



FORSYTH COUNTY
DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL

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Strategizer

Leading the way to a
healthier Forsyth County



FORSYTH COUNTY
DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL



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TODAY!



SCAN ME

September 2024 Volume 4 Issue 5

[Donate to FCDAC Here](#)



September Is...



National Recovery Month (Recovery Month), which started in 1989, is a national observance held every September to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices, the nation's strong and proud recovery community, and the dedication of service providers and communities who make recovery in all its forms possible.



September is National Recovery Month

National Recovery Month is a time to honor the strength and resilience of those in recovery. Hear inspiring stories from Rx Summit Hope Ambassadors, and register for the 2025 Rx Summit, happening April 21-24 in Nashville, [HERE](#)

Collaborating to Celebrate Recovery, Healing and Hope!

Forsyth County organizations supporting and celebrating Recovery

and Freedom are collaborating to host this special event on the grounds of



Recovery is A Family Affair

Recovery Month

Honoring the restoration of families with stories from:
 Al-Anon
 Certified Peer Specialists
 Community Partners
 Recovery Heroes
 Warrior Moms

Mini Horses, Yard Games, Family-Friendly!!
 Free Food/Ice Cream

September Saturday 14th Drop-In from 12-4

The Connection Forsyth
 608 Veterans Memorial Blvd
 Cumming, GA 30040
 470-253-8564
www.theconnectionforsyth.org

#georgiarecovertogether

The Connection, 608 Veterans Memorial Blvd., in Cumming.

Sweet Mini Horses, yard games, free food, and ice cream will be featured at the family-friendly event!



Stories of Family Restoration from members of Al-Anon, Recovery Heroes, Warrior Moms, and others.

Recovery is REAL

Drop-in and enjoy the Fun!
 12-4 p.m.
 Saturday, September 14

FCDAC Council Meeting, Work and Programs Round-up

Kayden's Korner



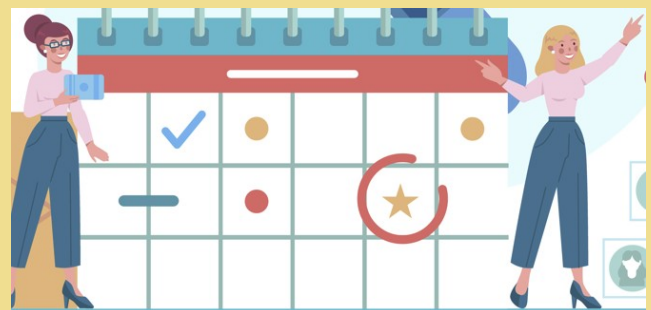
September is a time to stop and remember those men and women who lost their lives on 9-11 and the bravery of so many first responders and others on that day 23 years ago. A day that changed our country. Our council member and

Executive Director of The Connection, Kayla Bergeron, was present that day and heroically guided people down the stairwell. Kayla hosted a Virtual Day of Remembrance on September 11.

September is also the month highlighting Recovery Month. We celebrate those who have chosen recovery and the available evidence-based treatments. On Saturday, September 14, FCDAC is pleased to help sponsor Recovery is a Family Affair (see

applaud those who have fought hard to renew healthy living for themselves and their families.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



Our next FCDAC Council Meeting is on Wednesday, October 2

... sponsor recovery is family friend (see above flyer). We will have a table at the event to educate and empower the community to choose healthy lifestyles and

8 a.m.
United Way Offices

Council Meeting Highlights

Director Rachel Kayden was ill the morning of the meeting. FCDAC Founder Cindy J Mills facilitated the meeting at 8 a.m. by welcoming everyone, introducing attendees, and making announcements.

Announcements:

- Our friends at Sunrise Parent Retreat, The Cordrys, announced they are coming under the umbrella of **Prodigal Child Ministries**. Julie and Pacer Cordry will begin leading this non-profit, and Sunrise's vision of offering support and weekend rejuvenating retreats for parents of children struggling with drug misuse and other mental health conditions will continue and expand. **Their first event is Saturday, September 14, 6:30- 9:30 p.m. at Pop.In (above Myth & Legend) Cumming City Center.** Enjoy Los Rios catered Mexican food, fellowship & football in a casual atmosphere! Resources will be available.
- **The Connection, Virtual 9-11 Remembrance**
- **FullCircle Mike Cowan** announced he is moving to Arizona, and the FullCircle Home office based in Arizona has decided to close the Forsyth County branch.

