



## About Winners' Circle

Winners' Circles are peer-led support groups for people striving to remain free from past drug use and criminal justice involvement. Winners' Circles offer safe environments for former offenders to develop healthy lifestyles, learn and practice social skills, address problems that previously led to criminal activity, expand their networks of recovery associates, and offer encouragement and support to others.

Members are actively involved in family, recreational, and community projects, serving as volunteers, mentors, recovery advocates, and role models to other peer support groups and community organizations. Through this therapeutic peer support network, the community benefits and each member is strengthened.

### Benefits

In community settings of all kinds, Winners' Circle:

- Provides a low-cost, sustainable, recovery support system
- Promotes peer coaching and recovery through best practices
- Improves treatment retention and sustained recovery for former offenders by promoting crime-free, pro-social living
- Offers a starting point for community reentry programs
- Creates recovery support capacity, especially where treatment resources may not be readily available
- Empowers and assists participants in creating sustainable networks of recovery resources

## Background

The concept of Winners' Circle began in Connecticut in 1988 as a support group for formerly incarcerated individuals. It was further developed during the Texas Criminal Justice Treatment Initiative in 1993, incorporating the concepts of peer support and peer networking with therapeutic techniques revolving around therapeutic community (TC) ideas.

In Illinois, TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) has developed and facilitated Winners' Circles since 1996. TASC is a nonprofit organization that provides alternatives to incarceration and community reentry services statewide, and currently facilitates one of the largest Winners' Circle networks in the country. The Center for Health and Justice at TASC, the consulting and training arm of the agency, shares this on-the-ground expertise by offering customized training on how to develop and facilitate Winners' Circles.

**Center for Health and Justice at TASC**  
700 S. Clinton St.  
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*Throughout history, peer support has helped people achieve health and wellness. The consumer-operated service model of peer support is now being recognized nationally and internationally.*

*- Consumer-Operated Services: The Evidence. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2011.*

## Bring Winners' Circle to Your Community

Our 2-day **Winners' Circle Facilitators Training** will teach you how to:

- Begin a Winners' Circle in your community
- Identify and mentor Winners' Circle leaders
- Make your Winners' Circle sustainable and self-sufficient
- And much more

All training materials are provided. Ongoing support is available to ensure your program's success.

## Contact Us to Learn More:

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