

# ***SOUTHSIDE HARM REDUCTION SERVICES***



## ***2023 ANNUAL REPORT***

**Deliveries:** 612-615-9725 (Mon-Wed, 2-8pm)

**Referrals:** 612-355-1267 (Mon-Thur)

**Office hours:** Mon-Wed, 2-6pm

**Email:** [shrs@southsideharmreduction.org](mailto:shrs@southsideharmreduction.org)

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 @southsideharmreduction

 Southside Harm Reduction Services

**Learn more & get involved:** [SouthsideHarmReduction.org](https://SouthsideHarmReduction.org)

## Letter from the Executive Director

At Southside we want to express immense gratitude to our participants and everyone else who supported the autonomy and health of people who use drugs in 2023 - whether that support was a contribution through or to Southside, another harm reduction group, or directly supporting people who use drugs in your life - thank you. Something that we are always reminded of and see is that people who use drugs respond to the most overdoses, hand out harm reduction supplies and naloxone, and so very often provide the care and support we aspire to at Southside.

Like most years, this year was filled with immense challenges and sadness - we lost too many loved ones to overdose; regular encampment sweeps continued, harming the health and well being of the people living in the encampments; HIV outbreaks continued for the fifth year among people who use drugs in the Twin Cities; and additional challenges supporting safer drug use emerged, largely related to xylazine and the ever changing drug supply. It is hard to communicate the immensity of the challenges that people are facing, taking into account both the complex and beautiful identities of our

participants and the stark health and social disparities and challenges they face. It is clear that expanded, better-tailored services for people who use drugs and people who live outside are needed to support the health of all of our communities.

In addition to the challenges and sadness we have experienced this year we also have immense hope and excitement for the future of Southside. We are growing and changing quickly - working to build an organization that is better able to support the health, wellbeing, and autonomy of people who use drugs. We are continuing to build better systems to connect participants to the quality healthcare and services they deserve, providing rapid HIV and Hep C testing, providing naloxone and harm reduction supplies where they are needed most (which is almost always in the hands of people who use drugs). 2023 was our third year of having paid staff and we have been growing our organizational structure to better support staff and are working toward having a physical space, a home for our organization.

As we look to the future and consider the role we want Southside to play in

the community, we continue to think about ecological recovery: after a wildfire, the first plants to return are grasses, wildflowers, and other similar plants. This first growth stabilizes the soil, preventing nutrients from being washed away. This process makes space for bushes and trees to grow. Those bushes and trees then allow for bigger trees to emerge that eventually flourish as vibrant forests.

Southside hopes to emulate the grasses and wildflowers that emerge in the wake of a wildfire by being a stable, positive force in the communities we are a part of: an organization that supports the growth of bigger 'trees' such as drug user unions and other groups founded and run by people who use drugs; supportive care for people who use drugs across the health and social service system in Minnesota; overdose prevention spaces; and whatever else is organized or dreamed by people who use drugs.

– Jack Martin, Executive Director



***"I was evicted today. Why do they keep doing this? We all know why. Being an elder, 62 years old having to pack up and help others is stressful. I've had to change my lifestyle for evictions; I pack lighter and am used to starting over again and again. My health is degrading due to evictions. I lost my medications, personal belongings that can't be replaced, connections to providers and my mental health is getting worse. I thank Southside Harm Reduction Services for being here." – Participant***



## 2023 Financials

**Income:**

Grants: \$3,216,413.41  
 Contributions: \$123,480.34  
 Other: \$4,481.09  
**Total Revenue: \$3,344,374.84**

**Expenses:**

Program Costs: \$1,117,834.51  
 Administrative Costs: \$193,014.83  
 Fundraising Costs: \$105,428.98  
**Total Expenses: \$1,416,278.32**

## Board of Directors

Rox Anderson  
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 Nikki Giardina, Secretary  
 Ryan Kelly  
 Arielle Edelman McHenry  
 Mo Mike, Chair  
 Dr. Kari Rabie  
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 Grace Hallberg-Cain, Community Coordinator  
 Shannon Clancy, Overdose Prevention Lead  
 Rodrick Fields, Operations Director  
 Kieran Hitchcock, Program Manager  
 Kris Jessen, Volunteer Coordinator  
 Zach Johnson, Program Director  
 Claire King, Finance Manager  
 Tammy Lavelle, Overdose Prevention Trainer  
 Gracie Lindblad, HIV Counselor  
 Jack Martin, Executive Director  
 Ash Monk, Fundraising Leader  
 Angela Richards, Outreach Program Lead  
 Lexus Stokes, HIV Counselor  
 Onishona Villareal, Community Coordinator  
 Abby Walker, Delivery Lead

## About Southside Harm Reduction

Based in south Minneapolis, Southside Harm Reduction Services works within a harm reduction framework to promote the human rights to health, safety, autonomy, and agency among people who use drugs. Southside offers safe use supplies directly to people who use drugs through delivery and outreach programs, links people to resources at their request, facilitates free naloxone trainings, and offers HIV/HCV testing.

