



To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing in support of the creation of a 708 Board in Piatt County. The Piatt County 708 Board will provide a healthy framework for those seeking mental health, substance use treatment, and developmental supportive services. Piatt County has always been known as a place where community need is best met with community resources, and we believe passing a 708 Board would be just another positive step in this tradition.

The demand for mental health treatment, more in the public eye than ever, continues to rise. Many of our own clients gratefully benefit from these services and resources. Partnering with The Center is part of the support network we create for our clients. In fact, we could use more resources from The Center regarding family support services- trauma informed care, parenting classes, and anger management to list a few. Preventative services would also be helpful and could be very cost-effective.

According to various sources, nationally 1 in 5 adults have experienced mental illness, 1 in 6 children have a diagnosed mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder, and over 63% of all adults have experienced at least one Adverse Childhood Experience. In the field of addiction recovery, 16.5% of people over the age of 12 have met criteria for a substance use disorder (SUD) in the past year and Illinois Opioid deaths continue to climb at about 15% annually. Sadly 70% of individuals with an alcohol use or dependence issue have never received treatment. Within the next 10 years, 28,000 children in Illinois will move onto a statewide list, waiting for services related to Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities. 14% of Piatt County residents have a disability and The Center receives calls weekly for those in need of support to serve additional adults with disabilities. While many of these are national numbers, these statistics are relative to our community and are contributing factors in many domestic violence cases.

For over 50 years, The Center has proudly stood as a beacon of support for those in the mental health and developmental disability service field. The Center's reputation for unparalleled clinical services and a collaborative approach is well-known and the reason why they serve 600 unduplicated individuals annually. One of the bigger challenges to The Center has been navigating rising operational costs with a stagnant and woefully incompetent state-reimbursement rate. If expenses continue to rise at current rates and there is not an identified supplemental revenue stream relatively soon, changes to services and/or workforces will be a foregone conclusion. While this would be inconvenient for privately insured clients, these changes could be catastrophic for under-resourced individuals, including damaging a part of Willow Tree's safety net and support network for our clients.

Please join us in this proactive step to ensure our community has a strong network of support for those seeking services. Support the establishment of a 708 Board on November 5<sup>th</sup>. We can send a clear message: the needs of Piatt County residents will be met by the Piatt County community. Vote yes for 708.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill A. Maxey".

Jill A. Maxey, Executive Director  
Willow Tree Missions

Resale Shops  
100 E. Washington St.  
351 W. Monroe St.  
Monticello, IL 61856  
217-762-2350

Family Service Center  
100 E. Washington St.  
Monticello, IL 61856  
217-631-1018  
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