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**Sioux City Noon Lions Partners with Heartland Counseling Services’ School Based Mental Health Program**

Heartland Counseling Services, a nonprofit organization committed to providing quality mental health and substance abuse services and education to the Siouxland community, is pleased to announce a grant award from the Sioux City Noon Lions. Grant funds from the Lions were awarded in support of Heartland’s School Based Mental Health Program that provides therapeutic intervention to children, regardless of their ability to pay, in the safe and familiar school setting.

“Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in our youth and we have seen a rise in anxiety and depression issues in our youth due to COVID,” explained Heartland Counseling Services’ Executive Director Jennifer Jackson. “Placing licensed mental health therapists in the schools removes the barrier of access to services and allows us to help kids that are struggling with their mental health or substance use.”

The Sioux City Noon Lions recognizes the emotional and behavioral challenges affecting academic performance and overall health of kids and by supporting this program, they are helping to provide a better chance for them to develop skills, learn and succeed in school. The $1,500 grant will help eliminate the financial barrier so that no family will have to bear the out-of-pocket costs, including co-pays and deductibles.

Heartland began working closely with various school districts in 2014. The formal School Based Program was piloted in the South Sioux City school district’s 6 elementary schools, middle school and high school in 2018-2019. It soon expanded to the schools in Emerson-Hubbard, O’Neill, Bancroft-Rosalie, Oakland-Craig, Lyons-Decatur and Wakefield. In addition to expending to other communities, Heartland is also hiring for another School Based Mental Health Therapist for the South Sioux City area.

For more information on Heartland Counseling Services, how you can access assistance, or how you can donate to help others in their journey to positive mental health, visit [www.heartlandcounselingservices.com](http://www.heartlandcounselingservices.com) or call the main office at 402-494-3337. Heartland’s dedicated staff is available to take calls and set-up appointments Monday-Thursday 8am-8pm and Fridays 8am-noon. Heartland’s Crisis Response Team is available 24/7 at 402-494-7655 for the Siouxland area and at 402-336-9928 for western Nebraska counties.

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