



The FCDAC STRATEGIZER

Leading the way to a
healthier Forsyth County

February 2023 Volume 2 Issue 10

Receive Our Newsletter



"The world needs that special gift that only you have."
– Marie Forleo

COME TO FCDAC / FULLCIRCLE 2ND ANNUAL DRUG SUMMIT YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATION EVENT

FCDAC and FULLCIRCLE presents
our 2nd Annual Drug Summit

February 8

4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.

FullCircle

433 Canton Rd. Suite 301

FREE EVENT!

[REGISTER HERE](#)

OR CONTACT

PLEASE JOIN US IN
THE 2ND ANNUAL

DRUG SUMMIT



Youth Substance
Abuse Education
Event



HOSTED BY FCDAC AND THE ATLANTA FULL CIRCLE PROGRAM.

► Commissioner Cindy Mills with a panel interview of youth in recovery and their Parents► Benefits individuals who work with youth ► For professionals and parents only ► Education on signs and symptoms of drug use.

If you are interested in attending or tabling this event please email Rachel. (email attached below)

This event is crucial to help our community become educated on this pertinent topic. The best way to learn is from the source.

- **Event Is Free.**
- **Additional Parking at the top of the hill.**

When: February 8th 2023

Where: Full Circle Facility

433 Canton Rd, Suite
301
Cumming, GA 30040

Time: 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm

<https://www.forsythcountyrugawarenesscouncil.org>

RSVP: rachel@unitedwayforsyth.com

CALL US FOR MORE INFO (480)809-5361

OR CONTACT
**DIRECTOR RACHEL
HERE**

FCDAC Work and Programs Round-up



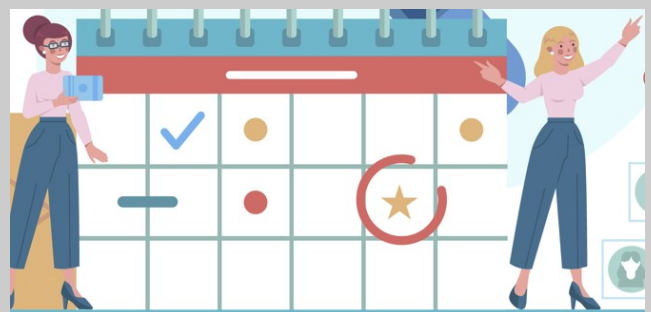
Wow! Anticipation is growing for our 2nd Annual Drug Summit: Youth Substance Abuse Education Event.

Please bring your neighbors and other adults in your sphere of influence to this important community event.

It will surely be eye-opening as **Commissioner Cindy Jones Mills interviews youth in recovery** about their involvement in the dangerous and often life-threatening world of drugs. Find out what is happening in the community. Also, Commissioner Mills will lead a **panel of parents** who will discuss missed warning signs of their child's drug involvement and what steps they took to aid them in getting out of the drug scene.

Click the Register button above for this **FREE event.**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



The March FCDAC Council Meeting is
on

**Wednesday, March 1
8 a.m.
United Way Offices**

Community Outreach, Youth, Members, and Partners



Our Next Speaker Training
February 22
6:30 p.m.
United Way Offices
Training for all who want to
represent the Council before
groups or table events!



COMMUNITY OUTREACH



SHATTERPROOF FORSYTH COUNTY EVENT
APRIL 23, 2023 2-5 p.m.
CENTER CITY, CUMMING, GA

SHATTERPROOF RISE UP AGAINST ADDICTION WALK is proving to be a significant educational event for FCDAC in 2023, and **everyone** will be needed to make it all it can be! Our Forsyth event is shaping up to encompass the **WALK, Speakers, Memorial Rememberances, Resource Area, and MUCH MORE!**

The **Shatterproof Committee** has laid the foundations of the Shatterproof Forsyth County Event! A committee of 14+ FCDAC members, friends, and allies met recently to divvy responsibilities. There is still time to join in with these preparations. [Click Here](#) to help.

