



## Meeting Minutes

- Date/Time/Location: 5/11/26 @ noon. Jersey County Health Department or online via Teams Meeting
- Location: 1307 State Highway 109. Jerseyville, IL. 62052
- Next Meeting: 6/8/26 @ noon.
  
- Attendance:
  - Toni Randall
  - Rita Robertson
  - Rachel Klocke
  - Meaghan McGlasson
  - Amanda Taul
  - Amanda Phelps
  - Johanna Garcia
  - Kevin McNicholas
  - Dustin Percy
  - Nicholas Settles
  - Nick Crnokrak
  - Keppen Clanton

**Guest Speaker: Kevin McNicholas**

Our first guest speaker was Kevin McNicholas (KMcNicholas@cusd7.org), who is a Social Worker at Gillespie School District and a co-founder of the Mental Health First Responders Network. Kevin gave an excellent presentation on Resilience. Kevin defined resilience as the ability to recover from or adjust to misfortune and quickly reviewed multiple academic models emphasizing self-perception, spiritual/emotional wellness, organizational and personal resilience, and the mindset of viewing crises as surmountable. He noted research themes such as courage, creativity, connection, and the idea that one meaningful relationship can make a decisive difference for a child.

Kevin summarized behaviors resilient youth typically show (sense of purpose, learning from mistakes, help-seeking) and contrasted them with non-resilient behaviors (blaming, substance coping, following negative peers). He illustrated these points with anonymized student stories showing recovery pathways into parenting, college, helping professions, and healthcare careers.

Kevin presented three building blocks: motivation (action-oriented work on oneself), mindset (positive self-perception and psychological flexibility), and mentors (people who help others find reasons to change), and reinforced parents' role as primary teachers whose effort matters for modeling resilience. He described mentor influence on behavior change and recommended practical supports like book studies and adult connections in agencies.

Community resources, burnout risk, and invitations to join supports

Kevin emphasized societal stressors and the human need for social connections, noting ROSC and the health department's role in preventing isolation and burnout among providers. He invited attendees to join Mental Health First Responders for free professional development. Please reach out to him if you would like to be added to this!

THANK YOU TO KEVIN!

### **Strategic plan update and Oxford House lived experience on housing**

Rachel announced a two-year grant extension, asked participants to surface barriers for future strategic planning, and identified housing for persons in recovery as a key barrier discussed with partners recently.

Our second guest speaker was Dustin Percy from Oxford House, and he shared his lived-experience recovery story, described Oxford House as peer-run and self-supporting, and explained how accountability, assigned house roles, and required meeting attendance rebuilt purpose, community, and family stability. Mentors and purposeful roles (e.g., house officer, sponsor) were identified as practical mechanisms that increase resilience by providing accountability and belonging.

Dustin explained membership expectations, financial arrangements, and the three charter rules governing Oxford Houses: fair share payment, democratic governance, and abstinence from mood-altering substances. He described new-member contracts, curfew and meeting requirements, room assignments as incentives,

and how houses exercise autonomy to set rules and support members returning from relapse. Dustin also referenced personal experience living in an Oxford House and the organization's role in recovery outcomes.

- Key Take Aways about Oxford House:
  - Oxford House requires members to pay a fair share, follow democratic house governance, and abstain from substances, with specific curfew and meeting requirements during a new-member contract
  - Houses are autonomous and use Robert's Rules for decisions, with a 51% majority needed for house votes
  - Long-term Oxford House residence strongly correlates with sustained sobriety according to DePaul University (**83% chance of remaining sober after one year**)

### *Community response, stigma, and legal protections*

Amanda Taul and Kevin expressed strong support for Oxford House development in Jerseyville, noted local meeting availability, and described stigma and community attitudes that can impede recovery services. Dustin recounted recent municipal resistance in Alton and explained that Fair Housing and disability protections allow recovery houses to exceed typical unrelated-person limits; he offered to provide literature and further contacts for local advocacy.

- Jerseyville has emerging recovery meetings and demonstrated community need, but stigma and occasional municipal resistance remain barriers
- Participants agreed to formation of a housing subcommittee to pursue potential Oxford House development in Jerseyville, with multiple local contacts identified as potential supporters

### **Local recovery activities and peer outreach**

Nicholas Settles reported growth in his SMART Recovery meeting and new jail-visitation access to connect people with treatment after release. Rachel confirmed positive collaboration with county law enforcement while noting more engagement is needed, and she summarized Narcan distribution progress including delivery to Jersey Fit and plans to revisit an outdoor courthouse box upon Codi's return.

### **Narcan access, provider outreach, and clinical engagement**

Rachel described a prescribing provider's request for a list of free Narcan locations for patients without coverage and proposed exploring tabletop Narcan displays in clinical waiting rooms. Meagan suggested starting with Dr. Elving regarding this. She also described efforts to connect JCH ER with Amanda Phelps and BJC to review newly formed suboxone policy and to pilot ER peer support and suboxone utilization, with planning and scheduling in progress.

### **Resource drives, events, and distribution logistics**

The group planned a personal-hygiene drive and resource bag distribution with collection sites at the Health Department, Koen Counseling, First Assembly of God (on Cross Street, JCH Wellness Center, Sinclair's and Royal Banks. Personal Hygiene items will be included in resource bags that we will make up and distributed to the following: Recovery Peer Clients, JCHD Wic Clients in need, CASA, Local police and Jersey County Jail. Please help in spreading the word!

Rachel and Nick hosted ROSC's first Free Laundry Day. Donors were anonymous community members. We had a HUGE success and were able to help people who really needed it. Multiple people have reached out to Nick about donating. Rachel asked about donation logistics and proposed a Jersey Health Department Venmo to centralize funds for donations outside of businesses- will ask Heidi, JCHD administrator about this and go from there. Will make a Facebook graphic and post to local pages a week or two in advance to help spread the work and hopefully get more donations. Discussion of getting the word out to families in need in the school district. Nick C. provided information about the virtual backpack for flyer distribution pending superintendent approval, and his school resource officer who helps with summer food programs for kids.

### **Social promotion and overdose awareness night proposal**

Rachel and Nick recently met and reviewed future pro social events. Persons in his recovery group mentioned bowling nights. Meagan also suggested a sober NYE party, and finding childcare. Johanna from DBHR mentioned that ROSC funds can help in covering these expenses- this is HUGE! Meagan suggests reaching out to Furl Forge- great idea- for rental for this.

Rachel proposed an overdose awareness night for Jersey County on August 29 at Walk Park featuring survivor speakers and a candlelight vigil to honor losses. Meagan suggested having mental health story geared towards having conversations with kids on the story walk at Wock Park. Kevin's wife is on the board at the library and he will ask her about doing this for either the night of our event or month of September! Suggestions for event: candle light vigil, pictures/names of persons lost to OD, ribbons or something in the grass to represent a visual of those people lost in our county. Meagan mentioned reaching out to the coroner for this information. Nick C. said that Kevin Ayres will be the new SRO for alternative school and he can help with this. Looking for guest speakers who survived OD to speak at this event. Opening prayer would be neat too!

Looking at doing a suicide awareness event next year as well.

Rita offered that she, Leanne, and their children could create memorial items such as buttons using a button maker to personalize the remembrance. Love this idea!

### **Recovery Corps hiring and outreach support**

Rachel announced the Recovery Corps will add a part-time project coordinator to support outreach and an anti-stigma campaign, with the role expected to begin in May and potential to expand to full-time later depending on need.

- Rachel will email the group when the part-time Recovery Corps project coordinator hire is confirmed, expected in May with a start date in September.