



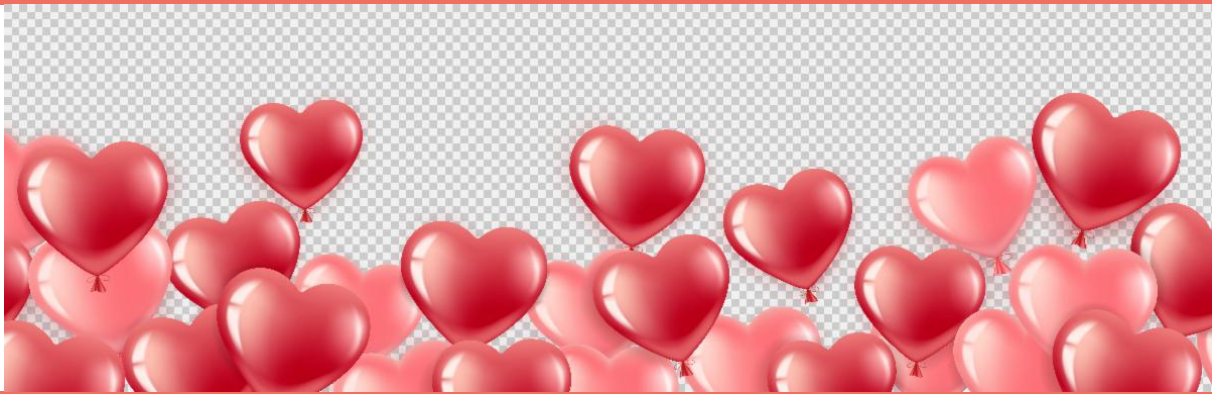
The FCDAC STRATEGIZER

Leading the way to a healthier Forsyth County

RECEIVE A NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2022 VOLUME 1 ISSUE 10

LOVE BEING DRUG FREE!



Director Updates

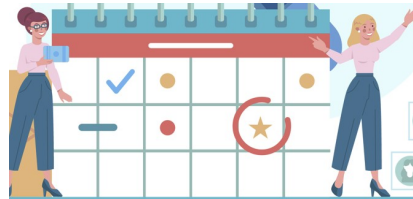
Mitch's Memo



Mitch's Memo

Our year is getting off to a fast start! The council has grown in membership and in community partnerships. We have begun our FORSYTH

FIGHTS BACK community initiative and I am forging ahead with establishing the three Action Committees: Youth Committee, Parent Committee and Community Outreach Committee.



Mark your Calendar!

March Council Meeting
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2,
4:30 p.m.
AT

FullCircle Address:
433 Canton Rd



PLEASE! Remember to use Track It Forward to Log your Volunteer Hours!
**** Except for the Council Meetings and we will take care of that!****

AND



Youth Substance Abuse Education Event

If you need assistance setting this up [Click Here](#)

- ▶ Multiple interviews of youth in recovery
- ▶ Benefits individuals who work with youth
- ▶ For professionals and parents only
- ▶ Education on signs and symptoms of drug use

RSVP HERE



MEET RACHEL KAYDEN NEW FCDAC PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Rachel Kayden is the new **Program Coordinator for Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council**. Rachel came to FCDAC from the Insight Program, a drug and alcohol treatment center for young people ages 13 – 25. She is a Certified Drug Abuse Counselor (CDAC) and has 12 years of experience in education and Social Work. Rachel worked with teenagers and young adults ages 13-30 with drug and alcohol addiction, social, emotional, adaptive, and other difficulties to improve their ability to succeed personally and academically.

Rachel previously worked as Senior Administration Executive with experience in helping companies compile data through reports and record keeping. Her strengths include organizing and running multi-facet departments and programs, including maintaining and obtaining proper licenses.

Rachel has lived in the Atlanta area since 2012, is married seven years, and is a mom to one son.

