

The FCDAC STRATEGIZER

Leading the way to a
healthier
Forsyth County



August 2022 Volume 2 Issue 4

Subscribe to our Newsletter



WELCOME BACK FORSYTH!

SCHOOL MATH 2022*

- $\frac{1}{3}$ — the fraction of total students who start school between August 12 and August 16.
- \$696.70 — the average amount spent on back-to-school shopping in 2019.
- 2019 — the year when half of all back-to-school shopping was done online.
- 50.8 million — the number of students

Forsyth County School Resources

DID YOU KNOW FORSYTH COUNTY SCHOOLS
HAVE GREAT RESOURCES?

CHECK OUT THE DISTRICT'S WEBSITE BY
[CLICKING HERE](#)

Under District Services, choose Student Support.

enrolled in Fall 2019, the highest ever.

- 6.8 hours — the average school day.
- \$12,000 — the average spending by U.S. public schools per student.
- 49.4 million — the number of public school students enrolled in prekindergarten through grade 12 in fall 2020.

*From *National Today*

Once there, you will find various topics to select from **Prevention, Family Resources, Counseling, Health Services, and College and Career Readiness Guide.**

Our Council member **Lindsey Simpson** leads **Prevention Services** that provide prevention resources on Bullying, Substance Use, Suicide, Vaping, and more.

Voices of our Council's Educators



Forsyth Academy's Gabby Breiten

Gabby Breiten is the on-site Drug Counselor at Forsyth Academy and is gearing up for the new school year that begins on August 4.

"This school year, I am excited to bring positivity and fun to the topic of **sobriety**. It can be challenging for students to get back into the groove of going to school, so I hope that through my groups, I can make sobriety attractive and fun for young people. I am also looking forward to having a drug counselor at North Forsyth High School and potentially collaborating with them on some functions and

community events for parents and community members," she said.

"Given the current Fentanyl Crisis," Gabby said, "I will be hitting hard on greater student awareness of the **life-threatening dangers Fentanyl** poses. Utilizing prevention techniques with students who have not yet experimented with the drug will help protect them from the severe, negative, and potentially life-threatening consequences. I will attempt to use **FCDAC's posters** showing the prevalence of **counterfeit pills** that look identical to real ones. So many drugs have Fentanyl as a cheap filler, making them killers. There is no way to tell the difference between the two images, and that's "sobering." My goal is to be able to help students think through the potential consequences, even first-time use!"

North Forsyth High School Gets Drug Counselor

Amy Dykes, the Student Support Counselor at North Forsyth High School and FCDAC friend and contact point at North Forsyth High School, reports exciting news! **Emily Ennis** is the new full-time drug counselor for North Forsyth High School. "As far as we know," says Amy, "Emily will be the first full-time drug counselor assigned to a traditional high school. North Forsyth is super excited about being the pilot for this great program. We know our community has a need, and we are excited about the opportunity to provide intentional support for our students and their families."



Emily Ennis

As was reported at last month's Council Meeting by **Principal Drew Hayes, Commissioner Cindy Mills** alerted him to a grant availability. He successfully applied for and obtained this grant to fund two full-time drug counselors for Forsyth High Schools. North Forsyth is the school our FCDAC Drug Counseling Team

(Counselors Mitch Durdle, Mike Cowan, and Jaxon Savajian) brought weekly small group sessions formed after the team spoke to health classes. With this opening and seeing the need, **FCDAC played a significant**

role in acquiring the full-time drug counselor.

"While Emily is at North, she will host and provide more opportunities for additional small groups, work with individual students, connect with families, and host parent nights. We are looking forward to welcoming Emily and working with her this year," Dykes said.

INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY AUGUST 31st

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL

According to a National Safety Council analysis, a person is more likely to die from an accidental opioid overdose than from a motor vehicle crash.

In 1921, when the National Safety Council published its first statistical summary, *An Analysis of Public Accidents*.



Fear is natural and healthy. It can help us respond to danger more quickly or avoid a dangerous situation altogether. If we overestimate our risk in one area, it can lead to anxiety and interfere with our daily routine.

Ironically, it also leads us to underestimate real risks that can injure or kill us. Plane crashes, lightning strikes, or dog attacks are common fears, but what about falls, the danger inside a bottle of pills, or your drive to work?

