



FORSYTH COUNTY
DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL

DRUG PREVENTION WORK
IN FORSYTH COUNTY

EDUCATE.
ADVOCATE.
EMPOWER.

STRATEGIZER

Leading the way to a
healthier Forsyth County

October 2023 Volume 3 Issue 6

Receive the Newsletter



October Is National Substance Use Prevention Month and Youth Substance Use Prevention Month

FCDAC Youth Council Campaigns for
Protection and Prevention

FCDAC Youth Council
Members
Avi Karamchandani and
Sharmada Venkataramani
announce their plans to

protect and prevent drug

**MARIJUANA
AWARENESS
CAMPAIGN**

BY: SHARMADA VENKATARAMANI



misuse through **two new initiatives!** See their plans under **Youth Outreach.**



Locking Rx Vial Project by Avi Karamchandani

'An Ounce of Prevention' - Virtual Field Trip

Take this **Virtual Field, An Ounce of Prevention**, produced by DEA's Operation Prevention, in collaboration with Discovery Education. **Empower** yourself and others with knowledge they can use to make healthy decisions and become advocates for prevention in our community.

Meet Featured Contributors~

- **Cheri Oz** Special Agent in Charge, DEA Phoenix Division, Phoenix, Arizona
- **Shelly Mowrey** Prevention Specialist, Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA), Prevention Works AZ
- **Jennifer Talamantes** School Counselor, El Paso, TX
- **Amy Neville** Founder, Alex Neville Foundation

[Click Here for the Field Trip](#)

FCDAC Council Meeting, Work and Programs Round-up

Kayden's Korner



Hi! It's fall, y'all! There's lots going on! **Mobilize Recovery Across GA** was a successful day of celebrating recovery, and we were honored that Forsyth County was chosen as the Recovery campaign tour's final stop. Recovery stories were told and

celebrated. The message is strong: **Recovery is possible, and Recovery is Real!**

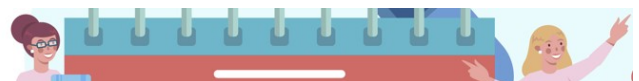
Even so, we have more work to do! (See below the tragic story of a recent GA teen's OD). We want to prevent and delay first use/exposure by constantly increasing awareness of the dangers posed by

counterfeit pills laced with fentanyl.

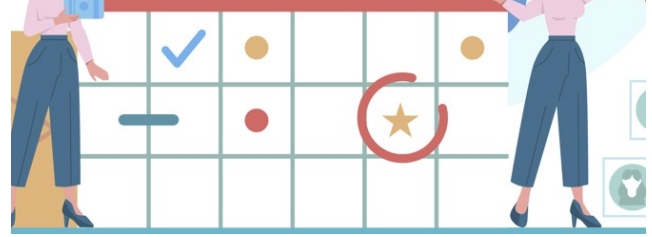
their peers and a positive, can-do American Spirit that will inspire others.

Lastly, this month, I have been considering the Council's sustainability, and like most non-profits, we are always grateful for your support through membership and financial and material donations. Please don't hesitate to contact me [here](#) if you can help us in any way.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



I am most energized by our new Youth Council Members, who have proposed two campaigns to protect and increase awareness of the great THC Threat! Avi and Sharmada are our future leaders and citizens who exhibit selfless compassion for



Our next FCDAC Council Meeting is on
Wednesday, November 1
8 a.m.
United Way Offices

Council Meeting Highlights

Director Rachel Kayden opened the 8 a.m. monthly council meeting by welcoming everyone, introducing in-person and zooming attendees, and making announcements.

Announcements:

- **Mobilize Recovery Bus Tour** success summary. Rachel thanked all the Council Members who made this event a success.
- This month's guest speakers come from some of our clinical treatment facilities. We will discover what they see and learn particulars about their treatment centers. We want to refer people appropriately and individualize our referrals to meet the client's needs.
- **Lakeview Behavioral Health** is sponsoring a Habitat build on October 18, 9-3 p.m. (See Our Partner section below).

Representing **Avita Community Partners** was Danielle Rietta. Our Regional Community Service Boards serve all 13 counties in Northeast Georgia. **We service low-income clients with no insurance or who have Medicaid.** Avita is a resource for individuals and families in northeast Georgia experiencing the disabling effects of mental illness, developmental disabilities, and addictive diseases.