As Program Coordinator, her duties at FCDAC will include:

- Assist the Program Director with data tracking
- Responsible for producing minutes for community meetings
- Attendance at DFC training and any other pieces of training deemed necessary to perform duties of the position

- Acting liaison with the grant evaluators
- Responsible for writing final grant reports and submitting them to the Program Director for review on

a timely basis

- Assist Program Director with developing the annual budget
- Collect and track in-kind hours and any additional funds brought into the organization via fundraising
- Assisting with community events as needed.

Rachel says, "I'm excited and looking forward to helping FCDAC in any way that I can. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns." Contact Rachel [HERE](#).

Committees, Sectors and Partners Updates

FCDAC: How We Work For Community Change

Seven Strategies for Effective Community Change

1. Provide Information
2. Enhancing Skills
3. Providing Support for Prevention Activities
4. Enhancing Access/Reducing Barriers
5. Changing Consequences (Incentives/Disincentives)
6. Changing Physical Design/ Making Environmental Changes
7. Modifying/ Changing/ Developing Policies

Council Meeting Committee Discussions

"The **Outreach Committee's** purpose is to become actively involved in the community and increase FCDAC's recognition as a go-to community resource," said Director Mitch at the February 3rd council meeting. "Another way we are doing this is being a presence at the local 5 K racing events. Ideally, we would like to be in the position to sponsor community events," he said. We currently have four members: Alex Martinez, Mike Cowen, Sean Sass, Susan Tanner, and Tori Schreiner.

FORSYTH FIGHTS BACK is one of our responses to the opioid crisis! As a Council initiative into the community, we are placing displays for free **Deterra Drug Deactivation Systems** in local businesses and organizations. Our goal is to provide people with a safe and effective way to empty their medicine cabinets of all unused and unneeded prescription drugs.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING PARTICIPANTS

- FullCircle
- The Connection
- Forsyth Department of Health
- Walgreens (Cumming)
- VFW
- Local Church Forsyth
- Kids 'R' Kids
- Brown's Bridge Church
- Realty4Recovery
- Forsyth Central High School
- Gateway Academy
- Forsyth Academy
- Mountain Ed
- Georgia Highlands Medical Services
- Georgia Highlands Pharmacy
- Ivybrook Academy

The Youth Committee members, Jeff Mogan, Matt Meyer, Lindsey Simpson, Dana

The Parents Committee is still forming. Mitch asks council members interested in this

Bryan, Kevin Kayden, Gabby Breiten, Katie Newman met. The committee envisions the first step to establish a list of the need gaps in the community.

Currently, Director Mitch is scheduling meetings with county school administrators seeking their endorsement.

Commissioner Cindy Mills suggested reaching out to Juvenile Court as another avenue for the committee's speakers.

committee to contact him.

Commissioner Mills suggested putting together a survey directed to parents to discover the gaps in their knowledge and what resources they seek when facing a crisis with their children. **Kirsten Banks** offered to survey the 200 members of the Parents Recovery Network.

ACEs COMMITTEE

ACEs Committee Member Kirsten Banks

Kirsten has been on the Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council since its beginnings. "I met FCDAC founder and BOC **Cindy Mills** through a parent of a young adult patient who struggled with heroin addiction. The parent was involved with the **Parent Recovery Network (PRN)**, a support group. This was going on during the formation period of the Council, and the three of us connected, knowing Forsyth County needed a group to combat addiction. That's when we began the Drug Awareness Summits events. This parent was a speaker at one of the first Summits. I was able to help her place her son in a treatment program, and he is sober today." she said.



In addition to her work as a therapist and interventionist, Kirsten has had extensive **community involvement** in the local area to help combat the impact of drug addiction on the community. Kirsten developed and still facilitates a local support group and online support community called **Parent Recovery Network (PRN)** for parents and grandparents of children of all ages who have an addiction. **PRN** is a FREE, anonymous support that helps **parents** navigate this emotional storm by providing friendship, resources, and education on addiction and treatment options.

Parent Recovery Network meets **Thursday evenings in person at the Connection from 7-9 p.m.** "I also have a virtual group meeting chat and private FB group as well," Banks said.