This month's guest speaker is **Sergeant Mike Reutter** from Forsyth County's Drug Taskforce, Forsyth County Sheriff's Office. Sergeant Reutter is a veteran law enforcement officer with 16 years of experience. He reminds us that the joint **Johns Creek (Fulton County) Forsyth Task Force** works hard to make their arrests whenever possible in Forsyth County because of the tighter laws in Forsyth and the availability of our courts and drug court programs that seek more options for those who are seeking freedom from addiction.



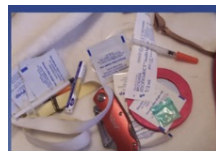
Today, I will present what law enforcement sees on the illegal drug front.

- **E-liquids and Vaping.** It is estimated that **1 in 3 high school students vape—high concentration of nicotine in attractive favors.** Kronic Juice brand vaporized products have been found often laced with synthetic marijuana called spice. EVALI is a severe **lung** disease caused by vitamin E acetate and other substances in e-cigarette and **vaping** products.
- **Marijuana** is the number one most widely used and easily obtained illegal substance. **Wax dabs** is a **concentrated** form of cannabis with high potency with a range of **THC** between 60% - 90%. Common overdoses are caused by being unaware of the product's increased levels of THC.

E-Liquid and Vapes
Marijuana
Wax, Dabs, Shatter
Methamphetamines
Cocaine

VAPING DANGERS


- E-Liquid CBD products that contain **OTHER** synthetic cannabinoids have been causing overdoses on a large scale on school campuses



Cocaine
 Heroin
 MDMA/Ecstasy Molly and LSD
 Prescription Drugs
 Cough Medicine Dextromethorphan
 Synthetic Marijuana
 Alcohol

...with a large scale on school campuses nationwide

- Many 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%)




- **Methamphetamines** are cheap and very addictive stimulants. Signs include dilated pupils, grinding of teeth, hyperactivity, paranoia, irritability, and sores from scratching. It is smoked in a pipe, injected, snorted, or swallowed.
- **Cocaine** has been on the rise recently. It is snorted, smoked, and injected. Also, a stimulant causes dilated pupils, grinding of teeth, hyperactivity, and not sleeping.

- **Heroin** is also on the rise and has been a thorn in our side because it is being brought into the county, so we can't easily get to the source. We must work with other agencies, including HIDTA, a Federal agency with different rules. It is a depressant, causing constrictive pupils, droopy eyelids, and track marks on the arms.
- **MDMA/Ecstasy, Molly, and LSD** are consumed orally; a synthetic drug that acts as both a **stimulant and a psychedelic**, producing euphoria, empathy, and enhanced sensations. It causes serious health problems, such as memory loss, liver damage, and overdose, and is **often mixed with other drugs that are toxic or deadly**.



- **Hemp products** like synthetic Marijuana (Delta 8 and 10) called Spice. Brought in unintendedly by the 2018 Farm Bill, manufacturers are constantly changing the contents of their products to avoid scrutiny.
- **Perscription Drug** abuse reduced, but still robbing the medicine cabinet is still a pathway to many addiction stories. Fake pills, M-30 fentanyl deadly and frequent OD happen although Narcan has made a huge impact in saving lives.
- **Cough Medicine/Dextromethorphan** the overcounter abuse by chugging it.
- **Alcohol** is the most widely abused and accepted drug.

The Council meeting concluded around 9:15 a.m.

Community Outreach, Youth, Members, and Partners

Youth

Youth Council

Friendly Staff Member from The Place



Our Youth Sector Leader, **Sharmada Venkataramani**, reported **ten doses of Narcan and 200 Youth Mental Health Resource Guides** from the Forsyth County Youth Mental Health Coalition and the **Resource Guide for Parents** created by the Parent Committee from the Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council were distributed to **The Place on August 30**. **The Place** provides



brochures were distributed to The Place on August 30. The Place provides compassionate assistance to people in Forsyth and Dawson to meet their essential needs and become self-sustaining. They operate a **thrift store**, a **food pantry**, a **senior assistance program**, and **The Cottage**, a home for young women experiencing housing instability.

Sharmada said, "Serving as a liaison, Rachel and I are working with **Laura Martino**, the Director of Clinical Operations at **Good Samaritan Gwinnett**, to conduct Narcan training on October 21. **Pete Clark** from the **Georgia Harm Reduction Coalition** will be the trainer."

