



FORSYTH COUNTY
DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL

EDUCATE.
ADVOCATE.
EMPOWER.



Strategizer

Leading the way to a
healthier Forsyth County



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TODAY!**



SCAN ME

March 2025 Volume 4 Issue 11

Donate Here

Get Ready



APRIL 27, 2025 | 3:00-5:00 PM
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DONATION QR CODE
PLEASE PUT 'THE WALK' IN THE MEMO LINE

SPONSORSHIPS AND DONATIONS SUPPORT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE FORSYTH COUNTY DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL AND ITS PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE WALK FOR RECOVERY

THE WALK FOR RECOVERY
#onestepatatime
AT THE CUMMING CITY CENTER

EVENTS
MUSIC AND GAMES
FACE PAINTING
PIZZA AND PRIZES
RESOURCE TABLES
WALK FOR AWARENESS
AND MORE!

RSVP, SIGN UP FOR A TEAM, OR DONATE BELOW:

OUR SPONSORS

- NLB NO LONGER BOUND
- Shatterproof Stronger than addiction
- CONNECTION Empowering RECOVERY in Forsyth County
- FORSYTH COUNTY DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL
- REALTY4RECOVERY
- FORSYTH COUNTY COMMUNITY CONNECTION family connection

SCAN FOR MORE INFO!

ARE YOU READY?!
The Walk for Recovery is the Council's next big Community event. Mark your Calendar for Sunday, April 27, at the Cumming City Center from 3-5 p.m.

We need Sponsors (see left) and Walkers to form teams. Resource tables will also be available. Material and monetary donations are also needed.

All hands on deck!
Rally your friends, family, and church family, and post this flyer to your social networks to make this the best event ever!

FCDAC Council Meeting, Work and Programs Round-up

Kayden's Korner



I am still riding high after the Drug Summit! What a fantastic event! I am thankful to everyone who participated and came out for the event. Thank you to UNG for the lovely venue and the tremendous support you provided.

However, we can't slow down, and up next is The Walk for Recovery on April 27 at the



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Cumming City Center. Priority #1 is to **get the word out** to everyone you know, post our flyer on your social media, and ask stores you frequent to post the flyers and hand them out.

The Walk for Recovery gives witness to the lives and stories of many loved ones who lost their lives to overdose and addiction. We also educate and promote healthier, drug-free lifestyles. We shout from the rooftops that **recovery is possible** in Forsyth County.

Use the QR code (above) to sign up and donate or [CLICK HERE.](#)



**Our next FCDAC Council Meeting is on
Wednesday, April 2
8 a.m.
United Way Offices**

Council Meeting Highlights

Director Rachel Kayden opened the 8 a.m. monthly council meeting by Welcoming everyone. The scheduled speaker from Mentor Me could not come to present this morning. We will use our time to collaborate and bring each other up to speed with our organizations and activities. We will also get an update from Keertana Uppala and her youth initiative.

Recap of the Drug Summit

- 100 + attendees
- many schools represented
- Our panelists (school principals and other school professionals) were thankful to be asked to speak and believe the meeting was positive. They felt supported by the community.
- At Leadership Forsyth, Cindy said the Drug Summit was a topic of conversation and was well received. She expressed that the schools were doing their best in the situation dealing with mental health and addiction issues—that they didn't ask for but were looking at students' best interests.
- Regarding state actions, Forsyth County is leading the way in providing real and meaningful intervention for students and encouraging healthy lifestyle choices.
- Having the FCDAC Parent Partner Committee (Ashley Dickerson and Marti Roveda) speak through their own experiences in dealing with these issues at parent meetings and in the community successfully opened new lines of communication and broke down stigmas and barriers.

Council goals for the 2025 and 2026 school year

- This year, the Council's goal is to bring our parent speakers to established parent events so that they can address parents at schools, churches, clubs, and organizations. They can speak to hot-topic issues of parents, like how to effectively set boundaries for their youth.
- Another Council initiative is to provide the schools with informative videos and recordings for students and parents. We have a **youth member who has a fentanyl awareness project and has created a fentanyl awareness curriculum.** We could release it in video segments through the newsletters.
- Rachel said we will get onto the schools' orientation program for short preventative presentations at all levels, including elementary and middle schools, a priority. For example, a non-threatening topic like setting boundaries. What does that look like for elementary, middle, and high school students?