"**My hope for FCDAC ACEs Committee** is to educate the wider community with the knowledge that most everyone with addiction and those loved ones affected by addiction have untreated trauma. Some even meet the criteria for PTSD, and I want them to know about trauma and trauma treatments. I have a dream and vision of

Kirsten Banks, is a Georgia State Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), a Board Registered Certified Intervention Professional (CIP), a nationally Certified ARISE Interventionist (CAI), and a Certified PC Trauma Therapist. Kirsten has worked in the addiction and behavioral health field for over 20 years and specializes in addiction, codependency, trauma, as well as family and couples counseling. Kirsten earned her BA and BS degrees in Sociology and a minor in Rehabilitative Services in Women's Studies from the University of Florida in 1998. In

2005, she earned her Master's Degree in Professional Counseling from

about trauma and trauma treatment. I have a dream and vision of a center in Forsyth that effectively treats trauma and addiction. I am beginning to talk to other professionals about locating a building to start such a program. We must properly treat trauma for family patterns to begin to change so everyone in the family can recover and thrive," Kirsten said.

Kirsten is the founder of the Therapeutic Recovery Network. Therapeutic Recovery Network works with individuals, couples, and families suffering from complex trauma, anxiety, depression, substance use disorders, and mental health issues. We offer counseling, therapy, intervention, and consulting services for mental health and substance abuse issues. Our mission is to provide concierge-level support efficiently and effectively for whole family healing and change.

"We focus on treating the whole person, and we always strive to think outside the box for any solutions that can ultimately put you on the path to hope and healing, there are always options and a way."

- Kirsten Banks, MA, LPC, CAI, CIP

Pediatrician Nadine Burke Harris ACEs and the Tangible Effects on Brain Development



Childhood trauma isn't something you just get over as you grow up. Pediatrician Nadine Burke Harris explains that the repeated stress of abuse, neglect, and parents struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues has real, tangible effects on the development of the brain. This unfolds across a lifetime, to the point where those who've experienced high levels of trauma are at triple the risk for heart disease and lung cancer. Listen to her impassioned plea for pediatric medicine to confront head-on prevention and treatment of trauma.



Listening Session, "Wellness for Families in Recovery" March 16

YOU ARE INVITED!

The Connection Forsyth will hold a Listening Session, "Empowering Wellness Through

Recovery in Forsyth County," on Wednesday, March 16, 12-1:30 PM at the United Way offices, 240 Elm Street, Cumming. The Listen Session is open to community leaders, local nonprofit organizations, community partners, including Forsyth County officials and clinicians. We desire to have a frank discussion on mental health, the number one public health crisis. The purpose is to share input, identify gaps in services, and develop a plan moving forward on how we can effectively collaborate to improve the quality

services, and develop a plan moving forward on how we can effectively collaborate to improve the quality of life for Forsyth families.

We can build stronger families and a healthier community through mental wellness recovery programs by working together as a united front.

RSVP by February 14 to [Kayla Bergeron HERE](#)

The Connection Forsyth is an addiction recovery support center, where those in recovery find fellowship, peer coaching, recovery meetings, and more activities. It provides a safe place to connect with others in recovery. The Connection offers programs that support those in and post-recovery from substance abuse while supporting the entire family. At The Connection, we know the toll addiction has on each family member and the importance of recovery support encompassing the whole family.

YOUTH NEWS

Youth Council Hosted Community Youth Training Summit January 22

THE TRUTH BEHIND E-CIGARETTES: AN EDUCATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT.



Participants in The Truth Behind E-Cigarettes: An Educational Youth Summit



Team poster campaign presentations

Saesha Kapoor, Youth Council President, spearheaded the Saturday, January 22 event. **THE TRUTH BEHIND E-CIGARETTES: AN EDUCATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT** was a collaborative effort between FCDAC Youth

Council, Erika Lopez-Gil, GA Department of Public Health, and Rachel Morris, GA Prevention Project. The featured guest speakers were Erika Lopez-Gil, GA DPH, Rachel Morris, GA PP, and Samuel Ortiz.



In 1998 **Samuel Ortiz** was a student participant in creating a youth anti-smoking education campaign by **Truth Initiative**.

