
NATIONAL
RECOVERY
MONTH
SEPTEMBER 2026

Edgar County ROSC

Building a Stronger, Healthier Community Through Recovery

Recovery is possible!

BY EDGAR COUNTY ROSC COUNCIL

Recovery is more than overcoming substance use; it is about restoring hope, rebuilding lives, strengthening families, and creating a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. That is the mission of the Edgar County Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care (ROSC) Council.

The Edgar County ROSC Council is a community coalition made up of local organizations, healthcare providers, law enforcement, educators, faith leaders, individuals with lived experience, business-es, and community members working together to improve the health and well-being of Edgar County. Rather than focusing on one organization or one service, the ROSC Council brings partners together to identify gaps, remove barriers, and create lasting solutions that support prevention, treatment, recovery, and overall community wellness.

One of the things that makes the Edgar County ROSC Council unique is that every voice matters. Individuals and families with lived experience are valued partners in the planning process because they understand firsthand the challenges people face when seeking help. Their experiences help shape programs, resources, and services that are compassionate, effective, and centered on the needs of our community.

Throughout the year, the Edgar County ROSC Council coordinates a variety of initiatives designed to educate, connect, and support residents. These efforts include free laundry days, community Narcan trainings, harm reduction education, recovery celebrations, employment initiatives, educational workshops, community outreach events, and partnerships that increase access to resources throughout the Edgar County.

MAKING AN IMPACT IN EDGAR COUNTY

During fiscal year 2026 (July 2025-June 2026), the ROSC Council continued to make a measurable impact across Edgar County. More than 1,000 boxes of Narcan were distributed through community overdose prevention sites, helping expand access to naloxone (Narcan), a life-saving medication that reverses an opioid overdose.

The Free Laundry Day initiative provided 731 wash cycles and 783 dry cycles, serving 222 individuals through the generosity of community donors and volunteers.

The ROSC Council also hosted 15 community events, bringing together residents, organizations, and local leaders to reduce stigma, build connections, provide education, and promote recovery throughout Edgar County.

The Edgar County ROSC Council is also leading several priority projects aimed at creating long-term systems change. Current initiatives include developing a hospital-based warm hand-off program to better connect individuals experiencing substance use-related emergencies with recovery support and resources, expanding second-chance employment opportunities for individuals in recovery, and increasing access to harm reduction education and resources throughout Edgar County.



MEET OUR EDGAR COUNTY ROSC COUNCIL RECOVERY NAVIGATOR: JESSICA PARRILL

An important part of connecting our community with support is the work of Jessica Parrill, the Edgar County ROSC Recovery Navigator.

Jessica's role is centered around connecting individuals and families with resources, support, and opportunities that can help them move forward in their recovery journey. Her work includes providing community education on substance use and related issues, helping individuals navigate available community resources, distributing Narcan, connecting people with treatment and recovery services, and building relationships throughout Edgar County.

At the heart of the Recovery Navigator role is a simple but powerful approach: showing up, meeting people where they are, and reminding them that they do not have to walk through recovery alone.

Having someone available who understands how to navigate resources and can provide encouragement and support can make an important difference for someone who may not know where to turn or what their next step should be.

LIVED EXPERIENCE LEADING THE WAY

The Edgar County ROSC Council's People with Lived Experience (PLE) Subcommittee continues to grow, bringing together community members who use their experiences, ideas, and voices to help identify needs, reduce barriers, and develop practical ways to support others in Edgar County.

One of the subcommittee's current projects is the "Pack the Backpack for a Better Future", an initiative focused on collecting essential items for individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

Through community donations, the PLE Subcommittee is working to fill backpacks with everyday necessities that can provide comfort, dignity, and support to someone facing difficult circumstances.

This project is a great example of what can happen when people with lived experience and community partners come together with a shared purpose. As the PLE Subcommittee continues to grow, the ROSC Council hopes to create even more opportunities for people with lived experience to help guide local solutions, connect individuals with resources, and make a positive difference throughout Edgar County.



RECOVERY TAKES A COMMUNITY

Recovery is not something that happens alone. It takes families, neighbors, employers, healthcare providers, schools, churches, law enforcement, and community organizations working together to create an environment where people have the opportunity to succeed.

The Edgar County ROSC Council believes that when communities invest in recovery, everyone benefits through stronger families, healthier workplaces, safer neighborhoods, and a more connected community.

