The Jeff Davis Substance Abuse Coalition

October 2026 NEWSLETTER

About Our Coalition

The purpose of the Jeff Davis Substance Abuse Coalition (JDSAC) is to address youth and adult substance abuse through a collaborative, community-wide approach that increases recognition, education, prevention, treatment, and recovery to improve the quality of life for individuals and families of Jeff Davis County.

Interested in Joining JDSAC?

The public is encouraged to get involved with this community effort. If you are interested in getting involved in JDSAC, email our Project Coordinator, Ivey Grace Churchwell, for more information!

igsmith@jeffdavishospital.com

Jeff Davis Community Meetings:

All Recovery Meetings:
EVERY Thursday at 6pm
10 E Sycamore St, Hazlehurst, GA 31539

Pineland BHDD Community Service Board Meeting:
November 10: In-Person (Toombs)
Meeting starts at 10:30 AM
For questions, please contact:
Sarah Refuss, *serefuss@pinelandbhdd.org*

Jeff Davis Local Food Pantries

Hazlehurst Church of God

Address: 77 S Cromartie St, Hazlehurst, GA 31539
Contact: 912-375-7774.
Distribution Day and Times:
Wednesdays, from 5:30 - until food runs out
No requirements. Food is first come, first serve.

First Baptist Church - Hazlehurst

Address: 30 N Tallahassee Street Hazlehurst, GA 31539
Distribution Day and Times: Conducted every 4th Thursday of each month at the FBS Activities Center Parking Lot from 10am-2pm.

October is Substance Use & Misuse Prevention Month!

What's the difference between substance **use** and substance **misuse**? **Substance use** refers to using a substance, such as a prescription medication, alcohol, or nicotine product. **Misuse** occurs when a substance is used in a way that is **unsafe, unintended, or different from how it was prescribed or intended to be used.** This can include taking someone else's prescription medication, taking more medication than directed, or using a substance to cope with stress or other challenges.

This month, JDSAC encourages community members to:

- Talk openly with youth about substance use and its risks.
- Teach youth healthy ways to cope with stress and difficult emotions.
- Safely store prescription medications and never share them with others.
- Pay attention to changes in behavior, mood, or relationships.
- Reach out for support when concerns about substance use arise.



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Red Ribbon Week
October 23–31!

Red Ribbon Week is the nation's oldest and largest drug prevention campaign, encouraging youth, families, and communities to make healthy choices and stay drug-free.

DID YOU KNOW?

Prevention starts before there is a problem. Talking openly with children and teens about the risks of alcohol, nicotine, prescription medications, and other drugs can help build healthy decision-making skills and reduce the risk of future substance misuse.

Small conversations can make a big difference.

- How was school today? What was the best part of your day?
- What do you and your friends usually do for fun?
- What's something you're proud of yourself for doing recently?

Remember:
Everyday conversations help build trust.

20th Annual Georgia School of Addiction Studies Conference

Held this past August 29th through September 2nd In Savannah, Georgia, the 20th Annual Georgia School of Addiction Studies (GSAS) conference offered a valuable opportunity for professional development, information exchange, and networking among professionals working in the field of substance use and prevention. The conference is designed to strengthen knowledge and skills through advanced training and opportunities to learn from others in the field.

Ivey Grace Churchwell, Program Coordinator for JDSAC, attended the conference alongside Share Health staff members Tanesha Slocumb and Jodi Pudwill. Their participation provided an opportunity to gain new knowledge, connect with professionals from across Georgia, and bring valuable insights and strategies back to the communities and partners they serve.



Share Health
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https://www.sharehealthsega.org/

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October JDSAC Prevention Activities!

- **National Prescription Drug Take Back Day – October 22**
  - JDSAC will partner with Jeff Davis Hospital and local community partners to host a Drug Take Back event on the hospital lawn.
  - Community members will be encouraged to safely dispose of unwanted or expired medications.
  - Medicine Lock Boxes will be distributed to community members to provide a safe option for medication storage and disposal in the home.
  - Narcan/Naloxone will also be available for distribution, along with education on recognizing and responding to an opioid overdose.
  - The event will provide an opportunity to increase community awareness surrounding safe medication practices, opioid prevention, and overdose response.
- **Downtown Trick-or-Treating – October 29**
  - JDSAC will participate in the community's Downtown Trick-or-Treating event by hosting an informational table.
  - Prevention-focused educational materials and resources will be available for families and community members.
  - Candy and kid-friendly prevention materials will be distributed to help promote healthy, drug-free choices in a fun and engaging environment.
- **Red Ribbon Week – Primary School**
  - JDSAC will support Red Ribbon Week activities at the local primary school throughout the week.
  - Daily activities will incorporate age-appropriate, kid-friendly prevention messaging focused on making healthy and drug-free choices.
  - Prevention-themed swag and educational materials will be distributed to students.
  - JDSAC will visit two kindergarten classes to read a children's book centered around the importance of being drug-free and making positive choices.
  - Activities will provide students with an early introduction to substance use prevention in a positive and engaging way.
- **Life Skills Classes – Middle School**
  - JDSAC will provide substance use prevention education to four Life Skills classes serving students in grades 6th–8th.
  - Presentations will focus on the risks and health effects associated with vaping and nicotine use.
  - Students will participate in an interactive drunk goggles activity designed to demonstrate how alcohol can impair vision, coordination, balance, and decision-making.
  - The interactive format will encourage student participation and provide an opportunity to discuss the importance of making informed, healthy decisions.

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SAVE THE DATES!

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAININGS

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

NOVEMBER 3, 2026

9:30AM-4:00PM

APPLING COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
560 BARNES ST, BAXLEY, GA 31513

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

DECEMBER 3, 2026

9:30AM-4:00PM

APPLING COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ROOM
69 TIPPINS STREET, BAXLEY, GA 31513

Gents & Glam

Share Health
SOUTHEAST GEORGIA

Coalition for a Healthy Appling County

Magnolia Coastlands AHEC
Area Health Education Center

Stay tuned for event updates and registration information!

GEORGIA NURSING LICENSURE RENEWAL

THE GEORGIA BOARD OF NURSING DEEMS MAGNOLIA COASTLANDS AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER AS AN ACCEPTABLE PROVIDER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE). THIS ACTIVITY IS APPROVED FOR 8 CE HOURS TOWARD THE CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR GEORGIA LICENSURE RENEWAL. NURSES SHOULD ONLY CLAIM CREDIT COMMENSURATE WITH THE EXTENT OF THEIR PARTICIPATION.