

PARENT

NEWSLETTER



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SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER TREATMENT MONTH

Join SAMHSA this month to increase awareness of abuse, treatment, and recovery.

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TMI Opens Cold Weather Shelter for the Community.





BY SAMHSA



SAMHSA ILLUMINATES PATHS TO SUD TREATMENT

For many Americans, January is a time to reset and make changes that will improve their quality of life.

Here at SAMHSA, the new year also kicks off Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment Month, our nationwide push to help Americans struggling with alcohol or drug addiction understand that sobriety is within reach and that there are many paths to recovery.

When a person is ready to seek SUD treatment, it may feel challenging to get started and to find the right approach. But there's a way forward for everyone. For some, medications for opioid or alcohol use disorder might work; for others, having a supportive peer—a person in recovery who can help—in their corner might make a world of difference; or perhaps mutual-support meetings or trust in religious faith are the recipe for success. Often treatment and recovery include a combination of these approaches, and each individual finds their own path.



This second-annual SUD Treatment Month campaign highlights the different options available, the support services that complement treatment, and the importance of having a support system when pursuing recovery. This year's theme is: "Treatment Works! Find the Path that Works for You." And, we will have weekly themes to highlight different facets of SUD treatment:



WEEK 1 (JAN. 1-11)

Starting Fresh

Turn over a new leaf by confronting unhealthy substance use and adopting healthy changes.

WEEK 2 (JAN. 12-18)

Multiple Pathways to Recovery

Learn about mutual-support resources, peer support workers, SUD medication, and other treatment options.

WEEK 3 (JAN. 19-25)

Wraparound Services

Explore services and supports—such as education, employment, stable living, and recovery housing—that complement treatment.

WEEK 4 (JAN. 26-31)

Treatment-Friendly Communities

Focus on personal support networks—such as friends, family, and others—that help strengthen individuals engaging in treatment.

Treatment works!
Find the path that works for YOU!

 **FINDTREATMENT.GOV**

Offers resources for anyone
seeking treatment or support
for substance use disorders.

If you need help now, you don't have to wait for a month's worth of information to act—you can find help any time:

VISIT OUR TREATMENT LOCATOR



CALL OUR NATIONAL HELPLINE

1-800-662-HELP.

*If you are in a crisis, text or call the 988
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.*

YOU CAN ALSO CHAT HERE



Whether you might have SUD or believe that a loved one does, take a look at these resources. Share them with others. They may help you find your path to make and sustain change. It is this concept that fuels Treatment Month as we work together towards empowering all Americans to live as healthy and productive lives as possible.

*Let's get people not only into
treatment but thriving in recovery.*



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration



MEET DIANA

School Support Specialist

Hello! My name is Diana Anthony, and I am the School Support Specialist at Musselman High School. Now in my fourth year serving our incredible students and families, I can confidently say that each day is busy, meaningful, and deeply rewarding.

We Bleed Green in South Berkeley!

Whether you're a lifelong local or a new transplant, our Musselman High School motto proudly says it all: "Once an Appleman, Always an Appleman." As the largest high school in Berkeley County, Musselman High is more than just a building – it's a community. Each week is filled with motivational quotes, friendly smiles, High-Five Fridays, and music over the intercom between classes. It's the kind of atmosphere that makes both students and staff proud to call MuHS home.

BY DIANA ANTHONY

While I wear many hats in my role, my mission remains constant – to provide students and families with the emotional and behavioral support they need to thrive both in and out of the classroom. I am continually inspired by the dedicated faculty and staff at Musselman High, whose collaboration and commitment make a lasting impact on our students' lives.

This year, I am especially proud of four seniors who have been with me since their freshman year. Each of them once faced significant challenges – academic struggles, frequent absences, mental health concerns, impulse-control difficulties, and the real possibility of not meeting graduation expectations.



Over the past four years, I have had the privilege of working with many students, watching them grow from struggling freshmen into confident young adults reaching for their dreams.