Student leaders came to the Summit from three area high schools and learned more about the dangers of e-cigarettes. Armed with the knowledge, the students brainstormed strategies to counter the misinformation some youth have received from e-cig advertisers and others.

Ms. Morris, the Program Coordinator for GA Prevention Project, addressed what science reveals about the health consequences of vaping. She explained methods to kick the vaping habit and the importance of peer support.

Then, she addressed **media influence**. The reality is that "streaming services are becoming the new commercial, and **teens and young adults exposed to tobacco imagery are three times more likely to start smoking,**" Rachel said.

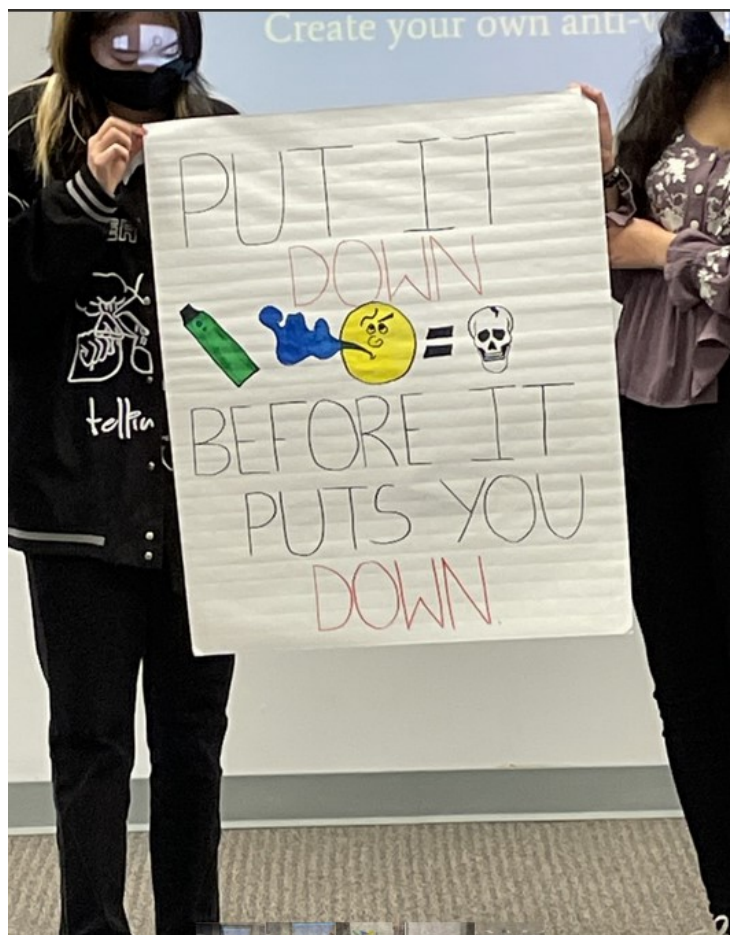
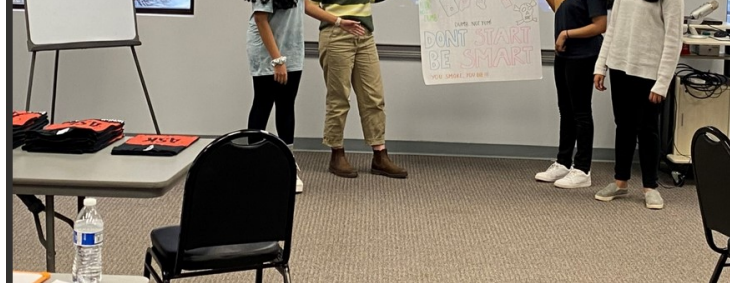
She reminded the student leaders that advertising's purpose is to **sell products and make money**. "Media is **designed to make you feel a certain way** about specific topics. Big Tobacco doesn't want you to know that vapes are the new cigarettes," Morris said.

"Our goal this morning is to **give you the power and information** to be better than how they are telling you to be," she said.

Ms. Lopez-Gil is the Chronic Disease and Health Promotion Coordinator for District 2, GA DPH. She focused her talk on **building an awareness campaign** that students could bring back to school with them. **Mr. Ortiz** provided his experience as a student creating a similar anti-smoking campaign. He described how they came up with the campaign and provided the students with tips and information about how to make changes in the

attitudes of their peers.

