



FSSRI Far Southside ROSC Initiative

PLANNING FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY

10/27/25

Far Southside ROSC Community Meeting Agenda

Welcome, Introductions, and Community Sharing

Frederick Buford, RC, CPRS

Opening remarks and introductions to begin the meeting.

Frederick invited attendees to share information about their organizations, programs, and services to encourage collaboration and strengthen community connections.

ROSC Overview, Updates, and Community Progress

Robert Bufford, RC, CPRS, NCRS

An overview of the *Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC)* framework, including current accomplishments, ongoing challenges, and recent community developments.

Robert also shared updates on substance use trends, recovery initiatives, and collaborative efforts supporting individuals and families in recovery and returning citizens.

Guest Speaker Presentation

Ms. Shells, ED, BSM, RCP, CAMS I

Topic: *Problem Gambling Awareness and Harm Reduction*

A presentation exploring the impact of problem gambling, its connection to mental health and substance use, and harm reduction strategies that promote recovery and community wellness.

Guest Speaker

Ms. Tiffany Web – Healthcare Alternative Systems (HAS)

Resources and Closing Remarks

Ms. Shells, ED, BSM, RCP, CAMS I

Review of key resources, community supports and closing reflections.

Networking and Community Connection

Please leave your business card to stay connected and collaborate beyond today's meeting.

Date: 10/27/2025

Location: TEECH Foundation

1750 West 103rd Street Chicago IL 60643

In person/virtual

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83594646165?pwd=mSe9cJy0S4E90KmbD3LEy8CMpujMit.1>

Meeting ID: 835 9464 6165

Passcode: 235477

Far Southside ROSC Initiative (FSSRI) October Monthly Meeting Minutes
Community topic: Problem Gambling Awareness & Harm Reduction

Frederick Buford RC, CPRS – The meeting commenced with a warm welcome extended to all visitors, partners, and participants joining both in person and via Zoom. Mr. Frederick Buford, RC, CPRS - ROSC Coordinator, opened the session by expressing sincere appreciation for the presence and participation of all attendees. He emphasized the value of everyone's engagement, noting that their continued involvement and shared insights are essential to the success of the ongoing community recovery initiatives.

Mr. Buford invited participants to provide their contact information in the chat box, along with any questions, community concerns, or available resources they wished to share. He emphasized that transparent communication and collaboration across community sectors are vital for identifying needs, connecting individuals with the right services, and sustaining a recovery-focused environment that supports both individuals and families.

During his remarks, Mr. Buford highlighted the importance of coordinated partnership and mutual accountability in addressing the many challenges faced by those affected by substance use disorders. He underscored that through collective effort, stakeholders can strengthen recovery systems, promote wellness, and ensure that individuals returning to their communities have access to the care and support they need to thrive.

Mr. Buford stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review and discuss the key initiatives currently underway to advance recovery efforts, reduce recidivism, and enhance the overall quality of life for individuals and families throughout the community. He encouraged all attendees to remain actively engaged, to contribute their perspectives, and to work collaboratively in the development of solutions that reflect compassion, evidence-based practices, and cultural responsiveness.

In closing, Mr. Buford expressed heartfelt gratitude to everyone for their ongoing dedication to fostering positive change and strengthening the fabric of the community. He acknowledged the tremendous progress achieved through shared commitment and reaffirmed the Council's focus on sustaining momentum through continued partnership and open dialogue.

Robert Bufford RC, CPRS, NCRS – The meeting was led by Robert Bufford, RC, CPRS, NCRS, Lead ROSC Coordinator, who provided a comprehensive community update and collaboration report. Mr. Bufford began by defining the Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC) and explaining its significance within the Far Southside community. A ROSC is a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that are person-centered and built upon the strengths and resilience of individuals, families, and communities. The system is designed to help individuals achieve recovery and improved health, wellness, and quality of life, particularly for those with or at risk of alcohol and drug use disorders. The overall goal of ROSC is to establish an environment that supports long-term recovery while enhancing the well-being of individuals and families across the Far Southside of Chicago.