The Walk for Recovery is Sunday, April 27, at the Cumming City Center, 3 - 5 p.m.

- The flyers are on the table. We ask you to take these flyers and distribute them to your contacts.

- the flyers are on hand for you to take these flyers and distribute them to your contacts, your organizations, schools, churches, stores, and restaurants, and post them to social media accounts, community bulletin boards, etc. We want to push community involvement. We have had good support and attendance from our Recovery Community, but this is for the greater community's awareness and education. **It is a super friendly family event**, and we want to reach our friends and neighbors, breaking down the stigma and showing that Recovery is Real.
- There will be a bounce house, face painting, pizza, and music for families. **This family event is for anyone interested in fun and healthy living in Forsyth County and keeping drugs and alcohol out.**
 - **The Walk itself is a collaborative stroll. Please promote it as such.**
 - **An Updated Sponsorship flyer is coming out.** We need sponsors, and we will use their logos on T-shirts, banners, and all types of social media.

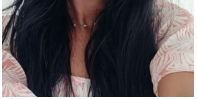
Introduction and Announcements:

- Rachel Kayden, the Program Director of FCDAC
- Alycea Vega, Assistant Program Director
- Child & Family Welfare Collaborative lunch on March 17 at East Forsyth High School. [RSVP HERE](#)
- Kristen Banks Therapeutic Recovery Network—[CLICK HERE](#) for their services overview—leads a free Parent Recovery Network group and leads the East Forsyth High School ODAT (One Day at a Time) student small group.
- Drew Hayes, ACE Principal
- Reggie Mayers, Cumming Comprehensive Treatment Center, we are a medication-assisted treatment and counseling.
- Janice Neyer, The Strategizer, FCDAC Newsletter
- Tom Cleveland, a retired school board member, volunteers with the sheriff's department, riding with the chip and EMT unit
- Emly Dent, Twin Lakes Recovery
- Jenna Smith CASA
- Dana Bryan is a retired Middle School teacher and Parent of a daughter who died at 15 of a drug overdose.
- Sarah Pedarre, Forsyth County Community Connections
- Susan Tanner, Mentor Me and board member Prodigal Child Ministries
- Cindy Mills, FCDAC Founder and retired County Board of Commissioners
- Katie Lamberson, UNG
- Todd Shifflet, Georgia Highlands
- Abigail Buben, Forsyth County Community Connection Drop
- Maureen Bixler, Live Life Counseling
- Lindsey Simpson, Forsyth County Schools
- Danielle Rietta, Avita Community Partners
- Jessica Mitcham Recovery Bartow, Inc.
- Ainsley Miller, Insight Program, Prevention Coach at North Forsyth High School
- Emily Ennis, Insight Program, Drug Counselor at ACE. Ainsley and I have done programs at Lambert, Central, and the middle schools.
- Marti Roveda, Parent Coach and Co-chair of our Parent Committee discussed advocacy opportunities with legislators at the state capitol.
- Keertan Uppala, Youth Council
- Adam Miller, North Georgia Recovery Center

Keertana Uppala is a member of our Youth Council and a West Forsyth High School freshman.

"Thank you for having me here today. I came to talk about my project about harnessing the power of social media and getting teenagers involved. When I was in Middle School, I heard about drugs, and I thought like, how are middle schoolers getting involved in drugs at such a young age? It broke my heart to listen to stories about these kids. Then, during the summer of 8th grade, I decided to get involved in the Drug Awareness Council. I contacted Mrs. Kayden and asked if I could be involved





the Drug Awareness Council. I contacted Phil Rayson and asked if I could be involved with the Council because I wanted to be a part of the solution and make kids feel safer.

I've been recruiting people through word of mouth, posting on TikTok, and finding individuals on LinkedIn interested in the opportunities FCDAC offers. The obstacle I am running into is trying to move kids past the fear of hearing the word drugs. If I stress promoting a community where everybody's happy, protected, and safe, I will recruit others. As I listened to the discussion and some of your upcoming projects, I thought about how the youth could assist. Concerning the Stars and Strikes program, youth members could create the flyer and form a greeting committee to provide a warm welcome.