Through perseverance, hard work, and consistent support, all four are now on track to graduate this May. Not only are they graduating, but they are thriving – performing above average academically, involved in extracurricular activities, employed, and actively submitting college applications. It has been an honor to walk alongside them and witness their growth. One of them recently shared, “You’re very good at just listening and not judging. I know I can tell you anything, and you will help me.” Moments like that reflect the heart of the work we do here and the trust our students place in us.

As this year’s theme reminds us, “Roots Down, Rise Up!” We take great pride in our traditions, our accomplishments, and our community. Big things are happening here in Apple Country – and this is what it truly means to be an Appleman.

Musselman High School

Highlights

National Banner Unified Champion School

Recognized by Special Olympics North America for excellence in inclusion and school-wide engagement.

Top CTE High School

Supported by grants that expand hands-on learning opportunities, including funding for the Musselman Broadcasting Sports Network.

WV 2024–2025 College Access & Success Champions

Honored for strong support of students’ post-graduation planning and success.

Historic TOB Victory

The Musselman Marching Band became the first West Virginia band to win the Tournament of Bands Atlantic Coast Championship in Hershey, PA.



BY TMI STAFF

MEET JESSICA

School Support Specialist

We are thrilled to welcome Jessica Horn to The Martinsburg Initiative team as our new School Support Specialist at Eagle School Intermediate, with plans to expand her role to North Middle in the near future. Jessica brings a wealth of experience in social work and a deep commitment to supporting youth and families in our community.

Jessica holds a Bachelor of Social Work and is a Licensed Social Worker in West Virginia. She is currently pursuing her Master of Social Work at West Virginia University, with graduation expected in August 2026. Prior to joining TMI, Jessica worked with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources' Home Finding Unit, supporting kinship and relative families across the Eastern Panhandle, with a focus on Berkeley and Jefferson Counties.

She is especially proud of her child welfare work, where she guided kinship families and supported children and teens who were initially hesitant to engage. For Jessica, being a consistent, safe presence in a young person's life and seeing them open up and seek support are among the most rewarding accomplishments of her career.

Her passion for school social work grew during her MSW internship at John Handley High School in Winchester, Virginia, where she engaged students directly in meaningful, individualized ways.

Seeing the impact that early support and prevention can have on young people solidified her commitment to this career path. When Jessica learned of the opportunity at TMI, she knew it was the perfect chance to follow her passion in her hometown, joining an organization she had long admired for its positive impact on the community.

In her role at TMI, Jessica will work closely with students to build trusting relationships, understand their needs, and deliver prevention-focused programming that helps reduce substance use while fostering resilience.

When she's not working with students, Jessica enjoys exploring her family's deep roots in the area. She is the fifth generation to live in her family home, built around 1901, and is fascinated by the stories and history tied to the house and her family's legacy.

*Please join us in welcoming Jessica
Horn to The Martinsburg Initiative!*





MEET REBECCA

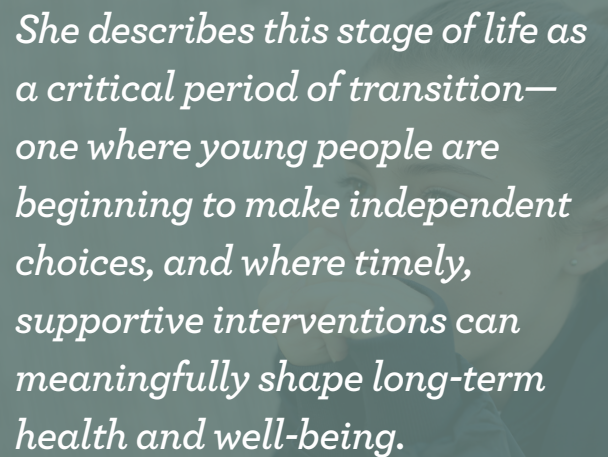
*Data Analyst for TMI's
Partnership for Success*

We're excited to welcome back a familiar face to The Martinsburg Initiative. After first serving as TMI's Project Manager from 2019–2020, Rebecca Bates, PhD, DNP, FNP-C, PMP, has returned to the organization in a new role, bringing with her a deep well of experience, perspective, and passion for youth health and prevention.