Southside Harm Reduction is the largest syringe exchange program in Minnesota, and the only program offering deliveries in the Twin Cities metro area. Southside distributes: sterile syringes, works, naloxone, smoking kits, xylazine and fentanyl test strips, safer sex supplies, snorting kits, booty bumping kits, biohazard bins, hormone kits, educational materials, basic needs items like hygiene supplies, snacks, drinks, clothing, winter gear, and more.

***Southside had 8,990 exchanges with participants in 2023.***

### In 2023, Southside distributed:

<b>1,130,000 syringes</b>	<b>8,368 works</b>
<b>80,159 naloxone doses</b>	<b>4,166 fentanyl test strips</b>
<b>80,350 condoms</b>	<b>4,000 xylazine test strips</b>
<b>45,537 smoking kits</b>	<b>50 hormone kits</b>





Staff posing with Southside's new van, "Rigsy Easy Touch Wagon Butt," which supports street outreach, deliveries, HIV/HCV testing, secondary exchange, and supply runs 5 days a week.

## Street Outreach

2023 was a hard but effective year for Southside's outreach program. The team remained consistent in showing up for Relatives at almost every single eviction that occurred, recording at least 40 evictions in 2023. Outreach lead, Angela Richards, has been documenting encampment evictions in south Minneapolis since 2022, creating an "Encampment Evictions Timeline Project" in collaboration with participants, which gives a visual rendering of the historical patterns and impacts of encampment evictions. Angela hopes the project can inform public policy changes around encampment closures.

The outreach program was able to better support relatives with transportation (bus tokens) and food with an increased monthly outreach budget this year. Outreach held multiple celebrations for program participants, including giveaways, feasts, and giving out lots of basic needs supply donations.

The outreach team has grown to better serve participants with the addition of an overdose prevention coordinator, referrals coordinator and outreach lead. The team also onboarded over 20 new volunteers within six months, and created a new onboarding system and handbook. The team is looking forward to continuing to grow in 2024 and taking on challenges faced collectively as a community in a good way.

**"Encampment evictions destroy lives...  
Stop the sweeps & start with solutions."**

January February March April May June July August September October

House of Balls & Cedar/94	32nd/Hiawatha	Cedar/24th & Hiawatha/24th & Taco Bell & Hiawatha/28th	Cedar/24th & Hiawatha/24th & Cedar/Franklin (X 3) & Taco Bell & Hiawatha/28th	Cedar/Franklin & Taco Bell (X 2) & 26th/Clinton & Behind Zipps Liquor Store	Cedar/94 (X 2) & 31st/2nd (X 3) & Cedar/Franklin (X 3) & 4th/greenway & 29th/Pillsbury	Cedar & Franklin (X 2)	The Wall & 31st & Nicollet & 29th & Nicollet	Alley by All Nations Church & Behind All Nations Church & Beside All Nations Church	26th/15th & Cedar/94 & Lake/1st
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Snapshot of 2023 evictions from Timeline Project

## Deliveries

In 2023 the delivery team made 1,459 delivery stops! The team met new program participants, and continued maintaining strong relationships with long-time participants that have been engaged over the years. Southside delivers safe use supplies Mondays-Wednesdays, and is the only syringe exchange in the Twin Cities metro that offers deliveries. The team is looking forward to bringing on new volunteer delivery drivers in 2024 to increase capacity.



# Overdose Prevention Training

In 2023 the overdose prevention team provided 94 trainings to 2,178 people, both in person and virtually, weeknights and weekends. The team was able to nearly triple training capacity this year with the addition of another overdose prevention trainer. Southside has exponentially increased overdose prevention trainings in the past two years, training nearly 700% more people in 2023 compared to 2021.

Training topics include: how to respond to an opioid overdose, overdose prevention techniques, how to use test strips, how to have conversations with friends, family, and community about overdose prevention, harm reduction and the work Southside does, and other various topics like wound care, vein care, person-centered and trauma informed care, and more.