Knowing the odds is the first step in beating them. View the video (on the left) for the latest odds of dying estimates. A summary table of some of the top causes of death is also provided. Please use the data details tab to explore all the odds of dying estimates.

Honor Loved Ones Lost to Opioids



The Celebrating Lost Loved Ones map allows families and friends to add loved ones lost to opioids and addiction. There is tremendous stigma around addiction, and this map is intended to show that people of all walks of life are impacted. Click Here to go to the National Safety Council's website and page, and click each picture for a story. To add a loved one, fill out this form.

Click each picture for more details. Only loved ones in that area will show if you zoom on the map.

FCDAC Work and Programs Round-up

Farewell, Mitch!



Mitch Durdle, our Interim Director who has led our Council for the last 10 months, has accepted a new work opportunity. While leading the Council, Mitch expanded our contact and outreach in the schools

by forming a small support group at North High School. We appreciate the work he did for the Council and wish him the best.

Commissioner Cindy Jones Mills, the founder of the Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council, announced the Council changes at the monthly council meeting and said Rachel Kayden, Program Coordinator for FCDAC, will continue to "hold the fort down" while a new director is found.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

FCDAC is hosting a Joint Meeting with the Mental Health Council



WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 2022, 8-9 AM
UNITED WAY OFFICES

We will host a panel of guests from area high schools and talk about the student's mental health and the programs being offered for their support.

Council Meeting Highlights, Community Outreach Committee, Youth Council, Members and Partners



Council Meeting, August 3, 2022 Highlights

- Update on Drug Council changes: **New director search is underway.** Our search will be for the right candidate with a passion for drug prevention, community collaboration, and fundraising experience. Please help us get the word out! Interested individuals can call the United Way Office at 770-781-4110.
- **Rachel Kayden** will coordinate the Council's activities until the right candidate is found.
- Introduction of the new school drug counselor for North Forsyth Highschool, **Emily Ennis.**
- FCDAC collaborators at **The Connection** introduced their new Executive Director, **Diane Waugh.**
- Guest speaker from Forsyth County Sheriff's Office, **Sergeant Brian S. Chatham,** discussed what law enforcement is currently seeing with current drug use and drug trafficking in Forsyth and the surrounding counties.
- **Saasha Kapoor,** Youth Council President, and Council member **Dana Bryan,** FCDAC Speaker, are hosting Community Event to increase awareness among youth and parents on August 28. (See article below.)

- **Shatterproof Committee** has formed and met. They are looking for a Spring date for our local Shatterproof Walk, with each committee member taking a piece to work on! We want other non-profits to join in through sponsorship and hosting tables.
- **Recovery Rocks September 18, 2022, Cumming Fairgrounds**
- **September meeting** will be a joint meeting with the Mental Health Council with speakers from several high schools who will speak to us about the student's needs, their programs, and where there are gaps.

Council Meeting Guest Speaker: Sgt. Brian Chatham Forsyth County Sheriff's Office Group Supervisor of the Drug Task Force

Sgt. Brian S. Chatham was our guest speaker at the August 3 Council Meeting. Sgt. Chatham is a no-nonsense 18-year veteran in Law Enforcement, and he is the **Group Supervisor in the Drug Task Force at the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office**. "I will not sugar coat anything, and I will show the reality of the drug crisis," he said.

Sgt. Chatham leads a 13 detective, multi-jurisdictional task force that covers the tri-county area. "We are a federally mandated Drug Task Force. That means we work with the big Federal Agencies like DEA and HIDTA (High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas). This Federal agency collaboration provides us with resources in my unit," he said. "What makes us different is that our focus is local; we fight local crime. Our Sheriff and Chief of Police of John's Creek created our unit for one purpose to fight the opioid epidemic."

Our detectives are on-site for every drug overdose. We want to know where and from whom they got their drugs. We immediately start tracking that dealer.

Predominate Drugs of Concern on our Streets

"You may be surprised that it is not Heroin or Prescription Drugs, that create the highest risk to our population," Sgt. Chatham stated. "Everything on the street right now is **FENTANYL** driven."

That being said the number one used illegal substance is still **Marijuana**, but not the green leafy stuff.

1. **High potency THC Marijuana products- cartridges Delta 8, Delta 10, vapes, and gummies-** is the easiest and most common drug. These products come through the mail from California and Colorado, where Marijuana is legal. Here, these potent THC products don't

have the plant material, are 98 percent of the time, when tested come back as a schedule 1





Marijuana THC cartridges obtained from California and Colorado can lead to felony arrests.