In her time away from TMI, Rebecca has focused her professional work on adolescent substance use prevention, combining research with hands-on training and technical assistance for individuals, coalitions, and organizations across the country, including continued collaboration with TMI. At the same time, she has been pursuing her graduate studies full-time at the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Studies at George Mason University, further strengthening her systems-level approach to community change.

A Family Nurse Practitioner by training, Rebecca has long been drawn to working with adolescents. Against the backdrop of the ongoing opioid overdose epidemic, which she identifies as one of the most significant public health challenges of our time, her commitment to prevention work has only deepened. When TMI's Director Margaret Kursey invited her to return to TMI, the decision was easy. She believes strongly in the organization's mission and is eager to contribute to its continued growth and impact.

In her current role as Data Analyst for TMI's Partnership for Success grant, she supports the backbone of effective prevention work: evidence and evaluation. Working closely with TMI's partners, volunteers, and community agencies throughout Berkeley County, she collects and analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data to assess how TMI's many interventions are functioning. From prevention education to youth resilience-building strategies, her work helps ensure that programs are not only well-intentioned but truly effective. As she notes: "If we do not rigorously document, analyze, and evaluate our work, we will not know if our efforts are having the intended outcomes."



She describes this stage of life as a critical period of transition—one where young people are beginning to make independent choices, and where timely, supportive interventions can meaningfully shape long-term health and well-being.

One accomplishment she's especially proud of this past year isn't a single project, but a broader realignment. She intentionally took time to reconnect her personal values with her professional and volunteer commitments, a process that ultimately led her back to graduate school and back to TMI. That clarity continues to guide her work and fuels her dedication to prevention and community impact.

Outside of her professional life, Rebecca brings that same endurance and discipline to her hobbies. Many may be surprised to learn that she is an ultramarathon runner and triathlete—an apt reflection of the perseverance and long-term commitment she brings to both her personal pursuits and her work at TMI.

We're thrilled to have Rebecca back on the team and look forward to the insight and impact her work will continue to bring to our community!

BY TMI STAFF

MEET JEANANNE

Licensed Professional Counselor

This is my second year with TMI as a part-time Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). During my career as a school counselor, I realized that I had a passion for working with children who have experienced trauma. To comprehensively meet this need, I began the long journey toward earning my LPC while continuing to serve children and families in my role as a school counselor.

My time in the school system has informed my work with TMI, as collaboration with families, school personnel, and an understanding of the educational system are critical components of effectively supporting children. I am grateful for the post-retirement opportunity that TMI has afforded me to provide holistic, individualized, trauma-informed support.

Referrals for my services come from within TMI, the school system, and the broader community. I integrate a mindfulness-based approach and draw from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Play Therapy, and EMDR in my sessions with children and adolescents, depending on individual needs. A key aspect of my work is encouraging family involvement in support of the child's needs; therefore, regular communication, support, and education with all adults involved in the child's care are included as part of the treatment plan. I truly enjoy being part of the TMI team alongside so many talented and committed individuals.



CREATING SOCIAL CHANGE TOGETHER

Under 21 Taskforce Highlights from Fall 2025



This fall, The Martinsburg Initiative's Drug-Free WV Under 21 Taskforce, led by Dr. Chiquita Howard-Bostic, continued to grow as a collaborative engine for prevention, education, and youth empowerment across Jefferson and Berkeley Counties.

Through new partnerships, innovative pedagogy, and cross-sector collaboration, the U21 Taskforce has helped spark meaningful momentum that will carry into the new year and beyond.

Building Stronger Prevention Partnerships

One of the most promising developments this semester is the Taskforce-inspired partnership between the Jefferson County Black Teachers Association and a community opioid prevention project led by Tanya Frazier. This collaboration reflects the Taskforce's role as a connector, bringing together educators, community leaders, and prevention advocates. Looking ahead, there is an opportunity for TMI staff, the Jefferson-Berkeley Alliance, and other committees to collectively amplify and support this work so it can reach even more families and youth.