The **Good Samaritan Health Center of Gwinnett (GSHCG)** is a non-profit organization that provides low-cost medical, dental, and pharmacy services for low-income and uninsured individuals in the north metropolitan Atlanta area.



Sharmada Venkataramani is FCDAC's **2024-25 Youth Sector Leader** and a junior at South Forsyth High School. Sharmada's podcast, "**Elevate Awareness**" debuted during the 2023-24 school year. Her interest in drug policy led her to involvement on the Youth Council.

School News



Gabby Breiten, Gateway and Forsyth Academy Drug Counselor



Emily Ennis, Prevention Coach, North Forsyth High School.

Emily Ennis tells the *Strategizer*, "I'm excited for this school year; the students seem receptive to receiving our services and are enthusiastic about continuing to learn how to apply the tools of recovery."

"This year at North Forsyth High School, I have two separate groups that meet twice a week, and I continue to meet with students individually," said Emily. Gabby also has two groups at her schools, Forsyth Academy and Gateway.

"**Gabby Breiten**, **Lauren Hairston** (FullCircle drug counselor), and I gave prevention talks in the 9th-grade health classes the last week of August. Our outreach to the other schools has started, too. South Forsyth Middle School scheduled us to speak to their health classes starting the last days of August and into September," she said.

We kick off our fun socials this school year with water balloon volleyball games. This cool and wet activity is appreciated during these (hopefully) last super hot days in August and is great fun for the students. Not only do we have our small group students signing up for this activity, but students

school-wide want to join the activity. It is a great chance to increase the awareness that sober activities are fun and having fun doesn't have to include substance abuse. We are anticipating 40-50 students turning out!

Lambert High School wants to schedule a substance prevention program for its 10th-grade classes. We are finalizing the dates now

are finalizing the dates now.

Parent University is a program hosted by Lambert High School in the community for parents of 6th—to 12th-grade students. "Gabby and I are on the presenting team and are excited about this opportunity to speak in the community. We hope to see this program grow," Emily said.

Thanks to everyone for all your support!

Parent Partners Corner

by Ashley Dickerson and Marti Roveda



Ashley Dickerson

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



Marti Roveda

Marti's only child began his recovery journey at the age of 16, igniting Marti's passion for educating and supporting parents of youth struggling with substance use disorders. Driven by this commitment, she founded **Equanimity Parent Coaching** to help parents find peace and serenity during the challenging times of their parenting journey. Marti is also an active member of FCDAC and volunteers as a parent advisor for an under-18 recovery program in Nashville.

The **Parent Partners** have kicked off the year with great momentum! We'll be presenting our informational flyer, "**What to Expect, When You Suspect,**" and sharing our personal journeys at the **Lambert Parent University on September 10th**. Additionally, we will present our experiences and hope for recovery at Gateway Parent Nights on October 8th and November 19th. We are eager to explore other opportunities to share our prevention presentation, flyer, and personal stories throughout the community and welcome all opportunities our fellow council members could pass along.

We're also excited to announce that Marti has elevated her passion by launching **Equanimity Parent Coaching** (www.equanimityparentcoaching.com). Through this new venture, she aims to support parents in finding peace and serenity during challenging times of their parenting journey. Marti is hopeful that this new direction will help expand the message of Parent Recovery through our FCDAC Parent Partners activities.

Members teaching Members

FULLCIRCLE WILL BE MISSED

By Dana Bryan

Dana

Bryan



Dana is a retired middle school teacher and





Mike Cowan, FullCircle Georgia Program Director

FullCircle opened its Cumming chapter in 2020. During the four years here, their program has helped young people and their families who are trying to overcome substance abuse and other compulsive behaviors, eating disorders, self-harm, and mental health concerns--free of charge. They use a 12-step program facilitated by staff members who are also in 12-step recovery. Their meetings and fun activities are based on the areas of change emphasized in their program: physical, spiritual, and emotional. The goal of the FullCircle program is to

offer young people and their families a lifestyle with fun and fulfilling activities and to provide them with a peer group whose goals are the same as theirs.

At the September meeting of the Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council, I learned that the Georgia Program Director, Mike Cowan, and Peer Support Counselor, Sophia Cooke-Cowan, are both leaving FullCircle in order to return to their home in Phoenix, Arizona. Not only is it sad to lose them, but the national leaders of FullCircle have decided to close our Georgia chapter, which is here in Forsyth. This is a huge loss to the youth and families in Forsyth and our whole community. The benefit cannot be measured for the lives and families that have been saved by their participation in the FullCircle program. It is unbelievably sad to think of the future young people and their families who will no longer have this opportunity through the guidance of FullCircle.

