



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Josh Sycks Memorial Golf Classic Points to Need for Substance Abuse Treatment in Illinois**

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) will host its Sixth Annual Josh Sycks Memorial Golf Classic at the Orchard Valley Golf Course in Aurora on September 21. The tournament benefits the residential substance abuse treatment programs at LSSI's Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Center in Elgin. The event comes at a time when treatment programs across Illinois are facing cuts of 20 – 50 percent, and in some cases, even more, due to the Illinois General Assembly's failure to enact a budget that fully funds the state's human services infrastructure.

The event is organized by Randy and Sue Sycks of Geneva, Ill., in memory of their 20-year-old son Josh, who died of a heroin overdose in 2002. At the time of his death, Josh was waiting to get into a residential substance abuse treatment program. By organizing the outing, the Sycks hope to help other substance abusers obtain what Josh could not — a safe, secure place for treatment and rehabilitation.

"With the economy the way it is now, these programs are becoming even more critical. They are suffering cuts when they really need increases in funding," Randy Sycks explains.

"These addictions are not going away and families are suffering everyday," Sue Sycks adds. "If this outing helps a few people get their lives back, it is well worth our effort."

LSSI's highly successful program helps people wanting to reclaim their lives from the grip of addiction. While many are able to return home after completing LSSI's four-week residential treatment program, LSSI also offers a halfway house or recovery home for those whose recovery would be jeopardized by an unstable home environment. LSSI's Elgin site offers one such halfway house for men on its premises.

"Last year, the addictions treatment programs provided at LSSI's Elgin Center touched the lives of 660 people needing help with substance abuse problems," says Joseph Paul, program director.

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“Without such treatment, addiction is an illness which robs us of loved ones, employees, friends and co-workers. The Josh Sycks Golf Classic helps to provide needed funding in the fight against addiction.”

“While the support of private donors — both individuals and businesses — can never replace public funding, this event will help us reduce the impact of state funding shortfalls this year. That’s critical because people who are ready to put their lives back together today can’t wait six months or a year for lawmakers to do the right thing,” Paul adds.

Nearly 1.5 million adults in Illinois are addicted to drugs or alcohol. Until the 1980s, hospitals had their own treatment facilities, but when insurance companies eliminated coverage for drug and alcohol treatment, hospitals closed their units. Since then, treatment centers have primarily been funded by the state and federal government through Medicaid, in addition to other state programs.

Unfortunately, the Illinois General Assembly failed to provide adequate revenue this year, resulting in deep cuts in funding for substance abuse treatment and prevention programs. It’s a move that LSSI and other organizations view as shortsighted, because research by the University of Chicago shows that every dollar invested in substance abuse treatment and prevention programs saves taxpayers about \$7 down the road, including costs for prisons and police, unemployment and welfare benefits, and health care and HIV/AIDS treatment. LSSI’s outcomes data shows that approximately 60 percent of its residential rehabilitation patients complete treatment, helping them to continue on the path of becoming healthy and productive family members and members of society.

The tournament includes lunch, 18 holes of golf, dinner and auctions for \$250; non-golfing guests may attend the cocktail reception, dinner and auction for \$60. To register or to obtain more information on the golf outing, contact Ed Newton at 847/635-4656, or at Edward.Newton@LSSI.org or visit [www.LSSI.org](http://www.LSSI.org) to register online.

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**About Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI):**

Founded in 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois is a statewide, not-for-profit social service agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. For more information on Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, visit [www.LSSI.org](http://www.LSSI.org).