



FORSYTH COUNTY
DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL



The FCDAC STRATEGIZER

Leading the way to a
healthier Forsyth County

April 2023 Volume 2 Issue 12

Receive Our Newsletter



LET'S DO IT! Walk for Recovery

**We have FCDAC BILLBOARDS!
Check them out!**

Highway 9 and 369 at Coal Mountain and
306 (Keith Bridge Road) before you get to
369 at Hammond's Crossing!



THE WALK FOR RECOVERY

#onestepatatime

AT THE CUMMING CITY CENTER

SUNDAY
APRIL
23
2P-5P



CLICK TO
LEARN MORE

EVENTS

- MEMORIAL TEACUP LIGHTING
- RESOURCE TABLES
- EDUCATION AND NARCAN TRAINING
- MUSICAL GUEST
- WALK FOR AWARENESS AND SUPPORT
- KONA ICE
- CAMPFIRE COFFEE
- MUSICAL GUEST
- FACE PAINTING AND MORE

GUEST SPEAKERS

- MAYOR TROY BRUMBALOW
- COMMISSIONER CINDY MILLS
- KATE BOCCIA
- PANEL DISCUSSION AND MORE

OUR SPONSORS



THE TIME IS NOW!

JOIN the Recovery Fun at the City Center!

- Live music,
- Walk,
- Memorial teacup lighting,
- Education & resources,
- Speakers

Mayor Troy Brumbalow,
Kate Boccia, Jeff Breedlove, Commissioner
Cindy Mills.

Please join us
from 2-5 in the
April 23!



and alcohol with kids. Begin the conversation about the science of drug use and addiction today!

SAMHSA’s Annual National Survey on Drug Use and Health Is Now Available- Click Here!

SAMHSA has released the results of its annual National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), which shows how people in America reported their experience with mental health conditions, substance use, and pursuit of treatment in 2021. The 2021 NSDUH national report is the most comprehensive report on substance use and mental health indicators that SAMHSA has released to date. You’ll find helpful data that you can use in your prevention efforts, including:

Underage Alcohol Use

- Among people ages 12 to 20 in 2021, 15.1 percent (or 5.9 million people) were past-month alcohol users. Estimates of binge alcohol use and heavy alcohol use in the past month among underage people were 8.3 percent (or 3.2 million people) and 1.6 percent (or 613,000 people), respectively.

Young Adult Alcohol Use

- Among people ages 12 or older in 2021 reporting past month binge alcohol use, the percentage was highest among young adults ages 18 to 25 (29.2 percent or 9.8 million people). Young adults that age also had the highest percentage of monthly heavy alcohol use (7.1 percent or 2.4 million people).

Past Year Alcohol Use Disorder

- The percentage of people with a past year alcohol use disorder was highest among young adults ages 18 to 25 (15.0 percent or 5.0 million people). It also reported that of adolescents ages 12 to 17, 3.4 percent or 894,000 people had a past year alcohol use disorder.

Past Year Substance Use Disorder

- The percentage of people classified as having a past year substance use disorder, including alcohol use and drug use disorder, was highest among young adults ages 18 to 25 compared to youth and adults 26 and older.

Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder with Any Mental Illness

- Among young adults 18 to 25 years, 13.5 percent had both a substance use disorder and any mental illness in the past year.

Note: Binge Alcohol Use is defined as drinking five or more drinks (for males) or four or more drinks (for females) on the same occasion on at least one day in the past 30 days. Heavy Alcohol Use is defined as drinking five or more drinks (for males) or four or more drinks (for females) on the same occasion on five or more days in the past 30 days.

Alcohol Interventions for Young Adults

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) has valuable information about proven strategies for addressing alcohol misuse among young adults. Individual-level and environmental strategies are presented, along with details to help you implement them. Below are only a few of the strategies you’ll find at NIAAA.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Individual-level Strategies

- Brief motivational intervention
- Screening and behavioral treatments
- Medications for alcohol use disorder

Environmental-level Strategies

- Enforcing the age-21 drinking age (e.g., compliance checks)
- Restricting alcohol sponsorship and advertising

- Restricting happy hours/price promotions
- Conducting “reward and reminder” or “mystery shopping visits”
- Enacting responsible beverage service training laws

success is what

- Enacting responsible beverage service training laws
- Enacting social host provision laws
- Enacting false/fake ID laws

Success is what happens after you have survived all your mistakes

FEARLESSMOTIVATION.COM

FCDAC Council Meeting, Work and Programs Round-up



Get Ready! It is time to **WALK FOR RECOVERY!** Only days away, we are working feverously to make this a fantastic event.

Please continue to spread the word and send people to the Eventbrite link

[Click Here](#)

To donate prizes for the raffle, [Contact Me Here.](#)

MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE INVITE YOUR PRESENCE AND SUPPORT FOR THIS EVENT! Please continue to pass out flyers and post the event and flyer on your social media! **AND COME!**

We were grateful and happy for **Dr. Deborah Silverstein and Jason Callis** to present at our monthly Council meeting on April 5.