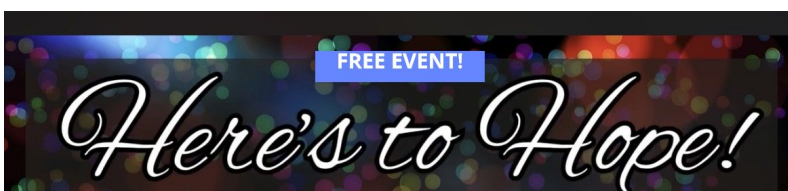
Other local programs are also successful in helping young people and their families who struggle with substance abuse and hope to change their habits to adopt a healthy lifestyle in an environment with others whose goals are the same. The one most similar to FullCircle is Insight, and many of the FullCircle members have been able to join the Insight program. Unfortunately, Insight is not in our county, so it is not as convenient to participate, but it is another successful program in the field of sobriety and healthy personal relationships.

No words can adequately express the loss of FullCircle to our community. Mike and Sophia, you will be missed by many, and your loss will be felt for a long time. We wish you much success and fulfillment in your move and in the endeavors you pursue. Most of all, to the families who are FullCircle graduates and present members, we wish you much fulfillment in your life and continued success in reaching your goals and in making the changes you are making in your life and in your relationships.

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!

Our Partners in Prevention

More Great Community Events from our Friends



PRODIGAL CHILD MINISTRIES

Do you have a child who is battling addiction and/or living with a mental health

PCM Family Fellowship

Join Us on Sept. 14

Pop.In Cumming City Center

6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Mexican food,
fellowship, & football



condition?

Come and see that you are not alone!

Let's gather as a community of parents and enjoy a casual evening. Los Rios will cater the event, and football will be on! Resources will be available so you know where to get support as you surround yourself with others on a similar journey.



9-11 Virtual Remembrance Event Hosted by The Connection Forsyth

Kayla Bergeron, Executive Director at The Connection and a survivor of the terrorist attack that brought down the World Trade Center twin towers in 2001, held a 9-11 Remembrance on Wednesday virtually.



Kayla, blonde top left guiding other survivors down the stairwell.



Kayla Bergeron,
Executive Director of The Connection.

Kayla said, "It is hard to believe twenty-three years have passed since the terrorists attacked the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Terrorists thought they succeeded in undermining the spirit of the American people and the freedoms we enjoy. They did not. We are more resilient than ever." On Monday, August 23, 2023, "Come Chat" hosts Sonya Johnson and Jamie Tall interviewed Kayla Bergeron, the executive director of The Connection. They discussed 9-11 and all aspects of Kayla's recovery journey. In honor of our 9-11 Remembrance, you can again be inspired by listening to this interview.

[Listen Here.](#)

The Connection offers a wellness-focused model for long-term recovery, taking a whole health approach. The Connection, where those committed to long-term recovery can find fellowship, peer coaching, fun, sober social events and support for family members.



Arch Academy presents

Meaningful Engagement with the Substance Abusing Adolescent Male

Hosted by:

The Insight Program



Lunch is provided- 12:00 p.m.

CEU Presentation- 1:00-2:30 p.m.
1.5 CE hours

Networking 3:00-3:30 p.m.

Please register using the QR CODE below:



John Bringuel, MA, RBF, TPTTNCPC, ICPS
Prevention / Intervention Program Manager
The Council on Alcohol and Drugs

I am excited to share "Drug Abuse Prevention Training for Community Professionals: Having Solution Focused Conversations." The workshops are uniquely shaped by the participants' experiences and dynamic discussions. While the training covers essential topics, the genuine conversations have captivated attendees. Each session begins with an in-depth exploration of the 3 Levels of Prevention Culture, enhanced by discussions on Addiction and Brain Science, CADCA's 7 Strategies to Community Change, Emotional Intelligence, and Integrative Medicine, among other relevant subjects. The interactive nature of these workshops ensures that participants are engaged from start to finish, with a shared understanding that these sessions are designed to be immersive. Participants also receive a Workbook to facilitate their learning journey. We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming session for **Region 6**:

Monday September 16th, Fayette County DBHDD Region 6

Location: Grace Church at 164 Flat Creek Trail, Fayetteville, 30214

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Host: Doreen Barr and Michael Mumper

Register [Here](#)



The Certified Addiction Recovery Empowerment Specialist Academy was developed by the Georgia Council for Recovery to create a workforce of peers who

provide recovery support services to Georgia's communities. Funded by Georgia's Department of Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities, the CARES Academy is the first of its kind in the country to be Medicaid billable.