- The Behavioral Health Crisis Center in Gainesville offers 24-hour walk-in assessments, a 23-hour observation unit, a crisis stabilization unit, and a detox unit.
- The Crisis Stabilization Unit: in-takes from ERs, voluntary and involuntary admissions, mental health, and medically monitored detox with an average stay of 5-7 days.
- Assertive Community Treatment Teams (ACT): highest care level after inpatient. It takes services out to the individual who qualifies (frequent hospitalizations, is not connected with any community services) and can serve up to 100 individuals. 12 contacts per month. Hall and Forsyth Counties.
- Community Support Services also go to the clients who may be homeless, with counseling, and nursing skills in Stephens, Habersham, Lumpkin, and White counties
- Limited housing support
- We work with the accountability courts
- Outpatient Mental Health Services at all Avita clinics: pharmacy, nursing, skill training, job coaching, and housing assistance.
- Women's Treatment and Recovery Support serves up to 14 women with residential substance abuse treatment and children under 13. The average stay is six months.
- Deaf Services
- Counselors in 45 schools, autism services assessments at a year out
- Co-responder program with mental health tech rides with an officer.

Matt Meyer, Program Director of The **Insight Program**, is located in Roswell, GA. It is directed at youth (13-17) and young adults (18-25). It is a twelve-step private program offering a network of

interacting services, including a fee-based intensive outpatient program and an 18 – 30-month support group. The Insight Program is committed to the idea that drug and alcohol abuse affects the entire family and offers counseling and support groups for families of drug addicts.

- We are a drug and alcohol treatment center for 13-17 and 18-25 year olds.
- We offer both outpatient substance abuse treatment (OP) and intensive outpatient (IOP) rehabilitation services for both teens (13-17) and young adults (18-25). Our OP and IOP programs include substance abuse treatment groups and drug abuse support group activities for 6-12 weeks.
- It features 12-step support groups for young people. Young people have access to our 12-step support group for up to two years after their initial treatment.
- We know addictions affect the entire family, so we offer weekly support groups and family counseling for parents of addicts or drug abusers.
- Group Therapy / Individual Counseling is Monday through Friday afternoons, and our peer support system meetings include sober social activities. On Mondays and Thursdays, we have 12-step meetings with parents attending on Thursdays. Friday and Saturday nights include fun, sober, and social activities. We need to show them a way of life without drugs and alcohol that is better than they had when using drugs.
- For years, exclusively private pay (complete program is \$12,000), but recently, we have been using a billing company that will work with insurance programs with out-of-network options.
- Scholarships are also available.

Adam Miller **NO Longer Bound** is a year-long, non-profit, Christ-centered residential addiction treatment center for adult men.

- Sobriety was not all I needed to maintain recovery; when you come to NO Longer Bound, you are at the end of the line for treatment— we use direct messaging because the man is choosing between death, prison, or NO Longer Bound.
- When your life sucks when you're sober, I saw no reason to be sober. There would be a momentary escape with drug use, but the misery in drugs is there, too.
- Our program is three hours of clinical individual and group counseling, and then the men are assigned to work a job that's not a paid position. I learned valuable and transferable skills: **conflict resolution** within myself and with co-workers. I learned I could have a bad day and still be productive at work.
- We offer an eight-month residential program- counseling, inner healing, and work- and four months of sober living, which we call "transition"- men can get a full-time job and save money necessary to return to real life.
- There is no charge for the program because of our Thrift Store and other donations and donors. If you qualify for the program, no one is turned away for lack of money.
- Qualifications for the program: we are constrained on medical staffing and allow very few medications, so we can not accept clients with mental health issues other than depression and anxiety. We do not take men with a history of violent crime/ sexual crimes.

Julianne Sittler, **Lakeview Behavioral Health**, provides a full continuum of care for adults and adolescents struggling with psychiatric health and addiction concerns. We provide a variety of mental health programming by age group to ensure the best environment for recovery.

- We are community-oriented, care for patients ages 10+, and accept all commercial and VA insurances.
- Our inpatient program treats primary mental health, primary substance use, co-occurring conditions, and detox. They are mainly detoxing for alcohol, heroin, meth, and opiates in voluntary admissions. Involuntary admissions are for those who come through an ER because of an accidental fentanyl overdose and are not willingly seeking to stop drug use.
- The inpatient program has six daily group sessions: pharmacy tech, art therapy, outdoor spaces, gym, psychiatrist, case manager, and individual counseling.
- The average length of stay for adults is 5-7 days, and for youth, it is 7-10 days.
- Outpatient programming can be partial hospitalization, virtual or in-person, or IOP. Patients are in

Outpatient programming can be partial hospitalization or in person. IOP patients are in a five days a week, 5 hours a day, no evening sessions, with group therapy, individual counseling, and medication management weekly. Intensive Outpatient for adults is 3 to 5 days a week for 3 hours a day.

- The adolescent (14-17) IOP program is done on-site and virtually after school hours with open house hours so parents and youth can meet in person for questions to get help.
- Admissions are open 24/7

Emily Dent represents **Twin Lakes**, which provides residential and outpatient treatment for adults seeking to live free from dependence on alcohol and other drugs.