Next month we will begin to unpack the findings of our team of council members who attended the RX and Illicit Drug Summit in Atlanta, April 10-13.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



The May FCDAC Council Meeting is on **Wednesday, May 3** 8 a.m. **United Way Offices**

Council Meeting Highlights

- Introductions/announcements by Director Rachel Kayden.
- Two Guest Speakers: **Dr. Silverstein and Jason Callis.**
- **NARCAN Training and Handouts** by Dr. Silverstein. Deborah Silverstein received her Doctorate in Nursing Practice focusing on Population Health from Emory in December 2020 and is a clinical instructor at the Emory School of Nursing.
- **The Phoenix-** Jason Callis is the Georgia program manager for The Phoenix. The Phoenix is an international non-profit that aims to build a sober active community. We partner with facilities ranging from gyms, music venues, art studios, and outdoor arenas to hold free active, and community-building activities for individuals in recovery from SUD and their supporters. Jason was hired in 2021 to start our Georgia chapter. Before joining the Phoenix, Jason worked ten years with college students in recovery at the University of Georgia and Kennesaw State

The presentation by Dr. Silverstein focuses on the Fentanyl Opioid crisis and the use of Naloxone to reverse an overdose.

1. 101,750 overdose death occurred in the US between 2020 and 2021, 25% of adolescents (ages 10-19) have misused opioids, and in GA, between 2010 and 2020, Opioid deaths are up by 207%.
2. Naloxone is an antidote to all types of Opioid overdose. It does NOT reverse benzodiazepines, barbiturates, ketamine, cocaine, methamphetamines, MDMA, or xylazine. Naloxone is SAFE for all ages and pregnant women.
3. Groups at risk include chronic pain patients, heroin users, and misusers of prescription pain medications, patients discharged from ED after overdose, former users after an abstinence period, those in recovery after release from prison, partygoers, children, and pets. Overdose signs include unconsciousness, pinpoint pupils, shallow/slow breathing, pale skin, blue lips, and raspy or snoring breath.
4. Steps to administer Naloxone
Access/attempt to rouse, call 911, administer Naloxone, roll the person to the left side, watch and wait 2 minutes, roll back and administer Naloxone again, roll back to the left side, and check for breathing. If not breathing, begin CPR—effects of Naloxone last 30 to 90 minutes.
5. GA law protects those who call 911 for an overdose from prosecution.
6. CPR Classes are available in FC and encouraged.
7. Myths about Naloxone GA Harm Reduction is giving out Naloxone to organizations.

- Jason Callis is the Georgia program manager for The Phoenix. The Phoenix is an international non-profit that aims to build a sober active community. We partner with facilities ranging from gyms, music venues, art studios, and outdoor arenas to hold free active and community-building activities for individuals in recovery from SUD and their supporters. Jason was hired in 2021 to start our Georgia chapter.
1. The Phoenix GA chapter is committed to helping sober individuals live their best lives in recovery. What people need is healthy connection to other people, and our organization works to create opportunities for those connections through activities from painting to rock climbing. No matter what your interests are, you can find active sober friends at The Phoenix in Georgia who will want to enjoy life with you.
 2. To participate in an activity, we require a person be sober for 48.
- Director Rachel adjourned the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

If you missed the meeting, check out the video below.



**APRIL IS VOLUNTEER AWARENESS MONTH
THANK YOU TO ALL FCDAC VOLUNTEERS!**

Meet One of FCDAC's Newest Volunteer

Marti Roveda



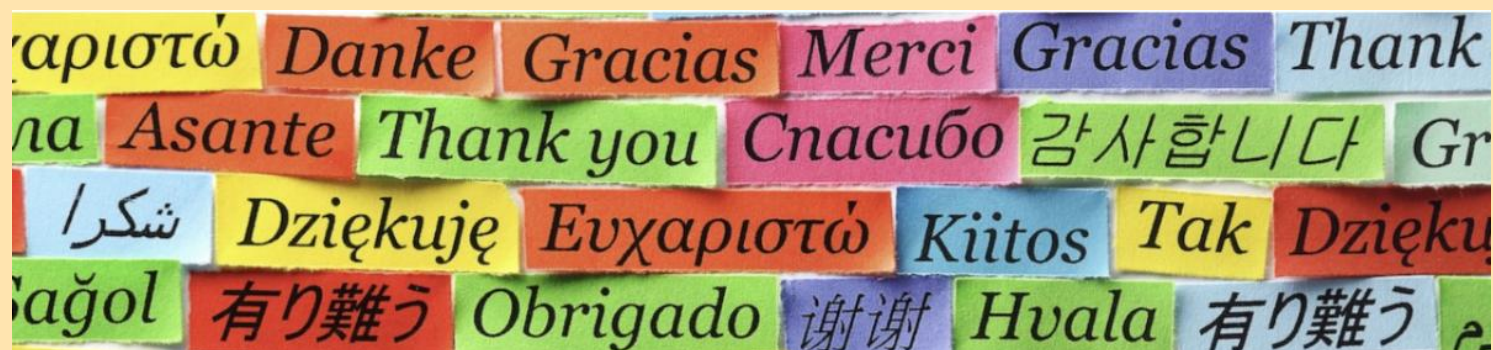
Addiction happens to *THOSE* families, not mine. But in August of 2019, after several months of our 16-year-old son not seeming like himself, we were blindsided by the reality that he battles substance use disorder. The following question swirled around in my head constantly....How could this happen to a loving and connected family, active in their community, church, and child's school and sports? Unfortunately, the disease of substance use disorder (SUD) knows no boundaries, and ANY family can be impacted.