What are some practical things you can do?

1. Begin to **spread the word** and form or find a **team** of friends, colleagues, and other like-minded people to Walk or table this fabulous event!
2. Can you make an **in-kind donation**, or are you part of an organization that can? In-kind donations are non-cash gifts of volunteer time, talents, and skills like promotion through social media, creation of graphics for flyers or repair work, or gifting physical items like a bounce house, food, or office supplies.

Still don't know what Shatterproof is?

Shatterproof is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to reversing the addiction crisis in the United States. Its vision is



THE WALK

Together, we'll honor those who lost their lives to this disease, celebrate

those living in recovery, and bring hope to the millions still suffering.

in the United States to work to transform our country's healthcare system and society.

Forty-six million Americans struggle with addiction, but many don't get the treatment they need. It doesn't have to be this way.

Gary Mendell, Founder, and CEO, says Shatterproof, promotes prevention and treatment of addictions with science and compassion – like any other chronic illness – and build a future where those touched by this disease don't experience any shame or stigma."

Find out more about Shatterproof [here](#).



IT'S Time to FORM YOUR WALK TEAM! Ask friends, neighbors, colleagues, church members, civic groups, and organizations to form teams of Walkers.

THE SPEAKERS - To Be Announced!

The committee hopes to invite speakers from the civic community, from those in recovery, parents groups, and professional groups, all of whom have personal involvement in addiction and its prevention.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE AREA

A community resource area will provide a place where non-profits and organizations working in prevention and treatment will be on hand to showcase and educate about what services they can offer our community. **Narcan training will be available.**

MEMORIAL LIGHTING OF TEACUPS

The lighting of the Memorial Teacups is a moving moment to pause and remember the many who have been lost to Substance Use Disorder. Begun as part of the Overdose Awareness event by FCDAC member and mother **Jennifer Hodge**, the lighting of Memorial Teacups is a heart-moving event sure to increase awareness of this growing tragedy. We welcome and encourage anyone who has experienced this loss to participate.



YOUTH OUTREACH-SCHOOL NEWS

Emily Ennis, Substance Prevention Coach at North Forsyth High School, reports that on February 1, she held a recreational event for

about 20 students from her established small groups. They played Jeopardy, the sobriety edition. "The students enjoyed our

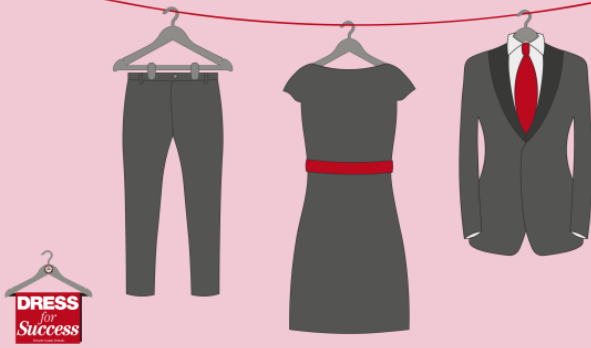


Dress for Success Free Thrifting Extravaganza

Donations accepted through
2/27 at the Forsyth Central
High School Front Office

Suits, Dress Shirts, Ties, Belts, Skirts, Blouses, Slacks,
and gently used Professional Dress Shoes in ALL SIZES!

Donated clothes can be worn for Dress for Success, Interviews,
Graduation, Mock Trial, Debate Club, and more!



recreational events last year and asked for them to continue this semester, too," Emily said. **Gabby Breiten and Jaxon Savajian** helped facilitate the games giving candy prizes to the 1st and 2nd place winners.

Emily also shared, "On February 22, we will be presenting to the freshman health classes our experiences to inspire and educate the students about the pitfalls, and regrets of trying drugs, the real and present dangers." It will be an opportunity to collect some valuable data for the FCDAC.