The Edgar County ROSC Council welcomes anyone who has a passion for making Edgar County a healthier place to live. Whether you represent an organization, own a business, have lived experience, support someone in recovery, or simply want to make a difference, there is a place for you at the table.

The Edgar County ROSC Council meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:15 p.m. in Horizon Health Conference Room A, with a virtual attendance option available.

In addition to monthly ROSC Council meetings, the Edgar County ROSC Council offers open office hours every Thursday from 1 to 3 p.m. at 504 East Jasper Street in Paris. Whether you want to learn more, get involved, share an idea, or find local resources, we invite you to stop by.

No appointment is necessary. We welcome the opportunity to connect with community members, answer questions, and help individuals and families find the support and information they need.

As September marks National Recovery Month, the Edgar County ROSC Council encourages everyone to join the movement. Learn more about recovery, support those on their recovery journey, challenge stigma when you see it, and participate in community events that celebrate hope, resilience, connection, and second chances.

Every conversation that reduces stigma matters. Every connection to a resource matters. Every person who chooses to support recovery matters.

Together, we can reduce stigma, strengthen recovery supports, and build a healthier Edgar County: one connection, one partnership, and one life at a time.

For more information, contact Nicki Hanks, Edgar County ROSC Council Coordinator, at 217-264-6465 or nickih@hourhouserecovery.org with questions about the Edgar County ROSC Council, upcoming events, the PLE Subcommittee, or how to get involved.



Celebrate Recovery

A Place for Hope, Healing, and New Beginnings

BY CELEBRATE RECOVERY

Everyone faces struggles in life. Whether it's addiction, anxiety, depression, grief, unhealthy relationships, anger, codependency, or other life challenges, no one should have to walk through them alone. Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered recovery program that offers hope, healing, and support for anyone seeking freedom from life's hurts, habits, and hang-ups.

Founded in 1991, Celebrate Recovery is based on Biblical principles and the Eight Recovery Principles found in the Beatitudes. The program combines faith, accountability, and peer support to help individuals find healing while building meaningful relationships with others who understand their journey.

One of the greatest misconceptions about Celebrate Recovery is that it is only for people struggling with substance use. In reality, Celebrate Recovery is for anyone who wants to experience personal growth and healing. Many participants come seeking support for grief, anxiety, trauma, family struggles, codependency, anger, unforgiveness, or other challenges that can affect everyday life.



A Celebrate Recovery meeting includes a time of worship, an encouraging lesson or personal testimony, and small group discussions where participants can share in a safe, confidential, and judgment-free environment. Everyone is welcomed with compassion and respect, regardless of where they are in their journey.

Celebrate Recovery emphasizes that healing is possible through faith, community, and honesty. Participants are encouraged to take recovery one step at a time while discovering that lasting change happens through connection, support, and a relationship with God.

Recovery is about more than overcoming addiction—it's about finding hope, restoring relationships, and becoming the person you were created to be. Celebrate Recovery reminds us that everyone has a story, everyone faces struggles, and everyone deserves the opportunity to heal.

If you or someone you know is looking for hope, encouragement, or a supportive community, Celebrate Recovery welcomes you. You don't have to have all the answers before you attend—just come as you are.



Celebrate recovery
Every Wednesday at 6 PM
Lake Ridge Christain church
122 E Steidl Road Paris, IL.61944

WHAT IS CELEBRATE RECOVERY:

CELEBRATE RECOVERY IS A CHRIST-CENTERED, BIBLE-BASED, TWELVE-STEP, EIGHT-PRINCIPLE PROGRAM OF RECOVERY THAT WAS DESIGNED TO HELP PEOPLE RECONNECT WITH GOD AND HEAL FROM PAST HURTS, HABITS OR HANG UPS

Lake Ridge Christian Church

COME AS YOU ARE!

Lake Ridge Christian Church

BEHIND EVERY RECOVERY IS A STORY OF COURAGE.



Pearman PHARMACY
116 West Court Street
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Steve Benefiel R.PH
Denise Allanson, R.PH
Jasmine Bennett, PharmD
Dustin Melton, R.PH.
Charlie Wieland, PharmD
Madelyn J. Brouwer, PharmD

PARIS CLINIC PHARMACY
217-465-4114
In The Horizon Health Paris Clinic
Paris, IL
Justine Bogue PharmD

National Recovery Month
September 2026

RU Recovery of Paris

'To God be the Glory'

BY RU RECOVERY OF PARIS

June 1, 2023, the first Thursday of the month, RU Recovery opened its doors at the First Baptist Church of Paris. This recovery ministry is a combined effort of First Baptist and Horace Baptist Church aimed at providing hope, help, and healing for people who are seeking to break bad habits and addictions. We are a faith and Bible based recovery program seeking to honor Jesus Christ and serve those who are seeking victory from the bondage of addiction.