For the first few years of our journey, I struggled with the shame, pain, and fear SUD brings upon those battling this disease and those who love them. After working on my program over the years, I was driven to serve other parents, sharing my empathy, strength, hope, and experience with other families on their recovery journey. I sponsor, lead parent meetings, and take calls from struggling parents. But I wanted to do more to help parents of under-18 youth fighting for their children's lives and their families, as it presents an additional complexity in seeking recovery. I'm driven to educate parents that substance use disorder is a family disease, that its vicious grip can start as early as elementary school, and that there are resources for their under-18 children....and their families.

I'm grateful to FCDAC for allowing me to co-chair the Parents4FCDAC to educate, advocate, and share my strength, hope, and experience to eliminate the shame and stigma of the family disease of substance use disorder.

In our first few months with FCDAC, Parents4FCDAC has defined our mission, created an informational flyer, and presented at a few events. I look forward to partnering with our FCDAC members in fighting this vicious disease.

THANK YOU TO VOLUNTEERS EVERYWHERE!



Community Outreach, Youth, Members, and Partners

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

FCDAC SPEAKS AT THE LANIER ROTARY CLUB

By Ashley Dickerson

FCDAC was honored to speak at the Rotary Club Of Lanier-Forsyth's meeting at the Legends Distillery on March 30th. FCDAC Director Rachel Kayden opened with a few words regarding FCDAC's overall **purpose to educate, advocate and empower** and a brief recap of how we strive to gain valuable insight regarding the latest substance use trends. Rachel explained the School Drug Prevention Program and how we seek to partner with the schools to integrate and provide three free programs: 1) health classes, 2) small group support, and 3) social event support. She distributed flyers with the FCDAC mission statement, the School Drug Prevention Program, and The Walk For Recovery at the Cumming City Center.



Ashley Dickerson is co-chair of FCDAC's newest program, Parents4FDCAC. To reach her, [CLICK HERE.](#)

Drew Hayes, Principal of Forsyth Academy and Gateway Academy, shared his passion for teaching and the importance of working with kids who thrive under the less conventional structure. He spoke about the history and development of bringing Drug Counselors into the schools where they were on-site and available to kids. These counselors have developed a connection with many of these students and can provide helpful information and ways to avoid substance use disorder.

Ashley Dickerson from the newly formed FCDAC Parent Program ([Parents4FCDAC](#)) also shared the program's mission to eliminate the stigma and shame of substance use disorder. She shared her personal story regarding her journey and her son's. Ashley shared material containing more information about some of the signs parents can expect when they suspect their child may suffer from substance use disorder and explained how parents could also benefit from support.

While the Rotary's member attendance was light, the message was powerful and welcomed. Ashley asked for the Rotary's help identifying additional speaking opportunities, and they enthusiastically thought they would invite FCDAC back to speak at one of their larger events. The members openly discussed the potential of providing financial support for FCDAC in the future and encouraged Rachel to process a funding request.



March 26th at The Green at Crabapple Market in Milton, GA.

by Alycea Vega

Alec's Pizza Party is an annual fundraiser in memory of Alec Durham, to support others in recovery, and to spread awareness. The fundraiser benefits [Tea and Cake Recovery Group](#) (a nonprofit supporting those transitioning from recovery programs into the community). Alec's Pizza Party, the biggest pizza party in Milton, was hosted by Amy and Jeff Durham on March 26.

I had the pleasure of **tabling this event for FCDAC**. Many fun activities for kids, small and big, and businesses within our community came out for the event. About a **dozen people stopped by FCDAC's table** for information and flyers. It was a blast to support recovery and fellowship with the community!

National Take Back Day April 22, 2023



DEA's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is April 22, 2023 – from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Georgia citizens, [CLICK HERE](#) to locate Drive-up Locations.

OR VISIT FORSYTH COUNTY DROP BOXES OPEN ALL YEAR

North Precinct Lobby
2310 Keith Bridge Rd.
Cumming, GA 30040

Monday-Friday 9-5p.m.

South Precinct Lobby
2985 Ronald Reagan Blvd.
Cumming GA 30041

Monday-Friday 9-5 p.m.

