

COUNTY OF KANE

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Media Release

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I.R.I.S. Helps Keep Families from Falling Through the Cracks

The web-based Integrated Referral and Intake System (IRIS) is helping to build healthy communities in Kane County.

“IRIS is a web based communications tool to help organizations connect the families they serve to the right resources,” said Anna Czerniak, Children’s Mental Health Program Manager with the Kane County Health Department.

Launched in March of 2021, the online resource has helped more than 600 families find services they need in Kane County- usually in 24 hours or less. The online system makes seeking referrals much easier and follows HIPPA requirements. The program boasts a list of more than 100 organizations that provide a variety of health related services including aging care, behavioral health, developmental disabilities, early childhood education and maternal and child health.

“Because the system is technology-enabled, you can use it on your computer and you can use it on your phone,” said Czerniak. Another feature of IRIS is a closed referral loop, which Czerniak said is one of her favorite features because of the communication it provides on client status. “When you make a referral, you’re notified when it’s been accepted, if it’s rejected for any reason, and then you’re notified when it’s been completed such as when the family has been enrolled in services.”

Because of the pandemic, many families needing behavioral health services have had to wait longer than normal to see a professional. However, IRIS is able to find providers with the shortest wait time and make a connection.

“This is another really cool feature of IRIS,” said Czerniak. “It shows you the estimated wait time for a particular program. If there’s several organizations that can meet a client’s need, you can look at the capacity bar to see what organization can get the client in the fastest.”

IRIS has the capability to generate reports to determine what resources in the community are being over utilized and underutilized. This information helps identify and close gaps in care.

Kane County Assistant Director of Public Health Michael Isaacson said he hopes additional organizations join so that an even greater number of families can be served into the future.

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