Can you tell which pill contains a deadly dose of Fentanyl?

Neither can your child.

A graphic with a black background. At the top, a white pill container holds two blue, round pills, each with the number '30' embossed on it. Below the container, the text is written in white, bold, sans-serif font.

The message is there are no "safe" pill on the street that is not laced with Fentanyl and DEADLY.

back as a schedule 1 drug- a felony. People don't understand that that means no bond, which is a mandatory four months in jail.

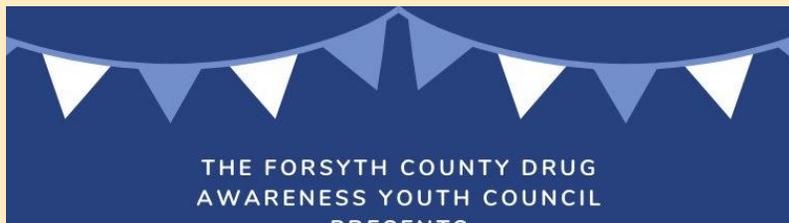
2. **Fentanyl** has replaced Heroin. It is potent, cheap, and deadly. This is where our fight is, and there is a significant loss of life locally.
3. **LSD** has made an enormous comeback and bought through social media
4. **Methamphetamine** is a cheap drug that is no longer made in mom-and-pop labs, but **Mexican Cartels have taken over its distribution**. They ship the meth in liquid and powder forms allowing them to hide the drugs in containers we aren't used to looking for. Then to covert the meth to the crystallized form, it is taken to a super lab. Another change in the **Mexican Cartel operation is to employ local gangs** to work in their labs (see the **Local News** story below to read about the most recent bust).
5. **Purple Drink** is a cough medicine (dextromethorphan) abused and sold now through Social Media.
6. **Cocaine** is big in Fulton County.
7. **Heroin**, an opioid, is less prevalent now because of Fentanyl. Every drug has Fentanyl mixed with it. It seems to be a craze to put Fentanyl in everything. It seems Fentanyl is a potent, cheap filler.
8. **Counterfeit pills** are challenging because they are sold "appearing" as one thing, but hidden in the pills is Fentanyl.

"We are in a battle for lives. In my career, I have held kids who have overdosed and died in my arms. I tried to save them, and I couldn't. I see those kids in my mind daily, which is why I do what I do. I don't have answers, and solutions are not easy. **What I know for sure is that we can't quit or give up.** I heard a quote from Golfer Tony Finau, and I think it can relate to everyone in the room. He said, ' I am glad my children get to watch me win because they have watched me fail my entire life. It takes a loser to be a winner."

So we, each of us, have at some point felt like we were losers, but we are winners just by showing up to continue the fight. We may not put a dent in this problem, but if we give up...what's our purpose on earth?" Sgt. Chatham emphasized.

Thank you, Sergeant, for coming to our meeting and all you and the Sheriff's Office does.

FCDAC YOUTH COUNCIL





Saesha Kapoor, is a Senior at South Forsyth High School and FCDAC Youth Council President. Saesha is impacting the Forsyth Community by hosting a youth-centered information and awareness event.

Kapoor joins forces with Council member **Dana Bryan** who writes the

"Members Teaching Members" column for the *Strategizer*. Dana is a retired middle school teacher and, prior to COVID, was a regular speaker at schools, making presentations about the real consequences and high risk of experimenting with addictive substances. Dana will be the **featured speaker** at the Post Road Library event providing a message for both youth and parents about how involvement with drugs affects them, their futures, and their families. The event will take place on **August 28, 2022, at the Post Road Public Library Meeting Room** from 1:45-2:45 pm.

All council members, collaborative organizations, and partners of the FCDAC are invited to attend this event as Saesha and Dana fulfill the council's mission to educate, advocate and empower our community to prevent substance abuse across the lifespan in Forsyth County!

Community Outreach Committee



Our FCDAC Shatterproof Committee held its first meeting. The new committee members are Rachel Kayden, Susan Tanner, Polly Sarno, Mike Cowan, Sophia Cook, Jaxon Savajian, and Kayla Bergeron. The committee met through Zoom with Lauren Shields, Shatterproof's Development Director. The committee will begin the process of planning a local **Rise Up Against Addiction Walk**.