Forsyth County Jail Lobby
202 Veterans Memorial Blvd.
Cumming, GA 30040

24 hours, 7 Days a Week

YOUTH OUTREACH-SCHOOL NEWS



Emily Ennis,
Substance
Prevention Coach at
North Forsyth High
School

I facilitated a sober recreational event at North the week in March called Day of Champions! About 40 students participated. It was a mini-game series where the students had to compete with their teammates. The winning team got Chick-fil-A gift cards, and we threw out a few MVPs who also got a Chick-fil-A gift card.

Gabby Breiten, Jaxon Savajian, Sophia Cook, and a counselor at North helped me facilitate this event.

Gabby and I also volunteered at the Family Fun Fest on March 23 and handed out information for my upcoming parent night at North on March 28. We handed out about 70 flyers about the community events North is involved with.

Never Assume

Gabby Breiten,
Gateway and
Forsyth Academy
Drug Counselor



On March 3, Gateway Academy hosted a 'Boy Band' dance competition. Fifteen students participated. Fun times!

Emily Ennis, Mike Cowan, and another council representative, Amanda Pruett, spoke to South Middle on March 14. We each spoke to one health class to discuss drug prevention. It went well, and the schools and students were receptive and positive about the experience.

We collected data from the classes, too, as the average age of first use continues to be younger across the board.

On March 24, I hosted a sidewalk chalk art competition. Seventeen students participated in the event.

We have two more middle school talks planned for April. One will be at South Forsyth Middle School health classes and one in the health classes at North Middle

A Pill Is Real

One in the health classes at North Middle School. The prevention talks in health classes average 15-30 or so students.

OUR PARTNER IN PREVENTION



A message from our partner in prevention,
John Bringuel, MA, RBF, TPNPCPC, ICPS, Prevention / Intervention Program Manager
The Council on Alcohol and Drugs

Dear Collaborative Members and Stakeholders,

Here is another opportunity to support **Overdose Response**. Please see the information below from Jennifer Wilds regarding **Narcan Training** held in Gwinnett County. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Wilds at 770.856.8034 (cell) or email her at Jennifer.Wilds@VPHealth.org.

Time: Saturdays 10:00am

Event Address: 52 Gwinnett Drive, Suite A, Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Contact us at 678-743-1808 EXT 115 or events@navigatorerecovery.org with any questions.

Why Attend?

We have Narcan available at no cost; the only requirement to receive Narcan is that you are trained on how to use it.

We encourage you to have this on hand in the event of an opiate overdose. You can help save a life! We will also share with you our services and what we do in the community.

*If none of the dates listed work and you would like to be trained and receive Narcan, please contact Jennifer to inquire about alternatives.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Upcoming dates:

April 8, 2023

April 15, 2023

April 22, 2023

April 29, 2023

Thank you,
John

**MORE TRAININGS
AVAILABLE!**

FREE NARCAN TRAINING





2023 CLASS SCHEDULE

Classes are held on the first Wednesday of the month.

January 4	July 5
February 1	August 2
March 1	September 6
April 5	October 4
May 3	November 1
June 7	December 6

6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

ROCKDALE DRUG-FREE COALITION*
625 Promise Path
Conyers, GA 30012

REGISTER TODAY!

Registration required.
To register, scan the QR code or visit qr.co.de/RockdaleDFCCNarcenTraining.



SCAN ME

You'll learn how to use Narcan, a drug used to reverse the effects of opioid overdose, and receive a Narcan Nasal Spray kit!

Training sponsored by



IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS AT RISK OF AN OPIOID OVERDOSE, YOU COULD SAVE A LIFE!

Have questions? Call 678-386-1444 or email mona@rockdalecoalition.org.

* Changes in community health status could result in classes being offered virtually only.

2023014

A CALL FOR ADVOCACY

CADCA® *Legislative Alerts*

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The fiscal year (FY) 2024 appropriations process is underway. Members of Congress are in the process of deciding upon their appropriations priorities for this fiscal year. CADCA's top appropriations priority is the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) program. We need as many members of Congress as possible to make funding the DFC program one of their top priorities in the FY 2024 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill. We are asking that the program be funded at the highest possible level in FY 2024 (at a minimum of the FY 2023 appropriated amount of \$109 million). In the House, Representatives Bill Johnson (R-OH-6th) and Ann Kuster (D-NH-2nd) are leading a letter in support of funding the

DFC program at the highest possible level in FY 2024. Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Chuck Grassley (R-IA) are leading a similar letter in the Senate. It is vital that these letters have strong bipartisan support in Congress.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Contact your members of the House and Senate and ask them to sign the letters in support of funding the Drug-Free Communities program at \$109 million in FY 2024.

HOW TO DO IT

CADCA's legislative alerts **use your home address to send messages to your members of Congress. All of these messages will be sent to your Congressional delegation as a constituent using your home address.**

[Click here](#) to send a message to your members of Congress asking them to sign

on to the House and Senate letters in support of funding the DFC program at the highest possible level in FY 2024.