The burden for this ministry began years earlier in the heart of Sue Sheeran, then director of Choices in Paris as she fought for the lives of unborn children and ministered to the women and men who conceived these children. These parents needed more than the Choices ministry provided. My wife and I had served the LORD and our Paris community alongside Sue for years. As she shared her burden for this sector of our community, God opened Debbie and my eyes to our community's true condition and overwhelming need. Her burden became our burden.

Pastors Tom Black and Trent Horner had the LORD work in a similar way in their ministries. They prayed for months for God's specific direction in providing help for those in our community seeking recovery from addictions. A man in recovery began attending their church a while earlier. This man found the hope and help that he needed in the LORD Jesus Christ and encouraged Pastors Tom and Trent to have a recovery ministry for the Paris community. Sue arranged a meeting with Pastors Tom and Trent, Debbie, me, and herself to seek the LORD's direction. We prayed and planned for weeks before the opening meeting. Many congregation members joined us for the early meetings. Pastor Tom leads the ministry. I serve as the director. Sue and TyAnn Whittemore led the ladies' ministry until recently. Jacqui Miller is beginning her ladies' leadership ministry programs. We have no idea where the LORD intends to take RU in our future, but we know that He is leading us, and we want Him to get all the glory for the work that He is doing.



Special to The Prairie Press

Some of those attending the RU recovery meeting on Aug. 20, 2026. Back row: Steve Remo, Michael Shanks, Todd Fancher and John Herbek; Middle row: Pastor Trent Horner, Terrie Andrews, Pastor Tom Black and CJ Rollings; Front row: Pastor Rick Cook, Reigen Kennedy, Megan Erwin and Jacqui Miller

One of our longest-attending members, almost the entire time RU has existed, John Herbek, has written out his testimony for you. Nothing can tell our story like someone who has gone from addiction to recovery. Here is John's testimony. Please pray for God to use RU recovery as He sees fit.

'From Overdose to Recovery'

by John Herbek

Three years and 43 days ago, my life changed forever.

I experienced an overdose, and in that moment, I believe God gave me another chance at life. God worked through the EMTs who came to my aid and helped save my life. I am incredibly grateful for them, and I am even more grateful to God for giving me the opportunity to live a different life.

After my overdose, God began opening the doors for me- doors I never thought would open. My recovery journey began, and I started making changes one day at a time. My faith became an important part of that journey. I started going to church, and I began attending recovery meetings. I surrounded myself with people who understood what I was going through and who encouraged me to keep moving forward.

Recovery hasn't always been easy. There have been challenges, but I've learned that I don't have to walk through them alone. God has been with me every step of the way. He has given me strength when I didn't think I had any left, and he has placed people in my life who have helped continue my journey.

Today I am proud and grateful to say that I have been sober for three years and 43 days.

That number represents more than just time. It represents another chance at life. It represents the days I chose recovery; the meetings I attended, the prayers I prayed, the people who stood beside me, and the grace God has shown me.

And now I am beginning to give back to the recovery community.

For so long, I needed people to help me. Today, I want to be someone who can help others. If sharing my story can give one person hope, encourage someone to walk into their first meeting, or remind someone that their life is worth fighting for, then everything I've been through has a purpose.

I don't take my recovery or my life for granted. I know where I came from, and I know that I didn't get here by myself.

God gave me another chance. The EMTs helped save my life. The recovery community helped me learn how to live it. And today, I am grateful to be sober, grateful to be alive, grateful for my faith, and grateful for the opportunity to give back.

My story is still being written, and I believe God is not finished with me yet.

Three years and 43 days sober- and by the grace of God, one day at a time, I keep moving forward.

Thank you for reading my story. Please share it with someone that it might help.

by Jacqui Miller

My name is Jacqui Miller.

I love RU! It's a warm, welcoming meeting that gives people fellowship and a chance to get to know God and build a relationship with Him. RU helps people feel like they are worthy of God's love.

