



Roane County Anti-Drug Coalition (RCADC) Meeting Minutes

January 3, 2024

Members/Guests Present: Nathan Wray (prevention coordinator), Sarah Harrison (executive director), Ashley Freeberg (prevention coordinator), Ben Briley (volunteer coordinator), Danyel Smith, Bethany Bunch, Dawn Carlock, McKayla Gallaher, Matilyn Lands, Laura Conner, David Laxton, Jared Hall, Demerius Bunch, Ken Yager, Randy Lewis, James Owens, Darian Green, Mike Barber, Terry Stevens, Gary Bickford, Marty Stanley, Beth Sams, Thomas Boduch, Sherry Samples, Dudley Evans, Catherine Brunson (zoom), Courtney Briley (zoom), Marilyn Calfee (zoom), Kathy Parks (zoom), Maretta McNichol (zoom)

Our monthly coalition was a hybrid meeting held in person at the RCADC office at 151 E Race St, Kingston, Tennessee and via Zoom.

Ben Briley opened the meeting and new year with a welcome. Ben introduced the meeting's speaker: Dr. Thomas Boduch, Roane County Medical Examiner.

(Please refer to January Presentation for information presented underneath the minutes on our website)

-Dr. Boduch began with a presentation of 2023 data relating to overdose deaths and suicides in Roane County.

- Overdose deaths rose from 58 in 2022, to 71 in 2023.

- Fentanyl (#1) and methamphetamine (#2) continued to be the leading cause of overdose deaths. Dr. Boduch noted the prevalence of "designer fentanyl" such as xylazine and carfentanil.

- Overdose deaths caused by prescription opiates have fallen consistently since 2021.

- Deaths caused by a solitary substance have reduced, with most overdose deaths in Roane County having two or more substances in the toxicology report.

- Suicides in 2023 averaged to about 1 per month. Dr. Boduch notes the myth of a higher suicide rate during the Holidays; the month with a high suicide rate in Roane County is April.

Ben opened the floor for questions for Dr. Boduch. This led to a collaborative conversation of substance misuse in Roane County. Notable topics include:

- TN State Senator Ken Yager mentioned the Prescription Safety Act in 2011 and how fentanyl has replaced opiates, noting the position shift in state legislature and the importance of coordinating data with community partners.

- Terry Stevens asked if xylazine and/or carfentanil would be reclassified by the DEA. Senator Yager notes that xylazine was recently reclassified.

-Detective Marty Stanley, Harriman PD, commented that local law enforcement agencies rarely see heroin, instead supplanted with fentanyl.

-Dr. Boduch answered a question on the prevalence of fentanyl-laced marijuana. He mentioned he's only seen two or three cases since 2015.

-Ben pointed out the wide range of community partners represented in today's meeting, which include four local law enforcement agencies (RC Sheriff's Office, Harriman PD, Rockwood PD & Oliver Springs PD), State Senator Ken Yager, state offices, healthcare, mental health, schools, childcare & community organizers.

Ben began announcements from RCADC by mentioning the Roane Schools Poverty Simulator hosted for Ridge View Elementary staff.

Mike Barber, Roane County Schools, updated the group on the "Handle with Care" program with TN Association of Drug Endangered Children.

Ben promoted the RAM Clinic, coming to Roane State, April 20-21, 2024.

Sarah thanked Senator Yager for joining us and mentioned that RCADC has been working closely with the Prevention Alliance of Tennessee in the development of the legislative agenda for 2024.

Ben then opened the floor for announcements by attendees:

-Dawn Carlock, Roane Chamber, mentioned the Legislative Breakfast on January 18.

-Laura Conner, RC Health Department, noted that the RCHD does have Naloxone available to distribute.

Meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on February 7, 2024 at noon at the RCADC office. The February meeting will be in-person only.