If FCDAC representatives came to present at our school's resource and community fairs, it would let other youths know about the Council and the positive impact they could have on events and projects. We have a group called **Healthcare Pathway**, and if one of you could come and talk to these kids about mental health careers in addiction recovery, being involved, getting internships, or applying for scholarships, many kids in my school would be really interested.

Honestly, I appreciate all of you guys coming out here. I realize that every single one of you has a busy life with jobs and family, but you come here to these meetings and put so much effort into helping kids have a better life. Thank you for letting me speak today."

March 5, 2025 Council Meeting



Missed the Council meeting? Please click on the play button to the left and check it out!



Community Outreach, Youth, Members, and Partners





The Walk for Recovery is for EVERYONE!

This family-friendly event brings our entire community together! We remember those lost to overdose, stand strong with those in

recovery, shattering the shame, and move all sectors of society toward health and well-being!

Speakers

Walk

Music

Games and Face Painting

Pizza and Prizes

Resources



Youth Outreach

School News



Emily Ennis, Gateway and Forsyth Academy Drug Counselor



Ainsley Miller, Prevention Coach, North Forsyth High School.

Currently, I have three group sessions meeting twice a week at Gateway and Forsyth Academy. Individual meetings with students are ongoing and are initiated by the students. In those meetings, I focus on the student's immediate concerns, most often helping them identify what issues drugs and alcohol may present in their lives and trying to inspire a different way of living through sobriety.

Emily and I attended the **Drug Summit**. She spoke on one of the panels, and I handed out eight flyers for our services at a table.

The following week, I brought in two counselors to share their testimonies with a group of guys and girls.

way of living through sobriety.

group of guys and girls.

The topic of how to have fun in sobriety has come up in many different conversations. So, I am focusing on building strong connections with the students, showing them, and providing opportunities for them to develop strong connections with each other because **friendship consists of what you know about each other and what you do together.**

This is why our "Having Fun Sober" events are so important! The **group sessions and sober functions build strong connections that inspire change.** Last month, we held a Jeopardy event at Gateway and Forsyth Academy and gave the winning teams candy and gift cards. This month, we will hold an event where the students will create their own theme, and we'll have finger foods and a game.

At **Lambert High School**, we continue to meet weekly in group sessions and are currently meeting individually with students at **Central High School.**

East Forsyth High School reached out to collaborate with their community addiction support group. This is an exciting opportunity! Their group, ODAT (One Day At A Time), was formed under Katie Newman, East's Community Wellness and Engagement Coordinator. I'm looking forward to seeing how they operate their group sessions there.

In February, Ainsley and I presented to the 8th-grade health classes at **South Forsyth Middle School.** I always enjoy speaking with middle school students because they ask great questions and are a fun group to work with.

It's been an extremely productive and fun semester, and I'm very excited about the new emphasis the council and the schools have placed on continuing to help kids in need.



On Wednesday, February 12th, I brought a group of my girls to a girl's sober recreational event. They got to hang out with puppies for an hour! I had three girls attend!

On February 26th, we hosted a sober recreational event: **Capture the Flag**, a kid favorite. Emily helped out, and seven students attended.

Like Emily, I am focusing on creating opportunities for real connections between myself and the students and the students with each other. Providing time and space for playing games and sharing experiences are ways to build friendships. Seeking these meaningful connections and honestly finding enjoyment in the relationship when no mind-altering substances are involved is rewarding and enriching.

I have been at North for about four months and feel good about the relationships I have made with the students I meet with and the teachers/staff at North. I am planning another sober recreational event for March 19th and plan to play kickball with the students!



Parent Partners Corner

by Ashley Dickerson and Marti Roveda



Marti Roveda, CPS-P, and Parent Coach

Marti is a parent coach who helps parents of youth with substance use disorders find healing and strength through **Equanimity Parent Coaching.** She founded the ARCH Academy of Cumberland Heights (Nashville, TN) Parent Support Tribe, serves on the



Academy of Cumberland Heights (Nashville, TN) Parent Support Tribe, serves on the ARCH Academy Advisory Committee, and co-chairs FCDAC's Parent Partners Committee.

On February 25th, we shared our strength, hope, and experience at a **Gateway Parents Night**, where approximately 10 parents participated. Attendees also received our *What to Expect When You Suspect* flyer, a resource that has become a lifeline for parents seeking guidance and support.