The final component to the 4.5-hour Summit was Campaign Poster Building. Saasha Kapoor led this hands-on segment. The posters created by the students will be professionally printed and ready to distribute around the community for **Vaping**



Awareness month in March.

The creation of the poster campaign allows the student leaders to become school influencers and take back to their peers at school a visual message. They will educate with the truth and empower student peers to stand up against the persuasive influences of marketers and encourage others to do the same.



This NIH video for middle school students describes how synthetic cannabinoids, called K2 or Spice, which is often vaped, affect the brain and the body.



Saesha Kapoor, FCDAC Youth Council President, is a junior at South

Forsyth High School and has worked on drug prevention for five years. She is also the co-president of *Be Smart Don't Start*, a drug awareness club at South Forsyth High School.

MEMBERS TEACHING MEMBERS



PARENTING: LOVE VS ENABLING

WALKING A FINE LINE

by Dana Bryan

February is the month we are reminded of **LOVE** everywhere we go, from the Valentine cards and decorations in stores to the abundance of roses and other fresh flowers begging to be taken home with our groceries. My definition of **love** is to **want what is best for another person**, whether we are expressing love for our parents, children, spouse, friends, or coworkers. Our love must not smother or prevent others from developing their unique potential to become the best version of themselves. It is also essential that we love the other person enough to tell them "No" when attempting to do something that could be harmful to

love the other person enough to tell them "No" when attempting to do something that could be harmful to them or someone else.

In the role of parenting, **love** is often confused with **enabling**. While there is a positive type of enabling that lovingly assists someone in accomplishing something they could not do alone, there is a destructive type. Destructive enabling allows someone to continue a **behavior or act that perpetuates harm to themselves or others**.

When addiction exists in a family or a relationship, **enabling**, misinterpreted as an act of love, often covers or keeps a bad behavior hidden by making excuses for why the addicted person can't come to work, school, or a family event. If the enabler is willing to financially "help out," there is little chance the person suffering from addiction will feel the financial burden addiction has on their life. **Keeping secrets, making excuses, and financially subsidizing** people with addictions or destructive behaviors are all "**signs**" of **enabling**. We are not helping them do what is best for them; therefore, enabling is not an act of love.

Love is often confused with giving our children all the material things they ask for or allowing them to do whatever they want without boundaries or guidance. However, the thrill of acquiring a new possession is temporary and is soon replaced by wanting to purchase something else.

Our memories of time spent together with a parent, child, or friend, that **gift of time, encouragement, and love last forever**. The best gifts of love are not things that money can buy. I once read in a card that "The best things in life are not things," and when I look around, I see how true this is. Think of ways in which your parents showed their love or ways in which you wish they had shown their love. Look for ways to show your love for people in your life, and try to provide help, love, thoughtfulness, or encouragement in ways that do not require money.

I wish you the fulfillment of being surrounded by examples of love that will be special memories and will last forever.



**Dana Bryant, Chair of Parents Sector,
Youth Action Committee**

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. Dana is a regular contributor to the *Strategizer*. Thanks, Dana!

LOCAL NEWS

FCDAC Member Donates Narcan to Fight Overdose in Forsyth County and Beyond

Jennifer Hodge, FCDAC council member and co-founder of **Realty4Recovery**, is playing her part in fighting the OPIOID CRISIS.

"In 2020, I started buying Naloxone (Narcan) in bulk from the makers of Narcan and **donating** it to individuals, parents, non-profits organizations with a need as well as to law enforcement agencies who contact me," Hodge said. **NARCAN** is a lifesaving medication used to reverse the effects of opioid overdose. "When I receive a shipment of Narcan, I post it on my R4R FB page," she said.

"The last few weeks of December 2021, we were able to donate 1,000 doses of naloxone," Hodge said. Her donations went to first responders, community members, and parents of young people suffering from addiction. "R4R is blessed to supply Narcan to the homeless, any parent dealing with a struggling child, or pretty much anyone who says they need it," she said.