Mr. Bufford outlined that the Far Southside Recovery Initiative, or FSSRI, provides services across several communities, including West Englewood, Auburn Gresham, Beverly, Washington Heights, Mount Greenwood, Morgan Park, Roseland, Calumet Heights, Pullman, Hegewisch, Oak Lawn, Evergreen Park, Robbins, and Dolton. He emphasized the broad reach of this initiative and its importance in promoting equitable access to recovery resources and support across the region.

For Fiscal Year 2026, the FSSRI Council is focusing on addressing high rates of recidivism throughout the Far Southside. Mr. Bufford highlighted that incarceration continues to have a deep and lasting impact on individuals, families, and the broader community. In response, the Council is developing a recovery-oriented system of care for returning citizens, ensuring warm hand-offs between treatment and recovery services, and expanding partnerships with law enforcement to create alternatives to arrest for individuals facing substance use or mental health challenges. In addressing recidivism, Mr. Bufford presented first-quarter outcomes for Fiscal Year 2026. During this period, thirty returning citizens received program support. Nine individuals remained active in the program, twenty-one completed their recovery plans successfully, and five did not complete. Eighteen participants secured employment, one of whom is receiving SSI benefits, while one participant relocated out of state. Two individuals returned to the penal system, and one overdose-related critical incident was reported. Additionally, seven participants engaged in community service alternatives, and four successfully completed their commitments. Mr. Bufford also noted that strategic partnerships have been established with Sergeant McClain of the 5th District CAPS Program and Ms. Jefferson of the 11th District, both of whom have committed to collaborating on initiatives to reduce recidivism and strengthen recovery supports across Chicago's Far Southside communities.

The discussion then turned to recent and concerning substance use trends in the Chicago area and beyond. Mr. Bufford reported a significant outbreak of overdoses related to medetomidine-laced opioids identified in May 2024 on Chicago's West Side. Twelve cases were confirmed, twenty-six were probable, and approximately one hundred forty were suspected. Victims exhibited very low heart rates and weak responses to naloxone, marking the largest known cluster of medetomidine-related overdoses to date. He also noted an alarming increase in xylazine, commonly known as "tranq," which contributed to 249 deaths in Illinois during 2023—a 6.4 percent rise. This drug poses unique dangers, including deep sedation and severe tissue damage, while also reducing the effectiveness of naloxone. On a national scale, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported approximately 77,600 overdose deaths as of March 2025, averaging 213 deaths per day. While the overall decline in overdose deaths has slowed, the total number remains historically high.

Mr. Bufford concluded by reaffirming the Council's dedication to building a sustainable, community-driven framework that integrates prevention, recovery, and justice collaboration. Through continued partnership and coordinated efforts, the Far Southside Recovery Initiative aims to strengthen recovery pathways, reduce recidivism, and improve health and stability throughout the communities it serves.

Community Topic: Gambling Awareness and Harm Reduction

Presented by: Ms. Tiffany Web, Health Alternative Systems

The central discussion of the meeting featured a presentation by Ms. Tiffany Web of Health Alternative Systems, addressing Gambling Awareness and Harm Reduction. Ms. Web delivered an in-depth overview of the prevalence of gambling throughout Illinois, the public health implications associated with it, and the need for stronger harm-reduction approaches to meet the challenges of a rapidly expanding gambling environment.

Ms. Web began by highlighting current statistics on gambling participation across the state. She reported that 68 percent of Illinois adults had engaged in gambling within the past year, 41.9 percent had done so within the past month, and 90.3 percent had gambled at some point in their lives. She stressed that gambling is far from a

harmless activity, explaining that it is associated with severe emotional, financial, and mental health consequences. Of particular concern is the finding that gambling carries the highest suicide rate among all addictions.

She continued by outlining the significant growth of gambling availability in Illinois. As of December 2022, the state operated 11 licensed casinos. By 2025, that number had increased to 16 licensed casinos, along with more than 55,000 active video gaming terminals across the state. This expansion has been accompanied by a 12.2 percent rise in adjusted gross receipts from 2022 to 2025, indicating not only industry growth but also increased public exposure. Ms. Web emphasized that with more venues and greater access come heightened risks. She also drew attention to the prevalence of lottery ticket sales and the deliberate design of casino environments—such as the absence of clocks and natural light—to encourage prolonged gambling sessions. These environmental factors, she noted, can make it easy for individuals to lose awareness of time and spend beyond their intentions.