"We are looking at the possibility of a Spring Walk," said Rachel Kayden. "We are inviting other interested non-profits to get involved. How? Through Sponsorships, Donations, and Hosting tables for their organizations at the event." All interested, please don't hesitate to contact Rachel Kayden [HERE](#).

Stigma is the missing piece in our nation's response to the addiction crisis.



PRESENTS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DRUGS

An Educational Experience For All Middle and High Schoolers (Parents Welcome)

28 August 2022 | 1:45 PM to 2:45 PM
Post Road Public Library
Meeting Room

With Guest Speaker Dana Bryan
Presenting Lauren's Story:
The Truth About The World Of Drugs





Shatterproof's Plan to Combat Stigma



Consider participating in this event and get your "squad" on board with you!

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Shatterproof is looking for people to VOLUNTEER at the event in Atlanta.

To VOLUNTEER, [CLICK HERE](#)

COUNCIL MEMBERS AND PARTNERS UPDATES

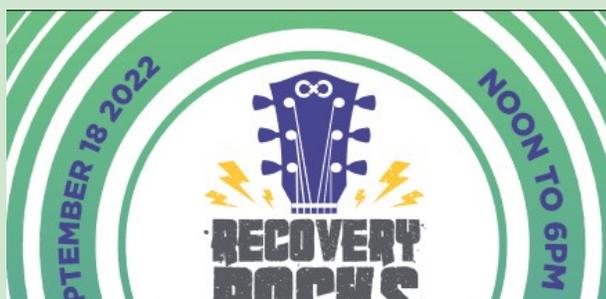


Sunday,
September 18, 2022, Cumming
Fairgrounds

A Rockin' Concert and Sober Social Festival in Cumming, GA.

Recovery Rocks is an annual day of family-friendly fun including:

- Live Music
- Stories of Hope
- Kids Activities
- Food Trucks
- Recovery-Related Resources...And More!



Join the fun for the entire family. Show your support because NOT ONLY IS RECOVERY POSSIBLE; RECOVERY ROCKS!



New Offering From Wellness For Families Through Recovery and FCDAC COUNCIL MEMBER, KAYLA BERGERON



Wellness for Families Through Recovery Presents

Equine Therapy Program

Working with horses requires concentration, selflessness, and teamwork. Equine-assisted therapy is an evidence-based program shown to help people improve self-esteem, self-awareness, confidence, and empathy.

Equine therapy is another tool to address mental health, including self-confidence, bullying, and substance abuse. Equine therapy programs can help to treat:

- Behavioral problems
- Grief
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Attention-deficit/hyperactivity Disorder
- Substance Abuse Disorders
- Eating Disorders

Wellness for Families Through Recovery

Equine Therapy Program

Saturday and Sunday Appointments Available

11:30 am - 5:00 p.m.



Special Equestrians of Georgia, 13185 New Providence Road,
Milton, GA 30004

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
KAYLA BERGERON [HERE](#)
Or PHONE: 561-308-8104



Teacup Memorial

Council Member Jennifer Hodge hosts the
6th Annual Teacup Memorial on August 27
& 28 at Century 21 in Cumming

The annual remembrance and memorial for all who have been lost to Substance Use Disorder will be a two-day event this year. The dates are Saturday, August 27, from 4 to 7 pm, and Sunday, August 28, from 2 to 5 pm, and the event will be held in Cumming's Century 21 Office, 2920 Ronald Reagan Blvd., Suite 113, Cumming, GA.

The Teacup Memorial is a heart-moving event meant to increase awareness of this growing tragedy and welcomes people who have experienced this loss from across the state and even outside Georgia.



Jennifer Hodge, Century 21 Results Realtor, is co-founder of Realty4Recovery with her late son, Robbie Hodge. She leads the fight against addiction with much community help. Realty4Recovery is a non-profit organization that uses Real Estate as a way of funding these events and helping other non-profits.



MEMBERS TEACHING MEMBERS



LAUREN'S STORY:
"The Truth about the World of Drugs"

On Sunday, August 28th, I will give my presentation, "Lauren's Story: "The Truth about the World of Drugs," at the Post Road Library from 1:45 to 2:45 p.m. Saesha Kapoor, FCDAC Youth Council President is the organizer of this event. She is a Senior at South Forsyth High School and President of "Be Smart Don't Start," a drug awareness club at her school.

