



# APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER

## Recovery In Action

BY ANTONIO SMITH

My name is Antonio Smith, I grew up in Detroit, Michigan. I have always had a very loving and supportive family with my dad being my idol. The neighborhood I grew up in was not the best, I ended up running the streets at age 14. I was drinking and smoking and involved with a gang. This was all normal for the area I was living in, gang violence and drug activity. I always looked up to my older brothers. My oldest brother was shot leaving him paralyzed from the neck down.



Things started to change after that, I got my first charge at age 18 when I had illegal possession of a handgun. I started to isolate myself because of what I was getting myself into, I was worried for the safety of my family. When I was 21, I had my daughter and not long after moved to Kokomo for a better opportunity. Shortly after moving to Kokomo, realizing I had dropped out of school and didn't have any work skills, I started dealing. I was arrested on my first dealing charge and spent 3 ½ years on a level 1 security.

When I was released, I didn't utilize the support of my family and grew impatient and unable to find a job. And 1 year later I was arrested again for dealing, this time I would spend 6 ½ years in prison on a level 2 security. My older brother ended up passing away while I was in prison and I was unable to attend the funeral, this is when my anxiety and depression started to kick in. During that time, I was able to obtain my GED, go through a substance abuse program and get into work release. The 1 ½ I was in work release I felt great, I had my first paying job, and was able to get 6 months knocked off my time. When I was released, I moved to South Bend and was able to maintain a job there for about 6 months, I was still coming back to Kokomo to visit and ended up getting caught up in the same mess as before. I violated probation and caught my third charge for dealing. I was sentenced to 2 ½ years in prison for violating probation, this time I was serving on a level 3 security, which is maximum security, that made me question my life choices.

I graduated from RWI (Recovery While Incarcerated) for substance abuse recovery which cut 6 months off my sentence, so I only had to serve 2 years. I ended up being a mentor and teaching the RWI classes while incarcerated. Peer Recovery coaching classes were being offered in the prison for the first time in any prison in Indiana; my counselor signed me up without me knowing. I took the class and became a Certified Peer Recovery Coach and started coaching fellow inmates. When I was released this last time, I went back to court to face my charges for the last time I was arrested for dealing. Due to the progress, I had made, and the recovery classes I took, the judge didn't feel like I needed to serve more time, instead I was given 2 years work release, 3 years of in-home detention and 1 year of probation. I am thankful for the opportunity to be given a second chance. I had a friend reach out to me from Turning Point telling me there was an opening for a Peer Coach, and it has been the best job for me. I aim to show clients that life on the other side of addiction is possible, and it's like a breath of fresh air to be able to walk free from my past.

## This Issue

Recovery In  
Action Spotlight  
By Antonio Smith  
pg. 1

Turning Point  
Upcoming &  
News  
pg. 2

CEO Report  
by Matt Oliver  
pg. 2

For announcements,  
events, employment  
opportunities, and  
updates visit  
[TURNINGPOINTSOC.ORG](http://TURNINGPOINTSOC.ORG)



## Ten Reasons to Prevent Child Maltreatment

It might seem self-evident that we should work to prevent child maltreatment. The damage it may cause can be even more insidious and far-reaching than most people realize. Here are 10 reasons to prevent child maltreatment before it hurts children and communities:

- Child maltreatment can be fatal.
- Child maltreatment can stymie a child's normal growth and development.
- Child maltreatment is costly for many social institutions (i.e., child welfare agencies, hospitals, and rehabilitation facilities).
- Child maltreatment costs multiply over time.
- Child maltreatment victims may repeat the violent acts that they experienced.
- Treatment services, while critical, may have limited impact in permanently altering parental behaviors.
- Prevention programs targeted at parents before they become abusive or neglectful reduce the likelihood for future maltreatment.
- Prevention programs targeted at children can improve a child's awareness of how best to avoid child maltreatment and other unsafe practices.
- Child abuse prevention efforts serve as a way to combat other social problems of concern to the public and to policy makers.
- Child abuse prevention creates a more compassionate society, one which places a high value on the welfare of children.

## CEO Report

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and an important time to raise awareness of the devastating realities of child abuse and neglect. Sadly, each day in the United States, an average of five children are fatal victims of maltreatment; the vast majority of these children are under the age of five.

Clearly there is important work to be done to prevent abuse and neglect as well as support struggling families living within our community. Accordingly, Turning Point's REACH program has been working hard to grow its impactful programs where youth ages 12-17 can connect, learn, and be supported. In addition to the current REACH community/home, and school-based programs, the Discovery Café offers an accepting community space for youth to feel a greater sense of belonging. Our goal is to help youth prepare for adult readiness, establish healthy relationships, practice healthy boundaries, and connect with peers who can support them.

We are excited for our new Manager of Youth Recovery Services, Molly Marburger, as she will be working to strengthen our great youth programs further still. At the end of the day, by supporting our youth, we are supporting our collective future. We are all in this together.



*Matt*  
Matt Oliver, CEO

## Upcoming

### Lifting The Stigma

Lifting The Stigma is a weight lifting fundraiser for our REACH youth program. The event will be held at FIT Kokomo on Saturday May 6th. We are looking for sponsors, teams, and individuals to participate. There is still time to register, call today or click the link below!

<https://www.turningpointsoc.org/lifting-the-stigma-registration/>

### Rise & Grind

Rise & Grind is a breakfast fundraiser for our Recovery Cafe. The event will be held at Turning Point on Tuesday May 23rd at 7:30am. This is a great opportunity to see what our Recovery Cafe has to offer. There is still time to register, call today or click the link below.

<https://www.turningpointsoc.org/event/rise-grind/>

## News

### Turning Point News

- Turning Point placed our 9th Naloxone distribution box in Howard County this month at Fuel Church (2021 E Markland Ave., Kokomo). Each month our staff fills around 800 Naloxone kits with Fentanyl test strips to restock in the community. In the month of April 725 Naloxone kits were distributed in Howard County.

-Pictured above Turning Point celebrated our 5th birthday! We are thankful for the support we have from this community, and the growth we have had as an organization.