



# Wayne County Recovery Coalition

# January 2026 Newsletter

## About Our Coalition:

The mission of the Wayne County Recovery Coalition (WCRC) is to improve the health and safety of individuals and families in Wayne County through comprehensive, community-wide strategies that reduce and prevent youth and adult substance use, assure treatment services are available and accessible for all, and promote long-term recovery for everyone. WCRC was initially formed in 2019 when a task force was developed to look into the rising number of ER visits related to drug misuse and overdose deaths due to opioids in Wayne County. In September of 2023, the WCRC was awarded a Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFCSP) grant to prevent and reduce youth substance use.

**Partners in Wayne County are uniting in health, safety, and well-being:** Anchored, Boys and Girls Club of the Altamaha Area, City of Odum, City of Screven, Coastal Pines Technical College, Drug Court, Family Connections, Forward Digital Marketing, Jesup Police Department, Life, Inc., Mother's Against Substance Abuse, Press Sentinel Newspaper, Safe Kids, Shane's Crib, Share Health Southeast Georgia, Southeast Health District, St. Simons by the Sea, Wayne County School System, Wayne County Sheriff's Office, and Wayne Memorial Hospital. By combining resources and support as partners in prevention, Wayne County will become a safe and healthy place for youth and families to thrive and live life substance free.

## Upcoming WCRC Meetings

January 13, 2026 | 9:30 AM

Wayne County Family Connection, 367 N Bamboo St, Jesup, GA 31545

February 10, 2026 | 9:30AM

Sam Dryer Community Center, 219 Florie St, Screven, GA 31560

## January is National Mentoring Month

January is recognized as National Mentoring Month, a time to celebrate and promote the power of mentoring relationships. Mentorship provides guidance, support, and positive role models for youth, which can have a lasting impact on their personal growth and decision-making.



### Why Mentoring Matters:

- Research shows that young people with strong mentoring relationships are less likely to engage in substance use.
- Mentors help youth build self-confidence, resilience, and healthy coping skills, which are key protective factors against risky behaviors.
- Mentorship encourages positive connections with family, in school, and community, supporting overall emotional and social well-being.



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Check out our website and follow us on Instagram and Facebook!

<https://www.waynecountyrecovery.com>

 @WayneCountyRecoveryCoalition

 @wcrecoverycoalition

## 2nd Annual RePack the Backpack Wayne County

Wayne County Family Connection is excited to host the 2nd Annual RePack the Backpack Resource Expo, supporting local students and families as they head into the new year with confidence and the tools needed to succeed.

### Event Details:

Location: Wayne County Farmer's Market

Date: Tuesday, January 6th

Time: 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM



### How You Can Help:

- Monetary donations are still being accepted to help meet the needs of Wayne County students.
- Donate online at [waynecountyfamilyconnection.org](http://waynecountyfamilyconnection.org) or by check (please include a note that your donation is for RePack the Backpack).

### Calling All Vendors & Community Partners:

- We are still accepting vendors!
- Vendor confirmation deadline: December 29th



This event is made possible through the generosity of our community. Every contribution, big or small, makes a meaningful impact. Thank you for continuing to support Wayne County families!

Interested in donating or becoming a vendor? Email Wayne County Family Connection Executive Director at [familyconnection@waynecountyfamilyconnection.org](mailto:familyconnection@waynecountyfamilyconnection.org) for more information!



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## Spotlight on Youth Connection: Joshua Johnson, Greenleaf Behavioral Health

Joshua Johnson, Business Development Representative at Greenleaf Behavioral Health Hospital in Valdosta, GA, has been working in the field of mental health since 2009 when he worked at a residential group home. Over the years, both as a professional and as a father of five, Joshua has seen firsthand the importance of building meaningful connections with children.

Drawing inspiration from author and psychologist Amy Morin, Joshua recently shared a practical tool for fostering engaging conversations between parents and children. At the December Partner meeting, he highlighted seven questions that can help guide meaningful discussions and support the growth and well-being of youth:

1. *What was the best part of your day?* – Encouraging children to scan for positives, training them towards gratitude and optimism.
2. *What mistake did you learn from today?* – Normalize failure and instill that mistakes are learning moments.
3. *Who were you proud of today?* – Removes the focus from themselves and grows empathy.
4. *What's one thing you could've made better today?* – Provides space to problem solve without spiraling into negativity.
5. *Who did you help today?* – Requires their focus, and when asked regularly, kindness can become a reflex.
6. *What was the most interesting thing that you learned today?* – Fosters curiosity and positively reinforces learning new things.
7. *What's something new you want to try?* – Courage question. Pushes them towards creativity, bravery, and growth without the pressure of perfection.



January is recognized as Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment Month in the United States, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of seeking help and accessing effective treatment for substance use disorders. This observance highlights that recovery is possible and encourages individuals, families, and communities to support those affected by substance misuse.

For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/about/digital-toolkits/substance-use-disorder-treatment-month>

## Pineland BHDD Community Service Board

### Mental Health Community Coalition 2026 Meeting Schedule

January 16: Virtual  
March 20: In-Person (Jeff Davis, Location TBD)  
May 15: Virtual  
July 17: In-Person (Candler, Location TBD)  
September 18: Virtual  
November 10: In-Person (Toombs, Location TBD)

For questions, please contact:  
**Sarah Refuss**, [serefuss@pinelandbhdd.org](mailto:serefuss@pinelandbhdd.org)



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