"As the new semester begins, I see our program gaining momentum. More and more students are reaching out for help, whether for themselves, a friend, or a loved one. These kids are getting the chance to experience life without a chemical dependency on substances. I am excited and hopeful about what this semester has in store!" Emily said.

OUR PARTNERS IN PREVENTION

Atlanta-Carolinas HIDTA To Launch Billboard Campaign and Training Event for Fentanyl Awareness

"The Atlanta-Carolinas HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas) will launch a billboard campaign for fentanyl awareness in the near future," according to Katy Freund, MPH Analyst for Overdose Response Strategy, Atlanta-Carolinas HIDTA.

The AZ HIDTA put together a toolkit in coordination with their state's Drug-Free Coalitions, which is free and available for anyone to use. The various media and presentations can be adapted for local campaign use.

Additionally, HIDTA proposes to host AZ HIDTA trainers to provide a fentanyl awareness workshop for those in prevention education to youth under 18.

Please [Click Here](#) for the tool kit. To reach out to Katy Freund HIDTA, you can [Click here](#)

Members teaching Members

17th Annual Drug and Alcohol Awareness Breakfast

by Dana Bryan



On Saturday, January 21, several Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council members attended the 17th Annual Drug and Alcohol Awareness Breakfast held at Harmony Grove Baptist Brotherhood in Dawsonville. It was definitely worth getting up early on a cold Saturday morning to attend because the messages from the various speakers were so informative and inspiring.

FCDAC Members in attendance at the Harmony Grove Drug and Alcohol Awareness Breakfast left to right: Commissioner Cindy Mills, Susan Tanner, Mike Cowan, Director Rachel, Kayla Bergeron, Dana Bryan, and Amy Leurat.

The main speaker, Chuck Bragg, celebrates seven years of sobriety after 20 years of addiction. He recognizes that marijuana, other drugs, and addictions took away his childhood, dreams, and ambition. Even after the birth of his four children, he continued to use drugs and made excuses for using them. Chuck Bragg's sobriety began on the day he got out of jail, which happened to be his granddaughter's birthday. He finally admitted to himself just how much of his life and relationships he had lost due to his addiction to various drugs, and he recognized that he had let drugs rob him of his teens, 20s, and 30s. He knew sobriety would only be possible by bringing new people, places, and things into his life. Drug counselors often stress to "Change your playground and change your playmates" to escape addiction and succeed in leading a clean and sober life. From that turning point, Chuck dedicated his life to God and made the changes necessary to accomplish his new goals. He is presently an Associate Pastor at Chestatee Worship Center in Dawsonville, and he and his wife are leaders in the Celebrate Recovery program at Crossbridge Community Church in Dawsonville. Chuck Bragg wants his message to be a message of hope, and he gives credit to God and to all who have been a part of his recovery.



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!

Throughout the morning, I heard powerful messages from the speaker and those in the audience who contributed ideas from their personal experiences related to drugs and addiction. I want to share some of these profound statements and facts. They are all worth repeating and worth remembering.





1. We win or lose by the things that we choose.
2. Success is how high you bounce when you hit bottom.
3. Judge Deal states that the Celebrate Recovery program changed how he operated the Drug Court in Hall County.
4. It is important at all stages of life to choose our friends carefully.
5. We are only as good as the company we keep.
6. Show me who you are hanging out with, and I can tell you where you will be in a year.
7. Judge Bagley, Superior Court Judge in Forsyth County, has graduated 423 from the 2-year Drug Court Program. The goal is for every graduate to become a contributing member of society, and this is true for a remarkable percentage of graduates.
8. High schools are beginning to realize the value of drug counselors on staff.
9. The Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council is an umbrella to bring our community together to foster drug awareness and prevention.
10. FullCircle is a free program for ages 13-25 who are involved in destructive behavior. It is based on a 12-step program and includes participation from parents. We are fortunate to have a FullCircle program in Forsyth County under the leadership of Director Mike Cowan.
11. A Drug Summit will be held at FullCircle on February 8, 2023, at 4:30.
12. A person must want "better for themselves" for recovery to occur.
13. The source of drugs and alcohol for many youths is their household and parents.
14. Just because something is legal does not mean it is okay.
15. Commissioner Cindy Mills once met with a group of youths involved with drugs. Commissioner Mills asked if someone would share the one thing she wishes her parents had given her. You might think she would want a possession and possibly something expensive. The one thing she wished she had received from her parents was to "Give me boundaries." This is wise advice to all parents and profound that this young girl realized the importance of boundaries and the problems resulting in her own life from the lack of boundaries.

