

# STRATEGIZER

Leading the way to a healthier Forsyth County

November 2023 Volume 3 Issue 7

Receive the Newsletter



We Thank VETS for Our FREEDOM!

# NO VAPE NOVEMBER AND LUNG CANCER AWARENESS

# SAFE FROM VAPING

Keeping kids safe from the dangers of



vaping is a

#### Health Impacts of Vaping: Quick Facts

\* \* **\*** \*

**THANK YOU** 

VETERANS

NOVEMBER 11TH

• The use of tobacco products in any form, including vapes, is unsafe for kids, teens,

and young adults.



concern for parents. Parents are encouraged to talk with their children early

on and frequently in this public service announcement from SAMHSA's "Talk. They Hear You."





Talking to Students About Vaping

• Provide students with tips for coping with stress by doing something they love, such as physical activity, the arts, and connecting with nature.

• Acknowledge the social pressure to vape that students

might be facing from peers, social media, enticing flavors, and targeted ads from the tobacco industry.

- Encourage students who vape to quit.
- Encourage them to tap into their support system by reaching out to family, friends, or educators who can help them quit.

• Most vapes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development. Teenage brain development continues until about age 25.

• Nicotine exposure during adolescence can impact students' learning, mood, and attention.

• The aerosol from vapes can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances, including:

- · Cancer-causing chemicals
- · Heavy metals (such as nickel, tin, or lead)
- · Ultrafine particles

• Flavorings such as diacetyl (a chemical linked to severe lung disease)

• When a person becomes addicted to nicotine and stops using it, their body and brain must get used to not having nicotine. This can result in temporary symptoms of withdrawal, including feeling anxious or depressed or having trouble concentrating. Youths might keep using nicotine to help relieve these symptoms.

• Youth might turn to vaping to try to deal with stress or anxiety, creating a cycle of nicotine dependence. But nicotine addiction can also be a source of stress.

Vaping coats the lungs with potentially harmful chemicals. E-liquid concoctions usually include some mix of flavorings, aromatic additives, and nicotine or THC (the chemical in marijuana that causes psychological effects) dissolved in an oily liquid base. According to Johns Hopkins physician Michael Joseph Blaha, MD, MPH, "The CDC has identified vitamin E acetate as a chemical of concern among people with EVALI. Vitamin E acetate is a thickening agent often used in THC vaping products, and it was found in all lung fluid samples of EVALI patients examined by the CDC."

# FCDAC Council Meeting, Work and Programs Round-up

Kayden's Korner



November is here, and beginning with Veteran's Day on the 11th right through to Thanksgiving Day and beyond, we recognize with gratitude our many blessings at home, work, school, community, and most especially, our awesome

coalition members!

FCDAC is made up of **passionate citizens** who love Forsyth County. The coalition consists of members from **12 sectors**:

- parents, government leaders,
- law enforcement,
- youth-serving organizations,
- youth,
- business representatives,
- religious organizations,
- substance abuse organizations,
- healthcare professionals,
- media,
- schools,
- and civic/volunteer groups.

Currently, we have representatives for most of the 12 sectors. We are searching for members who might lead the religious organization sector. Please invite members of your house of worship to join us in our mission!



Thank you for your passion and desire to help Forsyth County thrive and be its healthiest!

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



Our next FCDAC Council Meeting is on

Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8 a.m. United Way Offices

# **Council Meeting Highlights**

**Director Rachel Kayden** opened the 8 a.m. monthly council meeting by welcoming everyone. Each attendee introduced themselves and informed the Council about recent events or ongoing prevention efforts.

#### Announcements:

- Amy Dykes, Student Support Coordinator at North Forsyth High School, works with Emily Ennis, the Substance Prevention Coach. We've had a relaunch of prevention campaigns, including an anti-vaping contest; a resource vetted by the county is **Truth Initiative**. For Red Ribbon Week, we ran a Halloween anti-drug door decorating contest. We have drug deactivation pouches in an area available to both students and parents that are being used. Once per month, drug awareness lessons are given to all students at North.
- Ashley Dickerson, the co-chair of the Parent Partners Corner, works with parents in their recovery from the trauma of a child suffering from SUD. We like to address parents before their child takes steps toward misuse, and we have worked with our substance prevention coaches when parents

are gathered. I am sharing on social media, and I am getting lots of responses to that effort.