On Monday, March 3rd, I had the privilege of joining Michael Mumper and Dr. Gregg Raduka of Georgians for Responsible Marijuana Policy (GRMP) to testify before the House Agriculture Committee in support of HB 265 S. This bill, sponsored by Representative Steven Sainz (District 180, Camden County), aims to limit the amount of Delta-8 THC in consumable hemp products. While the bill did not advance, several committee members expressed that my testimony was impactful—many even shared personal stories of knowing someone affected by substance use disorder.

Although there was no immediate movement on HB 265 S, Rachel and I launched a social media campaign urging members of the FCDAC and the community to contact the Senate Rules Committee in support of SB 33 S ahead of Crossover Day (Thursday, March 6th). SB 33 S seeks to regulate all forms of THC, including Delta-8 and HHC, by capping total THC concentration at 0.3%. It also introduces testing, labeling requirements, and age restrictions (21+) to ensure consumer safety.

In support of efforts to close the Delta-8 loophole, I provided this written testimony that GRMP shared when I was unable to testify in person:

"Closing the Delta-8 loophole is crucial because my family experienced firsthand the devastation that unregulated, high-potency THC can cause. My son's addiction to high-potency THC began with what seemed like harmless use but spiraled into life-altering consequences for him and our family. These products exploit young, developing minds without accountability or awareness of their risks. Closing this loophole is a step toward protecting other families from the heartbreak we endured."

We remain committed to advocating for stronger regulations that protect families and communities from the dangers of unregulated THC products. Thank you to everyone who continues to support these efforts.



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. She contributes her insights monthly to the *Strategizer*."

Our Partners in Prevention

More Great Community Events from our Friends at ...



A Weekend of Renewal, Hope & Community

We gathered for an unforgettable **Prodigal Child Ministries Retreat February 7-9 at Ark on Lake Lanier**. The retreat center's name, **the Ark**, is a beautiful reminder of how **God provides a place of refuge in the storm**. Just as Noah and his family found safety in the Ark, we, too, found a place to step away from the chaos, seek renewal, and strengthen our faith.



Julie and Pacer Cordry, Prodigal Child Ministries.

Our theme for the weekend was **Renewal**, inspired by Romans 12:2: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will."

Thirteen parents came together—not just as individuals but as a community—to share, heal, and find strength in the Lord. Some came as couples, others came alone, but none of us left the same. Lives were changed, hearts were renewed, and hope was restored.

What made this retreat so special?

- **Friday Night:** We connected over a warm, welcoming dinner and shared our journeys with one another.
- **Saturday Morning:** Guest speaker **Jim Shambo** led a powerful session on renewing our minds through Christ.



- **Saturday Afternoon:** We embraced joy through a creative painting activity led by **Kristen & Milli**, reminding us that even in the hardest seasons, it's okay to find moments of fun.
- **Saturday Evening:** **Jeff & Linda Brethauer** shared their moving testimony about overcoming the loss of a prodigal, offering comfort and encouragement.

- **Sunday Celebration:** We welcomed back past retreat attendees for worship and an inspiring message, with **Maggie's beautiful voice and guitar filling the room with praise**.
- Most importantly, we experienced the power of community. There is something deeply meaningful about being in a space where everyone understands—where no one has to carry their burdens alone. As parents, we were reminded that even in the darkest moments, God is with us and has placed others in our lives to walk alongside us.



To our donors and supporters—this retreat is possible because of you. Your generosity allows us to offer this experience at no cost to parents who need it most. Thank you for being part of this ministry!

The Ark on Lake Lanier provided the perfect setting for

this retreat! **A huge thank you to Ms. Jackie and her team from The Ark** for the incredible food and warm hospitality. We were nourished in more ways than one. It was truly a place of peace, reflection, and renewal. Visit them **[HERE](#)**.