"I have donated to law enforcement in 4 or 5 counties around me. Most people don't know of the shortage of Narcan in our community, across the county, and the state. There have been several counties in Georgia that have reached out to me," Jennifer said.

"I was speaking to someone who works with the 911 system the other day, and he told me that he was on a call where there was an unresponsive driver. Two officers were on the scene, and neither had Narcan; it took another 5 minutes before the EMS arrived with Narcan. The thought still haunts me that whoever was in that car could have died, or perhaps was brain dead - all because of a lack of Narcan. I can't imagine why some counties are not supplying it, but my mission is to find out what is happening in Georgia," she said.

"I believe we can, through Realty4Recovery, fill the gap. Realtors see and feel the effects in their careers by working so closely with the public, and sadly some like me experience it personally," Jennifer said.

"The best thing I can do as a realtor is giving back to my community. While I lost my son, I will do anything I can to help you keep yours," she said.

*Picture credit, Realtors are Good Neighbors



Pictured left to right:
Danny Yearwood,
Chaplain Stephens Co. Sheriffs Dept.,
Stephens Co., GA, Sheriff Randy Shirley,
Stephens Co., and Jennifer Hodge.

Jennifer Hodge has

served on FCDAC for six years, is a Century 21 Results REALTOR®, co-founder of Realty4Recovery with her late son, Robbie Hodge, and leads the fight against addiction with much help from the community.



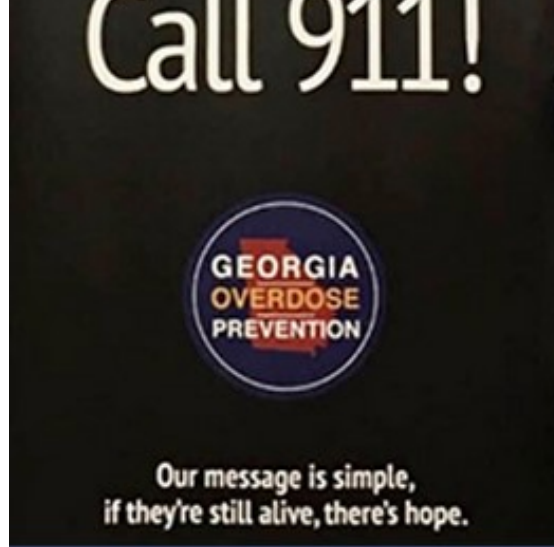
Realty4Recovery is a nonprofit organization that uses Real Estate as a way of funding events and helping other nonprofits who support prevention and recovery from drug addiction disorders. Each year Realty4Recovery and FCDAC sponsor the annual **Teacup Memorial**, recognizing those who have lost their lives to a drug overdose during Overdose Awareness Day.

"In 2015, I received the **National Association of Realtors Volunteering Works** award. That award gave me the confidence to begin earnestly developing Realty4Rehab and began Realty4Recovery to work with other realtors willing to **donate 33 percent of sales commissions** to this cause. My goal, through real estate sales, is to help people get off drugs," Jennifer said.

"In 2020, I started buying and distributing Naloxone because of the shortage among our community first responders, nonprofits, parents, and individuals," she said.

"We believed one way we can make a difference in the substance abuse epidemic is donating funds through Real Estate transactions. I encourage anyone buying or selling to contact Realty4Recovery, and together we can save lives," Hodge said.

[Click Here](#)



Pups with Purpose Graduation Therapy Dogs Trained by RSAT





Pups with Purpose Class 15 graduated on December 1, 2021, from the Forsyth County Sheriff's **RSAT (Residential Substance Abuse Treatment) program** and went home with their new families. RSAT participants trained this first class of Therapy Dogs. The dogs now complete their next training phase with their new handlers and trainer, Scot Rucker @ruckerdogtraining. Congratulations to the Pups and the RSAT trainers.

If you missed this story, [Click Here](#).

STATE NEWS

Mental Health Reform Bill Introduced

GA House Speaker David Ralston (R-Blue Ridge) announced, Wednesday, January 26, he filed **House Bill 1013**, a comprehensive bill to reform Georgia's mental health care delivery system and improve client outcomes.