 Lindsey Simpson, Student Support Facilitator FC School District, K-12 with Substance Use prevention and suicide prevention, is falling under my umbrella. Red Ribbon Week activities and

- this year's theme, Be Kind to your Mind, aligned well with our county's ongoing Source of Strength program.
- Dr. Katie Lambertson, Addiction Tract Coordinator for Addiction Counseling for the University of North Georgia-Now accredited and the only accredited program in Georgia.
- Rachel reminded members that Narcan is always available

This month's guest speaker is **Henry Kushner**, a person in recovery. He told his story.

# My Story

This month's guest speaker, **Henry Kushner**, is a person in recovery. You can listen to his Recovery Story is inspiring and uplifting. Encouragement to all in prevention and Recovery. Please <u>Click Here</u> to listen. Henry's story begins at 24:40.

# Outreach To Youth, Members, and Partners, and Community

# Youth Outreach





#### TRUNK OR TREAT HALLOWEEN FUNI

Our favorite Substance Prevention Coaches, Gabby and Emily (left) teamed up and joined the fun of Trunk or Truck held on Friday, October 26. This fun activity showed the delightful faces of these busy coaches, and besides handing out over add precess of cards



they informed parents and students of what a substance prevention coach offers to students in the school. They had many elementary and middle school students and parents stop by, and many took the **FGDAC** Fiver and our

Gabby Breiten, Gateway and Forsyth Academy Drug Counselor

This month, I, as always, am looking to



further prevention efforts through speaking in health talks at younger grades. Gabby's students from Gateway are preparing for some "mini-



game" fun for a social event.



such as middle schools.

I am presenting to the South Forsyth High School health classes

on November 14 and 15.

### Health Class Presentations by Emily Ennis

As Substance Prevention Coaches, we present in Freshman classes at West, North, Central, and Gateway High Schools once a semester. We have four counselors working in teams of two and work two hours weekly. Typically, our presentations touch on similar topics each time. I share my recovery story and tie in different coping tools that students might apply to situations they encounter. I talk about ways to gain self-esteem, recognize peer pressure, and not buy into false or shallow offers of friendship. Establishing good communication and dealing with parents is also a big topic. We also talk about how to be a good friend and what that means exactly. We keep students engaged by asking them different questions during the presentation and asking about their interests.



Emily reports that an **Iron Chef** competition was held at North, and it was as successful as the one held at Gateway! The kids had a blast

preparing their pasta and chicken dishes. Each dish was required to use a secret ingredient!

Emily Ennis, Substance Prevention Coach at North Forsyth High School.



Seventeen students cooked up a storm preparing four dishes for the three judges. The judges and event facilitators were Amy Dykes, Lauren Hairston, and Mike Cowan. Chicken Spaghetti was this year's winning dish.

November 7 and 10, I am scheduled to speak with North Forsyth High School's health classes.



#### Red Ribbon Week's Theme Incorporated in Forsyth County Schools "Source of Strength" Curriculum

Red Ribbon Week was celebrated in Forsyth County Schools from October 23 -31 using this year's theme, **"Be Kind To Your Mind, Live Drug-Free,"** in an already healthy-living curriculum called Source of Strength. The campaign emphasized that misuse of substances like nicotine, alcohol, marijuana, and other substances mess up your brain! Developing brains are adversely altered, research shows, and the retarding of

decision-making abilities is unacceptable to healthy students' lives.

# Deputy Kevin Ferraro Addresses Health and PE Teachers, Drugs of Forsyth County

FCDAC's Law Enforcement Sector Leader, Deputy Kevin Ferraro, presented "Drugs of Forsyth County" to approximately 20 health and P.E. teachers at their professional workshop on October 20 at Piney Grove Middle School. "We had great dialogue discussing the vaping issue within the schools at length," Ferraro said.

