

Summer 2025

PREVENTIONCONNECTION

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER



Alliance
for Healthy
Communities

A Convener, Collector, Conduit and
Catalyst for Community Change



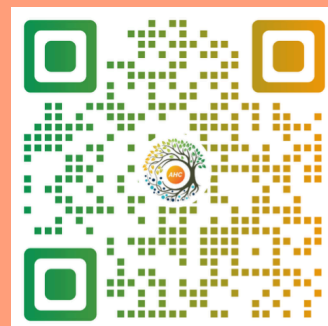
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Alliance for
Substance
Addiction
Prevention

Powered by **Alliance for Healthy Communities**

Prevention Tip of the Quarter

The Sunny Side of Wellness

Summer can bring fun and freedom, but it can also bring stress, boredom, and risk. Staying active, connected, and mindful helps protect our mental health and reduce substance use. From setting routines and unplugging from screens to encouraging open conversations and safe socializing, small choices add up. Let's use the season to promote wellness, build healthy habits, and support each other in making positive decisions.

For more info on how to get involved with ASAP initiatives or a committee, email ASAP Coordinator Missy Coyle:

Missy@empoweredcommunities.org

ASAP Quarter in Review

By Missy Coyle, ASAP Coordinator

Building Momentum, One Committee at a Time
This quarter, ASAP's committees made powerful strides toward creating a healthier, more connected community. The Substance-Exposed Newborn (SEN) Committee delivered another round of Blossom Bags, which are comfort-focused care packages offering essential items and support to families with substance-exposed infants, to local NICU's. The Alcohol Initiatives Committee received a Proclamation for Alcohol Awareness Month, celebrating its ongoing work with MADD West Central Florida to educate the community about alcohol-related risks. The Recovery Committee was recognized with an Inclusive Recovery Community Proclamation, reinforcing its mission to ensure recovery is visible, accessible, and inclusive. Meanwhile, the Opioid Action Committee continued to advance its harm reduction vending machine project, with life-saving resources like Narcan, Fentanyl test strips, HIV testing kits are scheduled for distribution later this quarter.

These milestones reflect the heart of ASAP's mission, reducing stigma, expanding access, and promoting recovery through collaboration, compassion, and action.

Committee Corner

This quarter, ASAP's committees continued to deliver high-impact programming, deepen community partnerships, and plan for what's next. We are heading into a busy and exciting season with three major events designed to engage the community, celebrate progress, and strengthen support systems.

First up on 9/20/25 is the Pasco County Recovery Walk, a vibrant and inclusive event honoring those in recovery and the people who support them. We're actively seeking sponsors and vendors to help create a powerful day of connection, hope, and visibility.

Soon after on 10/18/2025, we'll come together for the Alliance for Healthy Communities Gala, a signature evening of impact that fuels our prevention, recovery, and education efforts. This fundraiser is not just about celebration, it's about sustaining the work that matters. Sponsor and vendor opportunities are now open.

Rounding out the season, the Opioid Action Committee is planning a Community Resource Fair in late October. This event will bring together service providers, prevention resources, and community partners in one accessible, family-friendly space focused on harm reduction and wellness.

Mark your calendars and help us spread the word, because together, these events help power the momentum of prevention in Pasco County.

STAND ABOVE THE INFLUENCE

Change Begins
with **YOUTH!**

Powered by Alliance for Healthy Communities

STAND Coalition Updates

By: Kristina Scherer, STAND Coordinator

At the end of March, STAND participated in Prevention Advocacy Day at the Capitol alongside Drug Free America. The STAND youth engaged with lawmakers on three critical topics: Prevention, Marijuana and Pregnancy, and Delta-8. The lawmakers were notably impressed by their presentations, while the STAND Youth and Advisors enjoyed an informative tour of the Senate Chamber. This experience not only enriched their advocacy efforts but also served as an excellent team-building opportunity for the coalition.