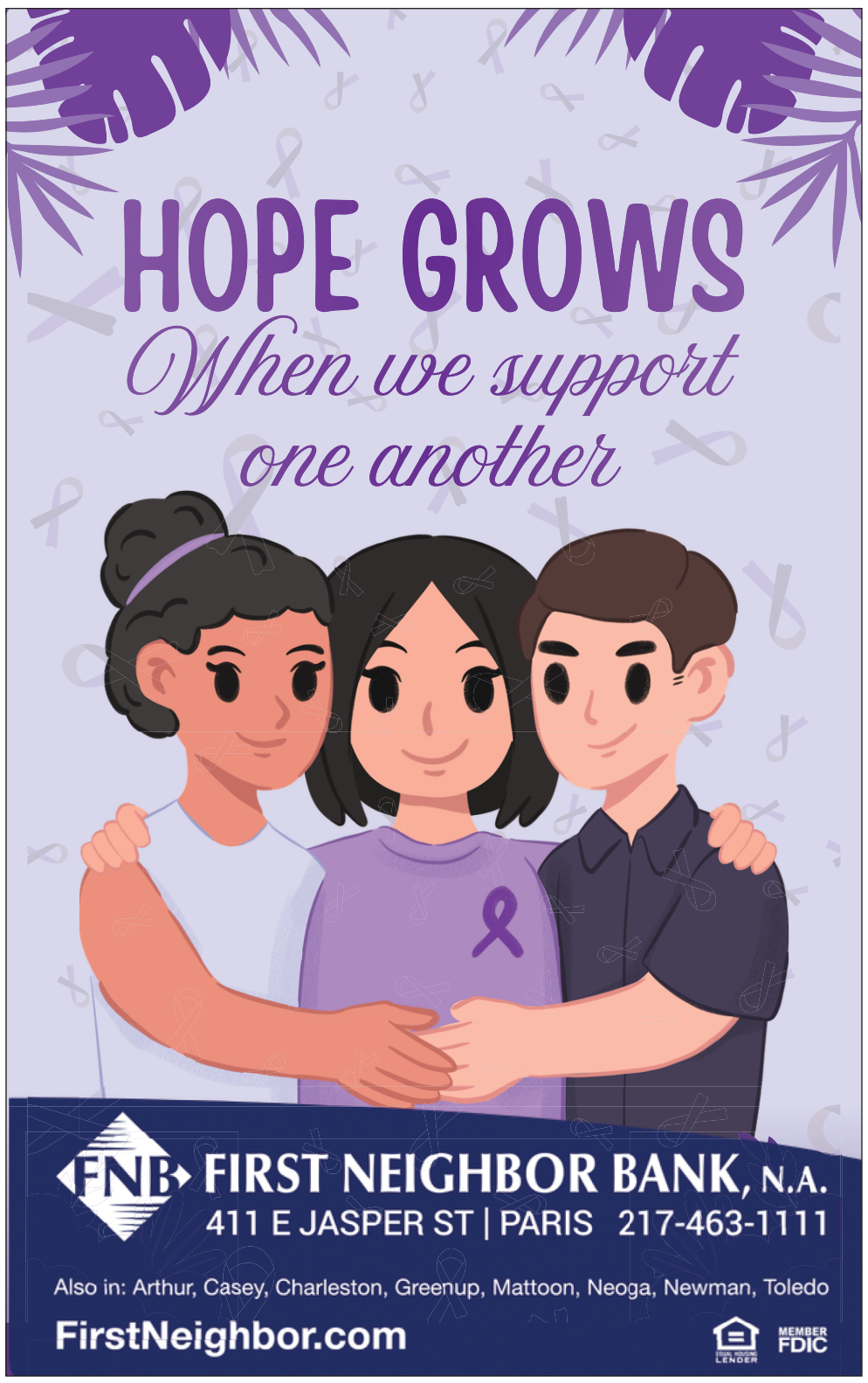
Addiction lies to you; in RU, you start understanding that God loves you and all of your flaws. RU shows you that if you live for God, it makes it hard to sin. We are all sinners; nobody is perfect, but your walk with Jesus really helps you so that you don't want to sin.

Everyone at RU is very compassionate about helping you on your journey and showing love when you don't love yourself. RU is a place where you can find friendships that last a lifetime, plus pull you closer to Jesus.

I am very grateful for all RU has done for me.

We split into men and women so that women can talk with women and men with men, which is very good for healing and finding friends in recovery. We all need good friends when struggling; we can't do it alone, and it just makes it so much easier.