"An insightful moment in the meeting for me was when we discussed the number of students on a high school campus who use vapes; the **overwhelming consensus was about 2 out of three (66%).** Speaking with our **SROs** (School Resource Officers) often, I believe this to be an accurate statistic, even though it is just an anecdotal statement," he said.

"While I focused on vaping, I gave a rundown of the prevalent drugs in Forsyth. To the right and below are some slides specific to vaping from my presentation," Ferraro said.

You can see clearly that these are manufactured to attract the youth.

by Deputy First Class Kevin Ferraro,



Community Relations Unit, Forsyth County Sheriff's Office. Deputy Ferraro also leads FCDAC's Law Enforcement Sector.



### E-Liquids/Vaping

- Must be 21 to purchaseNicotine addiction
- Nicotine addiction concerns
   Studies suggest 1:3 HS
- students vape Pre-filled cartridges vs.
- Pre-filled cartridges reservoir style

#### **CBD** Vaping Dangers

- E-Liquid CBD products that contain OTHER synthetic cannabinoids have been causing overdoses on a large scale on school campuses nationwide
- CBD products **DO** contain THC and are not recommended for people being tested
- Those that had adverse reactions to CBD's showed: • Altered mental state (82.4%)
- Nausea or vomiting (49.0%)
- Seizures or shaking (27.5%)
- Loss of consciousness (25.5%)
- Hallucinations (23.5%)





### Identifying THC Products

- Scan the QR code on packages for manufacturer, THC content, and other product details
- Will help with making charges/identifying substance
- Schedule I Substance



## Avi Locking Rx Vial Project

# **Youth Projects**

Avi Karamchandani is a Lambert High School Junior passionate about STEM, youth mental health, and health awareness advocacy. He founded an online platform, FitToday, focusing on youth mental and physical health awareness.

Avi's FCDAC project, **YouthGuard: Securing Futures, Protecting Dreams**, the proposed locking prescription vial distribution, will enhance and extend the drug deactivation pouch distribution that has already begun and is moving forward. He

reported that he has been researching and working through the pricing and sourcing of the vials and is in the process of purchasing them. "I have begun reaching out to those who will most benefit from this program, such as schools and homes for the aged," he said.



#### Members teaching Members

#### The Relationship between Smoking/Vaping and Using Illegal Drugs



Think of all the chemicals to which a person can become addicted. Which chemical do you think we become the most addicted to and the fastest? If you said nicotine, you are right. Remember that making a substance legal does not mean it is good for us. As you read, remember that everything true for

cigarettes is also true for vaping because both are ways to introduce nicotine into our bodies.

There is a close relationship between those who start smoking as adolescents or teens and those who will likely get involved with other addictive substances. This is because the reasons that cause a person to start smoking or vaping are the same reasons that cause a person to use drugs.

1. Curiosity, just to see what it is like. (This is probably the number one reason.)

2. To be accepted by a particular group of people. (It is so sad that we often want to be a part of a group that requires the use of a substance that they know could kill us.)

3. It is our perception that "Everybody's doing it." The poor choices of others should not determine our future. If you are a follower, choose those people wisely whom you follow.

4. If we smoke or vape, we think we will feel "cool," or a particular person will think we are "cool." Unfortunately, many poor choices are made for this reason.

5. We do not have the courage to stand up to a peer and say, "No. I don't want to smoke or vape."

These are just some of the causes for which adolescents and teens begin to smoke or vape. They are also some of the main reasons that cause a person to use drugs. For this reason, there is a close correlation between starting to smoke or vape and later getting involved with drugs. Unless a person changes the reasons for making their choices, he is more likely to choose to get involved with drugs. Whenever I meet former drug users and ask which drug they started with, they always trace their drug use back to the day they started smoking cigarettes or vaping.



