



## McLean County Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care (ROSC) May 2026 Council Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Tuesday, May 19, 2026

**Time:** 3:30 – 4:30 pm

**Location:** Via Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/96709486019>)

### **Attendees:**

1. Cat Hays, McLean County ROSC
2. Kari Knapp, McLean County ROSC/Ford County ROSC/Livingston County ROSC/Center for Community Engagement at Chestnut Health Systems
3. Kami Garrison, Statewide ROSC
4. Johanna Gonzalez, IDHS-DBHR
5. Victoria Dahmm, MedMark Treatment Centers Normal
6. Gail T Smith, Children's Best Interest Project
7. Krystle Hite Randall, Children's Best Interest Project
8. Emily Rieker, Safe for Families
9. Erika Hahn, OMNI Youth Services/Illinois Human Performance Project
10. Nancy Bollegar, Allies Against Trafficking
11. Selena Pappas, Central Illinois Friends
12. Linda Cox, Gateway Foundation Bloomington
13. Sarah Richardson, Gateway Foundation Bloomington
14. Selena Nolan, Community Member
15. Andrea Kindseth, LIFE CIL
16. Caitlyn Clyne, Bloomington Public Library
17. Nastasha Nunoo-Ponder, McLean County Center for Human Services
18. Olivia Brownlee, Home Sweet Home Ministries
19. Kelsey Shave, Gateway Foundation Bloomington
20. Michael Smith, Illinois Joining Forces
21. Cynthia Carter, Wayman AME Church

### **Agenda Items:**

- I. **Welcome & Attendance**
- II. **Community Resource Spotlight: Children's Best Interest Project – facilitated by Gail T Smith & Krystel Hite Randall – Reference PowerPoint Slides & Handout**
  - a. Children's Best Interest Act
    - i. Based on legislation developed by mothers and daughters active in the National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls.

*The McLean County Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC) is funded in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery.*



- ii. The Illinois bill was won by formerly incarcerated mothers active in the Visible Voices peer support and advocacy group, led by Colette Payne.
- iii. Applies to parents generally; other state laws focus more on primary caregivers and it has been most effective with primary caregiver parents.
- b. 730 ILCS 5/5-5-3.1
  - i. “Under this section, the defendant shall have the right to present a Family Impact Statement at sentencing, which the court **shall** consider prior to imposing any sentence and may include testimony from family and community members, written statements, video, and documentation. Unless the court finds that the parent poses a **significant** risk to the community that outweighs the risk of harm from the parent's removal from the family, the court **shall impose a sentence** in accordance with subsection (b) **that allows the parent to continue to care for the child or children.**”
- c. Impact of Adverse Childhood Experience of Separation of Child and Parent
  - i. Multiple peer-reviewed studies connect ACEs, specific traumatic events that occur during childhood, to harmful physical and mental health outcomes. As the number of ACES increase, so does the child's lifelong risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, ischemic heart disease, liver disease, some cancers, depression, alcoholism, illicit drug use, financial stress, risk of intimate partner violence, early initiation of sexual activity, sexually transmitted diseases, adolescent pregnancy, early initiation of smoking, suicide attempts, poor academic achievement, and poor work performance.
- d. Children's Best Interest Act Mitigation Factors:
  - i. (18) The defendant is the parent of a child or infant whose well-being will be negatively affected by the parent's absence.
  - ii. (19) The defendant serves as the caregiver for a relative who is ill, disabled, or elderly.
- e. Circumstance to be Considered in Assessing this Mitigation Factor:
  - i. That the parent is breastfeeding the child;
  - ii. The age of the child, with strong consideration given to avoid disruption of the caregiving of an infant, pre-school, or school-age child by a parent;
  - iii. The role of the parent in the day-to-day educational and medical needs of the child;
  - iv. The relationship of the parent and the child;
  - v. Any special medical, educational, or psychological needs of the child;



- vi. The role of the parent in the financial support of the child;
  - vii. The likelihood that the child will be adjudged a dependent minor under Section 2-4 and declared a ward of the court under Section 2-22 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987;
  - viii. The best interest of the child.
- f. Pretrial & Mitigation
- i. These factors should also be used in decisions about pretrial release. Even a few days' separation can be traumatic for young children, and can result in foster care placement and eventual termination of parental rights. The domino effect of loss of a parent's employment, housing, and public benefits disrupts children's whole world and threatens family stability.
  - ii. This does not prevent mandatory prison sentences for some charges. But these factors have been used successfully in mitigation in negotiations to reduce or dismiss charges, to negotiate a sentence of probation or community programming, to win pretrial release so that parents could be with children who have special needs, and directly with judges when prosecutors were not cooperative.
- g. Actions Agencies & Interested Individuals Can Take
- i. If you are working with a parent facing charges, talk with the defense attorney about the parent's role in their children's lives in cases where that might help.
  - ii. Offer to help gather letters of support from family, friends, and community members who know the family well. See Tip Sheet in the handouts. This has a different focus than the usual character letters.
  - iii. If you know the family, encourage them to support the parent-child relationship as much as possible.
  - iv. Help us spread the word about the Children's Best Interest Act.
  - v. Check out this video about participatory defense:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4wQHlIbxDbS>
- h. Join the Children's Best Interest Coalition
- i. Parents need to know that they have a right to have their children's needs considered in court.
  - ii. Anyone who has family responsibilities and is facing charges should ask their defense attorney about this law.
  - iii. Donate: [Donate Now | Restore Justice](#)
  - iv. Contact Information
    - 1. Email: [gail.smith@childrensbestinterstil.org](mailto:gail.smith@childrensbestinterstil.org)
    - 2. Phone: 773-396-4998



