



**EDUCATE.  
ADVOCATE.  
EMPOWER.**



# Strategizer

Leading the way to a  
healthier Forsyth County



June 2025 Volume 5 Issue 2

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International Day against  
Drug Abuse 2025



Drug Abuse 2023  
“Breaking the Chains:  
Prevention, Treatment,  
and Recovery for All!”

This slogan emphasizes community support, healthcare access, and the need for global solidarity in addressing drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

Drug Use Statistics 2025

- Over 300 million people aged 15-64 worldwide have used drugs in the past year.
- Cannabis use has increased by 25% in the last decade, with rising concerns over synthetic opioids like fentanyl and methamphetamine.
- 1 in 8 people with substance use disorders receive treatment, highlighting the urgent need for improved healthcare access.
- The global drug trade generates over \$400 billion annually, fueling organized crime, corruption, and violence.

This day helps educate communities about the dangers of drug abuse and trafficking. Furthermore, it encourages governments and organizations to invest in prevention programs.

FCDAC Council Meeting, Work and Programs Round-up

Kayden's Korner



**Welcome Summer!** Take a moment to take deep breaths, slow down, and reconnect with yourself, your family, and friends. Sounds good, but for many parents, summer can be a time when they feel the added stress about the activities and

whereabouts of their teens and young adults.

**Marti Roveda** was the speaker at this month's council meeting. She was recently interviewed by PAN (Parent Action Network) and discussed her parenting journey with a son who became addicted to high-potency THC (see the story below). There were two points she made that hit me.

The first point is that adults, parents, can continue to **work on themselves** and heal. "Somehow, when we have kids, we think we

going to **fight for your kid**, and people are going to bring you casseroles, and we're all going to gather and fight for your child's life."

Friends, let's take Marti's words to heart and use this summer to work on ourselves, become more self-reflective, recognize our wounds (and how they influence our parenting style and emotional regulation), and try to increase genuine connection with our children. Also, look around and bring that casserole to someone who is struggling.

.....



must have all the answers for ourselves and our kids." No! We all experience trauma that needs healing. We continue to grow our relationship skills. It is a lifelong journey. Sometimes we need to step back from our children and attend to our needs, especially as it pertains to our mental and physical health. "Ultimately, by becoming healthier individuals, we can show up in a healthier way for our youth who are struggling. When we're no longer struggling with ourselves, we can be a person of support for our loved one," Marti said.

The second point is **overcoming shame** connected to both mental illness and SUD. Marti said, "You know so many parents sit in shame and hide in the corners, they have someone with this disease. It's like, are you going to sit, are you going to do that if your child had cancer? No, you're not. You're



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



Our next FCDAC Council Meeting is on  
**Wednesday, July 2**  
**8 a.m.**  
United Way Office

## Council Meeting Highlights

Director Rachel Kayden is on bed rest until her baby arrives, so Alycea Vega opened the 8 a.m. monthly council meeting by welcoming everyone and inviting attendees to introduce themselves.

### Announcements:

- Our student council is working on several summer projects: the **Opioid Awareness Billboard Challenge** and a **Literary/Writer's competition** with prevention themes.
- Cindy Mills asked everyone to watch this report about the hemp THC-infused drinks that are flooding the market. Click on the link below!

<https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/amp/wellness/video/rise-thc-beverages-121231433>

This month, we have a prevention-focused meeting that offers practical, science-informed tools for parents, professionals, and community members to strengthen family connections and reduce risk factors for youth substance use and mental health challenges. Discover how emotional regulation, attuned communication, and supportive adult relationships can cultivate resilience and lay the groundwork for lasting well-being.

**Marti Roveda** is a Certified Parent Peer Specialist and Parent Coach and the founder of Equanimity Parent Coaching. Drawing from her personal experience navigating her own family's challenges with substance use and mental health, Marti is dedicated to empowering parents with the tools and support they need to foster healing and resilience within their families.

