

DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 9, 2024

INTENDED OUTCOMES OF MEETING:

Share status of community connections/meetings, upcoming events and build knowledge/capability.

AGENDA ITEMS:

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS: D-FAC Coalition Website: <https://www.drugfreeac.org>

Meeting of the DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION called to order at 4:05 PM. on January 9, 2024, at UAM-CTC in-person and ZOOM by Janie Carter [who passed the baton to Eric Shoffner, Chairperson 24/25]

IN PERSON		ZOOM
Christi Carter	Rayce Johnson	Officer Robert Black
Janie Carter	Gina Morgan	Linda Rushing
Ronnie Donaldson	Bro Mike Neal	Mary Vaughn
Olivia Gentry	Arlyn Richards	Evelyn Woods
Sherri Hendrix	Lisa Riels	
Cathie Hillier	Eric Shoffner	
Harry Hillier	Prostell Thomas	
Drew Johnson	Elizabeth White	
Jennifer Johnson		

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Hearing no corrections or additions, minutes from the December 12, 2023, meeting were approved as written, with Prostell Thomas initiating the motion and Ronnie Donaldson following with a second. The motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/INTRODUCTIONS:

New Members¹ Adult Supporting Members: Vivian Guimbellot [Law Enforcement], Ebony Jackson [Youth-Serving], Drew Johnson [Youth Serving], Jennifer Johnson [Parent], Mary Vaughn [Youth Serving]
Youth Supporting Members: Olivia Gentry [Hamburg Middle], Beau Kilcrease [Beekman Charter]

REPORTS/EVENTS:

In Kind Contributions²: Coalition members were reminded to report in-kind service hours to Gina Morgan [Treasurer] for Grant tracking documentation.

REPORT ON NOVEMBER/DECEMBER EVENTS:

December 20, 2023: Naloxone Train-the-Trainer certification through Criminal Justice Institute attended by Daniel Shelton, Jr., Carolyn Harris & Evelyn Woods

HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS:



2023 School District events and accomplishments [Lisa Riles & Elizabeth White]
• Food Pantry donations secured from Robert Holt and distributed to both schools

- JANUARY:** Continuing focus groups with CORE Student Group to focus on what is needed for the program [N= 20 students at each school]
- o 2024 Prevention Curriculum in place and monthly meeting cadence for students is being finalized.
 - o Working with Kacy Jo Gill, Jessica Griffith, Allison Kelley, and Leslie Switzer on design and schedule for Youth Summit to include Law Enforcement.

- FEBRUARY:** will be attending CADCA Graduation in Washington
- o School Leaders will be leading a month-long campaign drive for Food Pantries

DELTA UPDATE: Carolyn Harris, Executive Director Heart2Heart Connections/Mayor – report presented by Evelyn Woods

February 18, 2024: Will be providing Naloxone Training for community members in Wilmont

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 24, 2023: **Region 5: Faith-Based Substance Misuse Prevention Conference:** First United Methodist Church of Crossett 500 Main Street, Crossett, AR 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

- Engaging faith-based community
- Equipping with tools and resources
- Mental Health First Aid and Narcan Training sessions

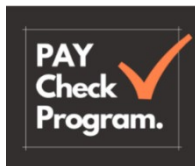
DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS:

1. **HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS SECTOR PRESENTATION:** Eric Shoffner lead discussion on: “What is the history behind where we find ourselves in the Opioid crises and drug addiction pathway today “. *Presentation notes at end of this document.*
2. **SECTOR LEADERS:** *Each sector was encouraged to identify the month they would be interested in leading conversation for their sector to present to coalition membership. Officer Robert Black volunteered to present in February.*
 - a. **NOTE:** *Need to find replacement for Business: Julie Roberson [unable to lead due to business travel] and Healthcare Professionals: Eric Shoffner [currently serving as Coalition Chair]*

COALITION SECTOR	REPRESENTATIVE	2024 PRESENTATION
Youth	Rachel Richardson	
Parents	Mandy Morris	
Law Enforcement	Officer Robert Black	February 13
Schools	Tracy Streeter	
Businesses	Julie Roberson	
Media	Dennis Maxwell	
Youth-Serving Organizations	Roshunda Davis Johnson	
Faith-Based Organization	Bro Mike Neal	June 11 & December 10
Civic & Volunteer Groups	Sherri Maxwell Hendrix	
Healthcare Professionals	Eric Shoffner	January 9 October 8
State, local & tribal agencies	Sharron Mims	
Treatment	Barron Griffin	

3. Transition of new Coalition Officers: work progressing on onboarding new officers:
 Chairperson: Eric Shoffner [2-year] Vice Chair/Chair Elect: Bro Mike Neal [2-year]
 Secretary: Christi Carter [1-year] Treasurer: Gina Morgan [1-year]

4.



PAYCheck Program Overview: [PAY: Protecting Arkansas' Youth] part of Criminal Justice Institute's Maltreatment & Drug Endangered Children initiative for school districts

- a. Designed to protect children impacted by a traumatic event away from school and could exhibit academic, emotional and/or behavioral problems at school because of exposure.