Coming to Fayette March 25-27, 2025

Please help us... **FACT 4 FUTURE** help our kids

FAYETTE & COWETA TOGETHER

PROUDLY PRESENTING

CHRIS HERREN

SPEAKING SERIES



Chris Herren, a former NBA basketball star, is a renowned speaker and advocate for substance abuse prevention. With a powerful story of overcoming addiction, Chris has dedicated his life to education teenagers on the dangerous paths that alcohol and drugs lead us. He champions compassion and dignity in how students treat each other. Chris speaks to the hearts of these young students helping them understand the decisions they make now will have a lasting impact on their lives tomorrow. So far Chris has spoken to over one million teenagers... we would like him to speak to our teenagers in Coweta and Fayette County as well. We have too many teens losing their lives to alcohol and drugs. This will save lives.

We have a commitment from the Herren Foundation for Mr. Herren to speak to students at every high school in both Coweta and Fayette Counties... nearly 14,000 teenagers! Additionally there will be two evening parent / community events. The dates for Coweta are Oct 28 - 29, 2024 and for Fayette Mar 25 - 27, 2025.

We are a non-profit and 100% of the financial burden of this initiative is on us as communities. Individuals can make a *donation of any amount* on our website listed below. *Business and Corporate sponsorships* start at \$500 and are rewarded with a powerful advertising package. Check out our webpage and if you need more information please reach out to our program manager Tara Hannon by email at TaraHannon@FayetteFactor.org or by phone 470-651-6374

THANK YOU! www.FACT4future.org **THANK YOU!**

CARES WARM LINE

"Connection is the Opposite of Addiction"

Available 365 days/year
Connect via call or text
8:30AM-11:00PM

844-326-5400

#GARecovers
Georgia Council for Recovery
Prevention from Addiction

FENTANYL IS THE NUMBER ONE KILLER FOR PEOPLE AGES 18 - 45



2025 Prevention Days Be Part of the Movement!

Your voice matters. Your advocacy makes a difference.
Join us for Prevention Days where we are coming together to take action on substance use and suicide prevention in our communities. Whether you are a professional, advocate, student, or concerned community member - this event is for **YOU!**



STRONGER TOGETHER
EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



STRONGER TOGETHER
BUILDING BRIDGES WITH COMPASSION



Rx and Illicit Drug Summit

April 21-24, 2025 | Nashville, TN

Rx and Illicit Drug Summit is the largest, most influential event addressing this crisis, where strategies are shared and put into action. Our global community includes multidisciplinary stakeholders "from federal to family." As we enter our 14th year, our mission has become increasingly important—we can't afford to lose more lives. It's time to turn the numbers around.

Substance Use Prevention Day
February 27, 2025 | The Georgia Freight Depot

[Register Here](#)

[Register Here](#)

Saturday March 22nd

Forsyth Resource, Volunteer, & Job Fair!

Connect with over 25 resource partners in our community and discover various volunteer and employment opportunities!



11am-1pm

3185 Dahlonega Hwy



RSVP today!



Child & Family Collaborative Luncheon meets monthly throughout the school year to learn how we can deepen each other's impact, reduce duplication of services and explore new ways to help our children and families.

Our Next Lunch,

**March 17th
East Forsyth High School, 12-1:30 p.m.**

MEDICALLY ASSISTED TREATMENT

If you or a loved one is struggling with substance abuse, there is help available. Our outpatient medically assisted treatment program assists individuals struggling with opioid or alcohol addiction.

TREATMENT INCLUDES:

Screening and Assessment

Medication Management

Substance Use Education

Counseling

No Cost to Patient

Georgia Highlands Medical Services



MORE INFORMATION

(770) 887-1668

<https://www.ghms-inc.org>

475 Tribble Gap Road
Cumming, GA 30040

This project was supported by Grant No. 19BJIA-23-GG-02380-COAP awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). The BJA is a component of the Dept. of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also included the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the US Dept. of Justice.

Narcan Virtual Training

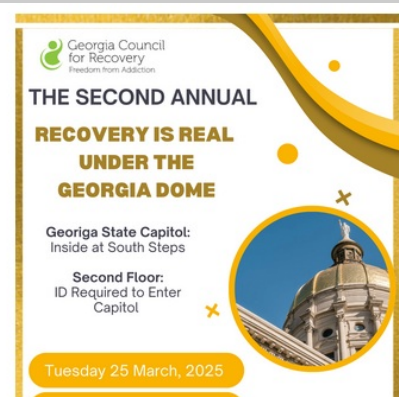
Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Narcan virtual training sessions

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



The Second Annual Recovery Is Real Under The Dome

North Georgia Rural Recovery Rally



March 22, 2025

12pm-4pm



Scan this code for individual or vendor table registration.