### Prevention through Connection

- My story began when my son, at age 16, came into contact with high-potency THC and other

substances to which he became addicted. SUD over the next several years took me and our family on a journey of fear and frustration. It was a roller coaster of emotions and struggles with relapses, different facilities, and ultimately to a crossroads. After about nine months of trying to get sober and work a program that he was kicked out of, we presented him with a choice: We said we love you and we understood that he was struggling, but we couldn't continue to allow him to slowly kill himself by continuing to use. His options were to choose another local or inpatient program in Nashville, or he could pack a bag of clothes and hit the road. It was our rock bottom, and his because he had nowhere to go. He'd burned bridges with friends, and he didn't want to be homeless at 17. He welcomed the opportunity to go to Nashville into an inpatient program.

- We needed to change. The parenting style, our communication strategy, and our trying to control our son weren't working. We were loving him to death. We needed to change for ourselves as a couple and as individuals. I came to share about the power of connection, and as we've said in this room before, the opposite of addiction is connection. Every person, and especially parents, need to model emotional regulation, attune communication, and learn how supportive relationships work. I needed to learn these tools, and when I took the focus off my son's 12-step program and focused on my 12-step program, I found that was the best way to provide the space our son needed.
- Today, we'll cover emotional regulation, attuned communication, supportive relationships, and see how it reduces risk.
- Practical science-informed tools to strengthen family and community connections.
- Promote long-term well-being and resilience in youth.
- **Emotional Regulation**, remaining calm, pause, reflect, and make thoughtful choices instead of acting impulsively. A parent's calm is the emotional anchor a child needs in their storm. Emotionally regulating means to be able to be calm, identify emotions and to be able to manage those emotions, so someone else's emotions don't hijack my feelings. This is healthy engagement and modeling,
- **Attuned Communication**: Be present, listen reflectively, and validate emotions. When I did this, I created emotional safety by listening to understand, not respond. And I learned to reflect back what he was saying, I had to truly stay engaged and hear what he was saying and reflect back to him so he heard and knew that I was listening, and validate his emotions. It's not our job to fix it; it's our job to listen and provide loving, nurturing guidance, but their decisions are ultimately theirs. If we provide our children with space, connect with them, listen to them, hold space, and give them an opportunity to speak their minds and hearts, we're building that connection.
- Empowering youth and allowing them to make age-appropriate decisions enables children to become decision-makers. It encourages them to think critically and be accountable, understanding that their decisions will ultimately have some form of consequence. The consequence could be either a positive or a negative outcome. Allowing our children to learn how to make decisions builds resilience. Their wins build confidence, and it fosters resilience; their mistakes are an opportunity for learning and growth.
- My mission is to get to parents in the early stages of parenting with these tools and develop skills to pass along to their children.
- Supportive Adult Relationships. Adults, both inside and outside the family, whom children can turn to when life gets hard. Those safe adults offer guidance without judgment, helping youth weigh the consequences. Modeling healthy coping and boundaries, reinforcing what safe feels like.
- Boundaries and staying connected without collapsing boundaries. Key points
  1. Stay calm and curious – respond, don't react (if you have no answer, use awesome, bummer, cool phrases)
  2. Use open-ended questions: What do you think could happen? What can you do to change the situation and the relationship dynamics?
  3. Reflect back their feelings to show empathy and reduce shame.
  4. Set clear, compassionate boundaries that focus on safety, mental, and physical health.
  5. Make decisions around their mental and physical health and family values, not fear and control
  6. Keep the relationship stronger than the behavior



- Practical tools
  1. Help youth label emotions
  2. Reflective listening to build trust and reduce conflict
  3. Pause before reacting; respond with intention
  4. Connection before correction, lead with empathy
  5. Practice rituals of connection, small daily moments, walks,
  6. Focus on effort and growth, catch them doing good!
  7. Expand the circle of care into the community, build a team of emotionally regulated adults
- Resilience is built over time. Positive interactions build upon themselves through consistent support. Families and communities are powerful agents of change. And everyone has a role in fostering resilience

Meeting ended at 9 a.m.