Visit cadca.org to learn more about our substance use prevention advocacy efforts!

SAMPLE MESSAGE

I am writing to encourage you to sign onto the Johnson-Kuster and Feinstein-Grassley letters in support of funding the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) program at the highest possible level in FY 2024 (at a minimum of the FY 2023 final appropriated amount of \$109 million). DFC grantees have achieved population-level reductions in substance use across alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drugs and are an effective use of limited federal funds. To sign onto the Johnson-Kuster letter in the House, please email Lizzy Burke in Rep. Kuster's office (Elizabeth.Burke@mail.house.gov) or Sam Hattrup in Rep. Johnson's office (Sam.Hattrup@mail.house.gov). To sign onto the Feinstein-Grassley letter in the Senate, please email Sean Nadel in Senator Feinstein's office (Sean_Nadel@judiciary-dem.senate.gov) or Michael Perkins in Senator Grassley's office (Michael_Perksins@judiciary-rep.senate.gov).

A Call for State Advocacy Effort



The pot industry and its lobbyists want to keep the dangerous Delta-8 THC loophole that legalized hemp-derived pot products containing as much as 40% THC open in HB 458 S. This will further their addiction-for-profit model.

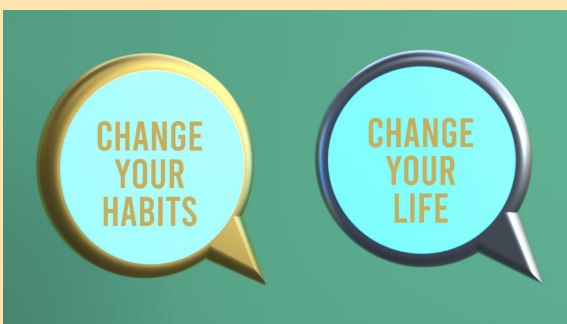
Delta-8 THC and other hemp-derived psychoactive products are addictive and harmful to the brain. There is no federal age limit for buying Delta-8 THC, so these products are sold to kids throughout Georgia in gas stations and online.

The Georgia General Assembly can act and ban these dangerous pot products.

These products, like Delta-8 THC, were made legal through the poorly written hemp legalization provisions of the 2018 Farm Bill. The Georgia Senate is considering a bill that could contain a provision closing the Delta-8 loophole in all cannabis and hemp products.

Could you be sure to contact your State Senator as soon as possible? **Using your home address to send messages**, let them know you want the Delta-8 loophole closed in Georgia in House Bill 458 S. You can find your State Senator's contact information by going [HERE](#).

Members teaching Members



Putting First Things, First Altering Choices That Lead to Stress

by Dana Bryan

I want to introduce you to a book by Stephen Covey: *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. The author observed that people who are the most effective have seven habits in common, and this is true whether they are students, young adults, or older adults. Although this book was written many years ago, these seven habits of effective people remain relevant today. I first studied it with a group in which each person had a family member involved with drugs or making other unwise choices. The group included parents as well as teenage and college-age siblings. One of the family members had just graduated from college, and she



Dana Bryan

Dana is a retired middle school teacher and

member of ECDAC. Through

made the statement, "I wish I had read this before I went to college." Her comment confirmed my decision to introduce the *7 Habits* to my middle school and college students and adult peers.

I have suggested many healthy ways to deal with stress in past articles. This time, I want to mention Stephen Covey's 3rd habit to prevent some of the choices that lead to stress in the first place. I once heard a speaker say we cause much of our stress through our choices. At first, I was appalled by the idea that I might have caused some of the stress in my life. Then, I thought of times when I had put off reading a book for a book report or put off chores or commitments until it was close to the deadline. I had to admit that I could only blame myself on these occasions for the stress I was experiencing.

Stephen Covey's Habit Number 3 is to "Put First Things First." His explanation of Habit Number 3 serves as a guideline for setting priorities and managing our time efficiently. The chart he uses is a clear explanation without using many words.

THE TIME MANAGEMENT MATRIX	
Urgent	Not Urgent
I ACTIVITIES: Crisis Pressing problems Deadline-driven projects	II ACTIVITIES: Prevention, PC activities Relationship building Recognizing new opportunities Planning, recreation
III ACTIVITIES: Interruptions, some calls Some mail, some reports Some meetings Proximate, pressing matters Popular activities	IV ACTIVITIES: Trivia, busy work Some mail Some phone calls Time wasters Pleasant activities

Stephen Covey's Habit Number 3 is to "Put First Things First." His explanation of Habit Number 3 serves as a guideline for setting priorities and managing our time efficiently. The chart he uses is a clear explanation without using many words. Stephen Covey explains that everything we do is either IMPORTANT or NOT IMPORTANT and is also URGENT or NOT URGENT. The goal is to do those IMPORTANT things and do them before they become URGENT. When we wait until an activity is urgent, there is no time to do it well or without stress. To quote Covey, "If something is important, it contributes to your mission, your value, your high-priority goals." It is essential to recognize that Covey considers those activities which are relaxing, enjoyable, or that relieve stress to be just as important as an assignment or obligation.