My message is especially beneficial for middle and high school students and parents. The choices and behaviors that lead to later drug use can usually be traced back to decisions made during middle school. I include as much information as I can because I never know which fact will convince the students of the reality and danger of drugs and the importance of their choices. I always hope there is something in my presentation that the students haven't realized or heard before.

These are the main points included in my presentation:

- The choices we make directly impact our future positively or negatively.
- The things students learn in their health books about drugs truly happen to real people. (Students have told me they never realized that the things they learn in their health class about drugs could happen to real people just like themselves and their friends.)
- The people who try to get you to take drugs, or to do anything that they know could kill you, are not your friends—even if they were your friend a short time ago.
- Drugs are NOT cool, and there is nothing cool about the world of drugs.
- Most drug users trace their drug use to when they started using some form of nicotine. The reasons that cause a person to try cigarettes or vaping are the same reasons that cause someone to try drugs.
- Of all chemicals a person can become addicted to, a person becomes the most addicted and the fastest to nicotine. It is much easier never to get involved with a nicotine product than to start and later be successful at quitting. If a person can get into their 20s without using some form of nicotine, this person will probably never use nicotine in any form.
- If you ever think about taking a drug, ask yourself, "What need am I trying to satisfy?" The honest answer to that question will reveal an area in your life where some changes need to be made.
- I inform students of the behavioral characteristics which cause a person to make poor and dangerous choices. They include the following: impulsiveness; having to learn the hard way; repeating the same mistakes without learning from them; being oppositional and defiant toward authority; the desire to be popular or cool without considering the consequences of not having the courage to deal with peer pressure; the thinking among teenagers that they are invincible—even when they put themselves in dangerous situations.
- Eating disorders are addictions and can lead to death.
- Sniffing/inhaling chemicals not made to breathe are deadly. This activity causes permanent brain damage and irreversible damage to other vital organs. One in ten people who sniff chemicals will die the first time. People who inhale chemicals don't do it long. They either quickly quit or die.
- If you know someone involved with drugs or any activity that could harm them or someone else, you are not helping them by keeping their behavior a secret. In fact, you are making it easier for your friend to continue doing something that could kill them.
- There are many healthy ways to deal with stress. I ask students to think of healthy ways they deal with stress. They mention these activities: listening to music, talking with a friend, going for a walk, a



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 insights monthly to the *Strategizer*. Thanks, Dana!

run, engaging in another physical activity, watching a funny movie or tv show that makes them laugh; playing a musical instrument; practicing a sport like basketball.

- I tell students about the "real Lauren" before drugs and show pictures of her (projected on a screen) at different stages of her life. I hope each student will see her as a relatable person and someone with whom they would have had something in common. Perhaps, like Lauren, they are part of their school's Gifted Program; they love to read; they love all animals and want to be a veterinarian. Maybe, like Lauren, they love to play soccer, tennis, and jump on their trampolines; or they compete in ice skating. Lauren had many friends who thought she was funny and fun to be with.
- At the conclusion, I share a poem Lauren wrote about six weeks before she died. We found it the day we buried her. The poem reveals how much she regretted her drug involvement and their control over her.
- Following my presentation, I encourage students and parents to ask questions.

I hope anyone who could benefit will attend. Please spread the word because it is an opportunity to learn how drugs affect families from a mother who lost her 15-year-old daughter. The danger to our youth is real and present. The best defense is the strength gained from knowledge.

NEWS FOR YOU

LOCAL NEWS

July 4th Traffic Stop Ends in Major Drug Bust

What began as a traffic stop for irregular lane changes violation and DUI stop on July 4th turned into a significant drug bust that covered several counties. The arrest led to the **discovery of 70 pounds of methamphetamine**, other drugs, and firearms. The Drug Task Force was called in, and investigations over three days resulted in multiple arrests and drug seizures, the discovery of a narcotics stash house in Buckhead, a drug warehouse in Alpharetta, and a methamphetamine lab in Ellijay.

This is the drug bust that Sgt. Chatham talked about during the August 3rd Council Meeting.

[Click Here](#) to read the Forsyth County News article.

STATE NEWS

Suicide and Crisis Hotline Number- **988** Rollout Begins



Saturday, July 16th, marked the beginning of the 988 national dialing code, which will eventually replace the 10-digit suicide prevention and crisis hotlines. One important goal of the 988 rollout is to relieve 911 and law enforcement of some of the increased demand for mental health crises and suicide interventions. 988 has

also been designed to provide Georgians in crisis with the right resources to meet their immediate needs.