Ms. Web provided important clinical context regarding gambling as an addiction. She explained that pathological gambling was first recognized as an addiction in 1980 under the DSM-III, then categorized in 2000 as an impulse control disorder under the DSM-IV-TR and reclassified in 2013 as an addictive disorder under the DSM-5. This reclassification acknowledged research showing that gambling affects the brain in ways similar to substance use disorders, influencing decision-making, reward systems, and impulse control.

The presentation further explored the principles of harm reduction, which form the foundation of modern approaches to gambling prevention and recovery. Ms. Web outlined these principles as acceptance, pragmatism, individualization, autonomy, incrementalism, and minimizing harm. She emphasized that harm reduction requires meeting people where they are—without judgment—while supporting them in setting achievable, person-centered goals. Harm reduction, she clarified, is not about enabling destructive behavior but about promoting empowerment, informed decision-making, and gradual, meaningful progress toward recovery.

Ms. Web also discussed the importance of language and the impact of stigma on recovery outcomes. She stated that stigmatizing labels can discourage individuals from seeking help, and the words used to describe addiction can either foster support or reinforce shame. Instead of using terms such as “addict” or “degenerate gambler,” she encouraged the use of person-first language, such as “a person experiencing gambling harm.” Through empathy, respect, and inclusive communication, communities can help break down barriers, reduce isolation, and create supportive spaces for healing and recovery.

Turning to practical harm-reduction strategies, Ms. Web recommended establishing personal spending and time limits for gambling activities, managing finances through accountability partners or prepaid tools, recognizing triggers that lead to gambling behavior, and seeking professional or peer support through programs such as Gamblers Anonymous. She also encouraged exploring alternative activities—such as exercise, volunteering, or hobbies—that promote emotional balance and social connection. Relapse prevention planning, she added, is equally essential for maintaining stability and preparing for moments of vulnerability.

Ms. Web concluded her portion of the presentation by reaffirming that harm reduction is a framework of empowerment, not endorsement. She underscored that recovery is a gradual and individualized process, where progress—no matter how small—represents a significant step toward stability and wellness. She concluded by sharing resources for ongoing support, including the National Problem Gambling Helpline (1-800-GAMBLER), Gamblers Anonymous (www.gamblersanonymous.org), Gam-Anon Family Support (www.gam-anon.org), and the National Council on Problem Gambling (www.ncpgambling.org). She reminded attendees that certified addiction counselors and recovery specialists are available both locally and nationally to offer confidential assistance and care.

Following Ms. Web's presentation, a gentleman with lived experience in gambling recovery, invited by Health Alternative Systems, shared his personal story. He informed attendees that gambling is the number one cause of suicide and described how his addiction had led to many of the same consequences experienced by individuals struggling with substance use or alcohol dependence. He disclosed that he has been in recovery for thirteen years and emphasized that society often fails to view gambling addiction with the same seriousness as substance or alcohol addiction. His testimony brought a powerful human element to the discussion, illustrating the emotional and psychological depth of gambling's impact.

In closing, the audience participated in an open dialogue reflecting on their own experiences and insights. Several individuals shared how their previous struggles with substances or alcohol had transitioned into gambling behaviors. Others spoke about being exposed to gambling at an early age, often within family settings or environments where gambling was normalized. The discussion fostered understanding, connection, and empathy, reinforcing the importance of addressing all forms of addiction with compassion and awareness. Attendees were also informed that they could speak privately with staff or representatives following the meeting if they wished to seek assistance, resources, or referrals related to gambling concerns.

The session concluded with appreciation for Ms. Web's comprehensive presentation and the personal testimony provided. Participants agreed that continued education, awareness, and harm-reduction strategies are critical to addressing the growing challenges of gambling and to strengthening recovery support throughout Illinois communities.