GC4R is currently accepting applications for CARES 67!

Upon completion of the CARES Academy, peers are able to:

- Advocate for recovery for themselves, the peers with whom they work, their recovery community, and for a Recovery Oriented System of Care.
- Conduct individual recovery check-ins by supporting peers in self-directed care and assessing a

- Conduct individual recovery check-ins by supporting peers in self-directed care and assessing a peer's 'recovery capital' using Motivational Interviewing (also NREPP) skills to enhance the relationship.
- Run recovery groups

Applications will close on Friday October 4th, 2024 at 4pm
Group Interviews will take place on
Tuesday October 29th, 2024
CARES Academy 67 will take place December 2nd- December 6th , 2024
Need more information? Please get in touch with a member of the CARES Team at
678-306-7035

[Click Here for Application](#)

News for You

Local News

Sunrise's Retreat Founders the New Leadership Face of Prodigal Child Ministries



Julie and Pacer Cordry, the founders of Sunrise Parent Retreat, are thrilled to announce their new leadership role at Prodigal Child Ministries! "When Fair & John Brocard reached out to us, we were honored and excited to lead this incredible nonprofit, which shares the same heart and vision as Sunrise," Julie shared. "Our mission remains the same: to offer unwavering support and encouragement to parents who have a child struggling with addiction or mental health challenges. We will continue to host our retreat weekends, now under the name of Prodigal Child Ministries, and we look forward to expanding

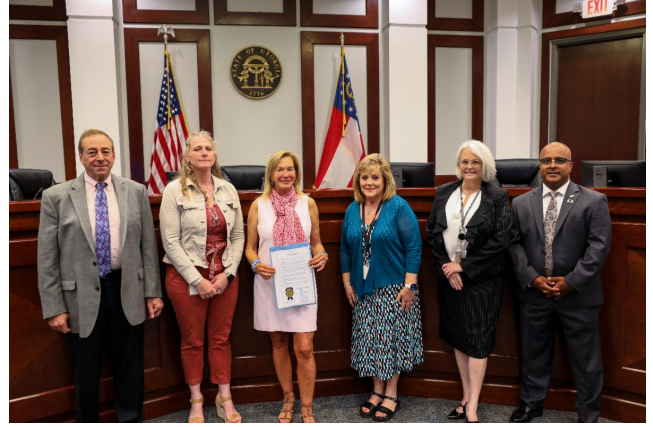
our reach and impact!"

Join Us for Our Upcoming Here's To Hope Event!

"We're excited to invite you to our upcoming event at Pop.In (above Myth & Legend) in the Cumming City Center on Saturday, September 14. This event is completely free for all parents who have a child battling addiction or navigating life with mental health conditions. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with other parents on similar journeys, share resources, and find strength in community. Come enjoy a relaxed evening with delicious food catered by Los Rios, great company, and even a bit of football fun!" Julie added.

Overdose Awareness Day Proclaimed in Forsyth County, August 31

Pictured: Forsyth County Board of Commissioners left to right Todd Levent, Kerry Hill, FCDAC Founder **Cindy Jones Mills**, Lauren Semanson, and Alfred John with local Licensed Counselor and Board-Registered Interventionist (CIP) **Heather Hayes** (center).



To recognize the impact of addiction and drug overdose in our community, the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners proclaimed Saturday, Aug. 31, 2024, as Overdose Awareness Day in Forsyth County.

The American Medical Association defines addiction as a chronic disease, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were approximately 110,000 attributed overdose deaths in the United States during 2023, or 304 people per day.

The Board of Commissioners encourages all Forsyth County residents to learn about this disease and support the individuals and families affected by it.

[Click Here to watch](#)

State News

The 2024 Georgia Recovers Bus Tour



The 2024 Georgia Recovers Bus Tour is a Georgia-based project sponsored by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) and the Georgia Council for Recovery (GC4R). GC4R is honored to partner with DBHDD to bring this exciting bus tour to over 60 communities across Georgia during National Recovery Month.