[PAYCheck Program](#)

5. Updated D-FAC Coalition brochure [attached] distributed to those in attendance at meeting to review and recommend edits or corrections needed.
6. Sherri Hendrix recommended Coalition consider participating in February GO RED events:
 - a. Health Fairs at local businesses during month of February from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
 - b. Go Red Gala: February 29, 2024

NEXT MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 13 at 4:00 PM at UAM College of Technology-Crossett

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned 5:00 p.m. and minutes submitted by: Christi Carter

¹ **TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP**

ACTIVE: Must be a resident of or employed in Ashley County, Arkansas, attend a minimum of six [6] monthly meetings and be actively involved in the work of the Coalition. Active members have voting rights that can be revoked if attendance falls below required threshold.

SUPPORTING: May not be able to attend all meetings regularly but is familiar with the work of the Coalition, supports prevention efforts and has a vested personal or professional interest in the community. Supporting members have no voting rights; however, if their meeting attendance reaches a total of three [3], they have one vote.

EXTENDED: Not necessarily aware of the day-to-day work of the Coalition but is an individual or community leader who may be contacted occasionally regarding specific prevention issues and or specific tasks.

- ² Our 5-year grant has the possibility of being extended to a maximum of ten years. The match for the first six years is at 100%. One thing that is very important is attendance. Anyone who attends meetings, in person or virtually will contribute to the match at more than \$23 per hour - a resource considered a fair amount per hour for public volunteerism in Arkansas. Every volunteer event, everyone in attendance, including youth and volunteers, is a "good in-kind match".

ERIC SHOFFNER: HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS' PRESENTATION

1/9/24 – Summary Notes

Opioid and Drug Addiction Crises: Where did it start? We can spend all day pointing fingers

Our focus needs to be on prevention and our youth, what does it take and what does it look like, [Giving your child away and divorce is not an option!!!]

FACING THE UGLY TRUTH: We had a product on the market – Darvocet – which was determined to have no purpose or usefulness. For example, prescribed for pain but we learned it has no value and is addictive, but Rx continued to be renewed. Production was ceased and it was taken off the market and backfilled with Oxycodone which has a long shelf life and is highly addictive. We then moved to fentanyl which is a long-acting product and has even more problems but was prescribed for cancer and terminally ill patients. Our country consumes 97% of opiates in the world. “As we get wiser – we get weaker!” We’re getting worse versus better at addiction. There is a perception in this country that we should never hurt; however, it has not always been that way. Our Greatest Generation: Traditionalists, born between 1925 - 1945 who powered through pain, they were tough because they had to be, but generations that have followed are not. Today, the slightest amount of pain results in getting an Rx. For example, hospitals started being judged on performance by discharged patients and the question was always “On a scale of 1-10, what is your level of pain?” “How did we do in your treatment and care?”. This resulted in patients being sent home - if 10 pills would have worked – they received 30, just to make sure they were not in discomfort or pain. Unused pills were never destroyed and inevitably ended up in the hands of others or sold on the streets.

The state of Arkansas is second in the amount of Rx dispensed/resident – Alabama, dispenses an average of 111 pills for every citizen and **Arkansas 105/person**.

We are seeing deaths like we have never had before 350 individuals die from overdose every day – that is equivalent to an airplane crashing every day. BUT, because it is occurring across the country, we respond with denial, embarrassment, and incomplete documentation. For example, death certificates may not reflect the total actual number of deaths because what is documented may state cause of death as car accident, rather than what actually happened as a result of the driver being high! It’s possible the number of deaths each day from overdose or addiction related could be doubled.

Our Creator, God, is at the Apex – we have a duty and responsibility to tell the truth.

All human beings, the people we are surrounded by, struggle with three things: man against man [*the person with the biggest stick wins or is in control*], man against God, [*individuals angry at the world*], and man against himself [*struggling with decisions or circumstances versus turning “IT” over to God*].

HOW DO WE FIX THIS PROBLEM: our job as members of the D-FAC Coalition is to look, listen and act. Our actions could mean the difference in helping change behavior or saving someone’s life. Eric presented parable of the drowning man:



The Drowning Man and God’s Messages of Hope

While out to sea, a boat capsized, and left man treading water. He prayed, asking God to save his life. Soon after, a boat came by and offered the man some help. “No thanks,” he said. “I’m waiting for God to save me.” As the man became more deeply concerned, a helicopter flew over to save him and his response was the same “No thanks,” he said. “I’m waiting for God to save me.” After awhile, a smaller boat came by. Again, the people aboard offered this man some help, and again he politely decline. “I’m waiting for God to save me,”. After some time, the man began to lose his faith, and soon after that he died. Upon reaching Heaven, he had a chance to speak with God briefly. “Why did you let me die? Why didn’t you answer my prayers?” “I DID, I sent you two boats and a helicopter!”

This story reminds us that divine intervention is not always clothed in the extraordinary but is often veiled within the tapestry of the ordinary.

PATH TO SUCCESS: Focus on prevention. We need to open our hearts and minds to the myriad forms through which the universe answers our prayers. It is a lesson in recognizing the divine in the seemingly mundane, a testament to the interconnectedness of faith and action. WE NEED TO TAKE ACTION. We need to LOOK, LISTEN, and then ACT.