Scan this code for sponsorship opportunities.

#GARecovers

9am - 2pm

#GARecovers

News For You

State News



The Georgia Council for Recovery General Assembly Virtual Town Hall

Wednesday, 26 March

12PM- 1PM

MEETING ID: 846 3435 2988

Passcode: recovery



#GARecovers



- 12 Years of Advocacy
- 10 Years of "Don't Run - Call 911!"
- 10 years of Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND)
- 72,000 Georgians trained
- 145,000 naloxone kits distributed
- 6,700 trainings
- 12,000 overdose reversals

National News

Senate Judiciary Committee Votes to Advance the HALT Fentanyl Act

On February 27, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted to advance the [Halt All Lethal Trafficking \(HALT\) of the Fentanyl Act](#) through a bipartisan vote of 16-5. The bill, which is led by Senators Grassley (R-IA), Cassidy (R-LA), and Heinrich (D-NM), would permanently label fentanyl-related substances as Schedule I prior to their temporary Schedule I classification expiring on March 31, 2025.

The House companion of the bill, led by Rep. Griffith (R-VA-9), was passed by the House of Representatives on February 6th by a vote of 312-108. The Office of Management and Budget officially

confirmed that President Trump plans to sign the bill when both Houses of Congress pass it.

CADCA wrote a letter of support for the bill and also signed onto an additional letter in strong support of the bill with over 40 other advocacy groups, 11 major law enforcement organizations and 25 State Attorneys General.

Call for Advocacy



Take Action Now!

Please send this EMAIL TODAY
It will help save lives impacted by Alcohol Use Disorder

[Send an Email](#)

Know your Senators! Write or Call Today!

Senator Greg Dolezal

27th District • Republican •
Cumming



Senator Steve Gooch

51st District • Republican •
Dahlonega
Majority Leader



High Resolution Photo

27th District

Capitol Address

421-B State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
Office: (404) 656-0040

High Resolution Photo

51st District

Capitol Address

236 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
Office: (404) 656-9221



From FCDAC's Friend, John Bringuel, MA, CTP, CTTC, CRBF, ICPS, Prevention / Intervention Program Manager, Prevention / Intervention Program Manager, The Council on Alcohol and Drugs.

270 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 2200
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-1283

Wk. (404) 223-2484

Cell (678) 245-2740

Fax (888) 638-0753 Email: jbringuel@livedrugfree.org

I want to share the attached document from **Watson Strategies**, which effectively clarifies the distinction between Advocacy and Lobbying. The document highlights Watson Strategies' expertise in crafting impactful advocacy campaigns, particularly emphasizing philanthropy and public-private partnerships. Notably, pages 2 to 4 provide a clear outline of "Phrases or Concepts Emphasizing Advocacy versus Lobbying Activities."

A special thank you goes out to Collaborative partner Charlotte Spell, who provided the Watson Strategy Guide. If you are unsure whether your statements qualify as lobbying, please consult your leadership or your organization's legal counsel. If you need more clarification about your role as an Advocate, please feel free to reach out, and I will be happy to help you. Thanks for your efforts.



[Click Here for Watson Strategies](#)

Marijuana, Hemp and Medical Marijuana Bills

Introduced In Georgia General Assembly



Advocacy is about educating our legislators about the serious nature and harm caused by marijuana. Things are

Update on Bills as of 3/7/2025

from Jeff Breedlove Crossover

The General Assembly has crossed over - meaning a bill which fails to cross over this year must wait until January 2026.

There are 12 legislative days remaining Session days: Now until April 4. While a bill that does not crossover may be dead until next 1-2026, the language and the policy

moving very quickly at the Capitol! Key marijuana, hemp, and medical marijuana bills have been "dropped" (introduced) in the Georgia General Assembly.

We can all Advocate through our education efforts. **Are you wondering where to start?** Our friend, Michael Mumper, Executive Director of Georgians for Responsible Marijuana Policy, can help!

Step 1: FIND YOUR STATE SENATOR OR STATE REPRESENTATIVE

To find your State Senator or State Representative, go to Plural Policy [AT THIS LINK](#), type your home address, and ENTER.