This stand-alone project is Georgia-grown and Georgia-run, encompassing the spirit and voice of the Georgia Recovery Community. GC4R is proud to partner with our local recovery community hosts to bring a uniquely Georgia message of the hope and joy of recovery.

The tour will make a Policy Stop: Law Enforcement & Recovery in Forsyth, GA, on September 30, 11:00 AM—1:00 PM, at the GA Public Safety Training Center, 1000 Indian Springs Dr, Forsyth, GA.

Policy Stop – where local stakeholders have a diverse community conversation on how addiction and recovery impact communities. Every stop is FREE and Open to the Public. We will highlight local peers in recovery, families impacted by addiction, and allies who support recovery.

[Click here for a schedule of all 63 stops](#)

National News



Big Tobacco's Latest Addiction

"New "smokeless and spitless" nicotine pouches are beginning to gain popularity because of social media promotion. Specifically, Zyn, which entered the market in 2014, has gained TikTok-fueled popularity, and the public has begun to take notice. In fact, one study found there has been a 641% increase in sales of the products between 2019 and 2022, but just 2.9% of U.S. adults had ever used a nicotine pouch. This shows an increasing and alarming rate of youth use," says **Each Breath Blog** posted July 31, 2024.

"These pouches contain nicotine powder instead of tobacco leaf. They come in several flavors and are available in a variety of different nicotine strengths. They have been marketed as an appealing alternative to spit tobacco, and the pouches do not produce odor, smoke, or vapor. This makes the pouches easy to conceal and use in places where tobacco products cannot be used, such as at school. These smokeless, odorless features lead many people to believe that these nicotine pouches are a safer alternative to cigarettes. Most concerning, nicotine pouches contain high levels of nicotine, which is incredibly addictive and harmful," the blog said.

The blog noted, "A concerning trend is that nicotine pouches are so addicting that 73% of young people who have tried nicotine pouches are currently still using them. This could be attributed to the fact that the average user consumes ½ can per day or 8-12 nicotine pouches. Depending on the nicotine content of the pouch being consumed, let's say a 6 mg Zyn pouch, the nicotine ingested would be equal to smoking approximately 3 packs of cigarettes or 1 ½ e-cigarette pods of 2% vape juice per day."

[Click Here to read the entire post.](#)

FYI

September is National Suicide Prevention Month

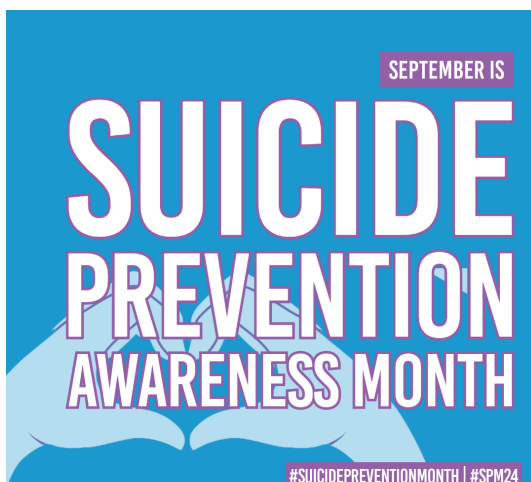
– a time to remember the lives lost to suicide, acknowledge the millions more who have experienced suicidal thoughts, and the many individuals, families, and communities that have been impacted by suicide. It's also a time to raise awareness about suicide prevention and share messages of hope.

During September and throughout the year, we can care about suicide prevention, connect to community, culture, data, and research, and collaborate with others to address this public health problem that has impacted millions of Americans.

How You Can Help

Educate yourself and others about suicide prevention: Learn the [warning signs](#) and [risk factors](#) for suicide, how to [support](#) someone considering suicide, and familiarize yourself with the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#).

Visit the [Suicide Prevention Resource Center \(SPRC\)](#): Each year, the SPRC creates a resource full of ways to get involved



Read and share the [2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and Federal Action Plan](#).

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. **Call** or **text** 988 or chat 988lifeline.org to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

'Awkward Conversations' Returns for Season 4!

DEA is pleased to announce the next installment of its collaboration with the Elks Drug Awareness Program.

Join Jodie Sweetin of "Full House" and "Fuller House", guest experts, and celebrity parents for Season 4 of the "Awkward Conversations" podcast to help create a healthy, drug-free future for your children. In Episode 1, Jodie addresses how just One Pill Can Kill, taking a deep dive into the current state of the fentanyl crisis, new forms of the drug, and updated prevention strategies.



