Behavioral Health Unit works to connect individuals to services

The Portland Police Bureau’s Behavioral Health unit focuses on aiding people in behavioral crisis resulting from known or suspected mental illness and or drug and alcohol addiction.

Response Teams (BHRT), which pairs an officer with a mental health clinician in partnership. These teams are given referrals of cases to follow-up and try to connect people with appropriate community-based mental health systems.

In 2020, the Behavioral Health Unit received 944 referrals of individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Of those, 417 (44%) were assigned to BHRT members.

BHU is successful in helping people who have had criminal justice system encounters. Analysis shows that individuals who have had criminal justice system encounters. Analysis shows that individuals who have

They oversee the Bureau’s Enhanced Crisis Intervention Training (ECIT) and provide assistance with the basic Crisis Intervention Training.

The Unit is also responsible for the Behavioral Health of them were assigned to BHRT members.

The Behavioral Health Response Teams pairs an officer with a mental health clinician to offer follow ups and try and connect people with help.

If you suspect child abuse, please call the hotline at 855-503-7233.

After recovering a stolen vehicle, officers found Milo in the passenger seat. Milo was very friendly and eventually driven to a friend’s house for safe keeping.

The pandemic has played a significant role in the discovery of child abuse cases. Since children were not in school, day care centers, after school programs, etc., mandatory reporters were not able to physically meet with children and report suspected child abuse.

In 2020, Child Abuse Team (CAT) Sergeants reviewed 7,440 of cases reported to the child abuse hotline. This is a 40% reduction compared to last year.

The Portland Police Bureau’s Child Abuse Team (CAT) is one member of a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) that includes the District Attorney’s Office, Department of Human Services, Cares Northwest and others.

Its goal is to:
- Lessen negative impacts of services to the child victim.
- Minimize the number of victim interviews.
- Prevent the abuse of other potential victims.
- Increase the effectiveness of prosecution of both criminal and dependency cases.
- Provide information to the involved agencies in a coordinated and efficient manner.

See BHU next page
This year already 23 people have died on Portland’s streets. Last year, Portland saw its deadliest year in three decades, with 58 people dying in fatal crashes. Distracted driving, whether it is texting, eating, reading or reaching for something in the car – anything that takes the driver’s eyes off the road – has proven deadly. In 2019, distracted driving killed more than 3,100 people, a 10 percent increase from 2018. The primary reason says the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is using a mobile device while driving. April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Please help end this deadly epidemic on our roadways.

Drive responsibly
• April is national Distracted Driving Awareness Month. This is a good time to regroup and take responsibility for the choices we make when we’re on the road. Follow these safety tips for a safe ride every time:
  • Need to send a text? Pull over and park your car in a safe location. Only then is it safe to send or read a text.
  • Designate your passenger as your “designated texter.” Allow them access to your phone to respond to calls or messages.
  • Do not scroll through apps, including social media, while driving.

Cell phone use can be habit-forming. Struggling to not text and drive? Put the cell phone in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of the vehicle until you arrive at your destination.

What information would you like to see in this newsletter? Please let us know. Email: ppbpio@portlandoregon.gov
Get future issues in your email by signing up at portlandoregon.gov/police/NewsBeat

Distracted driving kills

Worked with, and cleared from, a BHRT caseload have fewer police contacts and arrests/custodies. We strive to connect people to appropriate community-based resources in order to reduce future contacts with police. The BHU continues to be a resource to other law enforcement agencies throughout the country. During 2020, the BHU fielded a number of informational inquiries and site visits, explaining BHU’s framework and the Police Bureau’s scaled crisis response model. The BHU also continues to receive guidance from both internal and external advisory committees, who provide recommendations on training, policy and procedures, and ideas on how to move the Unit forward.

The BHU’s Advisory Committee now convenes community engagement meetings on a quarterly basis that are open to the public. Dates and times are shared on the Bureau’s Twitter and Facebook pages as well as the website.

View BHU overview here: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/783200

Service Coordination Team
The Service Coordination Team works as part of the Behavioral Health Unit as well. It focuses on improving public safety by coordinating law enforcement, criminal justice, and resources for individuals who are chronically in and out of the criminal justice system.

The SCT Program offers housing, treatment, and robust services to address the underlying root causes of police contact and to help break the entrenched cycle of addiction and criminality. During 2020, the Service Coordination Team graduated 29 individuals from their addiction recovery program.

The Team was challenged with street outreaching and networking with new providers during the pandemic, but continues to connect people as best they can, given current restrictions.

A lot of factors contribute to police call time response. Our officers want to get to emergency calls as quickly as possible and we need your help. This video goes behind the scenes to explore this important topic: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKV0OLxCaMw