For rural areas, 988 will be a game changer as it will be able to bring more services to Georgia's rural communities.

The activation of the 988-dialing code is the beginning of a long road in transforming Georgia's crisis system and making it easier for those experiencing behavioral health crises to know whom to call in an emergency. 988 is a lifeline for individuals in need of support and in need of someone to talk to. 988 will be that easy to remember, three-digit number for people to dial. It is also the hope that 988 will change the landscape of crisis work, mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention not only in the state of Georgia but nationwide. While we are excited about the launch of 988, keep in mind that the Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL) hotline and MyGCAL app will still be available to those who need them.

For more information about the rollout of 988, please visit the following resources:

- [CLICK HERE FOR GA INFO](#)
- [CLICK HERE FOR SAMHSA INFO](#)

NATIONAL NEWS

SAFE Banking Act Stripped from America COMPETES Act

On Friday, June 24 Congress announced that the Secure and Fair Enforcement (SAFE) Banking Act will not be included in the America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing Pre-Eminence in Technology and Economic Strength (America COMPETES) Act. **This is a major win for public health and for substance use prevention.**

The SAFE Banking Act would have granted marijuana businesses access to the banking system, making it easier for them to do business and exacerbating the negative consequences of marijuana proliferation. **The fact that it is not included in the America COMPETES Act is due, in large part to the fact that respondents to CADCA's legislative alert sent nearly 1,000 messages to Capitol Hill urging Congress not to include the SAFE Banking Act in the America COMPETES Act.**

Thank you for contacting your members of Congress and your support in helping America's communities to remain safe, healthy and drug-free. **Please don't let up! It is time to SPEAK UP AND WRITE FREQUENTLY TO OUR LEADERS WHO REPRESENT US!**

Florida AG Demands President Biden Classify Fentanyl a Weapon of Mass Destruction

This week, Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody sent a letter to President Biden urging him to declare illicit fentanyl a weapon of mass destruction (WMD). This comes in response to the exponential rise in

overdose deaths, where fentanyl is primarily responsible for massacring more than 200 people every day. A weapon of mass destruction is defined as a chemical, nuclear, biological, radiological, or other device used with the intention of harming a large number of people. Classifying fentanyl as a WMD would entail multiple federal agencies, such as the Department of Homeland Security, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Department of Defense, in the coordination of dismantling the supply chains to protect the population from fentanyl's death and destruction.

In her letter, Moody emphasizes the dire situation America faces with this narcotic, including the exorbitant supply flooding into America driven by drug cartels in Mexico supplied by China. Additionally, the letter highlights the continued record-shattering seizures by law enforcement, with amounts seized that are enough to kill the entire American population many times over. **Overdose is now the leading cause of death for young adults ages 18 to 45 years, surpassing the number of deaths from car accidents, suicide, cancer, or COVID-19 for this age group.**

If you think this is extreme, Moody highlights how prior to the attacks on September 11, 2001, one may have never thought twice about a commercial airplane being used as such a weapon. Considering the minuscule amount needed to cause death, the risk to first responders and Good Samaritans, and widespread availability to criminal organizations and 'non-state actors,' the likelihood of fentanyl being used in such a manner should not be underestimated.

Read her [full letter](#) and [press release](#) here.



CALL
TO ACTION!

Send a message to your Senators asking them to vote AGAINST the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act.



ISSUE BACKGROUND

On July 21, 2022, Senators Schumer (D-NY), Booker (D-NJ), and Wyden (D-OR) introduced the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act (CAOA). This bill would remove marijuana from the drug scheduling system altogether, totally legalizing the cultivation, production, distribution, and sale of marijuana, and ultimately **commercializing a new addictive and harmful substance**.

This bill, the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act is **nothing more than a massive giveaway for Big Pot. It contains zero of the necessary public health guardrails needed to protect public health and safety.**

As it stands, the bill also **contains no serious provision that would prevent the marijuana industry from being taken over by large, multi-national organizations, such as the corporate giants in Big Tobacco and Big Alcohol. Groups like this are already taking steps to corner the marijuana market.**

WHAT YOU CAN DO: LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

Please send the sample message below to your Senators raising the concerns we all have and encourage the Senators to oppose it. **As with all CADCA's legislative alerts, PLEASE use your home address when sending messages to Congress. All of these messages are sent by you as a constituent and not as a coalition leader or member.** Please share this alert with your networks using your personal email address.