In Habit Number 7, he explains that when we stop to take a break or to do something relaxing or enjoyable, we are more productive when we return to the project or assignment. Habit Number 7 is called "Sharpen the Saw," and his explanation and example will make it clear that he considers such activities to be in the "IMPORTANT" category.

Whenever I have asked students why they think so many are turning to drugs despite having drug education most of their lives, I always know that one of the first answers will be that students today have so much stress. It is true that students today are under a great deal of stress, and many of the situations and stresses they face did not exist for previous generations. My goal is to help students and

member of CDAC. Through her personal loss of her daughter to drug experimentation, Dana devotes her time reaching out to youth through presentations about the real consequences and high risk of experimenting with addictive substances and how it affects them, their futures, and their families. She contributes her insights monthly to the *Strategizer*. Thanks, Dana!

Stephen Covey explains that everything we do is either IMPORTANT or NOT IMPORTANT and is also URGENT or NOT URGENT. The goal is to do those IMPORTANT things and do them before they become URGENT. When we wait until an activity is urgent, there is no time to do it well or without stress. To quote Covey, "If something is important, it contributes to your mission, your value, your high-priority goals." It is essential to recognize that Covey considers those activities which are relaxing, enjoyable, or that relieve stress to be just as important as an assignment or obligation.

young adults deal with their stress in a healthy way and also to learn how to prevent causing stress whenever possible.

Sean Covey, son of Stephen Covey, has written an abundance of books that are especially for youth and young adults. One of particular interest to me is entitled, *How to Avoid Addiction*. I understand it is based on Decision 5 in his book, *The 6 Most Important Decisions You'll Ever Make*. Sean Covey has also published *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* as well as books and workbooks for teens and recent graduates. These titles could be excellent resources for families to have on hand and read together with their tweens and teens.

NEWS FOR YOU

LOCAL NEWS

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) by Commission Cindy Mills

Recently, I spoke with CASA Advocacy Specialist Stacy Archer and CASA Advocacy Volunteers Steven and Sheila Castelein to learn how CASA volunteers use their "on-the-job" training as parents to assist the juvenile courts in dependency cases.

Courts called upon to make the best interests of the child determinations rely on an extensive list of factors identified by law. The only way for the court to consider these factors is through the diligent work of CASA volunteers.

These court-appointed volunteers work directly with the child and often the entire family providing consistency for the child, resources for the caregivers, and ultimately an unbiased voice to court. Cases include DFACS foster care, family preservation cases, and sometimes private cases filed by a child's guardian when family circumstances change and might require re-evaluation.

CASA is always looking for Advocacy Volunteers or other assistance. If you want to learn more about CASA or how you can help, [Click HERE.](#)

Watch below the interview by Commissioner Cindy Mills, District 4. She talks with CASA Advocacy Specialist Stacy Archer and CASA Advocacy Volunteers Steven and Sheila Castelein about the program.



Public Safety Alert



DEA Reports Widespread Threat of Fentanyl Mixed with Xylazine

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is warning the American public of a sharp increase in the trafficking of fentanyl mixed with xylazine. Xylazine, or "Tranq," is a powerful sedative that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved for veterinary use.

"Xylazine is making the deadliest drug threat our country has ever faced, fentanyl, even