- Twin Lakes offers detoxification and residential treatment services (18+) at our Monroe, GA, facility.
- Our Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) services are in Gainesville and Athens, GA. Evening programs are 12-step-based but can offer individualized programs.
- Veterans and Family Programs
- We work with insurance.
- Fun in sobriety
- We are seeing the effects of xylazine entering the drug supplies.

MARIJUANA AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

BY: SHARMADA VENKATARAMANI

Sharmada Venkataramani introduced the **Marijuana Awareness Campaign** she is beginning. Please see the complete article explaining the campaign under **Youth Outreach**.

Community Outreach, Youth, Members, and Partners



MOBILIZE RECOVERY ACROSS GEORGIA

EDUCATING | MOTIVATING | CELEBRATING | ENGAGING | MOBILIZING

Saturday, September 23
Mobilize Recovery Bus
arrived at Center City in
Cumming, making its final stop.



The bus tour crisscrossed the state of Georgia during **National Recovery Month**. Over 800,000 Georgians live in long-term recovery from Substance Use Disorder. The tour united and celebrated Georgians in recovery and educated individuals on harm reduction and recovery resources. The initiative connected community members with professionals from treatment facilities



connected community members with professionals from treatment facilities, law enforcement, families and allies of people in recovery, local media outlets, faith leaders, policymakers, state representatives, local businesses, and collegiate recovery communities. **We are stronger when we unite; recovery is possible!**

Event speakers included FCDAC Director Rachel Kayden, left.



Above: Jeff Breedlove, Chief of Policy and Communications for Georgia Council for Recovery.



Above: Kevin Tanner, Commissioner the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Disabilities.

Below: The Connection Table

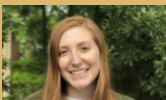


Family Friendly Fun and Music



Youth Outreach

School News



by Gabby Breiten, Gateway and Forsyth Academy Drug Counselor

Top students competed in our Iron Chef event at Gateway! It was super fun!



Ten students competed in our Iron Chef event at Gateway! It was super fun!

FCDAC Parent Partners, Ashley Dickerson recently shared her testimony with ten parents at a Parent's Informational gathering.

My small groups at Forsyth Academy, Gateway, and Central are moving full-steam ahead; I'm keeping very busy!

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



For October, my emphasis with the students focuses on two themes: **the detrimental effects substance use causes in their relationships and the decrease in life satisfaction**, and how **using daily recovery tools will help them reach their goals**. Previous themes have focused on creating positive friendships and what being a real friend looks like.

I continue to receive referrals through North's school staff or students, which indicates our efforts are making an impact and we will reach more kids.

Also this month, **Health Talks** continue at North Forsyth with FCDAC Counselors sharing their recovery stories with the freshman health classes. We went to Central High School for Freshman Health Talks the first week of October and were well received.

After Gabby's Iron Chef event was so successful, I am exploring ideas for a similar event for our sober recreational event later this month!

Finally, I am so grateful for the support from FCDAC and Drew Hayes from Gateway Academy. He's long been and continues to advocate for students, Gabby, and me.

Youth Sector Projects



Avi Karamchandani

A new FCDAC Youth Council Member, Avi Karamchandani, is a **Lambert High School** Junior passionate about STEM, youth mental health, and advocating for health awareness. He founded an online platform, **FitToday**, focusing on youth mental and physical health awareness.

Avi's Locking Rx Vial Project

pictured right, Safe Rx's LPV

Youth Council member **Avi Karamchandani** has proposed a **locking prescription vial** project to enhance and extend the drug deactivation pouch distribution project begun by former Youth Council member Vinayak Menon.

Avi says he calls his project, "**YouthGuard: Securing Futures, Protecting Dreams**," an impactful initiative with a singular mission: safeguarding prescription medications and preventing access by teenagers and youth. This visionary project leverages SafeRx Locking Prescription Vials (LPVs), equipped with a secure



4-digit code, to be an indispensable tool in the battle against youth drug misuse. By prioritizing the security of these medications, the initiative aims to create lasting positive change with profound effects on the future of Georgia's youth."



The locking prescription vials combination is known only to the patient using the medication. One maker of such a locking vial is **Safe Rx**, which said the new "Locking Prescription Vials (LPVs) is the first product to modernize the 1970 child-resistant packaging, bringing a material solution to the opioid epidemic and other public health crisis."

Avi is researching prospective non-profits who may be partnering with locking vial makers. He hopes to make kits combining the locking prescription vials with the drug deactivation pouches for distribution in Forsyth County and beyond. Meanwhile, Avi will continue the distribution of the drug deactivation pouches, establishing relationships with pouch suppliers and seeking new avenues where these products will add greater protection from abuse of prescription medications.