## Community Outreach, Youth, Members, and Partners



### FCDAC's Marti Roveda interviewed by SAM's Fortitude Podcast

FCDAC's Parent Partners Corner columnist, **Marti Roveda**, was interviewed by the Parent Action Network (PAN), a division of Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), dedicated to amplifying the voices of parents whose lives have been devastated by the harmful effects of marijuana.

"I recently joined the Fortitude Podcast to share the journey that reshaped both my career and purpose," said Marti.

"What I thought was a personal crisis revealed a much larger systemic gap: families of youth facing substance use struggles often feel invisible and unsupported. That realization led to the founding of Equanimity Parent Coaching and my advocacy work with **Georgians for Responsible Marijuana Policy**."



We talk about:

- ☐ Building a supportive space for parents
- ☐ The public health risks of high-potency THC
- ☐ The power of community and systems-level change

This conversation is about fortitude, healing, and shifting the narrative around youth substance use.

[Listen Here to Marti's Interview](#)

To find out more about the Parent Action Network and Smart Approaches to Marijuana Click below.

[PAN Click Here](#) [SAM Click Here](#)

## Parent Partners Corner

by Ashley Dickerson and Marti Roveda



Marti Roveda, CPS-P, and Parent Coach

Marti is a parent coach who helps parents of youth with substance use disorders find healing and strength through Equanimity Parent Coaching. She founded the ARCH Academy of Cumberland Heights (Nashville, TN) Parent Support Tribe, serves on the ARCH Academy Advisory Committee, and co-chairs FCDAC's Parent Partners Committee.



### Prevention Through Connection

#### Summer Strategies for Stronger Families

At our most recent Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council (FCDAC) Meeting, I had the privilege of presenting a topic close to my heart: "Prevention Through Connection." As the founder of *Equanimity Parent Coaching* and Co-Chair of FCDAC's Parent Partners Committee, I shared what I've learned through both lived experience and professional training—how emotionally attuned relationships between parents and kids can be one of the most powerful protective factors we have.



Ashley Dickerson

Ashley currently holds the role of Revenue Accounting Director at AT&T and is an active member of FCDAC. Her personal journey as a parent of a child who suffers from Substance Use Disorder covers a lot of pain, frustration, and isolation; but also a lot of hope and healing. Ashley openly shares her story of personal recovery with other parents to reduce the shame and stigma of the disease and help start the dialog among parents who may be struggling to find support for themselves. She contributes her insights monthly to the *Strategizer*."

With summer upon us, the timing feels especially important. Without the structure of school, many kids face long stretches of unsupervised time, boredom, or social pressure—and parents often feel unsure how to set limits without constant conflict. That's where connection comes in.

Connection doesn't mean caving in or being permissive. It means creating the kind of relationship where our kids feel emotionally safe, seen, and supported—even when they push back. When young people feel connected to a calm, caring adult, they're more likely to make healthy decisions and reach out when they're struggling. [Below are a few of the tips I've shared in a recent blog, Summer with Intention: Guiding Young People Toward Purpose, Prevention & Support](#), to help families stay grounded and connected this summer:

- **Be present.** Even five minutes of undivided attention each day—no phones, no distractions—can help your child feel seen and valued.
- **Make a flexible plan together.** Ask your child, "What do you want your summer to feel like?" Then create a rhythm that balances fun, rest, and responsibility.
- **Support independence with safety.** It's okay to give more freedom—but be clear about your non-negotiables, like curfews, screen time, and substance use.
- **Stay curious, not critical.** If something goes wrong, pause before reacting. Try asking, "What were you hoping would happen?" or "What do you need right now?"

· **Model emotional regulation.** Our kids don't need us to be perfect. They need us to be calm, consistent, and able to own our emotions when things get hard.

I hope these tools help you navigate the summer months with a little more clarity, confidence, and connection. We're all in this together—and I'm grateful to walk alongside so many courageous parents doing the hard work of showing up with presence and compassion.



Marti's Resource Page



EQUANIMITY  
PARENT COACHING

### Why Connection Matters

Prevention isn't just about rules—it's about building relationships that help young people feel safe, seen, and supported as they shape their future.