I hope you give RU a chance.



Finding help for addiction

SPECIAL TO THE PRAIRIE PRESS
info@prairiepress.net



Anyone thinking about seeking help for addiction should know that they are not alone. The 2022 United States National Survey on Drug Use and Health indicates 46.8 million Americans age 12 and older battled a substance use disorder in the previous 12 months. In addition, 10.5 percent of Americans 12 and older had an alcohol use disorder in the past year.

Substance abuse is not only expensive, but also dangerous. Addiction can cause health problems and damage relationships. Use of illicit substances and alcohol also can cause death. Taking the first step to enter treatment is seldom easy, but it can prove beneficial in the long run. Here's how to start the journey to recovery.

• Be honest with yourself. The first step to recovering from a substance use disorder is to recognize you have a problem. You are not alone in this battle, and it can take great courage to admit your missteps. Be proud of yourself for wanting to get help, even if you haven't quit just yet.

• Reach out to friends and family. WebMD says a close family member or friend can be one of your biggest supporters as you take steps to recover. Although you cannot be entirely sure how they will react to the news, family and close friends may already suspect a substance abuse problem.

• Be receptive to an intervention. Sometimes it takes the collective efforts of friends and family to help addicts realize they have people in their corner willing to help them recover. Sometimes interventions are surprises, other times they are not. Listen to what others have to say and how they may be willing to help you change patterns that lead to continued substance abuse.

• Work with an addiction professional. The Mayo Clinic says an addiction professional is usually a licensed alcohol and drug counselor, social worker, psychologist, or psychiatrist. Medical experts have realized that addiction is an illness and not just a matter of bolstering one's willpower. Therefore, enlisting a professional to suggest the best approaches to treatment and follow-up can lay a foundation for a successful recovery.

• Speak with a doctor. It may be intimidating to admit you need help, and if you don't feel comfortable speaking with family, you can consult your doctor. A doctor is required to keep anything you say to him or her confidential. A doctor may refer you to substance abuse professionals or prescribe medications that could make it easier to stop using a substance and ease withdrawal symptoms. If drugs or alcohol are being used to self-medicate, a doctor also may suggest safer alternatives that can treat issues that alcohol or drugs may be masking.

Addiction can seem like an impossible hole to climb out of. However, with help, people can get on the road to recovery.

Understanding alcohol use disorder, the signs

SPECIAL TO THE PRAIRIE PRESS
info@prairiepress.net

As long as alcohol has been available for consumption, there has been the potential for abuse. Alcohol is widely consumed around the world. The rehabilitation and counseling company AbbeyCare Group notes that the yearly average alcohol use globally is 6.4 liters of alcohol for every individual over the age of 15. That level of consumption equates to 53 bottles of wine consumed for every individual older than 15 each year, or about one liter of wine per week per person. A liter is equivalent to almost 41/4 cups or 38 fluid ounces.

Alcohol abuse is known by many names, including alcohol addiction, alcoholism and Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD), which is the term that medical professionals use today. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism says AUD is "a condition characterized by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use despite adverse social, occupational or health consequences." A 2022 National Study on Drug Use and Health found 28.8 million adults ages 18 and older in the United States had AUD in 2021. Statistics Canada says in 2021, almost 5.1 million people age 12 and older engaged in heavy drinking, defined as five or more drinks for men and four or more for women, on one occasion, at least once in the last year.

Although some people are very good at masking AUD, certain symptoms may be present if one is abusing alcohol. These include:

· Secretive or dishonest behavior in relation to alcohol.

· Drinking heavily alone.

· Spending increased time feeling ill or hungover.

· Drinking more or longer than one plans to.

· Having problems with work, school or family because of alcohol.

· Wanting alcohol so badly that this person cannot think of anything else.

· Spending a great deal of time in activities necessary to obtain alcohol or use alcohol.

· Using alcohol in situations in which it is physically hazardous to do so, such as while driving.

· Noticing that one has a significantly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of alcohol.

· Going through withdrawal symptoms when alcohol consumption ceases.

· Lack of concern over personal appearance or hygiene.

· Weight loss or weight gain from changes in appetite.

· Turning to alcohol to alleviate feelings of depression or anxiety.