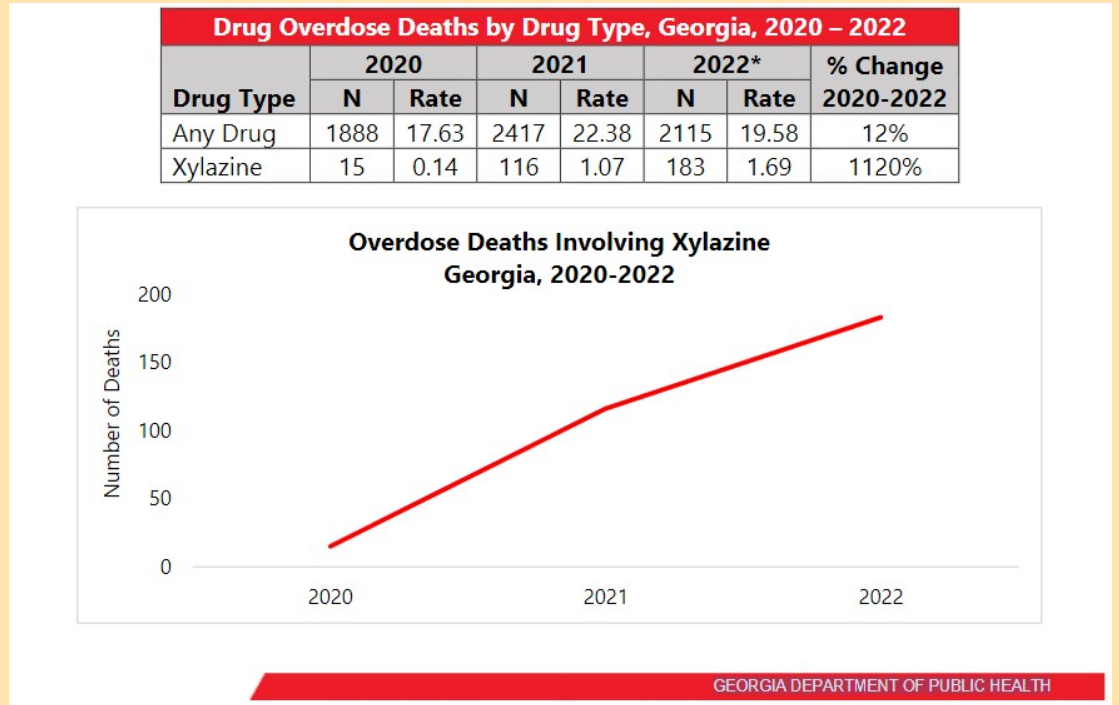
Xylazine is making the deadliest drug threat our country has ever faced, fentanyl, even deadlier,” said Administrator Milgram. “DEA has seized xylazine and fentanyl mixtures in 48 of 50 States. The DEA Laboratory System is reporting that in 2022 approximately 23% of fentanyl powder and 7% of fentanyl pills seized by the DEA contained xylazine.

Xylazine and fentanyl drug mixtures place users at a higher risk of fatal drug poisoning. Because xylazine is not an opioid, naloxone (Narcan) does not reverse its effects. Still, experts always recommend administering naloxone if someone suffers from drug poisoning. People who inject drug mixtures containing xylazine also can develop severe wounds, including necrosis—the rotting of human tissue—that may lead to amputation. According to the CDC, 107,735 Americans died from drug poisonings between August 2021 and August 2022, with 66 percent of those deaths involving synthetic opioids like fentanyl. The Sinaloa Cartel and Jalisco Cartel in Mexico, using chemicals sourced mainly from China, are primarily responsible for the vast majority of the fentanyl trafficked in communities across the United States.

From 2020 to 2022 in Georgia:

- Deaths involving any drug increased 12%
- Deaths involving xylazine increased 1120%
- The proportion of overdose deaths involving xylazine increased from 0.8% to 9*

* Stats and graph from Georgia Department of Public Health.



STATE NEWS

Georgia House Passes HB 520 to Continue Advancement of Last Years Mental Health Parity Act

On Thursday, March 2, the Georgia House of Representatives passed House Bill 520, 163-3, according to *Capitol Beat News Service*. The bill aims to grow Georgia's mental-health workforce and find better alternatives for patients than shuttling them between jails, emergency rooms, and the streets.

The legislation, sponsored by Rep. Todd Jones and others, would address the state's mental-health workforce shortage by creating a loan repayment program for nurses and other mental health professionals already working in the field and agreeing to provide mental health care in underserved communities. Last year's bill limited loan forgiveness to students who had not begun their professional careers.

The bill also creates a task force to look for ways to streamline mental health licensing procedures and reform some disciplinary measures for nurses and other professionals facing behavioral health or substance abuse problems to align with current guidelines for doctors.

House Speaker Jon Burns praised his late predecessor, **David Ralston**, who died last November, for leading the way on mental-health reform with the previous year's legislation HB1013, signed by Governor Kemp on April 4, 2022. "The passage of HB1013 was only a start. Without this bill passing, it makes HB1013 much less than it was created to be," said FCDAC Founder and Commissioner Cindy Mills.

House Bill 520 now moves to the Georgia Senate.

Georgia, with 14 Other States, Awarded CCHBC Planning Grants to Address Mental Health Crisis

On March 16, 2023, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**, awarded 15 states each with a \$1 million, one-year **Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC)** planning grant. This announcement marks the first time these planning grants have been available since the program began in 2015.

Georgia is one of the selected states. The other 14 states are Alabama, Delaware, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia. In 2024, up to 10 of those will participate in the CCBHC Medicaid demonstration program and receive enhanced Medicaid reimbursement.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE HERE](#)

NATIONAL NEWS

New SAMHSA Advisory On Cannabidiol (CBD)

SAMHSA has issued a new advisory on "Cannabidiol (CBD) – Potential Harms, Side Effects, and Unknowns."

This advisory will

- inform the reader about how cannabidiol (CBD) is derived and how it differs from delta-9 THC and other cannabinoids.
- Focuses on the risks and harms of CBD, especially those sold over the counter.
- Clarifies common misconceptions about CBD, given its broad availability and marketing for several medical conditions despite limited evidence of efficacy.
- Provide awareness of the potential harms associated with CBD use, and parents, in particular, should be advised not to let their children use non-FDA-approved CBD products.