Nitazenes What are nitazenes? Nitazenes are strong synthetic opioids, chemically altered offshoots of fentanyl. Why are we seeing the growth in these offshoots of Fentanyl? According to Rich Lucy, the senior prevention program manager with DEA's Community Outreach and Prevention, "modifications or manipulations to a drug to make one of these, if you will, related drugs is meant to evade regulation or control status so when the inspiration you would think in the licit side of chemistry is to find a drug that might have better properties what goes on in the clandestine or illicit chemistry isn't based on altruism. It's based on sheer greed. In last year's episodes of "Awkward Conversations," we talked about the 3 Ps: higher **potency**, brings higher **profit**, and that brings greater **peril**."

Coming to a Classroom Near You?

As the new school year begins, parents and guardians are being alerted of a new type of THC/Nicotine vape pen. These vaping pens are designed to look like everyday items such as pens,

sharpies, and highlighters.

These pens can be filled with more than just nicotine; they might have THC or even drugs like fentanyl.



Mental Health Tips to Help Youth Thrive



As the sweltering days of summer come to an end and our youth begin a new academic year, for some students, the back-to-school thoughts are filled with anxiety and stress.

"According to [recently published SAMHSA data \(PDF | 2.6 MB\)](#), nearly 1 in 5 adolescents ages 12 to 17 reported a major depressive episode in the past year. In some cases, there were co-occurring mental health and substance use issues," states [Anita Everett, M.D. DFAPA, Center for Mental Health Services](#) Director in a SAMSHA BLOG, August 22, 2024.

To help foster youth behavioral wellness and readiness to learn, SAMHSA and the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) – released "[Best Practices for Families and Guidance for Industry \(PDF | 14.8 MB\)](#)" just last month. Among the many recommendations, the report provides five overarching steps for parents and caregivers.

- **Build a family media plan.** Families can use [a tool](#) designed to manage expectations and create an agreement among all members of a family or household about media use to create a media plan.
- **Balance time with and without devices.** Families can intentionally create screen-free times, such as during an evening meal and during bedtime hours. Rather than just focusing on reducing screen time, help your family think about what they want to get back—such as family quality time, more sleep, time at the movies, playing with pets, or time outdoors.
- **Talk about social media.** Parents of youth of all ages should maintain open and nonjudgmental communication about media use. Starting with younger children, parents can position themselves as individuals who can help navigate social media by problem-solving and separating real from edited content. As youth grow older, they seek more autonomy—and with the increasing influence of their peers—so staying connected with open communication is key.
- **Set a good example.** Parents are role models for their children. How parents use social media, the time they spend on social media, and their emotional reactions to social media use create a framework of reference for children. Be mindful of what your children see you doing, and consider describing why or how you are using social media.
- **Optimize your family's online experience.** It is important to choose platforms and content that are developmentally appropriate for your child and set ground rules around whom children can engage with online. Privacy-preserving age-appropriate parental controls are important tools parents can use to help support safe online experiences for children. Be aware of warning signs of problematic online use, including withdrawing from activities they previously enjoyed or changes in their routine, including eating patterns and sleep habits.

[Click Here to Read the Entire Post](#)

On The Calendar



September

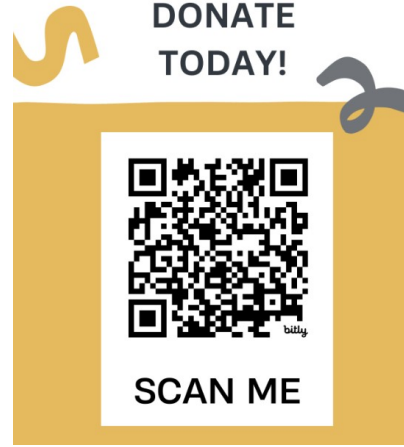


October



- Labor Day, September 2
- Patriot Day, Remembrance Event September 11 @ The Connection 10:30-12
- Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month
- Recovery is a Family Affair, September 14 (see details above)
- Prodigal Child Ministries, September 14 at the Cumming Center City Free event!

FORSYTH COUNTY
DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL



- FCDAC Council Meeting October 2, 2024
- National Substance Use Prevention Month
- Red Ribbon Week, October 23-31
- Mental Illness Awareness Week, October 1-7
- National Prescription Drug Take Back Day - October 26, 2024
- Halloween, October 31

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

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