Virtual trainings were attended by many folks outside of Minnesota, and trainers have been able to successfully support folk by directing them to their local SSP's to get naloxone and helping folk find information on their local laws on carrying naloxone.

The team also supported collective overdose prevention conversations, ensuring all staff and volunteers feel competent giving a naloxone training on the spot and responding to an overdose. The team also increased conversations with participants regarding poly substance use and chem sex.

New partnerships in 2023 included reaching out to local high schools and youth programs, and creating several youth specific trainings around substance use, safety, and overdose prevention, which created much needed spaces for students to ask questions openly about drugs and made resources available to them to be more safe.

Future goals for the team include continuing conversations and trainings with medical and social service professionals on harm reduction, and meeting clients where they are at without judgment or stigma regarding substance use.



In addition to offering monthly naloxone trainings, Southside created a short, 20 minute naloxone training video in English with Spanish subtitles, which you can find online in Southside's new digital library at: [SouthsideHarmReduction.org/library](https://SouthsideHarmReduction.org/library).

## HOW TO USE XYLAZINE TEST STRIPS

YOU WILL NEED: YOUR DRUG + A WAY TO MEASURE IT, WATER, A SMALL CONTAINER TO MIX IT IN



### DO THE TEST!

1. Add one scoop (10mg) of drug to one teaspoon (5mL) of water. Stir until dissolved.
2. Remove test strip from the pouch and hold it vertically by the solid-colored end.
3. Dip the end with the wavy lines into the water and hold it there for 15 seconds.
4. Lay strip on a flat non-absorbent surface (like the bag it came in).
5. Wait 5 minutes, then read your results\*.

\*Don't wait more than 10 mins to read the test or results may be inaccurate!

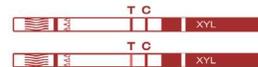
### READ THE RESULTS!

(+) POSITIVE: CONTAINS XYLAZINE



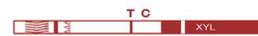
No test line means there IS xylazine present (opposite of a pregnancy or COVID test)

(-) NEGATIVE: NO XYLAZINE DETECTED



If you see two lines (no matter how faint!) there IS NOT xylazine detected in the sample you tested

(x) TEST ERROR: DON'T USE THESE RESULTS



Control line shows if the test is working properly. If you don't see a line there, use a new test strip 14

Following everchanging drug supply trends and participant requests, Southside starting distributing xylazine test strips in 2023, and published a new educational Xyla-Zine. Southside also switched to new fentanyl test strips that more accurately test stimulants, and now includes instructions with test kits. New safe use supplies added this year also included: snorting kits, booty humping kits, and hammer pipes.

## Secondary Exchange

Southside's secondary exchange program distributes larger amounts of safe use supplies to secondary exchangers every month for them to redistribute to people in their communities. Secondary exchange empowers participants as harm reduction leaders for their communities. It also maximizes reach and addresses barriers for people who might not otherwise access Southside's services—perhaps because they're highly mobile, lack a phone, are skeptical of social services, or travel between urban and rural areas or reservations, where syringe exchanges are often unavailable.

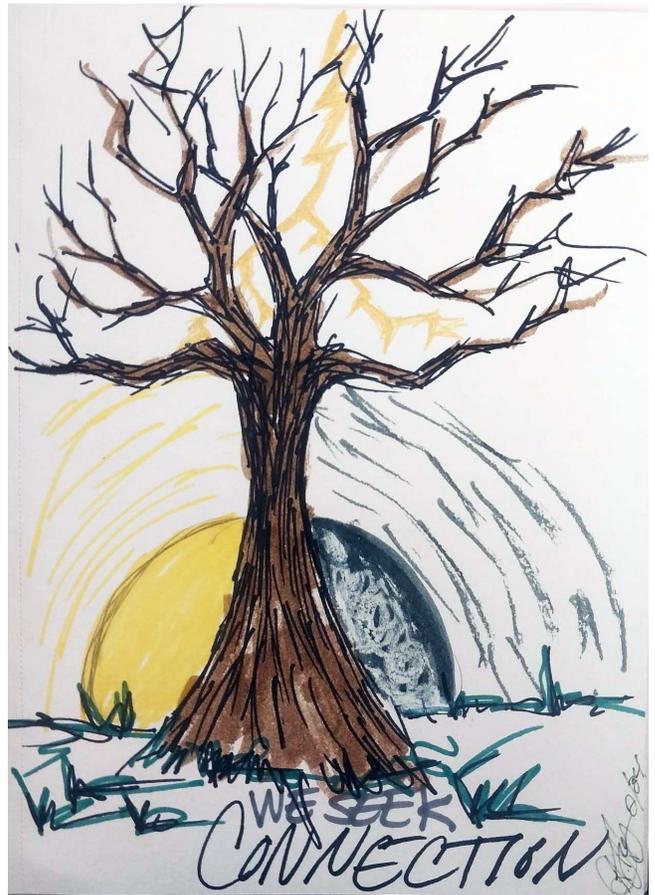
In 2023, Southside had 19 secondary exchange participants, and partnered with 14 communities and organizations, including: Longfellow Community Council, People Serving People, Red Door Clinic, Native American Community Clinic, American Indian Community Development Corporation, Simpson Housing, Leech Lake, White Earth, Red Lake Nation, Pine Ridge, SafeZone, Vail Place, Aliveness Project, Clinic 555.

