



**Roane County Anti-Drug Coalition (RCADC)
January 5, 2022**

Members/Guests Present: Jeanna Steele-Mack, Nathan Wray, Ashley Freeberg, Robert Woody, Anne Pirtle, Leonora Spangler, Laura Conner, Sarah Harrison, Sherry Samples, McKayla Gallaher, Beth Sams, Dr. Terry Stevens, Michael Yates, Allen Lutz, Lisa Stevensen, Catherine Brunson, Charles Stallings, Wendy Hunt, LaDonna Booker, Sonya Hornbuckle, Marilyn Calfee, Gary Bickford, Sarah Stewart, Tabatha Floyd, Candy Livesay, Anna Weeden, Jill Muphy, Ashlee Crouse, Ben Briley, Kathy Parks, Scott Hines, Maretta McNichol, Jolene Cook, Amanda Smith, Dr. Thomas Boduch

Due to COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), our January coalition meeting was held via Zoom.

Dr. Thomas Boduch, Roane County Medical Examiner, provided information on the number of overdoses and suicides that took place in Roane County during 2021. According to Dr. Boduch, the fatal overdoses increased from 21 in 2019 to 36 in 2020 to 49 in 2021. The average age of overdoses stayed constant at 43.4 years while the number of females increased dramatically from 15 in 2020 to 24 in 2021. Dr. Boduch believes this increase is because women's hearts are more sensitive to methamphetamine and fentanyl. He advised that the majority of the methamphetamine and fentanyl is being imported from Mexico. He recognizes that the number of overdose fatalities from opioids has decreased and that most of the overdoses are being caused by methamphetamine and fentanyl which is being found in many other illicit drugs or in illegally pressed pills. He stated that education regarding the dangers of methamphetamine and fentanyl is extremely important. There were 9 suicides in 2021, compared to 12 in 2020. Since 2015, 84 suicides have taken place in Roane County. The majority of suicides were caused by guns and he attributes this partially to the regional gun culture. While it is thought that women often choose a less violent means of suicide, in Roane County we are seeing women take their lives most often by gun. The highest month for suicides in Roane County was April, and Dr. Boduch stated that suicide rates are often lower over the holidays. He stated that suicides can be difficult to determine as many individuals do not leave a note. Dr. Boduch stated that he thinks the number of suicides may have decreased due to families staying at home because of the pandemic, but that the number of domestic calls has increased according to law enforcement.

Ashley Freeberg, Prevention Coordinator with RCADC, presented on, "Reducing Stigma – Your Words Matter." Ashley informed us that stigma is discrimination against an identifiable group of people, a place, or a nation, and that stigma about people with substance use disorder (SUD) might include inaccurate or unfounded beliefs that addiction is a moral failing instead of a chronic, treatable disease from which patients can recover. 1 in 14 Americans report experiencing a substance use disorder. Feeling stigmatized can reduce the willingness of individuals with SUD to seek treatment. It's important to use the correct terminology and person-first language which maintains the integrity of individuals. Terms to avoid include: addict, user, junkie, alcoholic, drunk, habit, clean or dirty, and addicted infant. Terms to use include: patient, substance use disorder, abstinent from substances, testing positive on toxicology, and infant with signs of withdrawal from prenatal drug exposure.

The meeting closed with updates from our community partners. The updates are listed below.

Allen Lutz with the Roane Alliance stated that they have two events in January. "Tennessee's Drug-Free Workplace Program" which is January 26th at 10am and the Women in Business Luncheon which will be the 19th at 12pm at the

Oliver Springs Historical Society. Allen also advised that on January 13th, 90 students from Rockwood will be visiting four area Rockwood businesses.

Beth Sams with the Roane County Sheriff's Office stated that she created a calendar of events for the month which include the AA meetings and Al-Anon meetings.

Jill Murphy with East Tennessee Foundation advised that their scholarship applications are open.

Catherine Brunson with ASAP of Anderson stated that she continues to do Zoom trainings and is willing to do in-person trainings for how to reverse an opioid overdose using Narcan. She stated that 1 in 3 overdose deaths contained methamphetamine or fentanyl and reminded everyone that 166 nonfatal overdoses took place in Roane County during 2021.

McKayla Gallaher with the Roane County Health Department is the newly hired Harm Reduction Navigator and is working to increase awareness surrounding her position and the services that are being offered by partnering with community organizations. Marietta McNichol with the Roane County Sheriff's Office stated that she would be interested in having McKayla come into the jail to do classes.

Marietta McNichol with the Roane County Sheriff's Office stated that they have resumed classes and are offering nearly 20 classes per week in addition to their work release program. Inmates are also provided the opportunity to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and HEP C immunization.

Anne Pirtle with Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services advised that they continue to offer same day access through their intake clinic and she encouraged patients to arrive by 8am to be seen. They are also offering evening walk-in appointments on Wednesdays at 4pm.

Tabatha Floyd with Centerstone of Tennessee, Inc. stated that they have a program focused on youth sexual health. She is interested in presenting at an upcoming coalition meeting.

Wendy Hunt with the Avalon Center stated they provide support services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims in Roane County.

Ben Briley with Pattersons Home Appliances stated that they are recruiting for 9th, 10th and 11th graders for Youth Leadership Roane County. They are also looking for adults interested in Leadership Roane County and individuals ages 18 to 40 for Young Professionals of Roane County.

Dr. Terry Stevens with The University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine stated that he has two pharmacy students who attended the RCADC Zoom meeting. Catherine Brunson with ASAP of Anderson requested that Dr. Stevens remind his students that Narcan is available without a prescription at most major pharmacies, but that many independently owned pharmacies are not able to participate. Catherine stated that while most pharmacists know this information, she has found that many pharmacy techs are not aware.

Nathan Wray concluded the meeting by advising that RCADC will be sponsoring the half time show at Harriman High School this Friday. The theme is, "Take Your Shot at Being Nicotine Free." He also provided the number for 1-800-Quit-Now and as well as by texting DITCHVAPE to 88709.

Our next coalition meeting will be Wednesday, March 2nd at 12:00pm via Zoom. We will hold a town hall style meeting with various presenters. Our February meeting has been canceled as several staff members will be in National Harbor, MD for the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) Forum.