Resources and Closing Remarks

Presented by: Ms. De'Shara Shells, Executive Director: Ms. De'Shara Shells concluded the meeting by expressing sincere appreciation to all attendees for their participation in the October ROSC Community Meeting. She commended the ongoing collaboration and dedication of community partners, service providers, and residents who continue to work together to strengthen recovery efforts and improve the quality of life throughout Chicago's Far Southside.

During her remarks, Ms. Shells addressed several community concerns, including economic hardship, incarceration, and access to essential services. She informed attendees that Link (SNAP) food stamp benefits will not be distributed during that month because the federal and state governments have not yet reached agreement on a budget. She noted that this delay has temporarily interrupted benefits and will likely place additional strain on families in the community.

In response, Ms. Shells assured participants that FSSRI/TEECH will do all they can to provide and coordinate food resources during November to help meet community needs and reduce food insecurity. She emphasized the organization's ongoing commitment to ensuring that individuals and families continue to receive assistance despite the budgetary challenges that are outside of their control.

Ms. Shells also shared a list of local food, clothing, and community support resources and encouraged attendees to share this information broadly.

Kindness Company will host a food distribution on November 6, 2025, at 703 East 75th Street. Bronzeville Fresh Foods will hold an event on November 8, 2025, at 2320 High Street in Blue Island. Additional resources include St. Sabina at 11120 West 79th Street in Chicago, reachable at (773) 846-3018; Catholic Charities at 1120 West 79th Street, Chicago, at (312) 655-7500; and Restoration Ministries, which provides assistance every Saturday at 253 East 159th Street in Harvey and 351 West 162nd Street in South Holland.

A Peer Leader Educator also informed attendees that New Life Covenant Church offers food assistance at 7521 South Greenwood Avenue. A representative from Rush Hospital added that the Salvation Army, at (312) 667-

2204, will distribute coats in the coming weeks to support individuals and families as the colder season approaches.

Ms. Shells closed the meeting by once again thanking everyone for their commitment to recovery, compassion, and community service. She encouraged continued collaboration among partners and reaffirmed that through unity, shared purpose, and mutual support, the Far Southside community can continue to thrive even in the face of ongoing challenges.

Upcoming Events: The following events will be hosted in collaboration with community partners and other ROSC Councils:

November 8, 2025 – Reentry Resource Fair & Collaborative Roundtable

Location: 11251 South Halsted Street

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

FSSRI and TEECH, in partnership with TREAD and the Justice Advisory Council, will present “*Engage & Exchange*”—a series of community conversations focused on supporting returning citizens. The event aims to foster meaningful community engagement, encourage open dialogue, and provide essential resources that promote successful reentry. By working together with local organizations and stakeholders, this initiative seeks to address barriers, share opportunities, and strengthen pathways for individuals transitioning back into the community.

November 21, 2025 – Unhoused People Support Drive

A community-wide effort to collect and distribute essential supplies and resources to individuals experiencing homelessness. Participants are encouraged to contribute clothing, blankets, hygiene items, and nonperishable goods to support those in need during the colder months.

December 20, 2025 – Children’s Winter Coat Drive

A seasonal drive dedicated to providing warm coats and winter apparel for children and families in need. Donations and volunteer participation are welcomed to ensure every child stays warm and supported throughout the winter season.

Date To Be Announced – Winter Wonderland Extravaganza

In partnership with *Brighter Behavior Choices*, this festive community celebration will offer family-friendly activities, entertainment, and resource connections. The event is designed to strengthen community bonds and spread joy while promoting continued collaboration among partner organizations.

FSSRI Monthly Meetings Frequency: Every 4th Monday of the month (unless a holiday or unforeseeable challenges arise)

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Format: Hybrid – in-person and via Zoom (with encouragement for increased in-person attendance)

Amenities: Light refreshments served

Parking: Free

Location: 1750 W. 103rd Street, Chicago, Illinois 60643

Participants are encouraged to leave business cards and contact information in the chat for networking and follow-up communication.