#### Core Protective Tools:

##### 1. Emotional Regulation

- A parent's steady presence helps calm a child during emotional storms
- Teaches youth how to manage stress without turning to substances
- Encourages thoughtful choices over reactive behavior

##### 2. Attuned Communication

- Connection deepens when we listen with empathy and without judgment
- Mistakes in communication are natural—what matters most is how we repair and stay engaged
- Staying emotionally present invites honesty and trust

##### 3. Empowering Decision-Making

- Giving youth room to make age-appropriate choices helps them grow confident and capable
- When they make mistakes, it's a chance to learn—not a reason to shame
- Supporting rather than controlling builds critical thinking and accountability

##### 4. Supportive Adult Relationships

- Youth thrive when they know there's someone to turn to in hard times
- Adults who guide without shaming help teens weigh choices and understand consequences
- Consistently modeling healthy coping shows what emotional safety looks like

#### Practical Tools You Can Use Today

- Help Them Name Emotions - Labeling feelings builds emotional awareness
- Reflective Listening - Repeat back what you hear to show understanding
- Pause Before Responding - Take a breath to avoid reacting out of frustration
- Connect Before You Correct - Start with empathy before offering guidance
- Create Rituals of Connection - Daily moments like meals or check-ins matter
- Focus on Effort, Not Perfection - Highlight growth and persistence
- Expand Their Circle - Involve trusted adults who can reinforce values

**Resilience** builds gradually—what matters most is showing up consistently, not perfectly.

Presented by Marti Roveda, CPS-P & CPC  
Certified Parent Peer Specialist & Parent Coach | Equanimity Parent Coaching  
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## Youth Outreach

### Youth Council

## Opioid Awareness Billboard - Design Extension June 27

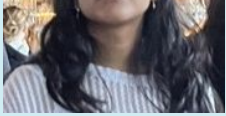


**Sahasra Tatavarti** told the *Strategizer* that it has decided to extend the deadline for the

format, but we're excited about what we've seen so far







extend the deadline for the Opioid Awareness Billboard Challenge to June 27. Sahasra said, "We have gotten several requests for an extension due to travel and the beginning of the summer vacation."

"So far, we've received 7 to 10 submissions. Only about five entries are fully valid due to the quiz

we've seen so far and are looking forward to the rest. The winner will be announced in July," she said.



There is still time to submit a creative design for the Opioid Awareness Billboard Campaign, if you hurry! The submission deadline is June 27.

## Uppala Announces Voices for Change Literary Contest



### Keertana Uppala

is a member of our Youth Council and a West Forsyth High School freshman.

She told the *Strategizer*, "I was in middle school when I heard about drugs, and I thought like, how are middle schoolers getting involved in drugs at such a young age? It broke my heart to listen to stories about these kids. Then, during the summer of 8th grade, I decided to get involved in the **Drug Awareness Council**."

"I have a passion for writing, for poetry, and for good stories. The **2025 Voices for Change Literary Contest** combines both my passion for writing with my passion to be a part of drug prevention work," Keertana said.


The contest invites students from middle school to high school in Forsyth County to submit original poetry, free verse, spoken word, and narrative entries using the following themes:

- Drug prevention and awareness
- The personal or societal impact of drug use
- Stories of resilience, recovery, or hope.

The top three winners get gift cards for \$100, \$50, and \$25, respectively.

The judging window will close on June 25th.

**Attention!**  
Council Members Please Help  
Promote this to all Youth! And  
Check Out our Instagram  
Account!



FORSYTH COUNTY DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL &  
 GEORGIA YOUTH WRITERS COLLECTIVE PRESENT

# 2025 VOICES FOR CHANGE LITERARY CONTEST

FORSYTH COUNTY STUDENTS IN GRADES 6–12 ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT  
 ORIGINAL POETRY, FREE-VERSE OR SPOKEN WORD PIECES, AND

NARRATIVES/STORIES THAT EXPLORE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING THEMES:

- DRUG PREVENTION AND AWARENESS
- THE PERSONAL OR SOCIETAL IMPACT OF DRUG USE
- STORIES OF RESILIENCE, RECOVERY, OR HOPE



**SUBMISSIONS DUE  
JUNE 25TH**

APPLICATIONS OPEN JUNE 4TH



COMPETITION CRITERIA:

- CREATIVITY
- ORIGINALITY
- EVOKES EMOTION
- UNIQUE VOICE

1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE **\$100 GIFT CARD**  
2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE **\$50 GIFT CARD**  
3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE **\$25 GIFT CARD**

REGISTRATION  
**FREE**

WINNERS  
CEREMONY  
**JULY 2ND**

SUBMISSIONS THROUGH GOOGLE FORMS | UNITED WAY |  
QUESTIONS? PLEASE EMAIL KEERTANAUPPALA@GMAIL.COM

## Members teaching Members



### Interdependence: A Natural Connection Builder in the Families

By Dana Bryan

Connection is a word that is often used to describe ways to prevent or overcome addiction. This word emphasizes how important it is for a recovering alcoholic or addict to be a part of a community with those who value sobriety and the dedication required to achieve it. Members of groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Al-Anon, Insight, or various parent groups support each other in the work involved to overcome the ways in which addiction to a substance or behavior has prevented them from leading a productive life.

**To be truly connected with others, one must understand the importance of interdependence.** This requires a person to consider how his actions affect others in the group, whether the group is their family, neighborhood, school, or the community in which they live. When a person is involved with addiction, all thoughts and actions are directed toward the substance or behavior to which the person is addicted, with no consideration for how his actions affect family members or others with whom



**Dana  
Bryan**

Dana is a retired middle school teacher and member of

FCDAC. 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

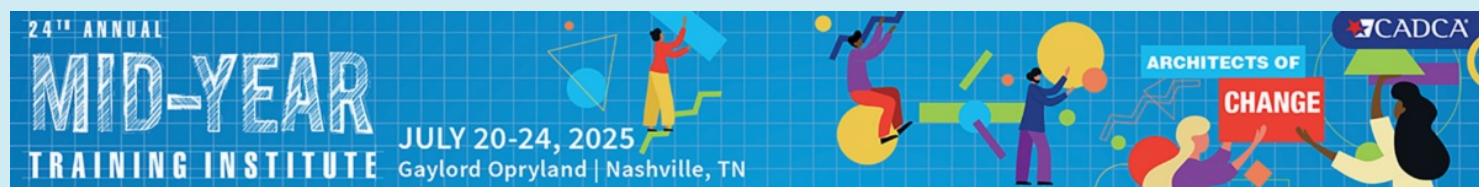
for how his actions affect family members or others with whom he comes in contact. When a person feels connected to a group, his decisions take into account the ways in which their actions will affect others.

families. She contributes her insights monthly to the *Strategizer*. Thanks, Dana!

**Interdependence** is one of the seven habits which Stephen Covey emphasized in his book *7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE*. Interdependence was the normal way of life for children who were raised in the 1950s and 1960s. Most homes had one car, one telephone, one television, and often only one bathroom so these things were shared by all members of the family. It was natural to say, "I need to make a phone call. Does anyone need to use the phone?" OR "Does anyone need to get in the bathroom before I take a bath?" OR "I would like to watch my favorite television show tonight, but you get to pick the show to watch tomorrow night."

I remember describing this lifestyle to my 8th grade students, and one of them raised her hand and said, "I have my own television, bathroom, and telephone. When I am 16, I will probably have my own car." This illustrates how few opportunities our children have to experience the skill of living interdependently and truly connecting with those in their own family. It is important for parents to create a home environment that encourages children to consider the needs of others within the family and the group as a whole when making their own decisions. This can happen naturally. Family interdependence prevents all family members from becoming isolated from one another, fostering family cooperation. This is a connection to be honored, valued, and practiced.

## Our Partners in Prevention



**Attend CADCA's 24th Annual Mid-Year Training Institute**, where professionals from across the substance use prevention field come together for four days of hands-on workshops, insights from experts, and networking opportunities! This event brings together industry leaders, master trainers, coalition members, and CADCA staff to share the latest cutting-edge strategies, best practices, and innovative solutions to common challenges.