## Coffee & Cigarettes

Every Monday, Southside hosts a two hour meeting for participants, dubbed “Coffee and Cigarettes,” that is centered around the needs and experiences of people who use drugs and people who live and spend their time on the streets. The goals of this group are to make basic needs resources available to attendees, hold space for relaxation and creativity, build community connections, and educate each other about harm reduction and other issues close to the group’s hearts. Attendance for these meetings has drastically increased in the past year, averaging 30-40 attendees every week, up from 3-5 attendees when these meetings began in 2022.

Resources shared with participants include: food and hot beverages, harm reduction supplies including naloxone and bio-bins, seasonal clothing and gear, safer sex supplies, and opportunities for ongoing referrals and check ins. In addition to providing resources, a wide variety of programming was offered, including guest speakers and workshops on:

- A four-part creative writing series with Deeq Abdi
- Herbal medicine making with long-time organizer, Kristi Golden
- New MN drug laws with Eddie Krumpotich
- Overdose prevention training and Xylazine presentation with overdose prevention trainer, Tammy Lavelle
- HIV presentation from Southside’s HIV team, Lexus Stokes and Gracie Lindblad



*Drawing by a participant, part of an activity for a participant meeting.*

***“We are living in the raw way of it. We are out here in the streets, you know. It is rough; it is scary; it is dangerous. All we want is some help. All we want is to be loved and accepted, and not just shunned and pushed away.” – Logan***

## HIV/HCV Testing

The HIV team launched hepatitis C (HCV) programming in 2023, completing 58 HCV tests, and creating educational literature on next steps after getting tested. The team also performed 246 HIV tests, and hosted 11 monthly pop-up HIV testing events. Southside’s monthly pop-ups are done in collaboration with community partners, together providing HIV testing, food, drinks, safe use supplies, clothing, hygiene items, over the counter medicines, wound care, foot care, housing referrals, linkages to care, and more.

In addition to hosting monthly pop-ups, Southside continued to partner with Native American Community Clinic, offering expanded access to HIV testing during their weekly Monday pop-ups at the clinic. The team formed a new partnership with Fond du Lac Reservation, bringing HIV and HCV testing to Duluth. The team tested at 50 pop-up events with partner organizations in 2023! Other highlights this year included speaking about HIV during a participant meeting and planning new educational materials that will roll out in 2024.



*Drawing by a participant during Coffee & Cigarettes participant meeting.*



**Thank you Southside Harm Reduction Volunteers!  
In 2023 134 volunteers contributed 1,139 hours!**

## Community Clean Ups

Southside hosted 18 community clean up days with 184 volunteers traveling to numerous zip codes across Minneapolis in 2023. Several new volunteer leads were trained in, which increased volunteer capacity to not only collect over 5,200 syringes, but also add trash clean up, picking up over 300 gallons of trash! Community clean up days are about more than just cleaning up syringe litter and trash - they're an opportunity for community members to build relationships and connection, and come together to discuss and learn more about harm reduction, how to reduce stigma around drug use, and how to support people who use drugs. Creating opportunities for building positive, supportive connections in community is just as essential as providing syringe exchange!