Step 2: Write and call your Senator and Representative.

Remember, these people work for YOU! Any time you talk with your legislators about these bills is very helpful. It is especially so if your legislator is on one of the committees assigned explicitly to "hear" this bill. You can see if your legislators are on one of these committees below. Also in this table is a few key points you can share with your legislator in addition to "Support" or "Oppose."

Key Talking Points for each:

- **SB 33** The bill brings Delta-8 (and similar products) under the regulation of all hemp consumables regarding the 21-year-old age minimum, product packaging, and testing for total THC levels.
- **HB 265** If your Representative is on the House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee, ask them to SUPPORT. The bill brings Delta-8 (and similar products) under the regulation of all hemp consumables regarding 21-year-old age minimum, product packaging, and testing for total THC levels.
- **HB 227** If your Representative is on the House Health Committee, ask them to OPPOSE. The bill gets rid of age minimums to certify mild and moderate autism and PTSD for medical marijuana so that even toddlers

on the autism spectrum could be given medical marijuana, despite the lack of consensus scientific support. It gets rid of the "end stage" limitation for all conditions so that even someone with mild cases can use medical marijuana despite the lack of consensus scientific support. And it opens the door to some advertising.

We appreciate all you do to keep our youth and citizens safe. Please call with questions, concerns, or ideas!

[Contact Michael Mumper Here](#) or call 770-592-7238

within the bill is still alive.

The Georgia Recovery Community is blessed that some bills we support crossed over - while some did not. GC4R will be working with our General Assembly Working Group on Addiction and Recovery leaders to find appropriate legislation to amend and attach our language.

SB 33 by Senator Kay Kirkpatrick includes Delta 8 and other dangerous variants of THC in the total percentage of THC in hemp products and requires testing and labeling like Delta 9 - **PASSED SENATE**

SB 33 Status:

Spectrum: Moderate Partisan Bill (Republican 12-3)
Status: Engrossed on March 6 2025 - 50% progression
Action: 2025-03-10 - House First Readers
Pending: House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee

HB 265

Status

Spectrum: Partisan Bill (Republican 4-0)
Status: Introduced on February 4 2025 - 25% progression
Action: 2025-02-06 - House Second Readers
Pending: House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee

HB 227 Status

Spectrum: Slight Partisan Bill (Republican 4-2)
Status: Engrossed on February 27 2025 - 50% progression
Action: 2025-02-28 - Senate Read and Referred
Pending: Senate Health and Human Services Committee



Thanks to all who contacted their Representatives and Senators!

Take Action: Fight for Recovery Out Loud

Our power is in our voices and in our stories. We are stronger together. You can take positive action TODAY! The Georgia Council for Recovery has two action items.

SB 277 by Senator Blake Tillery

SB 277 provides a platform to address Alcohol Use Disorder which is the second leading cause of death by substance use disorders, behind tobacco and ahead of opioids.

[Take Action, Click Here](#)

SB 277 Status

Spectrum: Partisan Bill
(Republican 1-0)

Status: Introduced on February 26 2025 - 25% progression

Action: 2025-02-27 - Senate Read and Referred

Pending: [Senate Health and Human Services Committee](#)



Results of Other Bills We Support From...

Jeff Breedlove, Strategic Policy Advisor at the Georgia Council for Recovery

[SB 6](#) by Senator Kay Kirkpatrick authorizes the use of testing equipment to determine whether a controlled substance has been adulterated - **PASSED SENATE**

[SB 33](#) by Senator Kay Kirkpatrick includes Delta 8 and other dangerous variants of THC in the total percentage of THC in hemp products and requires testing and labeling like Delta 9 - **PASSED SENATE**

[SB 79](#) by Senator Russ Goodman - the Fentanyl Eradication and Removal Act or the FEAR Act. This bill would strengthen the penalties of those who are in possession of fentanyl. GC4R is working with the Lt. Governor's office to introduce companion legislation for this bill that would address the unintended negative consequences our peers may face with this new legislation- **PASSED SENATE**

[SB 132](#) by Senator Brian Strickland mandates a hearing before a court orders an evaluation of the mental competency of an accused person to stand trial - **PASSED SENATE**

[SB 233](#) by Senator Matt Brass relating to the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission to revise the subcommittees and to extend the repeal date - **PASSED SENATE**