In April, STAND continued its outreach by tabling at the Healthy Family Event at the James P. Gills YMCA. Additionally, the organization achieved a significant milestone by establishing a STAND Club at Charles B. Rushe Middle School, supported by the health teacher, Jennifer Wakeman-Rippy and STAND Advisor Bonni Snider, who facilitates the after-school program.

May marked Mental Health Awareness Month, during which the STAND Youth showcased their creativity by coloring green ribbon-themed mental health coloring sheets. STAND also participated in NAMI Pasco's "Mental Health for All" Walk, where they provided educational handouts and engaged with attendees. Furthermore, STAND representatives demonstrated their community support by attending the Pace Center for Girls breakfast, an inspiring event that highlighted the valuable initiatives aimed at supporting teenage girls in the community.

June commenced with the graduation of two STAND members, Liam and Sky, from high school. Congratulations to them and all the students of the Class of 2025 on their achievements! As summer began, STAND successfully hosted its 4th Annual STAND Youth Summit, which had 64 youth attendees. Participants learned about mental health and the importance of being positive peers while enjoying a fun-filled environment. STAND extends its gratitude to the summit planning committee, advisors, and volunteers for their dedication in making this community event a success. A special acknowledgment is due to the event sponsors—Recovery Unplugged, Colleen Beaudoin, and Kayla Kuni—for their support in ensuring the success of this initiative. Also, STAND would like to extend their gratitude to all the vendors for their invaluable support to the community.

Looking forward, STAND is ready to advance its mission, drawing inspiration from recent successes and eager to pursue new avenues for growth and outreach. With a solid foundation and a dedicated team, the future presents exciting possibilities for further accomplishments and a positive impact.





Introducing **SAFE**

Suicide Awareness Finds Empowerment (SAFE) is Pasco County's Suicide Prevention Coalition. SAFE is focused on educating and connecting the community to the resources they need with the goal of reducing the suicide rate in Pasco County.

SAFE meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. To become involved contact Christine.Parris@baycare.org or kbarfield@cfbhn.org

The FL LEADS Project provides free suicide prevention and intervention training to community partners and the general public.

For additional information:

<https://www.floridaleadsproject.com/training>



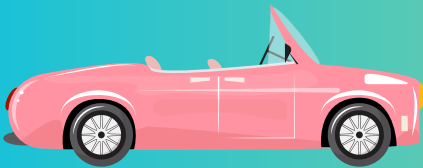
SAFE meets every fourth Wednesday of the month from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. For more information or to get involved, contact Karen Barfield at kbarfield@cfbhn.org or Chrissie Parris at Christine.Parris@baycare.org.



Trend Alert

Alcohol packaging has evolved a lot over time, causing consumers to become more and more susceptible to making purchases they didn't intend to. Clever marketing tactics, the use of uncommon words, and strikingly similar packaging has become the topic of conversation throughout the merchandising world.

People are accidentally purchasing alcoholic beverages whether for themselves or youth, and even buying THC-infused alcohol due to the misleading advertising. Many stores are putting the spiked vs non-spiked versions of products near each other, creating another challenge for telling the difference in the products.