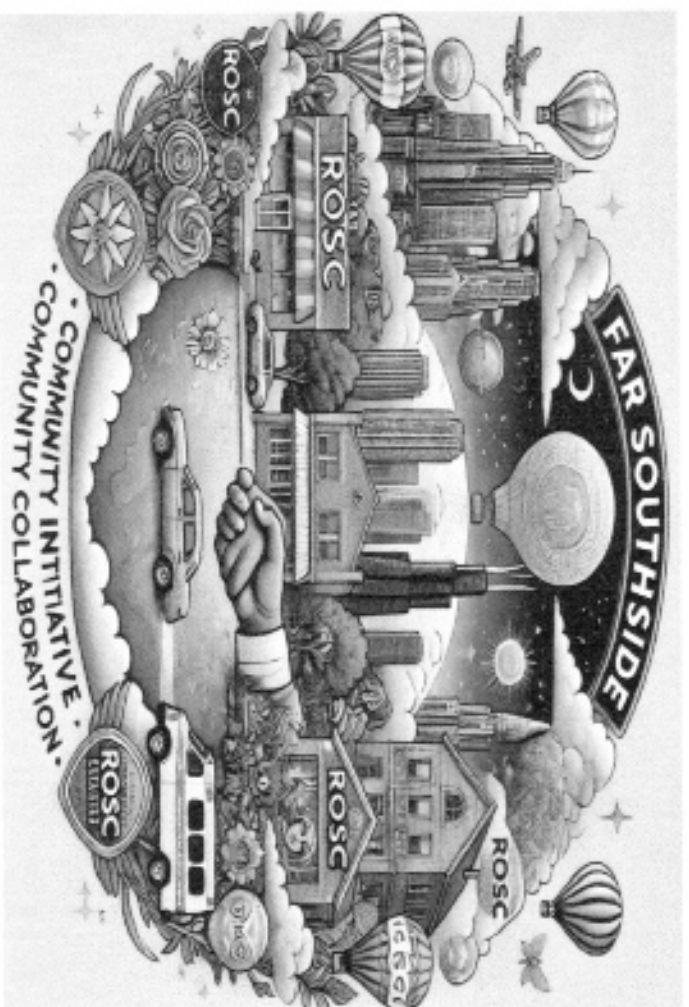
Meeting Adjourned: 12:00 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: November 24, 2025

Far Southside ROSC (FSSRI)
Robert Bufford RC, CPRS, NCRS
www.techfoundation1.org

FY26

October - Domestic Violence and Breast Cancer Awareness Month





“Two Causes. One Month. One Voice”

“Raising Voices & Hope:

Domestic Violence

&

Breast Cancer Awareness Month”



Domestic Violence Awareness

Definition: Pattern of abuse—physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or financial—used to control a partner.

- **Key Fact: 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men** in the U.S. experience severe intimate partner violence.

(Source: *National Coalition Against Domestic Violence — NCADV*)

Breast Cancer Awareness

Definition: Cancer caused by abnormal breast cell growth that can spread to other parts of the body.

- **Key Fact: Most common cancer** among women worldwide; early detection greatly improves survival.
- **Awareness Month: October** raises awareness, screening, and research support.



Far Southside ROSC Council

The **Far Southside ROSC Initiative (FSSRI)** works to **support recovery and mental health** by reducing stigma, uniting the community, and strengthening resources. Its goals include:

Nurturing recovery: Creating a supportive, healthy environment.

Building capacity: Developing resources and infrastructure for a **recovery-oriented system of care**.

Fostering commitment: Sustaining long-term recovery support in the community.

Bridging gaps: Connecting people in recovery or seeking help to services and reducing stereotypes.

Communities Supported by FSSRI

West Englewood
Auburn Gresham,
Beverly
Washington Heights
Mount Greenwood
Morgan Park
Roseland – North-East
Calumet Heights,
Pullman, South Deering
Hedgewisch
Oak Lawn
Evergreen Park
Robbins (Southwest)
Dolton (Southwest)

Communities Supported by FSSRI

West Englewood
Auburn Gresham,
Beverly
Washington Heights
Mount Greenwood
Morgan Park
Roseland – North-East
Calumet Heights,
Pullman, South Deering
Hedgewisch
Oak Lawn
Evergreen Park
Robbins (Southwest)
Dolton (Southwest)



ROSC Council Member Recruitment Strategy

The **Far Southside ROSC Initiative (FSSRI)** recruits' council members from the community, including **residents, healthcare providers, mental health and SUD specialists, law enforcement, business owners, policymakers, and people with lived experience**. Recruitment uses **social media, focus groups, newsletters, and word of mouth** to ensure broad, diverse representation.