Sharmada Venkataramani

Sharmada Venkataramani is currently a sophomore attending South Forsyth High School. She has an avid interest in drug policy and has published a Georgia State Social Studies Fair award-winning research paper on the pharmaceuticals and the opioid epidemic.

With a strong passion for drug awareness and prevention, Sharmada is implementing a county-wide THC social media campaign. She hopes to educate her peers and combat drug usage among youth. She believes serving on the FCDAC Youth Council she is shaping a drug-free future.

MARIJUANA AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

BY: SHARMADA VENKATARAMANI

Sharmada Venkataramani, new to the Youth Council this year, also announced the beginning stages of a **marijuana awareness campaign**. "The idea for this program started after one of our council meetings where statistics showed that many kids caught with drugs were often found using

Marijuana. I researched this more and found that in the past decade, adolescent marijuana use has increased by almost 200% across the country. There are also a lot of misconceptions and myths surrounding marijuana use, which further prompts adolescents to use without knowing its harmful effects. **The goal of the marijuana awareness campaign is to inform and do prevention work targeted at parents, kids, and other members of our community,**" she said.

"There are three parts to the campaign: the **social media campaign and ground-based prevention work in schools, and educating parents to reduce the stigma attached to addiction,**" Sharmada explained. The **Social Media Campaign will increase awareness through informational posts** about marijuana use. Some topics might be **the consequences** of marijuana use on a person's brain, emotions, and physicality, **debunking myths and misconceptions**. To make it interactive on the various platforms (FB and Instagram), I am including an anonymous Q and A forum designed for asking questions, and then I can respond in the next post. I will post twice weekly and plan to implement **testimonies** from people in the treatment field, people in recovery, law enforcement, etc. We want to provide **volunteer service hour opportunities** for students who wish to help with the campaign by posting and sharing on their


hour opportunities for students who wish to help with the campaign by posting and sharing on their Instagram page or helping with other parts of the campaign. I welcome council members with testimonies they would like to share. These testimonies would be in the form of 30 to 45-second PSAs.

The Prevention Work in Schools Campaign: I want to explore adding a peer-to-peer aspect to the Council's middle school programs and give short presentations on marijuana use. Middle schools are where kids are first exposed to drugs, and it's necessary that we start prevention work at that primary level to stop usage later on. Counselors or other adults usually give presentations on these topics, which might intimidate kids. Studies show that peer-to-peer formats are most effective in imparting information to youth. So, we are planning to involve youth council members in going to middle schools as that is where first use occurs. Equipping our youth members to make presentations will keep them engaged.

Parent Education Component: Providing parents with information in the form of 1-2 page PSA information packets will help to reduce the stigma and fears many parents have toward the influence the drug culture has on youth. We plan to work with the middle school counselors to distribute the material," Sharmada said.


Our Partners in Prevention

Events and Activities to Assist our Community



Habitat for Humanity
Networking & Build Event

October 18th from 9:00 to 3:00
3877 Fawn Ct, Gainesville GA, 30507
RSVP to Julianne Sittler at 404-548-3181



From John Bringuel:

Jennifer Kramer and AC HIDTA colleagues are hosting a statewide event on 11/2 for all Drug-Free Coalitions, DBHDD providers, DPH personnel, NPOs, and other community organizations.



NOVEMBER 2 2023
10AM-4PM
3587 PARKWAY LN, PEACHTREE CORNERS, GA 30092

STATEWIDE COLLABORATIVE AGENGA

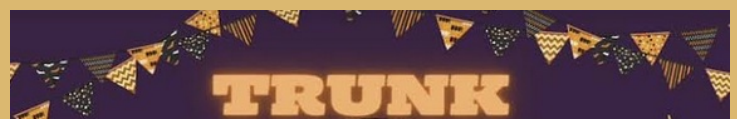
- AC HIDTA SUPPORT SERVICES
- ADAPT- WB HIDTA
- SHELLY MOWREY- AZ HIDTA
- OTHER SUPPORT SERVICE
- ORGANIZATION HIGHLIGHTS
- STRATEGIC PLANNING

REGISTRATION LINK
[HTTPS://WWW.ACHIDTA.ORG/EBFORMS.ASPX?EBID=1536](https://www.achidta.org/ebforms.aspx?EBID=1536)

SAVE THE DATE

For more information, contact Jennifer Kramer [Here](#)

or call 770-363-9360.



LUNCH & LEARN

THE SPEAKER

DAN FRANCIS

OCTOBER 17TH
11:30A-1P

Join us for our final in our series of 4 Lunch and Learns. Our guest speaker will be our very own Chairman of the Board Dan Francis. Come and network, enjoy lunch and a wonderful educational presentation.

WWW.HOPELINC.ORG



OR

TREAT

Come and Join Us!