# 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!** 



Statistics show that the younger a person is when he begins to smoke or vape, the greater the chances of getting involved with drugs down the road. If you ask 100 adult smokers how old they were when they started to smoke, or vape, 94 of them would likely tell you they were under 19. In addition, the 6% who started using some form of nicotine after they were 19 would probably say they were 20, 21, or 22 and still in college. This means that **if a person can get into his 20s without becoming a smoker**, **he will probably never be tempted to smoke or vape.** Fortunately, as we get older, the peer pressure is

usually not to use any form of nicotine. Remember that just because we see adults smoking, starting to smoke is not an adult thing to do. It is simply a very difficult addiction to stop. It is much easier never to be a smoker than it is to be a smoker and be successful at quitting. However, it is possible!

1. How many adults who smoke or vape would tell you how glad they are they use nicotine? Probably none, if they are honest.

2. How many adults who smoke or vape would tell you they are glad they have an addiction that not only controls them but costs them hundreds (possibly thousands) of dollars each year? None.

How many adult smokers would tell you they have one of the health conditions caused by smoking or vaping? Probably many, and the older they get, the more who will answer "yes" to this question.
 How many would tell you they have tried to quit many times but have never been successful at quitting for long? My guess is that all of them would be in this group if they were honest in answering.

The best advice to anyone having a difficult time deciding whether to smoke, vape, or make any other critical or difficult decision is to ask:

"What is best for me and those around me?" (We usually know what is best for us. This decision only becomes difficult when it is not what we want to do.) "Which decision will positively affect my life?" "If I do this and it appears on the 11 o'clock news, will I be proud and glad I did it?"

Asking questions of young people may be a more practical approach and get them to think through the impact smoking and vaping have and to choose to live and act in ways that positively affect their lives.

#### **Our Partners in Prevention**

## Georgia Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Collaborative (GPDAPC) Meeting



From John Bringuel, , MA, RBF, TPNCPC, ICPS, Prevention / Intervention

Program Manager The Council on Alcohol Please **save December 13<sup>th</sup>** in your calendar for the next Georgia Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Collaborative (GPDAPC) meeting. We will meet at the AC-HIDTA Training Center in Norcross (**3587 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners, GA 30092**). The meeting will start at **10:00 a.m. and adjourn at 2:00 p.m.** with a delicious holiday lunch provided.

There are two ways to attend. Of course, the BEST way to attend is in person. To register to attend **in person** or **virtually** please click <u>HERE</u>. If you choose to join via Zoom (virtually) you will receive the Zoom link on December 12<sup>th</sup> via email. Look forward to seeing all of you. If after you RSVP and need anything, please email, or call me, <u>HERE</u>.

More Great Community Events from our Friends at the ...





#### THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

#### **Nonperishable Food Kits**

Canned Corn, Stove Top Stuffing, Gravy and Instant Potato Packets, Canned Yams, Canned Cranberry Sauce, Ready Made Pie Crust, Canned Green Beans, Mini Marshmallows, Evaporated Milk, Pumpkin Pie Crust, Apple Pie Filling.

The Connection has partnered with United Way of Forsyth and Accountability Court to provide food to Forsyth County families in need. \$20 gift card for grocery stores. Donations can be dropped off at The Connection; the deadline is November 13, 2023.

#### The Connection 608 Veterans Memorial Blvd. Cumming, GA 470-253-8564 theconnectionforsyth.org

# Be the lifeline.



It's not happiness that makes us grateful, it's gratitude that makes us happy.