HOW TO DO IT

[Click Here](#) to send a message to your Senators.
Ask them to vote against the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act.

SAMPLE MESSAGE

As a concerned citizen, I ask that you strongly oppose the **Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act (CAOA)**. This bill would remove marijuana from the drug scheduling system, totally legalizing and commercializing marijuana.

Modern high-potency marijuana products can contain up to 99.9% tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). The CAO A does not contain any public health guardrails, such as potency caps, packaging, and labeling requirements, health warnings, or restrictions on advertising and marketing to youth, nor does it prohibit making misleading claims about these products.

Research on marijuana shows that it is contraindicated for fetal and adolescent brain development and linked to youth's attention, memory, motivation, and learning problems. Marijuana use is also linked to

negative health and societal outcomes, such as increased workplace injuries, increased fatal car accidents, physical ailments, and serious mental health issues.

As the United States continues to deal with the unprecedented opioid and stimulant epidemics, legalizing and commercializing marijuana would only exacerbate these issues. Please oppose the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act (CAOA).

FYI

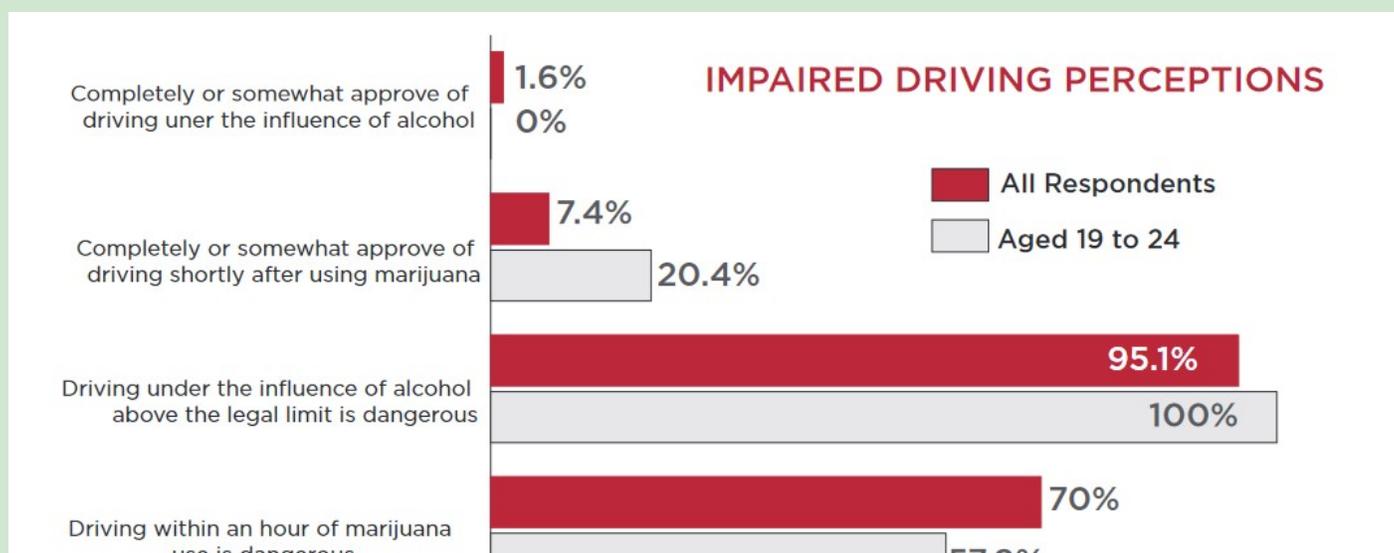
What can Georgians Expect IF Recreational Marijuana is Legalized? (Part 2)

Last month we looked at the alarming statistics of how legalized recreational use of marijuana impact Youth in states who have taken the step to legalize Marijuana use.

This month we will look at the impact legalizing Marijuana has on traffic safety in States where legalization of Marijuana has happened. Again, we are using the comprehensive report from **Smart Approaches to Marijuana***.

*This report is on the SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana) Website **May 2019** "Lesson Learned from State Marijuana Legalization." For all the stats with graphs, [CLICK HERE](#).