27th October

5pm - 7pm

**The Connection Forsyth
608 Veterans Memorial Blvd.
Cumming, GA 30041
(470)253-8564**



UNDERSTANDING YOUR TEEN

- * Overcoming Challenges
- * Doing Life with Your Teen
- * Understanding Teen Struggles
- * Having Open Conversations
- * Preparing for and Dealing with Failures

EVENT SPEAKER!

Jeff Mogan - Corner Farms Forsyth

**WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 18**

7:00-8:00 PM

United Way
of Forsyth County
Community Meeting Room
240 Elm Street, Cumming

REGISTER NOW FOR THIS FREE EVENT!

CHRIS@CORNERFARMSFORSYTH.COM



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



THE CONNECTION
3RD ANNUAL COAT DRIVE
MAKE A DIFFERENCE THIS WINTER.

JOIN US
local CHURCH DAWSON
QUEST

"THE STATE OF ADDICTION IN DAWSON COUNTY"

31 SUCCESSFUL
THURSDAY



**October
1-31,
2023**

**Men's, Women's, Children
New/Gently Used, Please.**

(470)253-8564
erin@theconnectionforsyth.org
608 Veterans Memorial Blvd, Cumming, GA 30040

**GUEST
Speakers**

**WAY
DAWSONVILLE,
GA 30534**

**OCT 19TH
5:30-7P**

Jeremy Merritt, Avita
Lt Johnson, Dawson County Sheriff's Dept
Stephanie Branom, Drug Court
Carol Smith, NLB
Cindy Charleston, GA Chapter Family Anonymous
Lisa Mize, NS Hospital



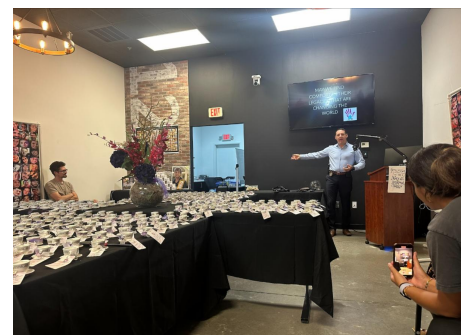
News from our Friends



7th Annual Teacup Memorial In Honor of Overdose Awareness

On August 27, the **Annual Teacup Memorial** service was held at Century 21 on Ronald Reagan Parkway in Cumming. This annual awareness project honors those who have lost their lives to drugs. The event holds a special place in our hearts as we come together to mourn and celebrate the lives of these cherished souls. We find solace in the warmth of shared memories, knowing that they will forever live on in our hearts. Over 1,800 teacups will be lit as family and friends remember their loved ones and provide support to one another.

NARCAN was provided to those attending, and the event was sponsored by Realty4Recovery, The Connection, Fullcircle, No Longer Bound, FDCAC, and Family Connection.





Sunrise Parent Retreat

A Beacon of Hope for Families Battling Addiction

by Julie Cordry



a child's addiction.

In a world where addiction can tear families apart, **Sunrise Parent Retreat** is a sanctuary of healing and resilience. This transformative weekend retreat, was held amid the breathtaking backdrop of **Sautee Inn** from August 25-27, 2023. it brought together parents facing the daunting challenge of

A Ray of Hope

Sunrise Parent Retreat is more than just a getaway; it's a lifeline for parents in need. The retreat offers respite, renewal, and a chance to redirect their focus. The mission is clear: to ensure that parents never lose hope, knowing they are not alone in their struggle. This retreat is exceptional because it's entirely cost-free, made possible by the unwavering support of a compassionate community.

A Journey of Empowerment

The 4th retreat weekend saw thirteen parents, all warriors in their own right, who have a child battling addiction. Here, they discovered they are not alone, and crucially, it's not their fault. While they can't change their loved one's choices, they can embark on a journey of personal growth that brings peace back into their lives. **Sunrise Parent Retreat** underscores a vital truth: recovery isn't just for individuals; it's for families, too.

Community and Connection

Throughout the weekend, parents are enveloped in a supportive community that shares their journey. Friday evening was dedicated to sharing stories, reminding them that they stand united. On Saturday, after indulging in a delectable breakfast at The Sautee Inn, they received wisdom from **speakers like Jim Shambo** who guided them in differentiating between God's truth and the lies that addiction can weave. Parents learn that their children's actions don't define them but can be refined through faith.

Self-Care and Revival

A generous lunch donation paves the way for an afternoon of self-care,

where attendees could choose between massages and facials at a nearby spa, thanks to **The Connection Forsyth**. Parents who have dedicated their lives to saving their children often neglect their own well-being. This gift of relaxation is met with profound appreciation and provides a much-needed respite.

Rediscovering Joy

Saturday afternoon brought a creative escape, where parents engage



Above: Weekend facilitating team: **Amy Black Durham, Terri and Jim Shambo, Julie and Pacer Cordry.**

Below: **Daniel Jacobs** (center) with Julie and Pacer Cordry. **Jacobs** provided music and his **testimony** during the retreat.