To learn more, visit <http://www.teechfoundation1.org> under the ROSC tab

ALARMING TRENDS

- 🐾 ****Medetomidine-Laced Opioids (May 2024, Chicago)****
 - 12 confirmed, 26 probable, 140 suspected overdoses on West Side.
 - Victims showed low heart rate, weak naloxone response.
 - Largest known cluster of medetomidine-related overdoses.
- 🐾 ****Xylazine ('Tranq') Surge****
 - Xylazine-involved deaths rose +6.4% (249 deaths in IL, 2023).
 - Naloxone less effective; severe wounds & sedation noted.
- 📉 ****Persistent National Overdose Burden****
 - ~77,600 U.S. overdose deaths (213/day, March 2025 CDC).
 - Decline slowing; deaths remain at historic highs.

Fy26 FSSRI Focus

FSSRI Council is tackling high recidivism on Chicago's Far South Side, where incarceration deeply impacts individuals and communities.

We are building a **recovery-oriented system of care** for returning citizens, creating **warm hand-offs** between treatment and recovery services, and **partnering with law enforcement** to offer alternatives to arrest for those with substance use or mental health challenges.

Why Reducing Recidivism Matters

Reduces crime and violence

Breaks the Cycle: Supports those with addiction and mental health needs.

Saves Money: Cuts costly re-incarceration and redirects resources.

Promotes Equity: Addresses disproportionate impact on communities of color.

Strengthens Families: Helps returning citizens rebuild stable lives.

Illinois Recidivism Data Gap

Data Frozen: The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) hasn't updated recidivism rates since **2022** due to a **computer programming issue**.

Last Reported: 3-year re-offense rate just under **37%**; **31.1%** for 2019 drug offense releases.

Impact: Outdated data limits planning, transparency, and evaluation of reentry programs.

Response: Lawmakers propose the **Correctional Data & Transparency Act** to modernize IDOC systems and require annual reporting by **2026**.

Overview: July 2025 to Present

-  **Total Participants Served: 33**
-  **Remain in Programs / Safe Housing: 11**
-  **Diversions: 8**
-  **Completions (Maintaining Stability): 17**
-  **Non-Completions: 4**
- 2 Returned to Penal System
- 2 No Contact
-  **Additional Notes:**
 -  1 Overdose
 -  1 Relocated Out of State (No Contact)

Join Us for a Series of Inspiring Community Events!

The events will be provided in collaboration with Community Partners and other ROSC Councils:

- **11/8/25:** Reentry Resource Fair & Collaborative Round Table – 11251 S Halsted – 10:00 – 3:00
FSSRI and TEECH in partnership with TREAD and the Justice Advisory Council, will present “Engage & Exchange” conversations focused on returning citizens. The goal is to foster meaningful community involvement, encourage open dialogue, and provide essential resources to support successful reentry. By working together with local organizations and stakeholders, we aim to address challenges, share opportunities, and strengthen pathways for individuals transitioning back into the community.
- **11/21/25:** Unhoused People Support Drive
- **TBA:** Thanksgiving Celebration Fest
- **TBA:** Winter Wonderland Extravaganza partnering with Brighter Behavior Choices

Stay Tuned more info to come: We look forward to seeing you there! 😊

FSSRI Monthly Meetings

- **Frequency:** Every 4th Monday of the month (unless a holiday or unforeseeable challenges arise)
- **Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- **Format:** Both in-person and via Zoom (promoting more in-person attendance)
- **Amenities:** Light refreshments served
- **Parking:** Free
- **Location:** 1750 W 103rd, Chicago, Illinois 60643

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) will be offered.

We need your participation, resources, and collaboration to make our initiatives successful. Your involvement is crucial in addressing the barriers and gaps within our community. We look forward to your active participation and support.

