

DRUG FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION

Minutes for June 9, 2026

4:00-5:00 p.m., E. C. Crossett Youth Center, Crossett

MEETING OBJECTIVES: RECOGNITION OF JUNE AS: NATIONAL PTSD AWARENESS MONTH, MEN'S HEALTH MONTH, FATHER'S DAY, & JUNETEENTH (JUNE 19); SHARING OF COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS/MEETINGS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

IN ATTENDANCE: Lisa Riels, Liz White, Dr. Barron Griffin, Sherri Hendrix, Roman Hebert, Linda Rushing, Roy Langstaff, DeVonda Brown, Dennis Maxwell, T'Pring McComb-Shirey, LaChandra Williams, Yolanda Johnson-Martin, Major Modisett, Tania Booher, Emmalee Pope, Ivyanna Cason, Hester Handley, Tyiesha Johnson-Fletcher, Mike Neal, Arlyn Richards, & Janie Carter

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS:

Vice Chairman Sherri Hendrix opened the meeting asking Mike Neal to offer prayer and Janie Carter to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Sherri recognized individuals in attendance, first-time attendees T'Pring McComb-Shirey, and D-FAC students: Major Modisett, Tania Booher, Emmalee Pope, and Ivyanna Cason. There were no Zoom attendees this month due to technical difficulties. Attendees were encouraged to help themselves to baked goodies and a "build a sundae" bar.

OLD | NEW BUSINESS:

- Approval of May 12, 2026, Minutes
- Recognition and introduction of new members: Hester Handley, E. C. Crossett Youth Center Board Member, and T'Pring McComb-Shirey, a member of the Faith-Based Sector.

COMMUNITY EVENTS (since last meeting):

- May 12: D-FAC Executive Committee (Eric Shoffner, Sherri Hendrix, Arlyn Richards, Janie Carter, Mike Neal, Lisa Riels, Liz White & Original Core Team Member Linda Rushing) met to discuss the decision on applying for years 6-10 of the Drug Free Communities Grant from the Centers for Disease & Control, the possibility of encouraging the two school districts to apply for an upcoming grant proposal for a district employee to serve as the Prevention Specialist, and the need to set a date for a Sector Leader Training Session. After dismissal of the paid staff and visitor, the Executive Committee agreed to proceed with the CDC grant proposal and to encourage the districts to research and apply for the Prevention Specialist grant.
- May 13: D-FAC Executive Committee members met with Mike Smith, Exec. Director of the Crossett Economic Development Foundation, Hali McNeice, CEDF Grant Writer, and Dan Pevy, CEDF Officer and Board Member.
- May 14: Phoenix Youth & Family Services Annual Domestic Violence and Substance Use Prevention Conference. Excellent conference and presenters. Arlyn showed this video about Dr. Karen Jackson that was shared at the Phoenix Conference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0bPt-pE6CXI>



- (Previously announced and launched on May 27): **The Bridge Project** was launched in Arkansas, offering unconditional cash stipends to support 300 mothers and their babies across the state. This initiative will reach two populations: mothers between 18 and 22 years of age, and mothers who are currently serving or have previously served in the U.S. Armed Forces, the National Guard, or the Reserves. Leaders of the project ask to share the [application](#) with eligible families in the region.
 - More than one-third of babies born in Arkansas are to young mothers, whose pregnancies can disrupt educational and career opportunities at a crucial inflection point. Arkansas is also home to over 19,000 women veterans, an underserved population that faces elevated maternal health risks and financial strain.
 - The program connects financial stipends with the strong ecosystem of Arkansas community organizations and philanthropic partners serving the state's most vulnerable families.

- May 29: Ms. April Null from UALR MidSouth Training Institute presented information about the **Arkansas All-Stars Prevention Curriculum** to Superintendents Boykin and Sullivan and their staff members. This Arkansas-specific [geared to the Arkansas Needs Prevention Survey (APNA)] is the culmination of a \$5 Mil grant from Senator Boozman to our state to coordinate and standardize character and prevention curriculum for elementary through high school students that meets the criteria of the LEARNS Act and the standards of the Arkansas Education Department's Health and Safety frameworks. The districts are to continue discussion and let April know by the end of June if they are interested in obtaining the curriculum with costs waived for two years.
- Saturday, May 30: Mike Neal reported on the **FUN DAY** event that was held in partnership with the E. C. Crossett Youth Center and Crossett Reunion Club. The weather was clear (and hot), and fun was served up along with hot dogs/chips for kids. Food trucks were also available and bouncy houses, water slide, "hamster balls", a new water game, and Emily Chisholm-Moffatt's Escape Room (<https://thetrieschmannhouse.com/>). Look on Facebook for hilarious pictures that depict the fun (see daring adults and kids alike getting doused by a full bucket of cold water)! Approximately 100 youth and adults attended the event.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Dates to be announced:

