirkwood Community College to offer a virtual support group for their students on Fridays at 1 p.m.

Nearly all outpatient services have implemented virtual treatment options, many with expanded access. More details are available at the link below.



Inpatient youth escaping isolation with new game-based program

Three Tanager Place staff members — BHIS Caseworkers Jordan Pinckney and John-Paul Blix, and School Based Therapist Darren Kirk — developed and implemented a specialized therapeutic version of the popular tabletop role-playing game Dungeons & Dragons for use with youth in our Inpatient Program.

Within an imaginary universe, the youth adventure their way through unlimited possibilities, solve problems, face consequences and work as a team. They tap into cognitive creativity, temporarily escaping current social isolation requirements into a safe, meaningful and unexpected new place.

Initial results from the pilot program are promising, with more gaming groups being formed. In addition, support for this initiative has been received from around the globe.

Learn more about this program and its benefits by reading the full story on our website at the link below.

Read and learn more about how we are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic:

tanagerplace.org/2020springnews