OhioRISE in Monroe County for Ohio Overdose Awareness Day

WOODSFIELD – OhioRISE strengthened its presence in Monroe County when care coordinator Jason Headley joined Ohio Overdose Awareness Day Aug. 31. Locally organized by the Monroe County Health Department and held in the parking lot of the Riesbeck Food Market, passersby spoke with Headley and other agencies about avenues of help.

Jefferson County Educational Service Center (JCESC) OhioRISE (Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence) is a Medicaid managed care program for children and youth with complex behavioral health and multisystem needs in Monroe, Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Jefferson, Stark, and Tuscarawas Counties and operated by the Jefferson County Educational Service Center. OhioRISE was formed to coordinate resources and put families in touch with what is available.

Headley raised awareness of the services OhioRISE offers, and that the program is active in Monroe County.

"That's the main thing, just getting the word out, getting the name out, meeting people, working with the other agencies here," he said. "It's just a great event to get everybody together and get some knowledge into the community."

OhioRISE care coordinators bring in-depth skill in locating services. Headley said resources are comparatively limited in Monroe County and OhioRISE is adept at pooling resources efficiently and will reach out to other counties and agencies.

"Monroe County's a very small county," he said. "We all need to be in it for the same goal, and that's helping people in need. We focus on the children and the families."

Headley said substance abuse is impacting younger people, and one person's overdose will affect the whole family.

"That's the overall key, just knowing that there are people to help, and reaching out for that help." Headley himself has roots in the area and is familiar with the challenges many face. He works with the fire and emergency services and as a part-time dispatcher with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office. He said many needs in Monroe County are related to mental health, which is a contributor to other problems. Headley encourages people who might need help to take that step and find assistance.

"People need to realize that it's OK not to be OK, and there's absolutely no shame in reaching out for help. That's the biggest key, getting people to open up," he said. "There are agencies and contacts, there are people and places you can reach out to for that help, and it's all discreet."

OhioRISE has formed strong bonds by collaborating with the other agencies represented.

Health Department Administrator Linda Masters of the Monroe County Health Department said they often collaborate with OhioRISE on plans for families. OhioRISE is a contributor to the Family and Children First Council.

"We've heard OhioRISE speak of the different families and instances. How they can help and what we can refer for."

When organizing the event, Masters said OhioRISE was a natural choice to invite.

"OhioRISE has been in collaboration with the health department a lot through Family and Children First Council, and we've heard what they bring to the table and what families they can help. I think it's a really good program and we're happy to have them come out today and join us."

Other agencies represented included Southeast Healthcare. Courtney Bish is a team leader supervisor for case managers at the St. Clairsville office where the school-based therapist works with OhioRISE. She is also familiar with the Woodsfield office. She said OhioRISE's access to a wide range of resources is a benefit to service agencies.

"I've seen that happen. I know they work a lot with our case managers through Southeast," she said. "A lot of my case managers do work with them for the school-based kiddos, making sure they don't go into placement, that they're able to keep them out of residential."

Bish said OhioRISE makes invaluable contributions.

"We do a lot of team meetings obviously with OhioRISE," she said. "We're able to work with outside community areas and we're able to work on getting the best care."

Shelter coordinator Selena Campbell with the Tri-County Help Center of Belmont, Harrison and Monroe Counties said some of their clients have worked with OhioRISE.

"They've always had positive things to say when we've had clients that worked with both agencies. It's always been positive feedback, connecting those resources," she said. "A lot of individuals don't realize what resources are available until they need them."

Wendy Ware, prevention specialist with the Monroe County HOPE Alliance Coalition, said OhioRISE is an excellent partner in the mission to help prevent issues such as substance abuse and suicide. She agreed that too many families are unaware of resources and how to access them.

"I think they're doing a great job of coordinating those services that are needed for children and their families," she said. "That is very needed."

Among the attendants was Monroe County Health Commissioner Annie Worthington, who spoke with Headley. She has been identifying mental health resources in the county, for reference by emergency response personnel.

"We want to know all the resources that are available in Monroe County for our residents," she said. "We would love to connect our community members with those care coordinators."

Headley answered questions from other attendees. One woman mentioned young relatives who might need assistance. Headley told her anyone could make a referral.

Anyone interested in becoming a care coordinator, please apply at https://jcescvla.bamboohr.com/careers/23.

To learn more about OhioRISE, call 740-792-4011, email ohiorise.info@jcesc.org or visit OhioRISE online at https://www.jcesc.k12.oh.us/CareManagementEntity.aspx

Photo Cutline: OhioRISE care coordinator Jason Headley speaks to Gary Hoskinson from outside Woodsfield when OhioRISE participated in Ohio Overdose Awareness Day in Monroe County.