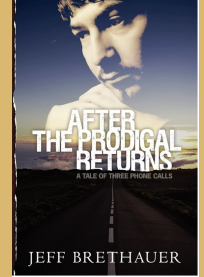


in an art project, rekindling the joy they've forgotten in the turmoil of addiction. **Amy Durham** generously shares her time and resources, teaching parents how to craft sweater pumpkins, a symbol of hope and warmth that resonates with all who attend.



Stories of Resilience

Saturday evenings were reserved for stories of hope and encouragement. **Authors like Jeff and Linda Brethauer**, who've penned their family's journey through addiction, donate their books to each attendee. Their generosity extends beyond their words; they've consistently given their time, resources, and experience at each retreat.



Musical Healing

Finally, Sunday morning brought the inspiring story and musical talent of **Daniel Jacobs**, a young man in recovery. As parents yearn for answers on how to guide their children to recovery, Daniel vulnerably and honestly shares his journey through music. His presence fills the room with hope and reminds all that recovery is possible.



A Community United

Sunrise Parent Retreat thrives through the support of a caring community. Their generosity bridges the financial gap for parents who have sacrificed their homes and savings in their quest for their children's well-being.

As we look to the future, we are planning the next retreat. If you'd like to contribute or receive information, please [CLICK HERE](#).

NEWS FOR YOU

Local News

Watch an interview conducted by FCDAC Founder Commissioner Cindy Mills on her Rays of Light Podcast with past Youth President Vinayak Menon and his sister, Parvati Menon. They discuss the importance of school involvement in students' lives and academic careers.





National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is October 28, 2023 Drop Boxes Available Year-round!

Forsyth County Sheriff's Office Prescription Drop Box
Prescription Disposal Box in Cumming, GA

Help Spread The Word This October to
Stop Medicine Misuse

This secure box offers community members a safe way to dispose of unwanted and expired medications. Please bring yours today!

Address: 202 Veterans Memorial Blvd, Cumming, GA 30040

CVS Pharmacy Medicine Disposal Box
Prescription Disposal Box in Cumming, GA

This secure box offers community members a safe way to dispose of unwanted and expired medications. Please bring yours today!

Address: 4895 Post Rd, Cumming, GA 30040

Web: <https://www.cvs.com/content/safer-communities-locate>

State News

A 17-year-old girl overdoses on counterfeit drugs disguised as Oxycodone

According to WSB-TV Channel 2 News, on Saturday, September 29, at 9:30 a.m. Conyers, GA, police were called to a home in which a person was unresponsive. The police could not revive the 17-year-old girl, who was pronounced dead at the hospital. Police investigation revealed that the girl had taken **counterfeit drugs** designed to look like Oxycodone.

Two have been arrested in connection to the overdose. The victim's name has not been released.

[Read the complete news story here.](#)

National News

Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits Involving Suicide Attempts

Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) released a [report](#) on drug-related emergency department (ED) visits involving suicide attempts. Alcohol was the substance reported most often in ED visits involving suicide attempts. The **highest rate of drug-related ED visits was among youth (12 to 17 years old)**. Find out more by reading the report, [HERE.](#)

NIDA Director Volkow Recognizes the Need for Research on

Peer and Community-based Recovery Supports

In her blog post, **Nora D. Volkow, M.D.**, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health, recognized the role of **community peer support services** in guiding individuals, families, and caregivers through radiating impacts of SUD recovery.

Peer support services are provided by people who have been successful in the recovery process and can help others begin their journey. Peers know how to access services and support that are essential to recovery. Through shared understanding, respect, and mutual empowerment, peer support can help people become and stay engaged in their recovery, increasing the likelihood of success.

Director Volkow writes, "... while treatments such as medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) or behavioral approaches like cognitive behavioral therapy or contingency management address the biological and behavioral dimensions of an SUD, changes in the brain and behavior take time, as does resolving the radiating impacts of an SUD on an individual's life. Those impacts may include job loss, loss of housing, fractured relationships with family and friends, and involvement in the criminal justice system. People may need ongoing support and help with these issues to maintain and sustain their recovery.

Unfortunately, [much less is known about recovery supports](#) than treatments, such as which kinds of services are most effective, how they work, and how they are best adapted to the needs of different people. Without that knowledge of efficacy, insurers and other payers may not cover these potentially valuable components of the care spectrum, and people may not know which to choose.

NIDA has been supporting research on **peer and community-based recovery supports, active recovery communities**, and recovery modalities that integrate multiple services, such as recovery residences. But more focus is still needed on this topic to build foundational knowledge of these services and thus better advance this part of the U.S."