I hope that more and more adolescents, teens, and young adults will realize the serious dangers associated with the world of drugs and those who are a part of that world. If someone is struggling with addiction or with choices that can lead to addiction, please ask for help from one of the available resources or a trusted adult.

NEWS FOR YOU

LOCAL NEWS

Board of Education Announcements

Kristin Morrissey retired from the Board of Education in December after serving for 12 years. During her three terms, FCS grew from 35,920 to 54,077 students and opened 11 new schools.

Wes McCall (District 1) was sworn in for his second term, and Mike Valdes (District 5) was sworn in for his first term.

For 2023, Darla Light will be the Chairperson and **Lindsey Simpson will be the Vice Chairperson.**

Congratulations Lindsey Simpson, FCDAC council member

STATE NEWS

Senator Kay Kirkpatrick, M.D. Named Chair of the Senate Committee on Children and Families and Vice-chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services



Watch and listen to the **Georgia State Senate Legislative highlights** by Senator Kay Kirkpatrick, M.D. She represents District 32, which borders Forsyth County. I include them here because she has important positions on committees that directly affect our collaborative's mission and interests.

Update: This 3rd week of the session, Senator Kirkpatrick introduced **Senate bill 22** relates to hemp products such as delta 8, which contain THC. It would require testing and labeling and prohibit the purchase or sale of ingestible hemp products by any individual under 18.

NATIONAL NEWS

New System to Track Non-fatal Opioid Overdoses Unveiled

On December 8, 2022, an NPR report by Brian Mann, the White House unveiled a new website that will track **non-fatal opioid overdoses**. Data collected by county-level EMS first responders in all 50 states and the District of Columbia will provide **updated reports on the website every two weeks**. Hopefully, the information will aid the medical response when overdose clusters occur in the country. If you would like to read the entire story, please [click here](#).

[Click Here for the tracking website.](#)

FYI

**GET SMART
ABOUT DRUGS**

A DEA RESOURCE FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & CAREGIVERS

Xylazine "Tranq" Overdose on the Rise

A Drug That Naloxone Can't Combat
Last Updated: Friday January 27, 2023

Xylazine – often called “tranq” – is a drug adulterant that DEA has detected in a growing number of overdose deaths, despite the FDA authorizing it only for veterinary use.

Illicitly-used xylazine is most often reported in combinations with two or more substances present, such as fentanyl, cocaine, or heroin, and can increase the potential for these drugs to cause fatal overdoses. While scientists have not conducted much research on its effects, anecdotal reports suggest that users experience symptoms similar to those encountered via opioids, namely depression of the central

nervous system. More specifically, effects associated with xylazine use include dry mouth, drowsiness, hypertension, respiratory depression, and even coma. Users can develop a physical dependence to xylazine, reporting withdrawal symptoms more serious than from heroin or methadone, such as sharp chest pains and seizures.

Note: Since xylazine is not an opioid, naloxone does not reverse its effects.

Xylazine-positive overdose deaths have grown in all regions of the United States, according to the DEA. From 2020 to 2021, these deaths surged 103% in the Northeast, 516% in the Midwest, and 750% in the West, skyrocketing 1,127% in the South. But since xylazine is not currently included with the CDC's reporting of national statistics on fatal overdoses, it is very likely that the prevalence of the drug is widely underestimated.