PRAIRIE SKY RECOVERY

# **Central High School**

Third Annual Free Thrifting Winter Extravaganza



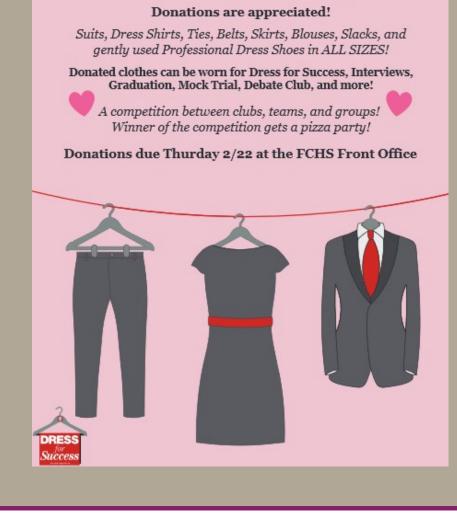


Second Thrifting Dress for Success Extravaganza



Dress for Success

Free Thrifting Extravaganza



# **NEWS FOR YOU**

## **State News**

## Inmate Drug Deaths Soar at Georgia State Prisons

An October 20, 2023 article in *The Atlanta-Journal Constitution* by Danny Robbins and Carrie Teegardin reported that illicit drugs are prevalent inside Georgia's prisons and a spike in overdose deaths is occurring. The article stated, "In 2018, 2 Georgia prisoners died from drug overdoses. Since then, the number has grown dramatically. Between 2019 and 2022, at least 49 Georgia prisoners died from overdoses. So far this year, medical examiners have determined that five inmates have died from accidental overdoses, but they have yet to rule on the causes of many other prison deaths." Read the article <u>HERE</u>.



save the Date



**CADCA** is excited to announce that <u>Capitol Hill Day</u>, happening January 31, 2024, will be returning in person this year! If you're not familiar with Capitol Hill Day, this event, which takes place during the week of <u>CADCA's National Leadership Forum</u>, is your opportunity to meet with your members of Congress (2 Senators and 1 member of the House of Representatives)! The purpose of your meeting is to discuss national substance use prevention policy priorities as well as substance use issues in your community.

**Register Here** 

# How To Best Use the Opioid Settlement Money

The battle is on across US communities devastated by the opioid epidemic on how to use the settlement money. "Using Opioid Settlement Cash for Police Gear Like Squad Cars and Scanners Sparks Debate," an article by Aneri Pattani for *KFF Health News,* was published on October 23, 2023. The Opioid Settlement Cash, totaling more than \$50 billion over 18 years, comes from national settlements with more than a dozen companies that made, sold, or distributed opioid painkillers, which were accused of fueling the epidemic that addicted and killed millions.

Many communities find it challenging to decide how best to use the funds. Some argue for law enforcement spending, while others emphasize treatment and social services. "We need to have a balance when it comes to spending opioid settlement funds," said **Patrick Patterson**, vice chair of Michigan's Opioid Advisory Commission, who is recovering from opioid addiction. If a county funds a recovery coach inside the jail but no recovery services in the community, then "where is that recovery coach going to take people upon release?" he asked.

Click Here to Read More.

# Call for Advocacy

# **\*T**CADCA<sup>®</sup> *Legislative Alerts*

Stop H.R. 3721 The USPS Shipping Equity Act

#### ISSUE BACKGROUND

The USPS Shipping Equity Act (H.R. 3721) will allow the shipment of alcohol through the postal service. The bill has been referred to the House Oversight and Accountability and Judiciary Committees. It raises significant public health concerns and would undermine the 3-tier alcohol system of alcohol control and increase the potential for unsafe, unlicensed, tainted, counterfeit alcohol to avoid regulation and enter the marketplace. Most importantly, underage drinking is the number one substance use issue facing American youth, and this legislation would only exacerbate the problem.

• Per a study from the Drug and Alcohol Review, people who purchased alcohol through the mail

between April and May of 2020 were associated with 75X higher odds of heavier drinking in the past week.

- The same study found that 58% of online purchasers under 25 reported no age verification checks during the same timeframe.
- Drug and Alcohol Review also found that 56% of people who purchased alcohol online when these emergency policies were implemented noted that alcohol was easier to get delivered than fresh food.
- Studies have shown that delivery drivers ignore age verification policies.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Please send the sample letter below to your Congressional delegation raising concerns about the USPS Shipping Equity Act as soon as possible and asking them to vote against this legislation. Your members of Congress must hear from a resounding number of their constituents NOW. **HOW TO DO IT** 

CADCA's legislative alerts use your home address so that messages are sent from you *as a constituent*. Click here to send letters to your Congressional delegation asking them to oppose the USPS Shipping Equity Act.

