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Photo by Anete Lusina

RURAL VICTIMS OF INTIMATE-PARTNER VIOLENCE NEED MORE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT, STUDY FINDS

While intimate-partner violence is a problem in all areas of the country, victims in rural communities need more resources and support, a new study has found. [The study](#) from the University of Minnesota's Rural Health Research Center found that rural victims of intimate-partner violence, or IPV, face more barriers and resource limitations that could affect their health and well-being. Attempts to address intimate-partner violence in rural areas should be tailored to the specific needs of the people and places in those areas, the study said.

STRIVING TOWARD JUSTICE: DIVERSE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS' AND PRACTITIONERS' PERCEPTIONS OF JUSTICE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SAFETY

American Indian and Alaskan Native communities; those who identify as Black, LGBTQ+, or as Immigrants; those with disabilities; and those living in rural areas experience high rates of domestic violence. This study by the Urban Institute explores perceptions of justice, accountability, safety, and healing held by diverse survivors of domestic violence. The study provides critical knowledge about the availability, accessibility, equity, and effectiveness of responses to domestic violence and offers recommendations for practice, policy, and research.



Photo by fotostorm/Getty Images

RETHINKING THE REMOVAL OF KIDS FROM MOMS STRUGGLING WITH ADDICTION

Addiction is so prevalent and the effects so severe that child welfare agencies are struggling to find enough foster families to care for substance-exposed infants. Children under age 5 are the fastest-growing age group entering foster care, and about half of those kids enter out-of-home care because of parental substance use. Amid the crisis, state governments are finding ways to support the comprehensive needs of mothers in recovery while keeping their infants and young children safe. These state efforts reflect a shift in greater child welfare policy toward family preservation, the well-being of parents and children, and collaboration between child welfare, health, and early childhood systems.



Photo by Illuminate Colorado

TRAINING HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TO REDUCE THE OVERREPORTING OF BIRTHING PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS TO CHILD WELFARE

Healthcare providers are a vital source of reports of infants to child welfare related to birthing people's substance use. This evaluation study collected data from health professionals registered to participate in a professional education webinar about pregnancy, substance use, and child welfare reporting. Participants practiced in all regions of the U.S., with more from the West and Northeast than the Midwest and South. More than half practiced in urban areas, and one fourth in rural areas. Findings showed statistically significant changes in five of 11 opioid attitudes/beliefs and four of nine child welfare attitudes/beliefs from baseline to follow-ups. The webinar was part of the [Doing Right at Birth](#) project, which has the goal of reducing overreporting to the child welfare system related to birthing people's drug use.

ACCESS TO MAT: PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES WITH TRANSPORTATION, NON-EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION, AND TELEHEALTH

Access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder (OUD) in the United States is a significant challenge for many individuals attempting to recover and improve their lives. Access to treatment is incredibly challenging in rural areas, characterized by a lack of programs, few prescribers, and transportation barriers. This study aims to better understand the roles that transportation, Medicaid-funded non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT), and telehealth play in facilitating access to MAT in West Virginia.

PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

RURAL JAILS TURN TO COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS TO HELP THE NEWLY RELEASED SUCCEED

Since the Sanpete County Sheriff's Office in Manti, Utah hired a community health worker last year, recidivism has dropped sharply. In the 18 months before the community health worker began her work, 599 people booked into Sanpete County Jail had been there before; and in the 18 months after, that number dropped to 237. Individuals with substance use disorders are released directly to a treatment facility, and nobody leaves the jail without a ride and a drawstring backpack filled with items like toothpaste, a blanket, and a personalized list of job openings.



On her day of release, Shantel Clark hugs Cheryl Swapp, the jail's community health worker, at the sheriff's office.
Lillian Mongeau Hughes for KFF Health News

LONE STAR LEGAL AID INTRODUCES COURTHOUSE KIOSKS TO SUPPORT ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN RURAL COUNTIES

Lone Star Legal Aid's [Rise to Recovery Initiative](#) offers judgment-free legal help to individuals and families coping with the opioid crisis. To bridge the gap in legal aid accessibility, Lone Star Legal Aid (LSLA), with the support of the district attorney and district clerk's offices of McLennan and Hardin counties, has unveiled a groundbreaking initiative, installing three cutting-edge kiosks in courthouses in rural Texas. These easy-to-use kiosks aim to simplify legal assistance by providing a direct pathway for low-income individuals to access applications.



