



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Jo Ann Dollard
847/390-1446
Carol VanderMey
847/635-4604

Sycks Memorial Golf Classic Tees Off September 13 to Help Fund Treatment for Substance Abuse

It's been eight years since Geneva resident Josh Sycks died of a heroin overdose. He was only 20 years old. He was on a waiting list for a residential rehabilitation facility, but no beds were available at a time when he needed help the most.

To help other substance abusers obtain what Josh could not — a safe, secure place for treatment and rehabilitation — Josh's parents, Randy and Sue Sycks, have organized the annual Josh Sycks Memorial Golf Classic. The event benefits the residential substance abuse treatment programs offered by Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) at its Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Center in Elgin. This year, the Seventh Annual Josh Sycks Memorial Golf Classic will tee off on September 13 at the Eagle Brook Country Club in Geneva.

"I can't believe that after eight years, the heroin problem has gotten even worse, and state funding [for substance abuse treatment] is in even more trouble," says Sue Sycks. In fact, the August 1 issue of the *Chicago Tribune*, in an article entitled, "Suburbia's Heroin Addiction," reported that the Chicagoland region has the most severe heroin addiction problem in the country, according to a Roosevelt University study.

"It seems that we can't do anything about the problem [right now]; but maybe we can help with the treatment," Sue explains.

LSSI's highly successful program in Elgin offers a place for people wanting to reclaim their lives from the grip of addiction. For recovery to be successful, long-term structure and support is essential. After completing a four-week residential treatment program, individuals either return

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home, if it is an environment that is supportive to their recovery, or go to live at a halfway house or recovery home. The Elgin site also offers a men’s halfway house on its premises.

Joseph Paul, program director at the Elgin Center, notes that the facility works with more than 750 people annually. “Without treatment, addiction is an illness which robs us of loved ones, employees, friends, co-workers and acquaintances,” he says. “The Josh Sycks Golf Classic helps to provide essential funding in the fight against addiction, especially in these days of state budget cuts.”

It’s estimated that almost 1 million Illinois adults are addicted to drugs or alcohol. Unfortunately, there are a limited number treatment programs today, and funding for those programs – primarily by the state and federal government through Medicaid – is being threatened. The estimated cost of one day of treatment at the BHS Center is \$200.

Last year, LSSI served nearly 5,000 people through the four levels of care it offers: detox (up to 15 days), residential rehabilitation (30-day stay), residential extended aftercare (90 to 180 days) and outpatient. LSSI provides services primarily in the Chicago area.

The golf outing includes lunch, 18 holes of golf, dinner and auctions for \$250 per person; a non-golfing guest may attend the cocktail reception, dinner and auction for \$60. To register or get more information on the golf outing, contact Ed Newton at 847/635-4656, or at Edward.Newton@LSSI.org. Participants can also register online at www.LSSI.org.

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About Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI):

Founded in October 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) is a statewide, not-for-profit social service agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. LSSI serves people through an array of services at 83 sites across Illinois. LSSI’s services include foster care, adoption, pregnancy counseling, Head Start, child care services, services for at-risk families, residential services for youth, counseling, mental health, substance abuse treatment, residential programs for adults with developmental disabilities, housing and services for older adults and individuals with disabilities, nursing care and rehabilitation, and programs for prisoners and their families. For information, visit www.LSSI.org.