

# NEWSLETTER

info@svvor.org

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

### WHAT IS 211?



### A Lifeline for Life's Many Challenges

When there's a crisis, where do you turn? If it's a life-threatening emergency, you call 911. But what if you can't pay your electric bill? Or you need childcare? Or legal help? Now you call 211.

United Way has partnered with area organizations and companies who offer free or discounted social services to provide you a fast, easy way to get the specific help you need...as quickly as possible!

#### WHY 211?

- IT'S FREE - Just call and you talk to a real person who will connect you to real answers.
- IT'S FAST - Just by calling, you're quickly connected to the help you need. Prefer to look up the answers yourself? Visit [www.findhelp211.org](http://www.findhelp211.org)
- IT'S COMPREHENSIVE - 211 has partnered with virtually all area companies and organizations offering social services...so you get the answers you need.
- IT'S CONFIDENTIAL- You never have to provide your name...just your zip code.
- IT'S NATIONWIDE - 211 is a national service so you can even offer help or support to others around the country.

United Way 211 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Most languages are readily available. 211 may not be reached on some hotel, cell, or pay phones. In these cases, 211 can be reached at 1-888-865-9903 or visit [www.findhelp211.org](http://www.findhelp211.org).

211 is available in several counties including Lee, Ogle and Whiteside and is provided by your local United Way.

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United Way of Lee County  
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## RECOVERY 101

### THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD SUPPORT SYSTEMS IN SOBRIETY



In many ways, recovery is an individual experience. Moving through recovery means becoming well-acquainted with your own thought processes and tendencies. It is a time when you become highly attuned to why you are abusing drugs and alcohol, and a time to find ways to become the person you want to be. Although much of recovery involves your own individual journey, the value of support systems cannot be underestimated. There are several reasons they are vital to recovery.

#### They help surround you with healthy individuals.

Severing ties with those who have had an unhealthy influence on you can be a difficult part of recovery. Often, while you are involved in substance abuse, you begin to shut out individuals who are not enabling you. Your life becomes filled with people who either abuse substances themselves or create unstable environments that trigger you to do so. The people you encounter in 12-step and other support groups are, like you, actively working toward a healthy life and using the tools necessary to stay clean. Associating with other sober people helps you avoid triggers and remain focused on maintaining your sobriety.

#### They give you an opportunity to voice your struggles.

As with any important life change, the road to recovery is not always easy. Rather, as you continue to work on your recovery, you are likely to encounter many obstacles and challenges. A sober support group gives you the opportunity to talk through challenges. Likely, others in the group will have encountered similar struggles and may have thoughts or insights on how to work through them. Talking through setbacks can also help avoid feelings of isolation, which may trigger things like depression, which put you at greater risk to use.

#### They provide healthy peer pressure.

Just as unhealthy people can drive you to use drugs and alcohol, a sober support group can help create pressure to make healthy choices. Attending meetings on a regular basis and maintaining a consistent dialogue with your sponsor means knowing that there are a great number of people who do not want you to relapse. This type of pressure can be very helpful as you work to stay clean.

#### They provide a lifeline during difficult times.

All recovering addicts face triggers throughout all stages of sobriety. Having access to a sponsor and a group of people you can turn to when you are tempted provides a healthy alternative to succumbing to triggers. Life is full of unplanned events. There is no telling when you may face anger, sadness, or stress because of circumstances that are outside of your control. As you become accustomed to dealing with these feelings in a constructive way, you continue to strengthen your ability to maintain your sobriety, regardless of what life throws at you.

Article adapted from Cindy Nichols at [Psychcentral.com](http://Psychcentral.com)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### SVVOR Sober Bowl Party!

Sunday, Feb 2, 2020  
Join us for the game at Mama Cimino's in Dixon. \$3 suggested donation  
Chili Cook-off (Winner gets \$50)  
Board Games - "Penny" Pools  
50/50 Raffle - Pizza Included  
Game projected on a Giant Screen



## LIFESTYLE OVERHAUL

RECONNECT WITH YOURSELF & YOUR COMMUNITY

### Speaker Meeting & Potluck

January 26th @ 6pm

Dixon Recovery Home

922 Washington Avenue

Dixon, IL 61021

Tom Demmer offers Free Passes to many of Chicago Museums and Zoos. Ask for the Constituent Education Resource Card. (815) 561-3690 or email Tom@tomdemmer.com

### Family Movie Night

This month's movie:  
**THE LION KING (2019)**  
Families are welcome to bring their own drinks and snacks. Call 815.284.7261 with questions or email kathleen.schaefer@dixonpubliclibrary.org

### Do You Want to Build a Snowman at Fun Jump?

Monday, January 20th  
10 AM-2 PM  
Fun Jump  
505 W Lynn Blvd, Sterling, IL

Join the The Emporium Build-A-Pet at Fun Jump on the kid's day off school and help build "Flurry" the snowman! Anna from Frozen will also make a visit to play and take pictures with the kids. Cost is \$20 and includes unlimited jump time.