WEBINARS

SHERIFFS' COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM: REDUCING THE CRIMINALITY OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

By utilizing community outreach coordinators embedded within the rural sheriffs' offices in the Florida Panhandle, Northwest Florida Health Network has been able to assist in diverting those with behavioral health needs away from the criminal justice system. By linking the community to resources, behavioral health needs are being met at earlier intercept points, reducing the criminality of behavioral health issues. Community outreach coordinators bridge the gap between law enforcement and social service providers, strengthening partnerships and fostering their reliance on one another.

This webinar will discuss:

- The importance of bridging the gap between law enforcement and social service agencies to meet the community's needs.
- Integration of community outreach coordinator within the sheriffs' offices.
- How to implement a multidisciplinary approach to behavioral health issues by leveraging the resources in the criminal justice system.

To Register:

[CLICK HERE](#)

Date:

December 10th

Time:

1:00 - 2:15 PM ET

INSIGHTS FROM THE REACHING RURAL INITIATIVE - NAVIGATING LEADERSHIP, INNOVATION, AND COMMUNITY IMPACT IN ADDRESSING SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Over the last year, Reaching Rural fellows convened, received coaching, and participated in skill-building workshops to help them improve outcomes in their home communities. The recorded webinar highlights key insights gleaned from county elected officials who joined Reaching Rural and charted their course for continued progress in addressing substance use.



RESOURCES

RURAL JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE

Rural communities face unique challenges that impact their ability to deliver fair and equitable justice. Despite these challenges, rural communities rely on their many strengths to address the needs of their residents.

The National Center for State Courts, in partnership with Rulo Strategies, launched the [Rural Justice Collaborative \(RJC\)](#) to showcase the strengths of rural communities and highlight the cross-sector collaboration that is a hallmark of rural justice systems.

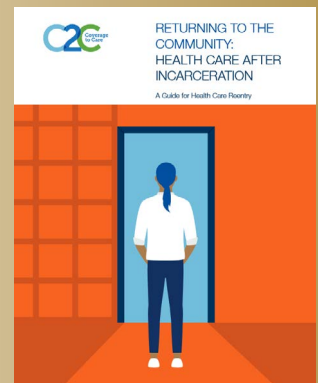
The work under the RJC is supported by a cross-sector advisory council composed of rural judges along with additional stakeholders in the justice, child welfare, and behavioral health systems. The advisory council guides and identifies innovative programs and practices.

NEW FILM ON RURAL MENTAL HEALTH IS A TEACHING TOOL FOR COUNSELORS

This film documents the beautiful and sometimes painful stories of a deep love for agriculture in Colorado. The Colorado Farm Bureau worked with experts statewide to create this glimpse into the lives and struggles of producers to help destigmatize mental health in rural communities and promote the work of the Colorado Agricultural Addiction & Mental Health Program and others with the same goals. Watch the film [here](#).

FEDERAL AGENCIES RELEASE NEW RESOURCE TO CONNECT PEOPLE RETURNING TO THE COMMUNITY TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES

The Office of Justice Programs and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Office of Minority Health have joined to release a new Coverage to Care (C2C) resource to support individuals upon release and reentering the community to connect to health coverage and health services. This guide, [Returning to the Community: Health Care After Incarceration](#), assists individuals upon release and re-entering the community to better understand their health care needs, including physical and behavioral health, to learn critical information, terms, people, and titles to help connect to health care services pre- and post-release, learn about insurance coverage types and how to apply, and tips to get started using health coverage to receive needed services to support a successful reentry and healthy life.



ARTICLES

'SLOWLY FORGING A RELATIONSHIP': RURAL VERMONT'S NEW BLUEPRINT FOR ADDICTION RECOVERY

In Bennington, Vermont, a new collaborative program is being tested, targeting alcohol and substance abusers who have fallen through the cracks. The pilot program partners the Bennington Rescue Squad with the peer recovery organization Turning Point Center of Bennington (TPCB) in what the Vermont Office of Emergency Medical Services calls the first collaboration of its kind in the state. Organizers hope it will offer a blueprint for other rural communities as well.



Photo by Peter Crabtree

SUSTAINABILITY TOOLKIT: FIVE STEPS TO BUILD A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

Sustainability refers to receiving ongoing resource support, moving toward scale, or institutionalizing practices and policies proven to improve outcomes. A sustainability plan is a roadmap for moving beyond an isolated pilot project into long-term continuation, expansion, or institutionalization. The National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) prepared this Sustainability Toolkit to provide collaboratives, organizations, and programs with the tools needed for planning and implementing a sustainability approach for innovative projects.