Designed for seasoned professionals and newcomers alike, this event offers a chance to expand your knowledge, add to your skillset, and collaborate with like-minded peers. You'll leave with practical tools and fresh ideas to help drive change in your community.

[Register for Mid-Year Here](#)





WHEN: July 12th  
@ 1PM

WHERE: Piedmont  
Fellowship Church

1170 Dahlonega Hwy  
Cumming, GA 30040

Join us as we  
discuss anxiety and  
depression and  
engage in activities  
to better our  
mental health!

Also:

Come hear from a representative from  
Georgia Power about how to save over  
\$33 per month on your energy bill.  
Apply for Georgia Power Discount  
onsite!

Basic childcare available! Bring the kids,  
they'll have plenty to do!

678-812-6622

[www.forsythcommunityclinic.org](http://www.forsythcommunityclinic.org)



## Changing the Tune: SAFE Project Partners

As part of the "Sensible Strumming" campaign, SAFE Project partnered with Ryan Whyte Maloney to create the song "It Ain't 5 O'Clock Somewhere," challenging the glorification of drinking alcohol in country music. This new country single encourages responsible drinking beyond Dry January and prompts a critical examination of the genre's prevailing culture of normalizing unhealthy drinking patterns. Listen to "It Ain't 5 O'Clock Somewhere," launched on dozens of music services including iHeartRadio, Spotify, Pandora, YouTube Music, and more.



Addiction Recovery Awareness Day -  
ARAD 2026 - ☐☐  
January 28 2026  
The Georgia Freight Depot  
and the State Capitol



We are Shatterproof — a community working to make it easier to access evidence-based support. We take pride in supporting everyone impacted by substance use — individuals, families, friends, coworkers, and entire communities.

Here is our free resource hub to guide you, wherever you are on your journey.

On our Addiction Resources page, you'll find:

- [24/7 crisis support and info on fentanyl and naloxone](#)
- [Resources for families, friends, and peers in recovery](#)
- [Help finding quality treatment options](#)
- [Support groups and grief resources](#)
- [Employer tools to support workplace well-being](#)
- [Podcasts, videos, and books that inform and empower](#)

[Explore Shatterproof Resources Here](#)

## News For You

### National News

#### President's Budget Release

CADCA is working its way through the recently released Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 President's Budget Request (PBR). The PBR represents an important part of the appropriations process. Proposals in the PBR do not represent final numbers appropriated for federal programs. Congress must pass, and the President must sign, appropriations bills into law before any funding amounts can be considered final. Regardless, the PBR contains many proposals of vital importance to the substance use prevention field.

The PBR proposes substantial cuts to various programs, including substance use prevention programs, and proposes to reorganize large parts of the federal government. Many programs would either be eliminated or moved to a proposed new agency, the Administration for a Healthy America (AHA). AHA will be "the primary agency focused on prevention [and] will centralize the work of multiple federal agencies". AHA would impact programs in the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Details on the proposed cuts and changes to substance use prevention infrastructure are below.

#### ONDCP

- The Drug-Free Communities (DFC) program is proposed to be moved from ONDCP to AHA and funded at only \$70 million (\$39 million less than the FY 2025 appropriated amount of \$109 million).
  - This proposed decrease in funding is a reduction of 36% from FY 2025. This would drastically scale back the national reach of the DFC program and could result in funding decreases to existing grantees and halt any new grants from being awarded in FY 2026.
- The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) Section 103 enhancement grant program's funding to current and former DFC grantees to do more with more intensity around

opioid and stimulant issues is proposed to be totally eliminated (-\$5.2 million).

- The High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program is proposed to be moved to the Department of Justice and funded at \$196 million (\$102.5 million less than the FY 2025 appropriated amount of \$298.5 million).

## SAMHSA

The PBR proposes to cut over \$1 billion from SAMHSA. Most of the proposed cuts would come from the Programs of Regional and National Significance (PRNS) across the three SAMHSA centers, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) and the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS).