"There is no issue more important to me this session," Speaker Ralston continued. "Georgia is a great state. Passage of this landmark bill will mean we are also a good state."

(Right) Speaker of the House, David Ralston at January 26 Press Conference.



Representative
and House
Speaker, David
Ralston



"Mental health issues touch almost every family in this state," said Speaker David Ralston Wednesday, January 26, at a press conference. "For much too long, our mental health care delivery system has been inadequate. The accessibility and availability of treatment have been woefully limited. For a state that is rated number one in the nation in which to do business, this is not acceptable."

The bi-partisan House Bill 1013 was sponsored by Speaker Ralston and signed by leadership members from both political parties, including Majority Leader Jon Burns (R-Newington) and Minority Leader James Beverly (D-Macon).

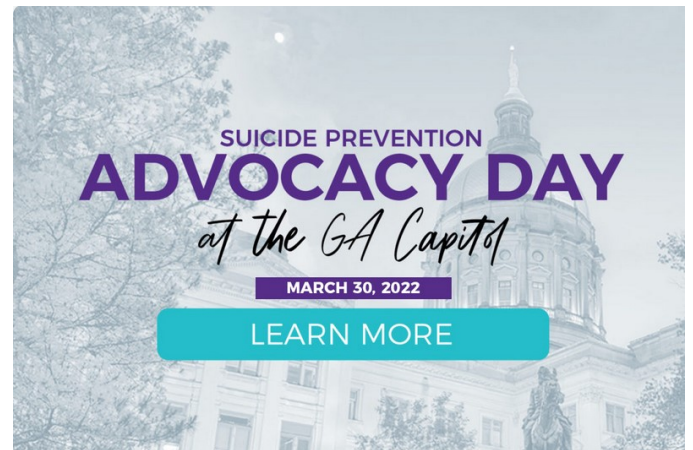
“There is no issue more important to me this session,” Speaker Ralston said. House Bill 1013 will be carried by co-sponsors Rep. Todd Jones (R-Cumming) and Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver (D-Decatur).

“Mental health service delivery is critical to the health and well-being of a growing, thriving state,” said Rep. Todd Jones. “While this is a complex issue, this bill speaks to the commitment of legislators and other stakeholders to work together for the common good.”

House Bill 1013 incorporates the recommendations of the Georgia Behavioral Health Reform & Innovation Commission which was established by House Bill 514 (2019). Former State Representative Kevin Tanner chairs the bipartisan commission, and the commission comprises legislators, judges, mental health practitioners, and client advocates.

Speaker Ralston will assign House Bill 1013 to the House Health & Human Services Committee for consideration.

Let your voices be heard at GA State Capitol Advocacy Days



Why Should Your Nonprofit Advocate?*

- Advocacy helps your nonprofit meet its mission.
- Advocacy helps your nonprofit survive and thrive.
- Nonprofit advocacy helps your community solve problems.
- Nonprofit advocacy helps your community avoid problems.
- Nonprofit advocacy helps give citizens a voice.
- Advocacy helps strengthen communities.
- Advocacy helps public policymakers who need – and often want – citizen input

*From National Council of Nonprofits

Advocacy Webinar- How to do it!

To help prepare for the GA Capitol Advocacy Days on Substance Prevention Day and Suicide Prevention, a Voices for Prevention (V4P) Advocacy Webinar was held on Wednesday, January 26. A lot of valuable information was provided. If you missed it, you can hear a replay [HERE](#).

NATIONAL NEWS



**Rx Drug Abuse
& Heroin Summit**
April 18-21 | Atlanta

**Overdoses are rising. Learn best
strategies for addressing this crisis.**

Register Now →

More than a million lives have been lost to drug overdose since the CDC began collecting data on this epidemic over two decades ago.

That's more than a million too many.

There has never been a more important time for our [Rx Summit](#) community to come together as one force, dedicated to creating solutions. This is the year that we must return to an in-person format, where we can work together, spread hope, and build connections face-to-face. The comeback must be greater than the setback.