Thank you! 😊

SURVEY – GO TO OUR WEBSITE – WWW.TEECHFOUNDATION1.ORG
COMPLETE OUR SURVEY RIGHT NOW IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY

ENGLISH

TAKE OUT YOUR PHONES



Scan me!

SPANISH



Scan me!



Thank You



Questions



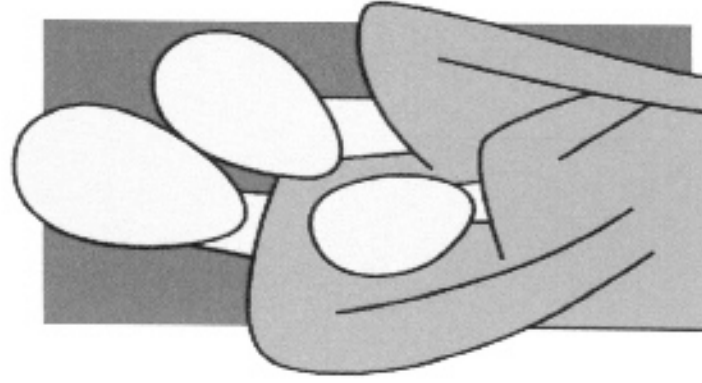
www.teechfoundation1.org

Resources

Illinois Department of Corrections, 2022.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence — NCADV.

World Health Organization — WHO & American Cancer Society.



H·A·S
COMMUNITY
COUNSELING
& TREATMENT

Problem Gambling Awareness & Harm Reduction

Empowering ROSC (Recovery Oriented
System of Care) Communities
Tiffany Webb, Gambling Outreach
Coordinator

Welcome and Acknowledgments

- ▶ Special thanks to Dr. Karen White, De'Shara Shells, and the staff at the TEECH Foundation.
- ▶ Your commitment to monthly gambling education and in-person screenings makes a real difference.
- ▶ Goals for Today:
 - ▶ 1. Share perspectives on gambling and gaming addiction.
 - ▶ 2. Highlight the prevalence of gambling addiction in our communities.
 - ▶ 3. Offer resources to reduce barriers and show that help is here.

A Moment to Reflect

- ▶ Close your eyes and imagine a gambler.
- ▶ Think about their daily life, their loved ones, and their struggles.
- ▶ For every one gambler, up to six people are harmed.
- ▶ This is why awareness matters.

My Why - Personal Connection

- ▶ I am an affected other – with a love one who struggled with gambling addiction.
- ▶ They game of choice the lottery three times daily, bingo twice a week, and went riverboat gambling.
- ▶ Our family lost our home due to gambling behavior.
- ▶ They passed away in a apartment because of financial harm caused by gambling.

Understanding Problem Gambling

- ▶ Problem gambling is gambling behavior that causes harm.
- ▶ It disrupts family life, relationships, and work.
- ▶ Anyone who gambles can develop a gambling problem.
- ▶ Gambling disorder is a recognized mental health condition.

Gambling Prevalence, Landscape Change & Self-Exclusion

- ▶ • 68% of Illinois adults reported gambling in the past year.
- ▶ • 41.9% gambled in the past month; 90.3% have ever gambled in their life.
- ▶ • As of December 2022, Illinois had:
 - ▶ - 11 licensed casinos
 - ▶ - 8,226 licensed video gaming establishments
- ▶ • From 2022-2025, state casino AGR rose 12.2% and gaming terminals exceeded 49,000.
- ▶ • Self-Exclusion: Individuals can voluntarily block themselves from casinos/gaming platforms.
- ▶ • More venues + more access = more risk.
- ▶ • Harm-reduction must evolve to match the growing gambling landscape.

Professional Experience and Discovery

- ▶ I have over 15 years of experience in behavioral health
 - from nursing home safety to detox and public health outreach.
- ▶ We screened for many conditions, but never gambling.
- ▶ In 2023, joining Healthcare Alternative Systems (HAS) revealed the prevention gap.

The Campaign and Community Action

- ▶ Through HAS, I joined the 'Are You Really Winning?' campaign with 1-800-GAMBLER.
- ▶ This campaign focuses on awareness, resources, and stigma reduction.
- ▶ Our outreach team works daily to educate, connect, and empower communities.