#### SAMPLE LETTER

Please oppose HR 3721 (the USPS Shipping Equity Act). This bill would allow the USPS to ship beverage alcohol. The bill raises major public health concerns. It would undermine the 3-tier system of alcohol control and increase the potential for unsafe, unlicensed, tainted, counterfeit alcohol to avoid regulation and enter the marketplace. Most importantly, underage drinking is the number one substance use issue facing American youth, and this legislation would only exacerbate the problem. Age verification and ID checks are critical tools in preventing underage access to alcohol. The USPS Shipping Equity Act puts the USPS in the position of having to monitor and enforce state-specific laws regarding particular products. The USPS would be forced to invest in the technology to follow age verification policies, placing an additional burden on an agency already mired in fiscal and logistical challenges. Furthermore, studies show delivery drivers ignore or improperly enforce age verification policies or deliver alcohol to the wrong address. This will only provide underage Americans with an easier way to purchase and consume alcohol, threatening to reverse the progress the public health field has made in reducing rates of underage drinking.

Vote "No" on the USPS Shipping Equity Act.

# FYI

# SMOKING VAPES-NICOTINE, MARIJUANA, AND OTHER CHEMICALS GETTING THE WORD OUT!





Use these tips to talk with your child:

- Plan to have many short talks;
- Choose informal times to have
- conversations, such as in the car or during dinner;
- Continue talking as they get older;
- Clearly state what you expect regarding drug use;
- Create family rules together, such as expectations when hanging out with friends; and
- Let them know you are always there for



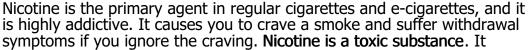
Research suggests that one of the most influential factors for children is a **strong**, **open relationship with a parent**.

That's why talking to your young person works! November signifies the beginning of the holiday season when more social gatherings and family time occur. This time of year provides many natural opportunities for short, meaningful conversations about these topics. them.

#### MAKE AN EXIT PLAN TOGETHER

Talk with your children about having an **"exit** plan" if they are offered marijuana, any drug, or alcohol. Peer pressure can be powerful among youths, and having a plan to avoid drug use can help children make better choices. Talk with your children about what they would do if faced with a decision about drugs, such as texting a code word to a family member. Be sure to practice the exit plan in a safe environment.

# Research suggests vaping is bad for your heart and lungs, just like cigarettes.





raises your blood pressure and spikes your adrenaline, which increases your heart rate and the likelihood of having a heart attack.

Is vaping bad for you? There are many unknowns about vaping, including what chemicals make up the vapor and how they affect physical health over the long term. The chemicals used in e-cigarettes vary by the manufacturer. Some people create their own mixes. Dr. Blaha says, "Emerging data suggests links to chronic lung disease, asthma, and cardiovascular disease. You're exposing yourself to all kinds of chemicals that we don't yet understand and that are probably not safe."



#### More Youths Are Getting Hooked

According to the <u>2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey</u>, more than 2 million U.S. middle and high school students reported using ecigarettes in 2021, with more than 8 in 10 of those youth using flavored e-cigarettes. Why? First, many **teens believe vaping is less** 

harmful than smoking. Second, e-cigarettes have a lower per-use cost than traditional cigarettes. Finally, with no smell, e-cigarettes are easy to hide and reduce some of the stigma of smoking.

# Battling Alcohol Chris Stapleton

**Chris Stapleton, Country Music Star** opens up and shares why he made the decision to get sober. As Chris Stapleton is one of the most authentic artists in country music, Chris Stapleton



very candidly shared his remarkable reason to let go of the bottle.



# On the Calendar



No Vape November

Lung Cancer Awareness Month

November

- Child Safety Protection Month
- National Nurse Practioner Week, November 13-19
- Great American Smokeout, November 17
- Thanksgiving Day, November 24

#### December

 National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month



- Central High School Thrifting Extravaganza, December 11-13
- Georgia Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Collaborative (GPDAPC) meeting, December 13, 10-2 pm, AC-HIDTA Training Center in Norcross
- Christmas, December 25

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

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