This April, join hundreds of law enforcement professionals, clinicians, government officials, family members, and advocates as we work together to share strategies for solutions. Your participation has never been more important.

Contact Mitch Here

FYI



Linking Teens to Facts that SHATTER THE MYTHS® about drugs and drug use.

National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week® will be held
March 21-27, 2022.

Registration opens November 1, 2021.

What is National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week®?

What is National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week®?

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 to improve the prevention and awareness of substance misuse in our own communities and nationwide.

What happens during National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week®?

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week® is an opportunity for teens to SHATTER THE MYTHS® about drugs and drug use. Teens, scientists, and other experts discuss how drugs affect the brain, body, and behaviors in community and school events all over America.

How can I plan an event for National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week®?

Check out the [National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week®](#) website for more information. NIDA offers free resources with suggestions on how to plan events, how to find experts who can participate, and how to connect with NIDA staffers who can help.

Register you Event

GET SMART
ABOUT DRUGS

A DEA RESOURCE FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & CAREGIVERS

Drug Paraphernalia – How Much Do You Really Know?



Educating yourself on various [drugs](#) and [paraphernalia](#) is a key way to prevent drug use in your household. Would you be able to recognize drug paraphernalia when you see it?

Test your knowledge by taking our quiz.

Webinar: Facing Fentanyl: Creating Life-Saving Communications Strategies
presented by
Rescue the Behavior Change Agency**

NEW WEBINAR

**FACING FENTANYL:
CREATING LIFE-SAVING
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15 10 AM PT / 1 PM ET

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Overdoses have skyrocketed during the pandemic, with a [record-breaking number of overdose-related deaths](#) reported in a 12-month period from April 2020 to April 2021. This spike is primarily a result of fentanyl, a highly potent substance commonly mixed into illicit drugs without the user's knowledge, flooding the U.S. drug supply. Those who use illegal drugs are increasingly vulnerable to an accidental overdose. However, many casual and experienced users still don't consider themselves at risk due to a lack of awareness or perceived relevance.

In our newest 1-hour webinar, experts will discuss cutting-edge communication strategies to address these gaps in knowledge and reduce fentanyl-related overdoses in your community. They'll provide you with a roadmap for creating actionable fentanyl education and share examples of effective overdose prevention campaigns. You'll learn how to:

- Act quickly to build local awareness of the fentanyl crisis
- Gain a localized understanding of at-risk populations and their messaging needs
- Implement tailored communications that are immediately relevant and urgently motivating

*Attendance is FREE; however, registration is required to attend and is not guaranteed.

**The Rescue Agency is a for-profit behavior change marketer. 100% of revenue comes from positive social change campaigns.

REGISTER* HERE



HAS THE WINTER SEASON GOT YOU DOWN?

WINTER DAYS are shorter and darker, and people sometimes experience more symptoms of sadness, moodiness, and tiredness. In more extreme cases, this is called **Seasonal Affective Disorder**. It's a good thing to be aware of the season and the symptoms that occur. It's a good idea to have some self-care ideas in your back pocket to use when you start experiencing symptoms.

Try these:

- Get as much natural sunlight as possible
 - Exercise regularly
- Reach out to friends and family
 - Eat right
- Take steps to deal with stress

Always seek professional help when needed. Call the **NAMI Helpline** for support and referrals at **1-800-950-6264**.

ON THE CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- **Suicide Prevention Advocacy Day**, Georgia Capitol, February 10, 2022
- St. Valentine's Day February 14
- **Free 1 hour Seminar, Facing Fentanyl: Creating Lifesaving Communications Strategies** February 15. 1 p.m. sponsored by Rescue The Behavior Change Agency [Info & Registration Here](#)
- **Substance Abuse Prevention Day**, Georgia Capitol, February 24, 2022

MARCH

- Vaping Prevention Awareness Month
- Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
- Brain Injury Awareness Month
- National Poison Prevention Week March 14-20
- **National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week** March 21, 2022 - 12:00 to Sunday, March 27
- **Suicide Prevention Advocacy Day**, GA State Capitol, March 30