### CSAP

- The following CSAP programs would be totally eliminated:
  - The Strategic Prevention Framework/Partnership for Success (SPF/PFS) grant program (-\$125.4 million).
- The Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking (STOP) Act programs (-\$14.5 million).
  - Enhancement Grants to current and former DFCs to do more with more intensity around underage drinking (-\$11 million)
  - National Adult-Oriented Media Campaign (-\$2.5 million)
  - Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD) (-\$1 million)
- Tribal Behavioral Health Grants (-\$23.66 million)
- Minority AIDS Initiative (-\$43.2 million)
- Strategic Prevention Framework – Prescription Drugs (SPF-Rx) (-\$10 million)
- Minority Fellowship Program (-\$1.3 million)

### CSAT

- Programs of Regional and National Significance (PRNS) is zeroed out (-\$576.2 million)

### CMHS

- A number of mental health Programs of Regional and National Significance would be eliminated. Other mental health programs, formerly in SAMHSA, would be moved to AHA. This list of mental health programs moved to AHA includes:
  - 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (\$520 million proposed)
  - National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (\$28 million proposed)
  - Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention (\$63 million proposed)
  - American Indian and Alaska Native Suicide Prevention (\$4 million proposed)
  - Project AWARE (\$121 million proposed)
  - Child Traumatic Stress Network (\$99 million proposed)
  - Children's Mental Health (\$125 million proposed)
  - Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (\$67 million proposed)
  - Assisted Outpatient Treatment (\$21 million proposed)
  - Disaster Response (\$2 million proposed)
  - Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (\$385 million proposed)
- A totally new block grant called the Behavioral Health Innovation Block Grant would be created that combines all of the funding from the Substance Use Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Services (SUPRTS) Block Grant (funded at \$2 billion in FY 2025), the State Opioid Response (SOR) Grants (funded at \$1.575 billion in FY 2025) and the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) Block Grant (funded at \$1 billion in FY 2025).
  - There is not much information in the budget about how the new Behavioral Health Innovation block grant would be implemented and structured. 78% of the money in this new block grant comes from the substance use related sources. However, it is not clear how much money would be dedicated in this new block grant to substance use related issues, nor is it clear what would happen to the 20% prevention set aside in the current Substance Use Prevention, Treatment and Recovery block grant that is currently the largest single source of funding for the substance use prevention field (funded at \$401.6

million in FY 2025).

## CDC

- The CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease and Health Promotion (which houses the Office on Smoking and Health and the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control) would be eliminated (-\$655.5 million).
- CDC's opioid overdose prevention work formerly in the Center for Injury Prevention and Control is moved to AHA and funded at \$475 million (-\$30 million from the FY 2025 appropriated amount of \$505 million).

The appropriations process is still months away from being finished and the numbers discussed here are not final. Congress will debate and mark up appropriations bills this summer, and the field will have ample opportunity to weigh in at that time.

CADCA will keep the field fully informed throughout the FY26 appropriations process. We will be holding a webinar on June 17 at 2:00 PM, in which our Public Policy Consultant, Sue Thau, will provide a more detailed briefing about the President's Budget Request including what we are advocating for with Congress and to answer questions from the field. More information on how to register will be coming soon.

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## White House Imposes Duties to Curb Illicit Drug Entry from Canada

February 1, 2025 President Trump

While the attention of most has been on the drugs coming across the Mexican border, criminal networks are implicated in human trafficking and smuggling operations, enabling unvetted illegal migration across our northern border. There is also a growing presence of Mexican cartels operating fentanyl and nitazene synthesis labs in Canada. In his Presidential Action, President Trump stated, "This challenge threatens the fabric of our society. Gang members, smugglers, human traffickers, and illicit drugs of all kinds have poured across our borders and into our communities. Canada has played a central role in these challenges, including by failing to devote sufficient attention and resources or meaningfully coordinate with United States law enforcement partners to effectively stem the tide of illicit drugs."

