Will County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (WCSAPC)
Main Meeting – March 2026
March 24th, 2026
9:30AM
In person & Zoom Meeting
Approved: April 28, 2026

Members Present

In-Person: Tim Ackermann (10), Mert Aksoy (10), Aishwarya Balakrishna (10), Yolanda Barnes (12), Alexciana Castaneda (7), Caitlin Daly (10), Diane DeVries (4), Connie Dewall (12), Courtney Garfield (7), Brittany Gruver (7), Stephanie Hook (12), Chuck Mascolino (7), Sam Ortega Hughes (10), Michael Rojas (11), Courtney Sanfilippo (10), Joan Stefka (10), Katie Zacharias (7)

Zoom: Kathleen Burke (11), Magdalena Campos (12), Tim Cramer (12), Paula Ekstrom (12), Anysse Evans (10), Celeste Fonteca (12), Samantha Gannon (12), Suni Leal-Markley (12), Susanna Marrs (12), Garland Mays (11), Bill McCarty (13), Tracey Papesh (12), Cristyna Ramirez (12), Jennifer Smith (12), Neesha Stringfellow (12), Xiomaira Vila (10), Jeremy Zdzinicki (7)

I. Call to Order/Welcome
Start: 9:34 a.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Introductions (Name & Organization)
Welcome to any first-time attendees: Courtney Sanfilippo (Will County Health Department), Samantha Gannon (Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists), Susanna Marrs (Nurse Ink Media)

*Caitlin also reported… 708 Mental Health Board grant awarded! Awarded the full $55,665 of what we requested. This will be utilized for new training opportunities and a fall event partnering with Lewis University. A training/conference questionnaire will be sent out in the next week so our members can start requesting their attendance at the listed trainings.

IV. Reports:
- **Treasurer** - Loren Yaksich - Financial Report reported by Courtney Garfield
  - $21,750.93 ending balance

  - 0 expenses in February
  - Motion from Aishwarya, second by Yolanda
- **Secretary** – Kayla DeCant- approval of February minutes
  - Motion from Aishwarya, second by Chuck

V. WCSAPC Requirements:

- **DFC Grant Report** – Courtney Garfield
  - Annual Performance Review was submitted a couple weeks ago, waiting to hear approval.
    - Serves as our non-compete continuation application for year 9
  - Member Appreciation Meeting next month, April 28. Jarrett Burton from the DuPage ROSC and Serenity House Counseling Services will be presenting on Kratom. We will also have some member awards and refreshments. Highly encouraging in person attendance but will also have the Zoom option.
  - Coalition Survey Results – Dr. Bill McCarty
    - 40 respondents which is a good result
    - Strong belief in goals/initiatives
    - His impression seems to be that some members are unsure of their role and how they can help.
    - Hybrid option is a plus but members enjoy the quarterly in person member appreciation meetings.
    - Hosting events at other locations was recommended, Neesha suggested hosting a meeting.
    - The board will be addressing the concerns and continue the positive results.

VI. Old Business:

- **Too Good for Drugs Update-** Brittany Gruver
  - Completed curriculum at Hadley Middle School—5th and 6th grade last week
  - Pre and post tests will be sent to Dr. McCarty for evaluation
- **Deflection Grant Update-** Alexciana Castaneda
  - Participated in the ICJIA Roundtable this month where we were able to collaborate with other grantees.
  - Working on the next reporting cycle currently
  - If you have a client in need- reach out or refer
    - 815-724-1404 , acastaneda@willcosheriff.org
- **Advocacy Update-** Aishwarya Balakrishna
  - State legislature session- Aishwarya & Dr. Burke sit on legislative review groups
    - Multiple cannabis & hemp bills, many Kratom bills
    - Many bills up for hearing including DUI from .08 to .05, nicotine sales have to at least 1,000 feet away from schools and educational facilities, Kratom bans, and flavored tobacco bans

VII. New Business:

- Assistance in filling the Youth and Youth Serving Organization Sectors ASAP – Courtney
    - Will be talking to a few interested parties this week, but nothing finalized
    - Anyone under the age of 18, looking to fill ASAP