[Read her blog post here.](#)

Call for Advocacy



Tell Your Senators to Oppose the SAFER Banking Act

ISSUE BACKGROUND

During the week of September 17th, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) announced that he plans to bring the **Secure and Fair Enforcement Regulation (SAFER) Banking Act** to the [Senate] floor with all due speed".

This legislation would allow banks to accept the federally illegal proceeds from the sale of marijuana. This will set a precedent to allow other federally illegal industries to gain access to the banking system. Additionally, **granting marijuana businesses access to the banking system will make it easier for them to do business, exacerbating the negative consequences of marijuana proliferation, including increased traffic fatalities, youth use rates, ER visits, and hospitalizations.** The following facts are particularly concerning:

- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), **marijuana is the top drug detected in impaired drivers.**
- A 2022 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) report states that

- A 2022 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) report states that marijuana was involved in 14% of drug-related emergency department visits in 2021. This is second only to alcohol.
- Quest Diagnostics research from 2023 (using 2022 data) indicates that marijuana positivity continues to increase in the US workforce. 3.6% of American workers used marijuana in 2020, compared to 3.9% in 2021, an 8.3% rate of increase in just one year.
- Today's marijuana products include concentrates, edibles and vapes that can have concentrations of up to 99.99% THC, and these are the drugs of choice for most teens who use.
- According to an August 2023 report from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), daily marijuana use among those aged 19-30 reached their highest levels ever reported at 11% in 2021, compared to 8% in 2019 and 6% in 2012.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Please send the sample letter below to your Senators raising concerns about the SAFER Banking Act ASAP and asking them to vote against this legislation. Your Senators need to hear from a resounding number of their constituents NOW.

HOW TO DO IT

Click [Here](#) to send a message to your Senators asking them to vote "No" on the SAFER Banking Act.

SAMPLE LETTER

Please oppose the SAFER Banking Act. This legislation would legitimize marijuana businesses that remain illegal under federal law. Granting these businesses access to the banking system will increase access and availability of high-potency THC products that have serious public health and safety consequences, such as increased traffic fatalities, ER visits, hospitalizations, and daily use rates. Today's marijuana products can contain up to 99.99% THC and are the drug of choice for most teens who use it. A 2023 NIDA report indicates that 2021 daily marijuana use among 19-30-year-olds reached the highest levels ever reported at 11%. A 2023 Quest Diagnostics report indicates that marijuana positivity in the US workforce increased by a rate of 8.3% in just one year from 2020 to 2021. NHTSA reports that marijuana is the top drug detected in impaired drivers. This legislation would strengthen international drug cartels' ability to launder money from other illegal activities and is ill-advised as our nation grapples with the opioid and stimulant crises. Vote "No" on the SAFER Banking Act.

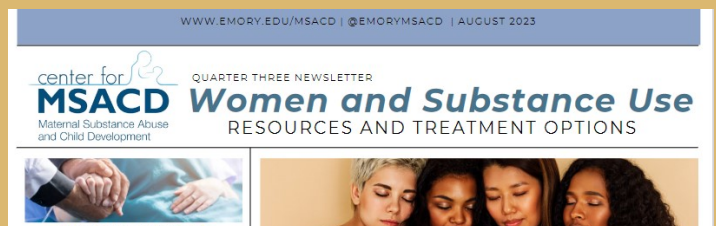
To Learn More About CADCA's Substance Use Prevention Advocacy Efforts, [CLICK HERE.](#)

FYI



New Resource for Women and Substance Use

Thanks to John Bringuel, who brought me this resource from Emory University's **Center for Maternal Substance Abuse and Child Development (MSACD)**! A



Newsletter, "Women and Substance Use, Resources and Treatment Options," is available to us! The newsletter explores the vast topic of Women and Substance Use. The newsletter also includes various treatment options and resources to share among your networks. Use the link below to read the newsletter yourself!

[CLICK HERE](#)

The Importance of Seeking Recovery

Qualandria Bell
Substance use disorder can affect people of all types and can cause harmful side effects and health conditions. This is especially true in the case of pregnant women who are experiencing problems with drugs or alcohol. Substance use disorders can be incredibly harmful to both mother and child.

Surveys indicate that many women continue to use drugs or alcohol during their pregnancy with the numbers varying for different substances. Many of the substances used during pregnancy can easily pass through the placenta, directly impacting the health and growth of the fetus. Thus, it's important for women struggling with addiction to seek help before trying to get pregnant or as soon as they learn they are pregnant.

While overcoming a substance use disorder may seem daunting, it's the best decision that can be made for both mother and child. There are several treatment options available to help pregnant women in recovery.