According to the White House Presidential Action Page, President Trump's February 1, 2025 action says, "With respect to smuggling of illicit drugs across our northern border, Canada's Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre recently published a study on the laundering of proceeds of

illicit synthetic opioids, which recognized Canada's heightened domestic production of fentanyl, largely from British Columbia, and its growing footprint within international narcotics distribution. **Despite a North American dialogue on the public health impacts of illicit drugs since 2016, Canadian officials have acknowledged that the problem has only grown.** And while U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) within the Department of Homeland Security seized, comparatively, much less fentanyl from Canada than from Mexico last year, fentanyl is so potent that even a very small parcel of the drug can cause many deaths and destruction to America families. In fact, the amount of fentanyl that crossed the northern border last year could kill 9.5 million Americans."

[Read President Trump's Full Presidential Action](#)

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## Call For Fully Enforce Parity and Increase Funds for Peer-Led Recovery Programs In Local Communities

**The Number One cause of death for Americans 18 to 45 continues to be opioid overdose and fentanyl poisoning.** There is no greater or more serious domestic policy issue.

America is losing a generation to the Addiction Epidemic. Death rates surpass totals from multiple wars. America averages some 200 deaths per day – the equivalent of a 737 airplane crashing – every day.

Addiction, properly referred to as Substance Use Disorder, is a medical issue. **The United States is at a pivotal moment in the Addiction Epidemic. Beyond the death and survival statistics lies the impact the Addiction Epidemic has on the American workforce. Businesses, large and local, are having to address the reality that addiction is impacting America's ability to maintain a workforce and conduct business in a consistent and profitable manner.** The Administration and Congress have two options: save lives, restore families, and strengthen communities, or watch the death rates continue to increase in communities across the nation.

### Parity

Numerous states remain noncompliant with both federal and state parity laws. Most families cannot afford treatment and must have insurance to support their loved one. Unfortunately, the insurance lobby often fails to comply with both Federal and state laws. Far too many American families enter generational debt because insurance is failing to cover treatment in a professional and medically appropriate manner.

**The Georgia Council for Recovery calls on the Administration, Congress, the United States Department of Justice, and the bipartisan National Association of Attorneys General to take appropriate actions to ensure full compliance with Parity at both the Federal and state levels.**

**As Prevention Advocates, please stay vigilant that the Laws on the books must be enforced. Please contact your federal representatives and senators.**

FYI

## Depressed Teens Turning to ChatGPT for Help — Should We Be Worried?



Check out Dr. Delaney Ruston's latest Screenagers Blog on the influence of AI on our youth. AI is all over the news and internet these days, and concerns about its influence on tech users, especially the youth and the elderly, are growing.

This Screenagers blog post examines AI bots designed to mimic real conversations and simulate deep personal relationships, including romantic partners, and their impact on our youth. Do we have reason to be

concerned?

[Click Here to read to the blogpost](#)



## Job Opportunity



### Immediate Opportunity - Administrative Assistant/Office Coordinator

We have an exciting opportunity at **Vision Warriors** for an Administrative Assistant/Office Coordinator to join our team. This is primarily an in-office position, with flexibility for some remote work.

Located in Alpharetta, GA, we're seeking an organized, proactive, and passionate individual dedicated to supporting our mission in recovery and faith-based community initiatives. Responsibilities include general office management, administrative support, scheduling, communication coordination, and assisting with special projects.

If you are looking to join a dynamic and impactful team, please contact

**Kirk Driskell** [Click Here by Phone](#) or [Email Here](#)

## On the Calendar



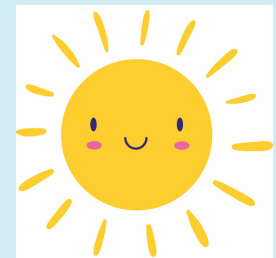
### June

- FCDAC Meeting June 4, 2025
- Flag Day, June 14
- Father's Day, June 15, 2025
- Literary Competition Submission, June 25
- International Day Against Drug Abuse 2025, June 26
- Opioid Awareness Billboard Challenge Deadline, June 27

### July



- Independence Day, July 4
- FCDAC Meeting July 2
- CADCA's 24th Annual Mid-Year Training Institute, July 20-24



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

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