Data That Drives Change

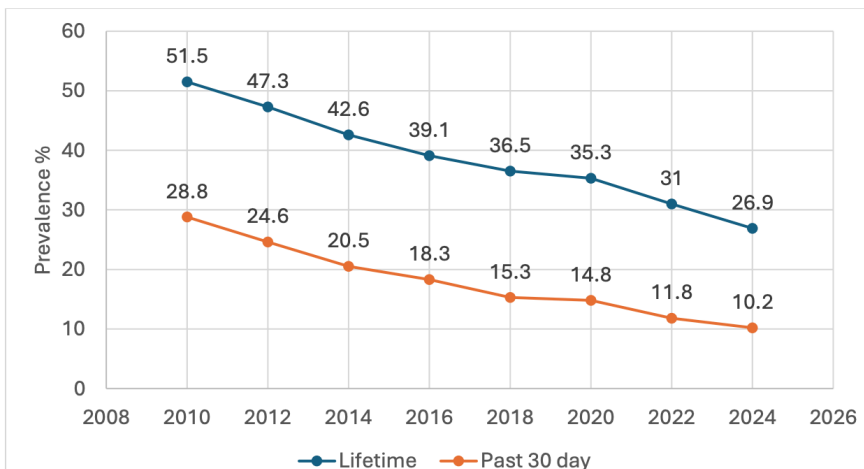


Figure 32. Alcohol Use Among Youth, Lifetime and Past Month, Florida, 2010–2024. Source: [FYSAS](#).

Even with these added challenges with alcohol packaging, the alcohol use amongst youth has been steadily trending downward! Similar patterns were also reported when it came to binge drinking in the youth population.



AROUND TOWN

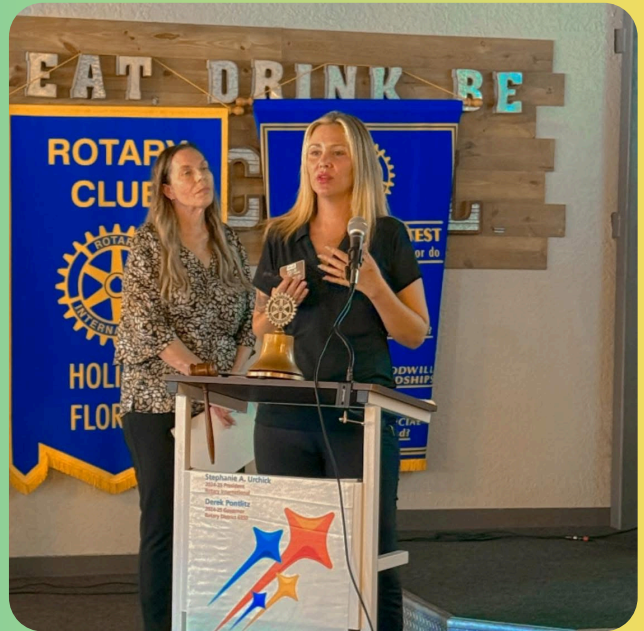


Above: (L-R): AHC Board Member Cesar Rodriguez, AHC Board Member Billy Major, AHC Executive Board Member Colleen Beaudoin, AHC Executive Board Member Kelly Mothershead, and AHC Executive Director Kellie Rodriguez supporting Pace Center for Girls Pasco at their Annual Believing in Girls Breakfast.

To right: Kellie Rodriguez & Missy Coyle presented in June at Holiday Rotary on AHC & the work we do.



Above: Kristina Scherer, STAND Youth Coordinator and Maya Young, Programs and Outreach Director tabling at the YMCA Family Fun Day.



IRC Proclamation!

On June 17, 2025, the Pasco County Board of Commissioners issued a powerful proclamation recognizing the county as an Inclusive Recovery Community (IRC)—a bold step toward equity, visibility, and support for individuals in recovery. This proclamation affirms that recovery is possible for everyone, regardless of background, and calls for cross-sector collaboration to reduce stigma and foster healing. With heartfelt remarks from community leaders and a representative from the Alliance for Healthy Communities, the message was clear: “You are providing hope.” Pasco now joins a growing regional movement to ensure recovery is not just supported—but celebrated



Coalition Metrics

2025	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Events Tabled ASAP STAND	7 5	5 3			
Social Media Impact	43, 463	57,082			
Individuals Educated Through News/Traditional Media	8,200	9,241			
Deterra/DOSC Kits Distributed	1320	1514			
Medication Poundage Collected: Dade City PD PSO NPR PD DEA Take Back	NA 156 NA NA	NA NA NA 117.4 lbs			
PSO Narcan Deployments	18	36			
QR Code Scans Narcan, SAFE 34668 Resource Guide	35	27			
Memorial Scholarship Recipients	5	1			
Presentations/ Youth Wellness Activities	3	6			