- Sector Leader Workshop/Training Session
- Fall FUN DAY in Hamburg (Boo in the Park)
- Operation Parent Handbook Sessions

DISCUSSION/OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Janie Carter reported on a comparison of results from the Fall 2022 APNA Survey to the most recent Fall 2025 survey. Many areas of improvement were noted. A copy of the "Past 30-Day Use" and the "Lifetime Use" as reported by Ashley County 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders' comparison is attached to these minutes. On the "Past 30 Day Use" survey: Underage Drinking improved 42%; Use of Marijuana improved 29%; and Use of Prescription Drugs improved 73%. On both comparisons, only Inhalants and steroids showed an increase in consumption in 2025 compared to 2022.
- Janie also announced that an evaluation exercise will be conducted at the July and the August meetings (an anonymous pencil and paper version) covering the years Drug-Free Ashley County (D-FAC) Coalition has been in existence in Ashley County. [The first meeting was held in March 2021.] A copy of the short evaluation is attached to these minutes. You may bring your evaluation to the meeting(s) or email/text/mail/hand-carry your remarks to Mike Neal, mnealdfc@gmail.com. Verbal testimonials will also be welcomed at the upcoming meetings.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, July 14, 12 noon – 1:00 p.m. at the Hamburg School District Administration Office
Minutes submitted by Janie Carter, Member-at-Large, Executive Committee

Ashley County Youth APNA Changes – Lifetime Use
Combined (6, 8, 10, 12 Graders)

	Fall 2022	Fall 2025	Better/Worse
1. Alcohol	24.5%	19.1%	Better
Cigarettes	11.0%	8.5%	Better
Smokeless Tobacco	7.6%	6.3%	Better
2. Marijuana	9.7%	6.9%	Better
Hallucinogens	1.0%	0.9%	Better
Cocaine	0.4%	0.0%	Better
Inhalants	2.5%	4.0%	<i>Worse</i>
Opiates/Heroin	0.2%	0.0%	Better
Steroids	0.2%	0.9%	<i>Worse</i>
Ecstasy	1.0%	0.0%	Better
3. Prescription Drugs	5.4%	1.6%	Better
Over-the-Counter Drugs	1.7%	1.3%	Better
Alcopops	12.0%	7.0%	Better
CBD Products	6.0%	3.1%	Better
Any Drug	17.0%	11.3%	Better
Vape Flavoring	11.8%	7.8%	Better
Vape Nicotine	17.5%	11.7%	Better
Vape Marijuana	8.7%	6.3%	Better
Any Vaping	20.6%	14.7%	Better
Injection of Illegal Drugs	1.2%	0.7%	Better

#1, 2, & 3: Targeted with the Drug-Free Communities Grant

**Ashley County Youth APNA Changes – Past 30-Day Use
Combined (6, 8, 10, 12 Graders)**

	Fall 2022	Fall 2025	Better/Worse
1. Alcohol	10.0%	5.8%	Better
Cigarettes	2.7%	1.3%	Better
Smokeless Tobacco	2.7%	2.2%	Better
2. Marijuana	6.3%	3.4%	Better
Hallucinogens	0.6%	0.0%	Better
Inhalants	2.3%	2.9%	<i>Worse</i>
Meth	0.2%	0.0%	Better
Steroids	0.4%	0.2%	Better
Ecstasy	0.2%	0.0%	Better
3. Prescription Drugs	3.3%	0.9%	Better
Over-the-Counter Drugs	1.3%	0.2%	Better
Alcopops	6.0%	2.2%	Better
CBD Products	4.8%	0.9%	Better
Any Drug	12.8%	7.8%	Better
Vape Flavoring	8.2%	3.8%	Better
Vape Nicotine	13.2%	7.0%	Better
Vape Marijuana	6.1%	3.8%	Better
Any Vaping	14.9%	8.5%	Better
Binge Drinking	5.8%	1.8%	Better
Suspended from School	14.1%	13.0%	Better
Drunk or High at School	6.6%	3.9%	Better

#1, 2, & 3: Targeted with the Drug-Free Communities Grant

Drug-Free Ashley County Coalition Evaluation Years 2021 – 2026

Length of time affiliated with or aware of the Coalition:

_____ **All Five years**

_____ **About 1 year**

_____ **3-4 years**

_____ **Between 6-11 months**

_____ 1-2 years

_____ **Just in the past 1-5 months or less**

Things I think are GOOD about the Coalition and what has been accomplished:

[illegible]

Things I think could make the Coalition even more effective in the future:

[illegible]

Other helpful comments:

[illegible]