

Help with Parenting

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Once a week on Thursdays, Majekodunmi leads a parent group for 12 to 15 people on average who come together to share stories and get information.

The initiative also offers other kinds of support, including home buying seminars, financial literacy sessions, information on how to prepare for COVID-19, and guidance for ensuring that your household is well. Parents may also receive food baskets or help with back-to-school supplies.

The one-on-one and group support, however, is what's most central to the public outreach, Majekodunmi said, because it lets families know they are not

alone, that other folks have gone through the journey.

"It's more or less about making sure that parents have the mental and emotional support they need," she said.

The CHI team also provides support for parents as they interact with the juvenile justice and adult criminal legal system and works to ensure they receive comprehensive, well-rounded information.

Making and keeping connections — and, for parents, using their voice to advocate for the support they need — are all essential in navigating a life touched by violence, Majekodunmi says. There are success stories: Youth complete programs and go to college, while others come back

and become mentors themselves.

"Our program works hard to show that there's another path that your kid can take, but we have to work together to make it happen so younger kids don't have to deal with the loss of a big brother," said Majekodunmi.

"It's sort of like counseling. The topics are different each week, and that usually opens up the floodgates," said Tamika. "I thought it was just me and my son going through this. We have the platform to say that and also talk about whatever is on the agenda.

"There were times when I was so tired from work and arguing with my son, but I still logged on. And each and every time I logged on, I felt better."

Tamika works with CHI Family Care Manager Babak Zolfaghari-Azar, who has been able to connect particularly

well with her son.

"I need that kind of support and that's what they give," she said. "When I can't talk to my son because of the mental part, Babak will jump in and he can connect. And not just because he's a male, but he's knowledgeable enough to know how to speak to someone like my son."

CHI will remain an essential part of her weekly routine.

"They continue to do things to help build self-esteem," Tamika says. "I want to really stress that as many times as I wanted to forget them, they never forgot me."

For more resources on the Community Healing Initiative and other programs, visit portlandoic.org/resources.

Thank you to the Multnomah County Communications team for sharing this story.

Experienced Deputy Enters Sheriff's Race

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increase its efficiency.

"I would like to find redundancies in the system and try to streamline for efficiency purposes," he said. "We're throwing a lot of money at a lot of issues, but a lot of times they overlap, so I want to see if we can find commonality to ad-

dress issues in a more efficient manner."

Peterson is president of the local chapter of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, describing the "blue collar path into leadership," he has taken over the years.

He is nationally recognized as an expert in diversity train-

ing, which he has taught at county law enforcement academies for the last two years.

He has also held panels on police reform to help shape community involvement in policing and worked on supporting BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) law enforcement personnel as they faced challenges following last year's murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Peterson also serves on the boards of the Social Sciences Department at Portland Community College and the Collins Grace Foundation.

He's held a "multitude of positions" over the years, including as a sergeant and chief deputy before being promoted to lieutenant as commander of the Corrections Emergency Response Team and has also as commander of hostage negotiations.

Peterson was promoted to captain three years ago to oversee Multnomah County Department of Corrections including the county's two jails, the Multnomah County Detention Center, inside the Justice Center in Downtown Portland, and Inverness Jail in northeast Portland.

"I've gotten to the point in my career where I've gained enough skill sets and tools while also being able to successfully garner support from various community leaders," he said.

Peterson has won endorsements in his campaign from state Rep. Janelle Bynum of Happy Valley and southeast Portland and Herman Greene of north Portland who was recently elected to the Portland School Board.

His experience running the

county jails has given him a unique perspective to the needs of inmates and staff, and he proposed several changes, he said.

"We need to look at how we are integrating or addressing adults in custody, and preparing them to go out in the community through halfway houses," he said.

And because the prison population is mostly male, women's issues haven't received as much attention as they deserve, he said.

"A lot of time they have children and don't have contact with them anymore. It's similar to males', but it's more prevalent among females. We are trying to find ways to keep that family bond. It's always been male-oriented in the jail atmosphere, but there needs to be more focus on females in custody."

Peterson said he'd also like to see a vitamin regimen adopted to help keep inmates stay healthy.

"It's proven to keep down colds and flu and balancing that would be advantageous to the system itself," he said.

Multnomah County deputies and other jail staff need more attention to their needs from in terms of their physical welfare and mental health, he said.

"If they are not healthy and well, we are not getting the most out of production that we would if they were not being attended to," he said. "Especially in this day and age, there needs to be emphasis on our line staff."

While he's sensitive to the needs of deputies, Peterson said he also knows what it's like to be a member of the Black community improperly pulled over because of their race, which gives him perspective not only

in teaching future deputies at the training academy, but overseeing the entire department.

"I've had to deal with that kind of discrimination in the past, just like a lot of Black men growing up having to be fearful of driving and being in different areas," he said.

Homelessness is also a huge concern, Peterson said.

He supports giving more weight to Multnomah County's Homeless Outreach and Programs Engagement, or HOPE program.

The HOPE team goes out in the community to work with houseless people, referring them to service providers and staying engaged with them to build trust, he said, and is "community policing at its best."

The sheriff's department covers a huge area, Peterson said, from Multnomah County's eastern border with Hood River County to Columbia County on the west, including all unincorporated parts of the county and both the Columbia and Willamette rivers, where it heads up rescue operations.

Peterson said his family has been residents of Portland for more than 70 years "since Vanport" and his wife, Leslie has been a leading influence in his life.

"She's was very instrumental in taking care of our son Trey, who had a traumatic brain injury, and is still suffering some effects, but graduated this year from George Fox University with an economic degree," he said.

Peterson said he's looking forward to leading the sheriff's department through the police reforms that people are asking for.

"I want to be part of that. I want to establish community trust," he said.



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