Genetics, family history and drinking at an early age can play a significant role in relation to AUD. Medications, behavioral treatments, and support groups are the main avenues that those who have AUD can use to recover from this condition. Those in the U.S. looking for more help with AUD can visit the NIAAA Alcohol Treatment Navigator at https://alcoholtreatment.niaaa.nih.gov. People in Canada can visit www.ccsa.ca/addictions-treatment-helplines-canada for addiction treatment helplines.



PROSPECT BANK
The Opportunity Bank
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National RECOVERY MONTH

'For a Long Time'

by Jessica Parrill

For a long time, I believed my story was something I needed to be ashamed of. I carried so much pain, guilt, and shame that I didn't know how to separate who I was from the things I had been through. I learned very young how to survive, but I never learned how to truly live. I spent years searching for love, acceptance, and something that would make me feel like I was enough. Instead, I found myself trying to numb the pain I couldn't put into words.

That pain eventually led me into addiction. I started using meth when I was only 11 years old, and what started so young turned into nearly 25 years of addiction. My addiction eventually took me into IV drug use and places I never imagined I would go. I lost so much along the way. I lost time, relationships, trust, opportunities, and pieces of myself. Most painfully, I lost moments with my children that I can never get back. I made choices that hurt people I loved, and there were times I looked in the mirror and didn't recognize the person staring back at me.

Motherhood was one of the places where I carried the most guilt. I wanted so badly to be the mother my children deserved, but addiction kept pulling me further away from the person I wanted to be. I remember feeling like I had failed them and wondering if I had done too much damage to ever make things right. In 2018, after having my twins, I reached one of the darkest points of my life. I was so overwhelmed by everything I was carrying that I attempted to take my own life. I didn't know how to keep going, and I couldn't see a future worth fighting for.

But God saw something in me that I couldn't see in myself.

Even when I didn't want to live, God wasn't finished writing my story.

On Nov. 11, 2022, I got clean. That day didn't magically fix everything. Getting sober meant I finally had to face the pain I had spent my entire life running from. I had to learn how to feel without using drugs to numb myself. I had to learn how to sit with guilt without allowing it to destroy me. I had to learn that making mistakes didn't mean I was a mistake, and that my past didn't have to determine my future.

Recovery has taught me that healing isn't about pretending the past never happened. It's about refusing to let the past control what happens next. I've had to forgive myself for things I wish I could change. I've had to accept that some moments can't be redone, but I can make different choices today. I can show up today. I can love my children today. I can be present today. I can become the woman I always wanted to be.

Today, I get to do things I once thought were impossible. I get to be a mother who is present. I get to rebuild relationships. I get to make memories instead of missing them. I get to wake up sober and make choices with a clear mind. I get to experience life instead of simply surviving it.

And God didn't just bring me out of addiction—He gave my pain a purpose.

Today, I work as a Recovery Navigator, and I get to sit beside people who are standing in places I know all too well. I get to look at someone who feels hopeless and tell them that I understand. I can tell them that recovery is possible because I'm living proof. I can remind them that they are more than their addiction, more than their mistakes, and more than the worst thing they've ever done.

I still have hard days. I still have things I'm healing from. I still have moments when the weight of my past feels heavy. But today, I have something I didn't have before—I have hope. I have faith. I have a purpose. And I know I don't have to walk through the hard days alone.

For years, I thought my pain was going to be the thing that destroyed me. Now I realize it can be the very thing God uses to help someone else.

I am not my addiction. I am not my mistakes. I am not the years I lost. I am not the woman I was when I was trying desperately to survive.

I am a mother. I am a woman in recovery. I am a survivor. I am a woman who was given another chance. Most importantly, I am a child of God.

I spent nearly my whole life trying to escape my pain. Today, I choose to face it, heal from it, and use it for something greater.

My story isn't about how broken I was.

It's about how God met me in my brokenness and showed me that I could be rebuilt.

I once prayed just to survive another day. Today, I'm grateful for the opportunity to live those days with purpose.

And if there is one thing I want someone to take from my story, it's this: you are not too far gone. Your story is not over. There is still hope.

Because if God could bring me from where I was to where I am today, I know He can do the same for someone else.

My past may always be part of my story, but it no longer gets to write the ending.

Narcotics Anonymous

A nonprofit, global support group for people recovering from drug addiction



BY NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

The meeting we started is an open meeting, meaning it's open to anyone and everyone, whether they are clean or in recovery or not.

The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using. The program is entirely free with no dues, fees, or paid subscriptions.

