



Collaborating for the health of residents in
Aurora, Batavia, Big Rock, Blackberry, Kaneville,
Sugar Grove, and Virgil Townships

December 2023

INC Links

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Featured Agency

Fox Valley United Way



For over 100 years, Fox Valley United Way (FVUW) has been inspiring hope for a better tomorrow. FVUW is committed to ensuring that all families in the community have equitable access to opportunities and resources by investing in positive health, education, and financial outcomes. Through collaborative work with partner agencies and important programs like Kane 211, UNITED for ALICE, Volunteer Fox Valley, Holiday Assistance, and SPARK, everyone works together to support and uplift individuals in need.

INC-funded program, SPARK, stands for Strong, Prepared, And Ready

for Kindergarten and is FVUW's education initiative. Created in 2012, SPARK is an Early Childhood Collaboration specifically focused to help underserved families in Aurora with children age birth to five. SPARK focuses on creating awareness of the importance of early childhood education and mental health from birth, helping children prepare for kindergarten, and providing a pathway for success in school and in life.

Direct services are provided such as playgroups, developmental screenings, social and emotional screenings, resources, and referrals. SPARK builds awareness of the importance of early childhood education and unifies efforts among families, funders, policymakers, program providers, and community stakeholders.

For information, visit www.foxvalleyunitedway.org or www.sparkaurora.org.

What's Happening With

Staff will attend the Association of Community Mental Health Authorities (ACMHA) membership meeting on December 7 & 8, providing an opportunity to collaborate with fellow colleagues in the industry.

Justine Rivard joined INC Board of Directors in November. She has an advanced degree in Cognitive Psychology and is passionate about mental health in her community. Justine will be a welcome addition to our board. Joanne Tosch has stepped down as INC Board Member and will continue her role with the Big Rock 708 board. We thank Joanne for her dedication to the INC Board of Directors.

INC welcomes Natalie O'Brien to the Virgil 708 board. We are grateful for her commitment to this board.

INC hired an Outcome Evaluator as a service to our funded agencies who want to improve their Outcome Reporting process. The

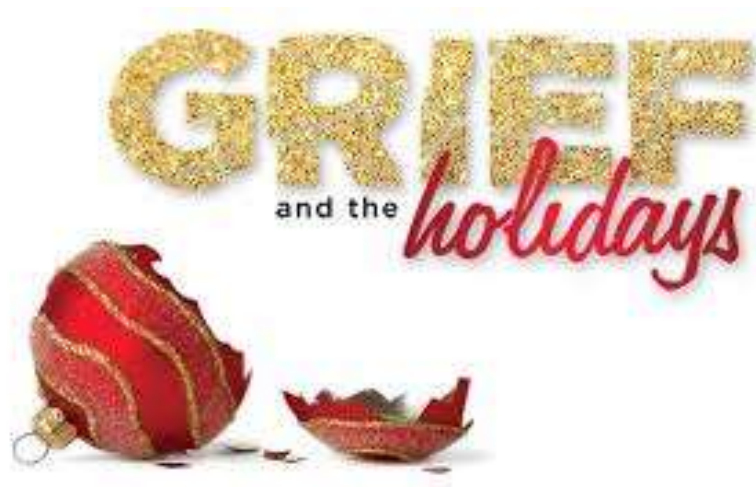
Evaluator's role is to review the reporting process and frequency of reporting with the agencies and INC staff and create a report that provides measurable data so that our board of directors, and other potential funders, can understand and appreciate the impact of our funded agencies' programs.

Remembering John McKee



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of John McKee on October 28th. John graduated from West Aurora High School in 1954 and from Beloit College in 1958 with a bachelor's in economics. He served on several boards including INC MHA (1990 – 1995), The Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley, the YMCA, and Aurora University. He received special awards in 1992 for Cosmopolitan Club Distinguished Service Award and in 2005 was the recipient of the Kiwanis Service to God and Fellow Man Award. Our deepest sympathy goes out to John's family.

Managing the Holidays after Loss



The holiday season is a difficult time for many, especially the bereaved. Expectations, traditions, and gatherings can all put a spotlight on our loss. Not to mention the holidays seem to mark the passage of time, making it feel as though our loved one is even further out of reach. Many will say that the type of loss and how long will dictate how one may feel at this time of year, but everyone's journey is different, and everyone grieves in their own way. Keeping this in mind, do what feels right for you during the holidays, and remember that there is no one

way to grieve. For information on grief support, visit

<https://conleyoutreach.org/> or <https://www.fvhh.net/>.



Did you know that October 31st marked the 60th Anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's signing of the Community Mental Health Act? This landmark bill transformed mental health policy by promoting community-based services over institutionalization. The Community Mental Health Act led to the closure of many state-run mental hospitals, as patients were transferred to community-based care. The Act also helped to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness by providing a more compassionate approach to care. Illinois

responded by passing House Bill 708, the Community Mental Health Act in 1969, which enabled the creation of mental health boards to carry out the provisions under the CMHA for the purposes of planning and funding mental health, developmental disability, and substance use services (*ACMHAI* News Release).

**INC Wishes You and Your Loved
Ones a
Happy Holiday and New Year!**



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