[HB 34](#) by Representative Dale Washburn establishes professional licensing boards and continuing education tracking to monitor compliance of licenses with applicable continuing education requirements - **PASSED HOUSE**

[HB 81](#) by Representative Bethany Ballard- Georgia would enter into an interstate compact for school psychologists - **PASSED HOUSE**

[HB 89](#) by Representative Sharon Cooper requires healthcare providers, facilities, and pharmacies to

[HB 69](#) by Representative Sharon Cooper requires healthcare providers, facilities, and pharmacies to provide the Maternal Mortality Review Committee with psychiatric or other clinical records - **PASSED HOUSE**

[HB 219](#) by Representative Ron Stephens establishes a professional health program to provide for monitoring and rehabilitation of impaired healthcare professionals - **PASSED HOUSE**

[HB 612](#) by Representative Katie Dempsey creating a Parity Compliance Review Panel to ensure compliance of the Georgia Parity Act - **PASSED HOUSE**

[HB 657](#) by Representative Leesa Hagan to legally define an RCO to protect the integrity of community based peer programs- **IN PROGRESS**

[HB 419](#) by Representative Lee Hawkins to facilitate Opioid Reversal Boxes on University System of Georgia and Technical College System of Georgia properties. This legislation will save lives and enhance the quality of life on our higher education campuses - **IN PROGRESS**

[SB 113](#) by Senator Clint Dixon establish a professional health program for the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists - **IN PROGRESS**

[SB 142](#) by Senator Kim Jackson allows expansion for certain licensure for qualifying international medical graduates - **IN PROGRESS**

[SB 262](#) by Senator Sonya Halpern mandating insurance companies provide health benefit services for certain preventative medical conditions including certain conditions relating to Substance Use Disorder - **IN PROGRESS**

Other Important Players at the State Capitol! Keep for future Reference

Chairman of the Rules Committee
Butch Parrish, 404-656-5141

Majority Leader
Chuck Efration, (404) 656-5052

Speaker Pro Tem
Jan Jones, (404) 656-5072

Whip
James Burchett, (404) 656-5024

Caucus Leader
Bruce Williamson, (404) 656-5025

Caucus Vice Chair
Houston Gaines, (404) 656-5025

FYI



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Empowering people in recovery to live meaningful and rewarding lives.

The Certified Addiction Recovery Empowerment Specialist Academy was developed by the Georgia Council for Recovery to create a workforce of peers to provide recovery support services to the communities of Georgia.



Advocacy



The Georgia Council for Recovery is an independent advocacy organization dedicated to reducing the impact of substance use disorders in our communities through education, advocacy, and training. We lead a collaboration of addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery advocates and allies in an annual event called Addiction Recovery Awareness Day at the Georgia State Capitol, where we provide a unifying voice for a recovery-positive legislative agenda.

On the Calendar

March



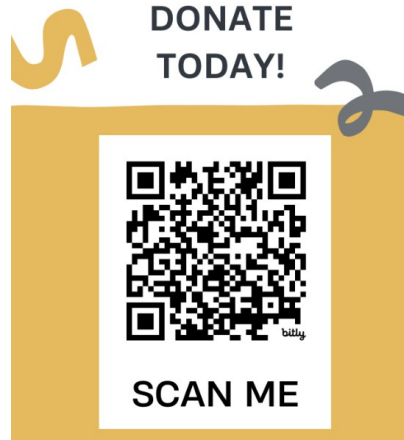
- Child & Family Welfare Collaborative Lunch, hosted by Family Connection, March 17th East Forsyth High School, 12-1:30 p.m.

- St. Patrick's Day, March 17
- N GA Rural Recovery Rally, March 22, 12-4
- FACT 4 Future March 25-27 Fayette, GA
- GCR Virtual Town Hall, March 26, noon-1p.m.



FORSYTH COUNTY
DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL

DONATE
TODAY!



April



- FCDAC Meeting, April 28 a.m. United Way
- National Alcohol Awareness Month, April 1-30
- Stress Awareness Month, April 1-30
- Easter, Sunday April 20
- Walk For Recovery, Sunday April 27 3-5 p.m. Cumming City Center.

WELCOME
spring

There is hope.



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

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