### SVVOR Cooking Classes coming!

Check back for details

### GIVE BACK...

#### Hospice Volunteer Training

Saturday & Sunday  
January 18th & 19th  
9 AM-3 PM

Rock River Hospice & Home  
2706 Avenue E, Sterling, IL

Rock River Hospice & Home needs volunteers and will be providing a training course for those interested. Volunteers provide companionship, support, and comfort to terminally ill patients and their loved ones. Rock River Hospice & Home is in someone's life, call Stacey at 815.625.3858 or email StaceyNielsen@hospicerockriver.org

### Looking Ahead..

**St. Patricks Sober Party  
March 14 (details to come)**

### FAMILY MATTERS...

## UPCOMING GROUP EVENTS

### Right Direction - Build People Build Community

12 week course begins January 30, 2020  
Sterling Township - 312 E. 4th Street - Sterling, IL 6181 - (815) 625-3990

### Art of Recovery 2nd Sunday February 9th.

Join Artist Michael V. Baker for art sessions at Rock U in Dixon, IL. No pressure to talk recovery but there is always someone who will listen. Meanwhile, allow your creative juices to flow. For more info check out the SVVOR Facebook page or call Michael V. Baker at (815) 440-7198



## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

THIS AREA HIGHLIGHTS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

### Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. (BEST, Inc.)

BEST, Inc. has received the Opioid Crisis Dislocated Worker Grant for their 8 counties - Putnam, Bureau, LaSalle, Whiteside, Lee, Ogle, Carroll, and JoDaviess. Looking for knowledgeable individuals to work with the Opioid Population, must meet eligibility of the BEST, Inc. program.

For further details contact the Opioid Grant Coordinator - Kerri Hicks at 815-872-0255 or email at [kerri\\_hicks@best-inc.org](mailto:kerri_hicks@best-inc.org).

## WHAT IS SPONSORSHIP TO ME?

Someone has "sponsored" me in everything I have ever learned, the good stuff and the bad. Someone taught me how to ride a bike, tie a neck-tie, fix a lawnmower and roll a joint. My recovery is no different. Please accept that these are my personal opinions of sponsorship and that many people view this matter in other ways.

To me, a Sponsor is someone in recovery who has walked the walk and can explain it. They are not my "Higher Power" and not my manager or substitute parent. People that ask me to sponsor them must realize that I am only in recovery because my life is messed up too and I am trying to get it back together. Even after many years of being clean and sober, I am a flawed human being. I cannot counsel someone on their marriage, mine is certainly a work in progress. My money is tight and thankfully, my boss is patient with my mistakes. I am far from perfect. I am sober though. That is one thing I can speak on. I can show someone what I did to get there. I can listen to their troubles and tell them they are not alone.

No matter what path you take to sobriety, there are things to learn. Sometimes very simple things like what not to say or do at meetings. Sometimes very complex concepts like spirituality. In many cases, years of guilt, shame, remorse and pain make it difficult for people to see things objectively. A sponsor is an outsider that can show people the way, explain things and help them to recognize objects in their blindspot.

I found a 12-step program as my route to sobriety. There are other paths. If someone wants to seek sobriety through the 12-steps, I can show them how I did it. Nothing more. I cannot assist someone that wants to take another path. I cannot give what I do not have.

So why shouldn't I sponsor people of the opposite sex? Or family, friends and co-workers? Because I am still a flawed human being. The early days of recovery can call for gut level honesty. A sponsor should be able to hear a person's most inner thoughts and secrets without judgement or thinking of personal gain. If the sponsor develops a crush on the sponsee or finds out that the sponsee has committed a crime against a mutual family member or their mutual employer it can cause a breakdown in trust. If you take the process seriously, you recognize that anything that may give the newcomer an excuse to back away from the process is leading them one step closer to a tragic end. I had to let my own daughter find her path and just be her "father" while she entered recovery. She eventually found a female sponsor with no connection whatsoever to me or my group or family. After working with that wonderful woman, I am happy to say that my daughter recently celebrated 1 year sober! I have never spoken to her sponsor and probably never will but I am tremendously grateful that my daughter does.

-A Grateful Recovering Addict/Alcoholic