Inspired

LEADING the Charge for Prevention

“At Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI), we see the struggles that youth have with substance abuse every day, but there seems to be a gap with prevention,” said Chris Mills, MSW, LCSW, Clinical Manager in LSSI’s Nachusa office. “Project LEAD (Leaders Encouraging Abstinence from Drugs) provides middle school students with education and social skills to fill that gap.”

LSSI has a long history of providing recovery and care for youth struggling with addiction. Mills and her staff received a grant from the Illinois Department of Human Services/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in 2011. Project LEAD, a Substance Abuse Prevention Program was awarded the funding in 2012.

Project LEAD provides educational and community partnerships throughout Lee and Ogle counties. LSSI prevention specialists Jessie Hafer and Marissa Pratt (pictured) run Project LEAD in Ogle and Lee Counties, respectively, including a classroom program that reaches local middle-schoolers and assists them in making healthy choices. Project LEAD serves approximately 550 students.

—1 PETER 4:10
Almost everyone deals with the stress and pressure of everyday life. For individuals recovering from alcohol or drug addiction, how they handle those stressors can be critical.

LSSI’s Outpatient Services helps people build and strengthen their recovery skills. These services are vital in creating stability in clients’ lives. Services include individual, group, and family counseling services for those affected by alcohol and drug-related issues, as well as DUI Risk Education.

Outpatient services address an array of needs, from Intensive Outpatient treatment for someone who has recently completed residential treatment to Early Intervention for individuals who show the early signs of developing an alcohol or drug problem.

“LSSI’s outpatient programs address a spectrum of life issues that adolescents and adults face related to alcohol and/or drug use,” said Ritu Reimer, MA, LCPC, Director of Outpatient Services at LSSI. “Our programs provide counseling services to increase a person’s quality of life by learning the skills to live and work without using alcohol and drugs.”

Services are offered at several locations in Chicago, suburban Arlington Heights and Elgin, as well as in Sterling in northwest Illinois.

Liz, 27, (pictured right) has been sober for more than four months. “LSSI saved my life,” she said. The Intensive Outpatient program has helped her transition from using drugs and alcohol, to recovery, and beyond. Talking in group therapy and with her counselor, Liz has found support to solve problems and not feel alone while she works and navigates sobriety. “It’s a positive atmosphere,” she added. “They’ve helped a lot of people.”

For more information on Outpatient Services for Alcohol/Drug Treatment, please visit LSSI.org.

Lutheran Day

“Neighbor, I’ve got you. You should always be loving, you should always have someone next to you, you should always have a family, and always have a friend.”

Those reflections by a young student at Holy Family School, Chicago, kicked off Lutheran Day 2016, invigorating the participants who gathered in Springfield on April 20.

Attendees met with their respective legislators and attended a prayer service in the capitol rotunda. Concluding the day, State Sen. Patricia Van Pelt (D-5th) and State Rep. Kelly Cassidy (D-14th) were awarded the Paul Simon Courage in Public Service Award.

Photos and services reflect actual programs of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois.
Dear Friends,

As we prepare to enter into our 150th year of service, I am frequently reminded of the responsibility, the command Jesus gave to love others as He loves us.

I am grateful to all of you who support our mission and services as an expression of the love of Christ.

More than 100 people turned out for Lutheran Day on April 20 in Springfield. As people of good will, we exercised our Christian vocation to speak out for justice and compassion for all people. We know our voice can make a difference as we advocate for the people we serve.

Just five days later, over 53 congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America across Illinois observed Good Shepherd Sunday celebrating their shared social ministry with LSSI. Nearly $50,000 has been collected through Good Shepherd Sunday to support those with whom we share in life and service.

Rounding out these activities was the Women’s Network of LSSI’s annual Spring Fling luncheon that raised nearly $40,000 for our children’s services.

These events share a common theme—they’re deeply rooted in our history. Over the years, just like today, congregations and individuals came together to exercise their Christian vocation to help others.

Since our founding, there has been an understanding that what has been received has been given to be nurtured, enhanced, and shaped to fit the needs of the present day and the people we serve.

In Faith,

Mark A. Stutrud
President and Chief Executive Officer
Peace and Prayers,

David Novak, J.D.
Vice President of Advancement
Executive Director of the Cornerstone Foundation

“I have a passion for helping... The children I foster keep me going—their smiles, seeing them happy. It’s a joy.”

—Chese Norey
LSSI’s 2016 Chicago Foster Parent of the Year

CORNERSTONE FOUNDATION

WhatBringsYouJoy?
That is always one of the first questions we ask when helping someone to develop a gift plan. Is it providing children with the building blocks to succeed through Head Start? Is it being the glue to bring families back together through Intact Family Services? Is it inspiring the human potential of an individual thriving after recovering from addiction? Or is it a passion for one of LSSI’s many other ministries?

However you answer this question about LSSI’s ministry, for us the gift planning is easy, it is what we do.

LSSI relies on you, our many faithful friends, who provide thoughtful gifts to carry out our mission. There are many ways to remember LSSI—through wills, beneficiary designations, and other types of deferred gifts. Each gift provides more confidence in the future of LSSI.

We are excited to announce the expansion of our planned giving education through a new newsletter, What Brings You Joy? The Gift Planning Newsletter of LSSI. The design is to provide information about estate and financial planning, as well as thoughtful charitable gift arrangements. It will soon be accompanied by a gift planning website, www.LSSI.giftplans.org.

I would love to learn what brings you joy. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have regarding gift planning at 847.635.4671 or David.Novak@LSSI.org

Susan Hallberg (from left), Krista Kapp, and Jill Hallberg were among 200 guests who attended the Women’s Network of LSSI’s annual Spring Fling luncheon on May 7. In addition to boutique shopping, guests enjoyed watching floral designer Michael Gaffney create beautiful bouquets and share his tips of the trade. The event raised $40,000 for children’s services at LSSI.

What Brings You Joy?

GENIE LEMIEUX

EVENTS

Saturday, November 19
35th Annual Amicus Certus Celebration
Union League Club of Chicago

For information, contact Barb Hailey at 847.635.4686 or Barb.Hailey@LSSI.org.

“The curriculum takes a wholistic driven approach,” said Hafer, who also runs a coalition of youth leaders in Ogle County. “Students learn refusal strategies and the long-and short-term effects of addiction.” Additionally, lessons include social-emotional learning and commonly abused substances.

Project LEAD also has established partnerships with local pharmacies and law enforcement. The coalition’s most successful event is Take Back Day for county residents to drop off expired prescription drugs for safe disposal.

The educational efforts are taking root. A recent survey of students at the schools Pratt serves saw a significant decrease in alcohol use over the past two years. The program also has impacted the community overall.

“We give students homework to do as a family that digs into conversational topics,” Pratt said. “Parents tell us they appreciate us opening the dialog with their children because many times before they didn’t know how to approach the topic with them.”