When we first had a vision of starting a meeting to help our community, our main focus was not only to help people struggling with drug addiction, but also to help people maintain sobriety, which, from my personal experience, are the two hardest steps.

1. Getting clean
2. Maintaining my sobriety

Having a support group along the way has helped me in so many different ways; I didn't/don't have to do it alone, and neither do you.

Before every meeting, we offer a hot cooked meal. We meet every Friday evening at the First Baptist Church, 201 S. Central Ave, Paris Ill. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., and the meeting is from 6 to 7 p.m.; again, everyone is welcome!

Al-Anon Family Group

Mondays | 6:00-7:00 PM

New Beginnings Church | Paris, Illinois

BY AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP

Al-Anon Family Groups are an international fellowship for family members and friends of people affected by alcoholism or addiction. Founded in 1951, Al-Anon provides a welcoming place where individuals can share their experience, strength, and hope while learning how to care for themselves and cope with the effects addiction can have on the entire family.

Al-Anon is a 12-Step program adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Members learn that while they cannot control another person's drinking or substance use, they can focus on their own well-being, attitudes, choices, and personal growth.

Meetings are based on fellowship, shared responsibility, mutual understanding, and anonymity. Members do not give one another advice or tell others what they should do. Instead, they share their own experiences and what has helped them.

You are not required to have a loved one who is currently sober to attend. Al-Anon offers help, understanding, and hope to families and friends whether their loved one is still struggling with addiction or is in recovery.

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of the Al-Anon program.