The U.S. Controlled Substances Act does not currently list the non-opiate sedative, analgesic, and muscle relaxant as a controlled substance and a kilogram of the drug in powder form can be bought online from Chinese suppliers for \$6-20. Drug traffickers may increase their profits by using the adulterant, with the drug's psychoactive effects allowing the traffickers to reduce the amount of fentanyl or heroin used in a mixture.

Get Smart About Drugs obtained this information from an October 2022 DEA Joint Intelligence Report. View the full report [here](#).

National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week® (NDAFW) March 20-26

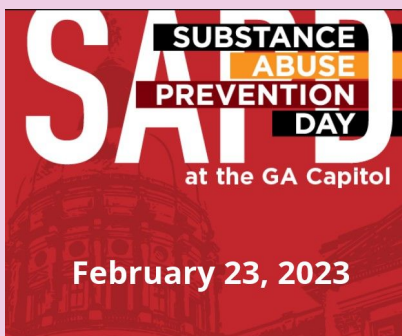


National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week®, or NDAFW, is an annual, week-long health observance that **inspires dialogue about the science of drug use and addiction among youth**. It provides an opportunity to bring together scientists, students, educators, healthcare providers, and community partners to help advance the science and address youth drug and alcohol use in communities and nationwide. It was launched in 2010 by scientists at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to stimulate educational events in communities so teens can learn what science has taught us about drug use and addiction. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism partnered with NDAFW in 2016. Both NIDA and NIAAA are part of the National Institutes of Health and work with leading organizations, media outlets, and other Government agencies to spread the word about NDAFW.

Want to find out how to host an event?

[Click Here!](#)

Substance Use Prevention Advocacy Day at the Capitol February 23, 2023



The word **Advocacy** may seem somewhat scary. However, anyone can advocate. **Advocating for what you are passionate about can take many forms**. If you are passionate about Substance Use Prevention and Suicide Prevention, a fantastic free resource and support of like-minded advocates, check out and become a member of **Voices For Prevention**.

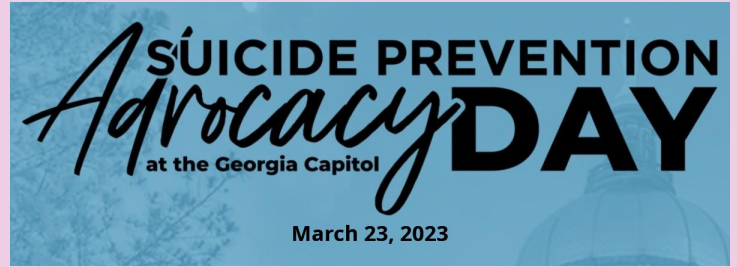
[Click Here to join V4P - It's FREE.](#)



Join Voices for Prevention at the GA Capitol on February 23, 2023. We will be able to educate and provide our needed perspective to our legislators. V4P can teach you practical communication approaches!



The mission of V4P is to build a unified, statewide voice for substance abuse prevention and suicide prevention by collaborating with a diverse group of individuals and organizations with an interest in and a commitment to substance abuse prevention and suicide prevention. This mission is accomplished by advocating for and educating about substance abuse prevention, suicide prevention, and related issues.



Mental and substance use disorders are among the top conditions that cause disability in the United States.

On the Calendar



February

- **FullCircle Youth Drug Summit II**, February 8, 4:30-6:00 p.m., FullCircle
- St. Valentine's Day, February 14
- President's Day, February 20
- **FCDAC Speaker Training**, February 22, United Way Office, 6:30 p.m.
- **Substance Abuse Prevention Day Georgia Capitol**, February 23, 2023, Join Voices 4 Prevention [HERE](#).

March



- St. Patrick's Day, March 17
- Suicide Prevention Advocacy Day GA Capitol, March 23
- National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week, March 20-26

April

- **Shatterproof Forsyth County Event**, April 23, 2-5 p.m.

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

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