Substance Use Recovery & Management in Pregnancy

Substance-Focused Treatment for Women

Kallio Hunnicutt-Ferguson, PhD, ABPP
The majority of the population uses some type of substance (even if only caffeine). Substance use problems are therefore considered on a continuum from none to mild to severe (APA, 2022). It is now understood that substance use disorders (SUDs) are a chronic brain disease, similar to other chronic health conditions like diabetes, asthma, or depression (Heilig et al., 2021). An SUD is defined as substance use (alcohol, illicit or other drug use, or misuse of prescription medications) that causes impairment in the ability to fulfill major obligations at work, school, or home. This can also include continued use of the substance despite it causing problems, or experiencing withdrawal symptoms when not using the substance. Individuals with a substance use disorder may also develop a tolerance to the substance in which they need more of the substance to achieve the same effect (APA, 2022). For those who are noticing impairment or problems developing from their substance use, more formal treatment or increasing supports may be recommended.

Women are affected differently by substance use than men, and experience what is called a "telescoping effect," which means that they experience a more rapid progression to substance use disorder compared to men, experience a higher blood alcohol content with the same amount of alcohol compared to men, and have unique negative health effects of substances, including increased risk of certain types of cancer, fertility issues, greater risk of liver disease, heart damage, and increased risk of mortality (Ait-Dououd et al., 2019).

Women are often underrepresented in substance-focused treatment centers, which can be a barrier to seeking care. Women may benefit from seeking substance-focused treatment from a center that serves women only or specializes in treating women. Several such programs exist in the state of Georgia and nationally (see below). These programs are able to tailor their approach in ways that address the unique needs of women, such as taking a trauma-informed approach, providing childcare or family support, and assisting in work placement following or as part of treatment (Rutman et al., 2020; Loui, 2018).

There are several evidence-based treatments for specific substances. Medication management is an important part of treatment for a substance use problem. Naltrexone, disulfiram, or acamprosate, are FDA approved medications for alcohol use disorder (NIAA, 2021). Buprenorphine, methadone, and naltrexone, are FDA approved treatments for opioid use disorder. Buprenorphine and naltrexone can be prescribed by medical doctor. Methadone has to be administered by a federally regulated clinic if provided in an outpatient setting (NIDA, 2021). Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing/Motivational Enhancement

**Why Carry Narcan?
You could save a Life.**



**2 OF EVERY 5 PILLS
WITH FENTANYL CONTAIN
A LETHAL DOSE**

Source DEA

**Never Assume
A Pill Is Real**



Red Ribbon Week, October 23-31

Need help planning for Red Ribbon Week?

Let Natural High help! It is not too late to participate this year!

Watch our [short video \(4 minutes\)](#) — in it, you'll learn how to use our lesson plans and resources to create an impactful Red Ribbon Week for your students.

You can also [click here to start previewing our content](#) and get your plans ready for Red Ribbon Week.

Here are the highlights:

- **New Storyteller:** [Tony Azevedo](#), Olympic water polo champion, inspires kids with his story of resilience and perseverance.
- **Playlist:** Featuring a week's worth of videos, discussion questions, and activities to share with 4th-12th grade students.
- **Featured content and activity:** Natural High's 2 fentanyl lessons include the 6-min PSA video and a lesson on fake prescription pills (fentapills). We also have a screening guide if you want to show the 6-minute video to a large group or assembly. [Get the guide here.](#)
- **Red Ribbon Week Toolkit:** Everything you need for a successful Red Ribbon Week. This includes: program overview, lesson plans, activities, social media posts, pledge, and more. [Download the toolkit here](#)

- Parent Letter: Send home to engage your parents during Red Ribbon Week.

Know Ur Vape

Social media influencers put a twist on unboxing videos to demonstrate the dangers of vaping.

The Know Ur Vape campaign is a collaboration between these influencers and others, as well as the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Service, Connecticut's Tobacco Enforcement Division, the Connecticut Clearing House, and a professional marketing team, receiving more than 177,000 views so far. Watch and share more videos from the campaign by visiting HERE.



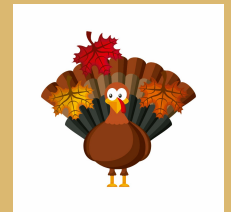
On the Calendar



October

- National Substance Abuse Prevention Month/Youth Substance Use Awareness Month
- Health Literacy Month
- National Bullying Prevention Month
- Mental Illness Awareness Week, October 1-7
- Columbus Day, October 10
- Red Ribbon Week October 23-31
- National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, October 28
- Halloween October 31

November



- Lung Cancer Awareness Month
- Diabetes Month
- National Nurse Practitioner Week, November 13-19
- Great American Smokeout, November 17
- Thanksgiving Day, November 24



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

[Unsubscribe tammy@unitedwayforsyth.com](mailto:tammy@unitedwayforsyth.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by fcdac1@unitedwayforsyth.com