PERCEPTIONS LEAD TO DANGEROUS TRENDS



use is dangerous



(AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 2019)

(AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 2019)

Driving under the influence of marijuana is dangerous.

Driving while under the influence of marijuana has proved an increasingly damaging phenomenon due to the legalization and normalization of marijuana in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that, in 2018, 12 million U.S. residents reported driving under the influence of marijuana. This represents 4.7% of the driving population (Azofeifa et al., 2019).

The reduced perception of risk and the prevalence of stoned drivers on the road bear consequences for road safety and raise questions for legislators and law enforcement going forward.

A survey conducted by AAA is illustrated in the above graph. It found that

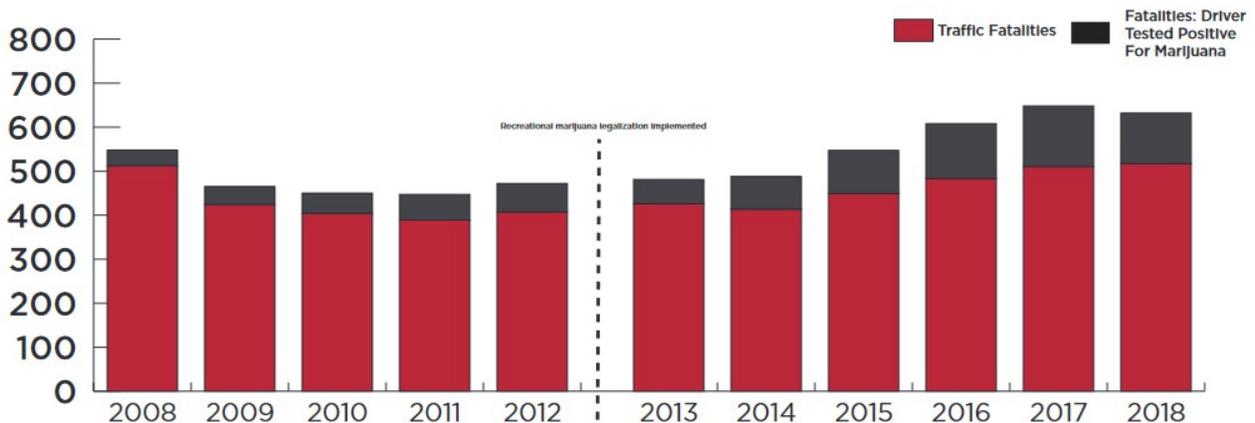
- Only 70% of drivers perceived driving within an hour of using marijuana as extremely dangerous or very dangerous, compared with 95.1% who felt that driving under the influence of alcohol above the legal limit was extremely or very dangerous.

- 7.4% of respondents completely or somewhat approve of driving shortly after using marijuana, compared with 1.6% who completely or somewhat approve of driving under the influence of alcohol above the legal limit.
- Of respondents between the ages of 19 and 24, only 57.9% believed that driving under the influence of marijuana was extremely or very dangerous.
- Among drivers between the ages of 19 and 24, 20.4% completely or somewhat approved of driving shortly after using marijuana. The downward trend in perception of risk has coincided with an increased percentage of marijuana-impaired drivers on the road.



47% of Colorado drivers who tested positive for marijuana at a level of 5.0+ THC, also had a BAC of 0.08 or higher.

COLORADO TRAFFIC FATALITIES WHERE THE DRIVER TESTED POSITIVE FOR MARIJUANA



(Colorado Department of Transportation, 2019)

In Colorado, traffic fatalities increased by over 31% since 2013. The rise in statewide traffic fatalities has coincided with a rise in instances of traffic fatalities where the driver tested positive for marijuana (active THC in the bloodstream). The number of traffic fatalities involving drivers who tested positive for marijuana in Colorado rose from 55 deaths in 2013 to 115 deaths in 2018. In 2018, 18.2% of all traffic fatalities in Colorado involved a driver who tested positive for marijuana (CDOT, 2018).

ON THE CALENDAR

AUGUST

- Summer Safety Month
- World Lung Cancer Day, August 1
- **SCHOOL STARTS, Thursday, August 4**
- International Overdose Awareness Day, August 31

SEPTEMBER

- **Patriot Day, September 11 Never Forget!**
- **Suicide Prevention Awareness Month**
- National Recovery Month
- Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
- Blood Cancer Awareness Month