

DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

INTENDED OUTCOMES OF THIS MEETING:

Share status of community connections/meetings, recognize **NATIONAL YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION MONTH, NATIONAL DEPRESSION/MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH, NATIONAL MEDICINE ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH, NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MONTH, RED RIBBON WEEK (OCT 23-31), NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY OCT 28**, and upcoming events

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS:

The meeting of the DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION began with ice cream sundaes and was called to order at 4:10 PM. on October 10, 2023, at the UAM College of Technology, Crossett, and via Zoom by Janie Carter. Everyone who brought youth guests introduced them and first-time attendees Felicia Mitchell, Ebony Jackson, and guest speaker Ernie Smith were welcomed. Janie thanked Gina Morgan for supplying the meeting attendees with copies of October meeting agendas and minutes from the September meeting. In celebration of Youth Use Prevention Month, Janie recognized the former Youth Sector Leader, Trinity Foster, and the current Youth Sector Leader, Rachel Richardson.

PRESENT IN PERSON		PRESENT VIA ZOOM
Falyn Arnold (Guest)	Judah Morris (Guest)	Carolyn Harris
Officer Robert Black	River Morris (Guest)	India Holt
Janie Carter	Bro. Mike Neal	Ebony Jackson (Guest)
Roman Hebert (Guest)	Arlyn Richards	Ernie Smith (Guest)
Sherri Hendrix	Rachel Richardson	Evelyn Woods
Katie Hernandez	Lisa Riels	
Victoria Herrera	Linda Rushing	
Rev Ephraim Johnson	Daniel Shelton, Jr.	
Asher Johnson (Guest)	Eric Shoffner	
Rayce Johnson (Guest)	Aiden Thomas (Guest)	
Kandi Keith	Phoebe Thomas (Guest)	
Beau Kilcrease (Guest)	Prostell Thomas	
Felicia Mitchell (Guest)	Scarlett Tucker (Guest)	
Gina Morgan	Sloane Tucker (Guest)	
Amanda Morris	Tracy Tucker (Guest)	
Brick (Tank) Morris	Elizabeth White	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes from the September 12, 2023, meeting were approved as written. Eric Shoffner initiated the motion for approval and Daniel Shelton, Jr. followed with a second. The motion carried.

REPORTS/EVENTS:

SCHOOL EVENTS:



Ongoing
October 10

Meetings and communications with admin and curriculum consultants
Lisa Riels met with Hamburg School District Youth Group



Ongoing
September 14

Meeting with Crossett School District Administrators and Curriculum Consultants
Liz White met with Crossett School District Youth Group

COMMUNITY EVENTS:

September 9

Phoenix Youth Back-to-School Event, New Bethel Baptist Church; community youth from Crossett and Wilmot were in attendance.

September 14

Dermott DYS Presentation, Daniel Shelton, Jr. made a presentation to 16 youth and their coordinator about the dangers and consequences of substance abuse.

DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

September 22

Law Enforcement/Judicial Members Appreciation Lunch; Coalition members sponsored a lunch at Mt. Olive Baptist Church. More than 50 individuals attended including 10th Judicial District members and Drug Task Force Commander and Agent, Crossett Police Department, Hamburg Police Department, Wilmot Police Chief, Mayors, community leaders, and Coalition members.

WILMOT/RURAL ASHLEY COUNTY REPORT: Heart2Heart Connections/Drug and Alcohol Free (D.A.A.F.) Youth Coalition Report

Ebony Jackson and Evelyn Woods reported the following on behalf of Executive Director/Mayor Carolyn Harris:

- D.A.A.F. Youth Coalition received grant funding (COPE Grant) from the Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership. Currently attending CADCA training and gathering data to write the DFC Grant proposal.
- D.A.A.F. Youth Coalition - September 16th - Karaoke/Dance Event. The event enabled the coalition to complete student surveys for the youth in the Delta (Wilmot, Parkdale, Portland, Montrose).
- Planned Events for October 2023
 - Red Ribbon Week- H2H afterschool students will participate in activities and learn the history of Red Ribbon Week. Coalition youth will distribute drug-free educational material in the delta communities.
 - October 28th - Wilmot Police Department will participate in Take Back Day
 - October 28th- D.A.A.F. Youth Coalition- Halloween Dance/Party. Youth attending the event will complete student surveys that focus on vaping both nicotine and/or Marijuana and will assess Opioid knowledge and usage.

TRAINING/CONFERENCE REPORTS:

CADCA PROJECTS have been submitted: Lisa Riels & Liz White will explain more about the information submitted in future meetings.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

- Brick "Tank" Morris was awarded the honor of Outstanding Youth Member for Program Year 2022-2023. He read an essay he had prepared telling why it is important to him to be drug-free. At the conclusion of his moving presentation, Tank received applause and a standing ovation. With Tank's and his parents' permission, his essay and picture will be posted on the Drug-Free Ashley County Coalition website (www.drugfreeAC.org). His essay and picture were submitted for publication in the local newspaper as well.
- Ernie Smith who grew up in Strong, gave a stirring description of his life's journey via Zoom from Lowell, Arkansas. He told the group that he began "using" at age 14 by smoking marijuana to be "cool" and ended up in his twenties and thirties a broken man in addiction not only using drugs but also selling them. The consequences of his crimes got him locked up 13 times, and subsequently he lost everything, including his family and children. Currently, Mr. Smith is in successful long-term recovery and credits his faith in God and a Salvation Army Treatment Program in Northwest Arkansas with turning his life around. Mr. Smith encouraged Coalition members to keep working to inform youth about the dangers of substance use and the presence of illicit drugs in today's world. He disclosed that two members of his own family had suffered fatal overdoses. He is an example of successful recovery who has regained relationships with his family and children. He is happily married, successfully employed, and healthy. He acknowledged that recovery is not easy, but it is possible; and his life is living proof of that fact. He, too, received a standing ovation and applause from the group.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

October 14

Wiggins Cabin Festival: Coalition members will man an informational table at the Wiggins Festival in Crossett. **Volunteers needed.**

October 18

Meetings with Ashley County Youth and Robert Holt of L.O.V.E. organization

October 23-31

Red Ribbon Week: different events are being scheduled in both school districts to take place during Red Ribbon Week; read more about the origin of Red Ribbon Week at www.redribbon.org

October 28

AR TAKEBACK DAY: Take unused prescription drugs to a Take Back location: Gammel's Pharmacy in Crossett; Crossett Police Department; Hamburg Police Department; Wilmot Police Department. D-FAC Coalition will assist in takeback events-**volunteers are needed at Gammel's and Hamburg Police Department.**

November 8

AR Stop Overdose Summit: Little Rock, Statehouse Convention Center; sponsored by the Arkansas Attorney General's Office; no registration fee is required. but individuals must register. <https://arkansasag.eventsmart.com/events/2023-stop-overdose-summit/>

DISCUSSION: Members who had previously provided a t-shirt size picked them up. Many made donations for a total of \$106. Members who have not requested a t-shirt need to provide one of the staff members with his/her size, and an order will be placed in the upcoming future.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Tuesday, November 14 - 4:00 PM at UAM College of Technology Crossett

DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.
Minutes submitted by: Janie Carter