[Read the Advisory](#)

FYI

Awkward Conversations: "The Talk"

Season 2 Episodes 17 &18

This episode encourages parents to talk early in their child's life and often about drug misuse. These conversations are opportunities to let your kids know you care, are interested, and want them to live healthy lives where they can thrive. The talk is ongoing and not one-and-done.



Host Jodie Sweetin is joined by Amy McCarthy, Dr. Aida Balsano, Special Assistant to the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Director, and Robert Vincent, Associate Administrator for Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Policy at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Ultimately our goal is to help parents have "The Talk," if it hasn't happened yet, then let's be prepared...if it has, how did it go?

If you screwed it up, no worries. Let's figure out how to get it right. But, on the other hand, if you feel it went well, take this as a reminder that the talk is not a one-off, let's figure out what's next in this constant battle to keep those we love more than life itself safe! This episode will discuss the When and Hows of talking with our kids about drugs and making smart choices.

Host Jodie Sweetin continues the "Talk," or, as we saw, one of many talks about substance use in our society. She is joined by Amy McCarthy, Dr. Aida Balsano, Special Assistant to the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Director, and Robert Vincent, Associate Administrator for Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Policy at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. In this episode, we will discuss keeping the child's dignity intact while assisting them through difficult situations. Separating what the child's behavior is and your love for the child can be hard when tempers are raging. We will share tips on overcoming these situations and how to make "The Talk" beneficial to the child and not detrimental to your relationship.



The Drug Enforcement Administration collaborating with the **Elks Drug Awareness Program** announces the next installment of Awkward Conversations. This year's project features the second

season of a video podcast series featuring Full House and Fuller House's Jodie Sweetin, guest experts, and celebrity parents. The 20 video podcast episodes cover a variety of subjects to help parents learn how to empower their kids with the tools needed to stay safe, drug-free, and make healthy decisions. Topics include signs of drug use in teens, fake pills, preventing drug misuse among college students, bullying and peer pressure and its consequences, understanding your kids' social media use, and do's and don'ts when discussing drugs.

Alcohol Awareness Toolkit

To raise awareness about alcohol-related harms and the importance of alcohol policy safeguards, Northwest PTTC has launched the **Alcohol Awareness Toolkit: #ProofsInTheNumbers**.

The Alcohol Awareness Toolkit seeks to do the following during the month of April:

- Raise awareness about alcohol-related harms and the importance of solid alcohol policies using memes.
- Encourage engagement from prevention and public health stakeholders to strategically educate and inform decision-makers about effective alcohol policies by providing easy-to-personalize, templated opinion editorials, letters to legislators, and proclamations.

The Northwest PTTC is excited to bring these resources to communities. We encourage our prevention partners to use the materials to raise awareness around the weekly themes.

2023 Alcohol Awareness Weekly Themes

Week 1: Harms to Others/Impaired Driving/Violence (April 2-8)

Week 2: Alcohol and The Economy (April 9-15)

Week 3: Alcohol's Role in The Opioid Epidemic (April 16-22)

Week 4: Alcohol and Cancer & Excessive Alcohol Use (April 23-29)

[Get Your Toolkit Here](#)

Additional Resources

Submitted by Kaylie Trotman, Recovery Local, internet mental health advocate. Recovery Local is dedicated to providing resources and information to all those struggling with drug and alcohol addiction.

- [The Summit Wellness Group](#) - Written and curated by Women of Color, this guide features over 60 resources for People of Color
- [Neuroscience Research Institute](#) - An excellent resource outlining recognizing and responding to PTSD and trauma
- [Pacific Sands Recovery Center](#) - An in-depth guide on understanding the impact, dangers, and classification of diet pills



Free Truth About Drugs E-Courses

This interactive Truth About Drugs course series has been designed so you can learn the truth about drugs at your own pace. Find out what drugs are, what they are made of, and their short- and long-term effects, and view real stories from real people about each of the most popular drugs of choice.

[Click Here](#)

On the Calendar

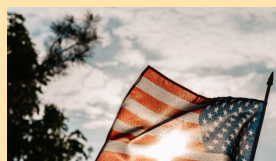


April

- Spring Festival City Center, April 22.
- **Walk for Recovery** Sunday, April 23, Cumming City Center.
- **Crisis of Substance A** Documentary on GPB on Monday, April 24th, 9 p.m. EST.
- Rx and Illicit Drug Summit, April 10-13, Atlanta, GA.
- Healthy Kids Day, April 29, Forsyth County

May

- Mental Health Awareness Month
- **Mother's Day**, May 14



- **Memorial Day, Monday, May 29**, commemorates all who have died in military service protecting

- Healthy Kids Day, April 29, Forsyth County YMCA 10-1 p.m. Amanda Pruett Tabling for FCDAC.

- **National Volunteer Month.**
- **Stress Awareness Month.**
- **Alcohol Awareness Month.**



FREEDOM.

Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council | 240 Elm Street, Cumming, GA 30040

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