



Roane County Anti-Drug Coalition (RCADC) Meeting Minutes

August 7, 2024

Members/Guests Present: Laura Conner, Jessica Woodell, Valerie Cheek, Sandy Leavell, Sherry Samples, Leonora Spangler, Mike Barber, Suzanne Horsfall, David Acres, Laune Buche, McKayla Gallaher, Beth Sams, Caleb Sexton, Yvette Reeder, Danyel Smith, Demerius Bunch, Matilyn Lands, Wade Creswell, Sarah Harrison (executive director), Nathan Wray (prevention coordinator), Ashley Freeberg (prevention coordinator), Ben Briley (volunteer coordinator)

Our monthly coalition meeting was held in-person at the RCADC Office at 151 E. Race St., Kingston, Tennessee.

Ben Briley opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and new attendees. Ben introduced Nathan Wray, RCADC prevention coordinator, to present “DEC Awareness – Identifying Drug Endangered Children: A Collaborative Approach”.

Nathan began by showing everyone a QR code, which leads to a sign-in page and evaluation form that was sent to the Tennessee Alliance of Drug Endangered Children (DEC). Then, he began a slideshow on the purpose and collaborative aspect of DEC.

- The Tennessee Alliance of Drug Endangered Children’s mission teaches early identification and responds in appropriate intervention services for children and families affected by parental or caregiver substance misuse.

- A video from DEC was shown to explain the “why” of their mission. DEC defines “drug endangered children” as: children who are at risk of suffering physical or emotional harm as a result of legal and/or illegal drug use including possession, manufacturing, cultivation or distribution. They may also be children whose caretakers’ legal and/or illegal substance misuse interferes with a caretaker’s ability to provide a safe a nurturing environment.

- The vision of DEC is 100% healthy, safe children, families and communities free from the negative impact of substance misuse and drug activity.

- Children whose parents misuse alcohol or substances are three times more likely to be verbally, physically or sexually abused. These children are four times more likely to be neglected. Children also raised in these environments are much more likely to abuse substances themselves.

- A second video was played related to the phrase “children see, children do”. The purpose was to explain how children are constantly watching their parents and/or caregivers and are much more likely to emulate their emotions and actions.

- Nathan defined “substance use disorder” as: a chronic relapsing disorder characterized by compulsive drug taking, continued use despite harmful consequences and long-lasting changes in the brain is considered a “complex brain disorder” and a mental illness.

-Pictures were shown of a warrant being served at a house in Salt Lake City, Utah, which depicted children being kept in deplorable conditions. The purpose of displaying these images was to ask today's attendees to identify the risks associated with these conditions.

-Nathan transitioned into the collaborative effort of Roane County to have 100% healthy and safe children by implementing appropriate and effective prevention strategies. He presented a picture of a long, two-lane highway for the purpose of explaining how this effort is ongoing. Other answers included "Are we ever going to get there?" and "How long will this road last?".

-Nathan opened the floor by asking "why" collaboration is challenging. Answers included competition, constant changing within agencies and a perception of an extra workload.

-A final point made by Nathan was how collaboration is integral in achieving DEC's vision of 100% healthy and safe children in our community.

Ben began with coalition updates with an opportunity for volunteers to participate in a lockbox conveyor line next Monday to add prevention information to the boxes for distribution. He also mentioned International Overdose Awareness Day on August 30 and National DEA Prescription Drug Take Back Day on October 26. Nathan Wray noted another volunteer opportunity at Kingston Elementary on Monday morning to welcome kids back to school with the Timbi mascot. Ashley Freeberg mentioned that school has started back, and we are excited for a new year.

Ben opened the floor for introductions and asked everyone to share why they are involved with the coalition and an example of how they collaborate with RCADC, in reference to the collaboration aspect of Nathan's presentation. Attendees were also asked to promote their individual organization's upcoming events.

The next Coalition Meeting will be September 4, 2024, at 12:00 P.M. at the Kingston Community Center at 201 Patton Ferry Rd., Kingston, TN. Kristi Beeler-McCaleb, ROPS coordinator, will be our speaker and will facilitate naloxone training.