### III. National Recovery Month Initiatives Sign-Up

- a. Recovery Month 2026 Planning Initiative #1 – Library Displays
  - i. Caitlyn Cline – will cover Bloomington, Normal, and Towanda Public Libraries; may be able to help with more
  - ii. Selena Pappas – would like to help with libraries closer to Woodford/McLean County and Tazewell/McLean County borders (TBD)
  - iii. Erika Hahn – will reach out to ISU Milner Library and health and wellness RSOs
  - iv. Olivia Brownlee – willing to make calls and transport materials to libraries (TBD)
- b. Recovery Month 2026 Planning Initiative #2 – Recovery Experiences
  - i. Linda Cox – will put out flyer and information at Gateway for clients
  - ii. Olivia Brownlee – will put out flyer and information for clients at The Junction and The Bridge @ Home Sweet Home Ministries
  - iii. Andrea Kindseth – will put out flyer and information for consumers at LIFE Center for Independent Living
  - iv. Selena Pappas – will put out flyer and information for clients at Central Illinois Friends Bloomington Clinic
  - v. Erika Hahn – will share flyer and information on Illinois Human Performance Project social media accounts
- c. Recovery Month 2026 Planning Initiative #3 – Paint the Town Purple
  - i. Linda Cox – able to make window decorating supplies for businesses with Cricut

### IV. Community Updates and Announcements

- a. Victoria Dahmm, MedMark Treatment Centers Normal – MedMark Treatment Centers Normal is hiring for substance use disorder counselors
  - i. [Substance Use Disorder Counselor in Normal, IL, United States](#)
- b. Erika Hahn, Illinois Human Performance Project – In collaboration with Project Oz, the ILHPP is hosting a student leadership workshop on June 9<sup>th</sup> for students
  - i. Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>
  - ii. 10 am – 2 pm
  - iii. Davis Lodge, Hudson, IL 61748
  - iv. Lunch Provided
  - v. Link for registration: [2026 Student Leadership Workshop Registration](#)
- c. Selena Pappas, Central Illinois Friends – Central Illinois Friends will be hosting a Prepping for Pride event at The Bistro in Downtown Bloomington on Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup> from 5-9 pm



## V. McLean ROSC Updates & Successes

### a. Upcoming Community Trainings

- i. Hatch Trauma Survivor Model Framework: A Lived-Experience, Peer-Guided Approach to Trauma-Informed Care

1. Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 3-5 pm
2. Chestnut Family Health Center
3. To register, please visit: [Free Training: Hatch Trauma Survivor Model Framework](#)

- ii. Words Matter, Outcomes Change: Evidence-Based Stigma Reduction for Co-Occurring Disorders

1. Presented by Faces and Voices of Recovery
2. Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 12-1:30 pm
3. Virtual via Zoom
4. To register, please visit: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_wAMrAM7yRXy7swffnzfqaA#/registration](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wAMrAM7yRXy7swffnzfqaA#/registration)

### b. Planning Committee Update

- i. Next meeting
  1. Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 4-5:30pm, In-Person at The Coffeehouse in Uptown Normal (IN PERSON ONLY)
- ii. For more details or if interested in joining, please contact Cat Hays via email: [Cmhays@chestnut.org](mailto:Cmhays@chestnut.org).

### c. Upcoming Outreach Events

- i. Mental Health Community Field Day
  1. Saturday, May 30, 2026, 11 am – 2 pm, Normandy Village, 1100 Beech St, Normal, IL
- ii. Summit of Hope
  1. Tuesday, June 2, 2026, 10 am – 2 pm, Interstate Center, Bloomington, IL
- iii. Community Naloxone Training w/ BloNo Helps
  1. Wednesday, June 17, 2026
  2. 6:30-8:30 pm
  3. Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington-Normal
  4. <https://www.facebook.com/share/18nMUH1jj9/>

## VI. Next Meeting – May 2026 (3rd Tuesday)

- a. Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>
- b. 3:30-4:30 Via Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/96709486019>)

## VII. Contact Info

- a. Kari Knapp, Associate Director of Community Health – [kmknapp@chestnut.org](mailto:kmknapp@chestnut.org)
- b. Cat Hays, Community Health Specialist for Recovery Supports – [cmhays@chestnut.org](mailto:cmhays@chestnut.org)



- c. Barb Brumleve, Community Health Specialist – [bdbrumleve@chestnut.org](mailto:bdbrumleve@chestnut.org)
- d. McLean County ROSC Team – [McLeanCountyROSC@gmail.com](mailto:McLeanCountyROSC@gmail.com)