VIII. Subcommittee/Action Team Reports

- **Alcohol** – Brittany Gruver
    - Committee met via Zoom this month to work on new goals for the year.
    - Reach out to Courtney if interested in joining
    - Will start to alternate with the opioid subcommittee, 9:00 am before the main coalition meetings will have a new Zoom option as well for both of the subcommittees. Log in to the same Zoom link at 9:00 as the main meeting.
    - Next meeting will be 9:00 am on April 28
- **Smoking/Vaping (formerly Marijuana/Nicotine)** – Tim Ackermann
    - Continuing goals for the year. Focus on parents…
        - 1-pager for HIPS trailer
        - Potential for a PSA
        - Potential partnership/collaboration with AOK
    - Next meeting- Friday at 10am via Teams
- **Opioid –** Connie Dewall
    - Next meeting- 9am before the main coalition meeting in May
- **Social Media** – Courtney Garfield
    - Facebook: 868 views 229 reaches 5 new followers
    - Instagram: 156 views 39 reaches 1 new follower
- **Care Team Updates** – Katie Zacharias
    - First event was on March 14th at Elwood school
    - More events approaching in May
    - Can request for community events, schools, etc. Can go anywhere within Will County if requested through Sheriff Office page, email HiddenInPlainSightForm@willcosheriff.org at least 30 days before event
- **Illinois Youth Survey (IYS) Update** – Dr. William McCarty/Tim Cramer
    - Currently registered: Fairmont, Homer Glen Jr. High, Hufford Jr High, Lockport East High, Reed Custer, Wilmington High School & middle school. All Valley View schools
    - Joliet schools- would not be participating since it is not required, and they have other surveys to complete this semester

IX. Sector Reports & Sharing:

- **Business in the Community:** Brian Delli
    - Family Fun Fest date has been secured in October and will be requesting HIPS trailer soon.
- **Civic Volunteer Groups:** Loren Yaksich/United Way
    - No updates
- **College or University-** Kayla DeCant/Lewis University
    - No updates

- **Faith-Based, Religious or Fraternal Organizations:** Sheree Stilwell
    - No updates
- **Healthcare Professionals:** Allison Thomas/Rosecrance, Gloria Bloodsaw/Gateway Foundation
    - No updates
- **Law Enforcement Agency:** Lockport PD
    - No updates
- **Media:** Diane DeVries
    - May social hosting/Prom PSAs coming
- **Organizations Focusing in Substance Abuse:** Tim Cramer
    - No updates
- **Parents:** OPEN
- **Schools:** Kristen Schroeder/ Homer Glen District 33C
    - At Hadley Middle School, today marked the start of IAR standardized testing, and our students are excited to showcase the learning and growth they've achieved this year. We have also officially begun the fourth quarter and are focused on finishing the year strong.
    - We are looking forward to spring break next week, both students and staff are excited for the opportunity to rest and recharge before a strong finish to the school year.
    - We recently celebrated a highly successful PTO Shamrock Bash, with over 550 students in attendance, an incredible turnout that reflects our strong school community.
    - This week, students are participating in the state-mandated "Growth and Development during Puberty" presentations. It's always a memorable experience as they learn about hormones, hygiene, and the changes that come with adolescence.
    - We are also nearing the conclusion of our Too Good for Drugs program. We are grateful for the continued partnership with the Will County Sheriff's Office and social workers who made a meaningful impact on our students.
    - Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome Matt Wilhelm on April 14 for an anti-bullying school assembly. While the message is powerful, there's also a bit of anticipation as he plans to jump his BMX bike over the Hadley administrative team...who will be lying on the floor!

- **State or Local Government Agencies:** Kathleen Burke
    - No new updates however have a contact with Give Back that can be helpful for the youth sector. Will forward information to Courtney.
- **Youth:** OPEN
- **Youth Servicing Organizations:** YMCA
    - No updates

Other Announcements

- Cristyna Ramirez
    - Southwest Coalition will be hosting their Spring Conference at Silver Cross on May 1. Courtney will send out flyer. CEUs available.

- Kathleen Burke
    - WIC's Easter Egg-stravaganza in Joliet (March 25) and Bolingbrook (April 1) They are still accepting donations for egg fillers for kids that are not candy.
- Paula (Wilmington Coalition)
    - March 16th- Basset class training from 4-8pm at Lions Hall in Wilmington, $10 registration includes dinner
- Celeste (HLM Recovery/ROSC)
    - Tri-county ROSC meetings are held today, please feel free to join. There will be a presentation from Guardian Angel as well as Will County Sheriff Democratic Candidate Patrick Jones.
- Magadalena Campos
    - Project Light presentation given in schools. Have reached many students so far and looking forward to additional presentations.

- Stephanie Hook

    - Partnering with Plainfield schools to do Road to Reality.

Adjournment
End Time: 10:17 AM

Next Meeting: April 28th, 2026 9:30am In person/Via ZOOM. Alcohol subcommittee meeting at 9am before full Coalition meeting. Next member appreciation meeting in April.

Drug-Free Communities Definition of a Coalition:
A community-based formal arrangement for cooperation and collaboration among groups or sectors of a community in which each group retains its identity, but all agree to work together toward a common goal of building a safe, healthy, and drug-free community.