HRC Substance Use Services

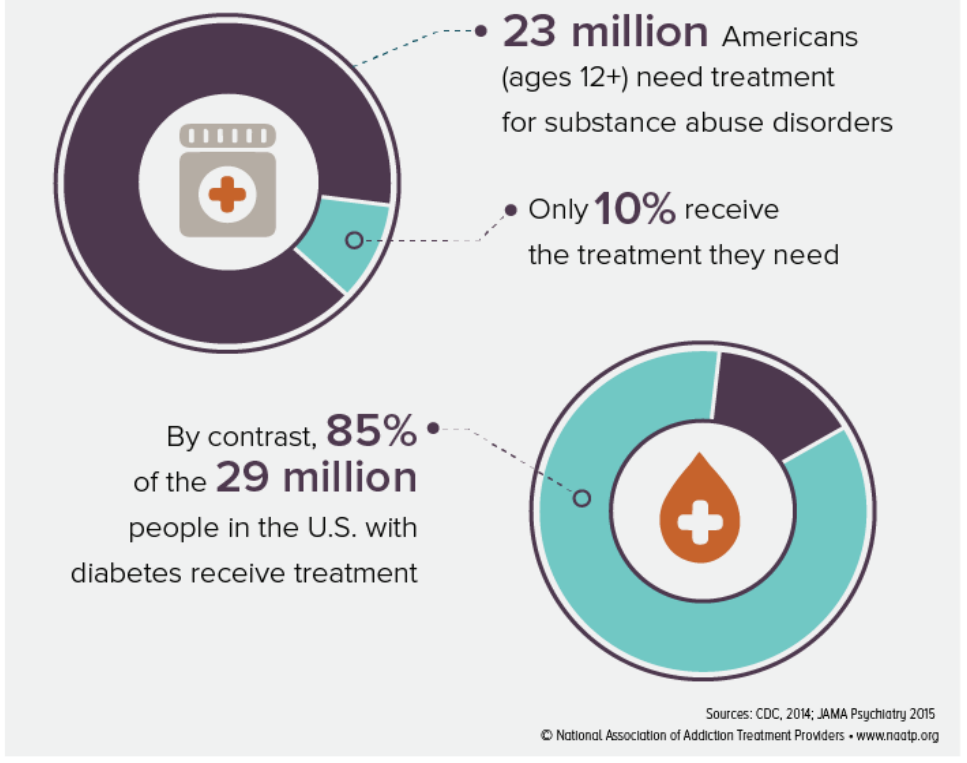
BY HRC

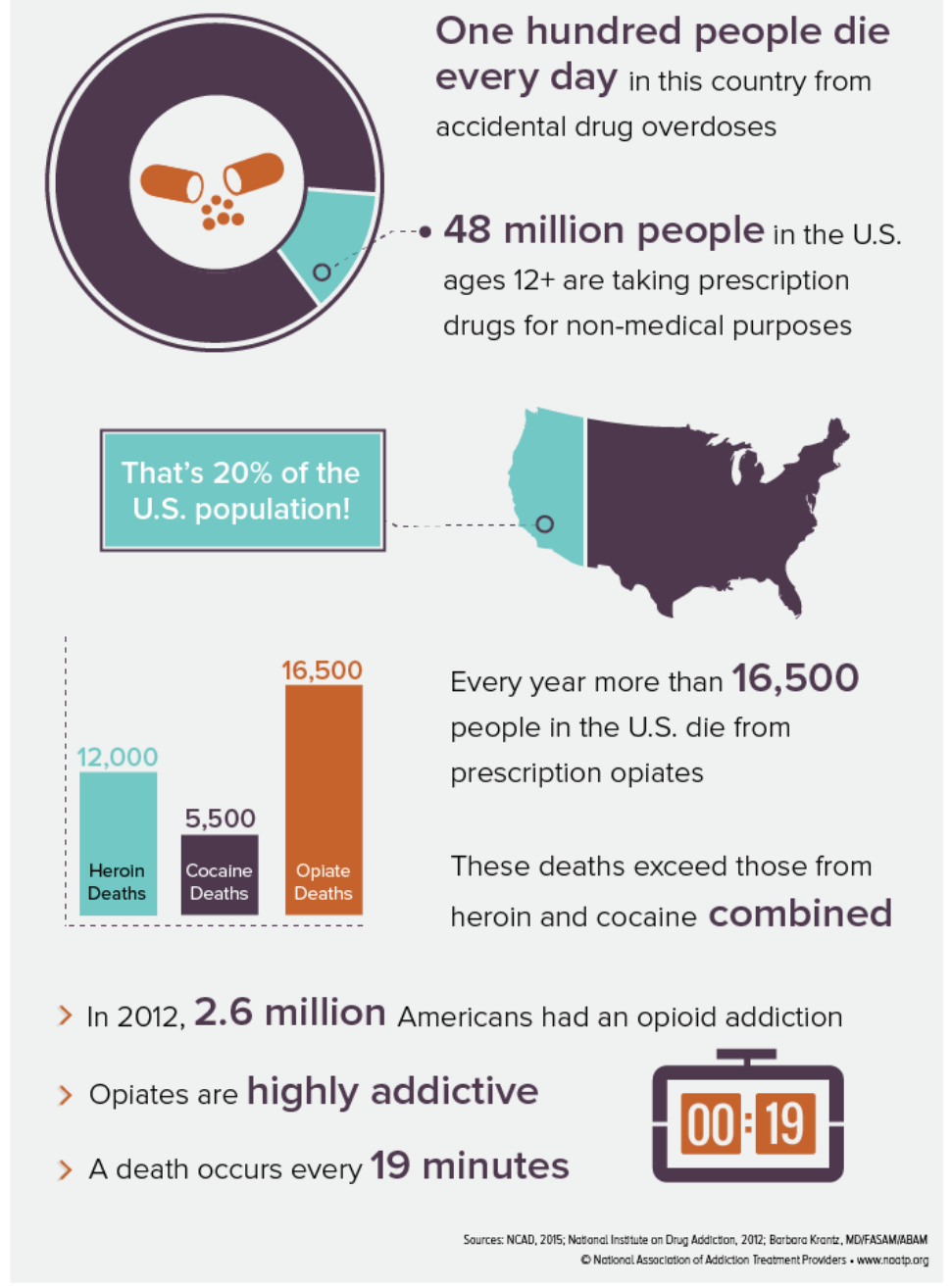
HRC's Substance Use Disorder services support over 200 individuals annually on their journey to recovery from addiction. We provide evidence-based outpatient treatment including individual and group therapy, DUI evaluations and risk education, drug screening, recovery support services, and care coordination—all delivered with compassion and without judgment. Our certified recovery support specialists, many in their own successful recovery, serve as mentors and advocates, extending support beyond clinical settings into everyday life.

We offer prevention education to all 6th and 7th grade students in Edgar and Clark Counties. Our prevention team also partners with schools on vaping and alcohol awareness campaigns and coordinates the Illinois Youth Survey to guide community prevention efforts.

Whether you're court-ordered, referred by a provider, or seeking help on your own, HRC provides confidential, comprehensive care that addresses not just addiction, but the whole person—including mental health, employment, housing, and family relationships.











YOUR STORY ISN'T OVER.

Recovery is possible.
Hope is real.
And every new beginning matters.

The Prairie Press