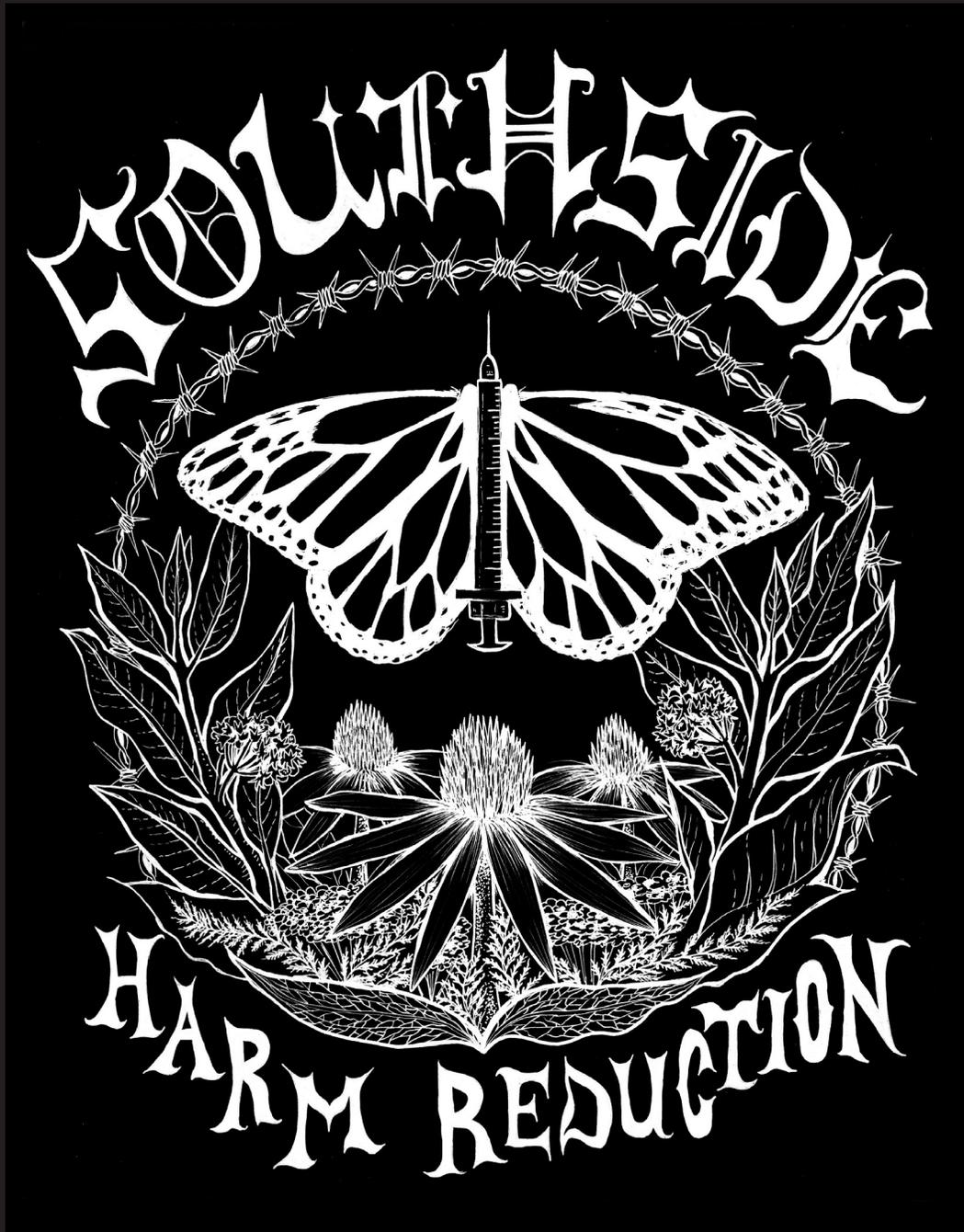


*Southside continues to install naloxone stations across Minneapolis at encampments and other busy areas; volunteers restock as needed.*



*Southside tabled at over 18 community events this year, bringing safe use and safer sex supplies, providing naloxone training, and sharing resources and information with community members.*





**VOLUNTEER:** Southside welcomes volunteers who care about the health and autonomy of people who use drugs, and offers a variety of roles. Learn more and apply at: [SouthsideHarmReduction.org/volunteering](https://SouthsideHarmReduction.org/volunteering)

**TRAINING:** Southside offers two public naloxone trainings each month; check social media for upcoming trainings! Interested in hosting a naloxone or other harm reduction training? Email: [trainings@southsideharmreduction.org](mailto:trainings@southsideharmreduction.org)

**DONATE:**



Sustaining donors directly support life saving harm reduction in the Twin Cities by providing consistent funding long-term - become a sustainer today! Whether it's a recurring or one-time donation, every dollar directly supports Southside participants.

Learn more & get involved: [SouthsideHarmReduction.org](https://SouthsideHarmReduction.org)