

Hello all! On behalf of Saskatchewan Addiction Awareness Month committee, Saskatoon SHA, we would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to all that took time to participate in our activities each week and learn about Substance use disorders, addiction, recovery and reducing stigma. The focus of last week during National Addiction Awareness Week was health and wellness and included some amazing virtual event options through Whitecap Dakota First Nations Health Center. If you were unable to watch the live Hard Knox Talks interview with Dr. Colleen Dell on recovery, spirituality and the power of pet therapy, please find it on Hard Knox talk Live on Facebook!

The winners for the 2 Leisure center gift cards were Joy Friesen and Jackie Boyd and for the 2 Enchanted Forest passes were Chloe Ireland and Raichelle Bueckert! CONGRATULATIONS!!!

We would also like to highlight the YouTube links below that offer great learning opportunities regarding Gaming and Gambling, Stigma around Mental health and Addictions and general information on substance use disorders and addiction.

1. GAP (Gambling Awareness Program) - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqzVzfMcH2e5_AxMpi8FDSQ
2. CCSA (Canadian Center on Substance Abuse and Addiction) - <https://www.youtube.com/user/CCSACCLAT/videos>
3. Project Voice and Break the Barrier - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVOgrVz10EEtFp6ameE265g>
4. Break the Barrier - <https://breakthebarrier.ca/>

There were a number of fantastic responses to the survey questions each week and as promised we would like to share some of those insights!

Week 1 question-Please list one NEW fact that you learned about the updated low risk guidelines:

- "Synthetic cannabis use has been linked to seizures, irregular heartbeat, panic attacks, agitation, hallucinations and even death."
- "There is a safe gambling amount determined by ones income"

Week 2 question (Celebrity focus)- Please describe in a few words how any of these celebrity experiences impacted you and why?

- "I am always impressed by people who remain vulnerable when they are struggling. That is strength."
- "Hearing the stories of celebrities made me feel sympathy for them but also made me realize that everyone goes through the same stuff whether you're famous or not. Addiction and mental health play a huge factor in everyone's lives"

Week 3 question (Local focus)- Which of these (local stories) experiences spoke to you and why?

- "The Newley clinic in Hard Knox Talks - fascinating stuff. I knew about ketamine treatments from the work done at RUH with our ECT program but the whole clinic idea is quite interesting. Well spoken ER doc."

- “Therapy Dogs & Recovery from Addictions by Colleen Dell because whether it's a dog or horse or some other pet, the pet provides you with unconditional love, especially to those who suffer in silence. Therapy pets can re-fill you soul when hurting or in a crisis. They help you re-think your life/situation and appreciate those moments of bonding and unconditional love...it is possible.”
- “Allan Keller’s because it is important to connect with people to help us with addiction and mental health. Silence feeds the disease.”

Week 4 question- Name something (or more than one!) that is your 'go to' for healthy coping?

- Exercise
- Sleep
- Swimming
- Reading
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Time with pets
- Family time

We also appreciate your suggestions for future topics/presentations and will continue to work on those for next year’s events! One of the suggestions was further information on MHAS Youth outreach work. Please see the brief description below along with the attached service pamphlets.

Youth Outreach Case Managers provide a multidimensional approach to the service they provide to youth in need in community. The basis of the work is around case management, outreach work and providing support and executing secure detox warrants. The program focuses on building hope, trust, respect and acceptance amongst youth, families, and communities. Building bridges between people and services has been the goal of the program and in turn it has created individual empowerment and healthier life choices.

The demographic for youth that access Outreach support services are those that struggle with addiction and mental health concerns and display high risk behaviors and whom have not responded to traditional services and may respond to alternative methods that require intense case management and/or outreach support for stabilization.

A big thanks to the MHAS Fun Run for providing us with funding for the gift card draws each week! What a way to brighten up the month!

Thank you for taking time to share and spread awareness around Addiction, Substance Use Disorders and Recovery! We hope to be able to SEE you all next November!

Sincerely,

The Saskatchewan Addiction Awareness Month Committee, MHAS, SHA Saskatoon area