Team Introduction

- ▶ Joining me today is James Morrison – a person with lived experience and a storyteller.
- ▶ Listen to his podcast: <https://spotify.link/ZLlp8bffAXb>
- ▶ Together, we bring prevention, recovery, and empowerment to the community.

Principles of Harm Reduction

- ▶ • Acceptance - Meet people where they are, without judgment.
- ▶ • Pragmatism - Focus on achievable, realistic goals.
- ▶ • Individualization - Tailor strategies to each person's needs.
- ▶ • Autonomy - Empower individuals to make informed choices.
- ▶ • Incrementalism - Recognize change as a gradual process.
- ▶ • Minimizing Harm - Reduce the greatest risks first.

Stigma and Language Matter

- ▶ • Stigma creates barriers to seeking help.
- ▶ • Words can either heal or harm – choose language that supports recovery.
- ▶ • Avoid labels like 'addict' or 'degenerate gambler.' Instead, say 'a person experiencing gambling harm.'
- ▶ • Promote empathy, respect, and understanding in all communication.
- ▶ • Encourage open, judgment-free conversations to reduce shame and isolation.

Harm Reduction Strategies

- ▶ Setting Limits - Establish a gambling budget and stick to it.
- ▶ Managing Finances - Use prepaid cards or trusted partners.
- ▶ Time Management - Schedule gambling times and set reminders.
- ▶ Identifying Triggers - Recognize what sparks the urge.
- ▶ Seeking Support - Join Gamblers Anonymous or counseling.
- ▶ Exploring Alternatives - Try hobbies, exercise, or social engagement.
- ▶ Relapse Prevention - Plan ahead for potential setbacks.

Key Takeaway

- ▶ Harm reduction is not enabling – it's empowerment.
- ▶ Reducing harm builds pathways to recovery.
- ▶ Focus on progress, not perfection.

Resources for Support

- ▶ • National Problem Gambling Helpline: 1-800-GAMBLER
- ▶ • Gamblers Anonymous: www.gamblersanonymous.org
- ▶ • Gam-Anon (Family Support): www.gam-anon.org
- ▶ • National Council on Problem Gambling:
www.ncpgambling.org
- ▶ • Addiction Counselors - Local specialists available nationwide.

Closing Message

- Together, We Can Create Change
- Recovery is a journey — not a destination.
- Every conversation about gambling awareness matters.
- Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to prevention.
- Healthcare Alternative Systems (HAS) - 312-850-0050 EXT 7
- Illinois Helpline: 1-800-GAMBLER
- Website: e.helplineil.org/areyoureallywinning





Far Southside ROSC Initiative

Event:

ROSC

SIGN-IN SHEET

Date:

OCT 27, 2025

FULL NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE #	EMAIL ADDRESS	CHECK FOR CEUS
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		(812) 533-6488		
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Ostenda Brooks	TEACH	773-392-2532	OstendaBrooks65@gmail.com	
Justin Griffin	TEACH	914-406-0844	JustinGriff2001@gmail.com	



Far Southside ROSC Initiative

Event: ROSC

SIGN-IN SHEET

Date: Oct 27, 2025

FULL NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE #	EMAIL ADDRESS	CHECK FOR CEUs
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Sandra Nicks	N-the Spirit	672-349-6745		
JANICE ELLISON	N-THE-Spirit	773-980-8354		
Tiffany Alvarado	N-the-Spirit	815 651-9554		
Danuee Abrams	Nthe Spirit	773-651-9554		
KIMBERLY HAWES	BEH	384-302-3400	FBELMON@essineboath.net	✓
Justin Pickett	TEACH	(708) 573-8537	januef@outlook.com	
Louise Hastings	HAS	708 435 5604	Louise.Hastings@jdo.com	✓
Monica Williams	Sage's Soul Therapy Consulting	224-713-4633	monica@sagesoultherapy.com	✓



Far Southside ROSC Initiative

Event: ROSC

SIGN-IN SHEET

Date: OCT 27, 2025

FULL NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE #	EMAIL ADDRESS	CHECK FOR CEUS
Destina Shells	TEACH	708 530 1923	destina.shells@teach.net	✓
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