Innovative Photovoice Collaboration Across States

This fall also marked the launch of a three-month, AI-infused Photovoice pedagogy project in partnership with Shepherd University, Hedgesville High School, and TMI's Drug Free Coalitions. Designed and facilitated by Dr. Albina Laskovtsov and Dr. Howard-Bostic in college classrooms in West Virginia (SOC1 321: Social Stratification) and Texas (SOC1 4311: Social Change), the project connected higher education directly to real-world prevention efforts. In collaboration with Ann Kidwell of Hedgesville High School, college students created authentic content for Drug Free Coalitions, resulting in more than 25 empowerment- and recovery-centered projects.

These works, spanning photography, poetry, music, and visual storytelling, focus on alcohol- and drug-free messages grounded in lived experience and hope. Both Shepherd and Texas student cohorts produced creative, impactful work, and plans are underway to share outcomes with coalition leadership in the coming weeks.



Expanding Youth-Focused Collaborations

Taskforce relationships also helped catalyze a grant-funded collaboration between Hedgesville High School's Drug Free Coalition and the Boys & Girls Club, resulting in several promising initiatives now underway. In addition, Karina Lopez—formerly connected through Jefferson County Schools' Cultural Unity and Equity (CUE) team—joined the Boys & Girls Club to provide bilingual support to at-risk youth and families at the Martinsburg Club. This connection is especially timely as bilingual support programs were paused in both Jefferson and Berkeley County schools this year. Karina's role strengthens support for Hispanic children and families, addresses behavioral challenges, and helps counter pathways into the School-to-Prison Pipeline, goals that closely align with TMI's school-based social work efforts.

What's Next: Sharing, Celebrating, and Scaling

After the New Year, Fifteen Photovoice projects will be formally presented through the Drug Free Coalitions, offering space for dialogue, reflection, and community engagement. Planning is also underway for a larger, collaborative event to bring together BRCTC, Shepherd University, coalition members, and community stakeholders to showcase this work and explore future partnerships.

Thank you to everyone who contributed time, creativity, and leadership this semester. Your work continues to build pathways for prevention, equity, and youth success across our region.





BY TMI STAFF

TMI OPENS COLD WEATHER SHELTER FOR THE COMMUNITY

The shelter operates nightly from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., with check-in between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m.

As winter temperatures drop, the Martinsburg Initiative has stepped up to provide a safe, warm place for unhoused residents. The Cold Weather Shelter officially opened on Saturday, January 3rd, at Christ Reformed United Church of Christ, kicking off a nine-week rotation among six local churches.

Guests are accommodated on a first-come, first-served basis, and those who stay a full night are guaranteed a bed the following evening. The shelter is open to adults 18 and older and is designed to be a low-barrier resource for anyone in need during the coldest weeks of the year.

The shelter is about more than just a warm place to sleep. In addition to overnight accommodations, staff help connect guests with referral services for additional support. In the first few days of operation, the shelter already welcomed eight individuals, with more expected as word spreads.



The Martinsburg Initiative is proud to lead this effort, emphasizing the importance of community support in caring for vulnerable residents. Providing a safe space during extreme cold is a vital part of the organization's mission, and staff are committed to keeping the shelter running for as long as it is needed.

Each week, the shelter rotates to a new church, following a model inspired by similar programs in Winchester, Va., and Charles Town. Supplies and bedding are transported to each new location with the help of volunteers, who are critical to ensuring smooth transitions and ongoing operations. Volunteers are also needed to assist with tasks such as laundry each week.

This project has received strong support from the city of Martinsburg, local grants, and city officials, who joined in a ribbon-cutting ceremony on opening day. Beyond providing warmth, the shelter aims to create opportunities for connection and understanding between the unhoused and the broader community.

By offering a safe, welcoming space, the Martinsburg Initiative is helping fill critical gaps and demonstrating the community's commitment to caring for its most vulnerable residents.

THOUSANDS OF US ARE IN RECOVERY.

YOU CAN BE TOO.



WHEN IT'S TIME, WE'RE HERE.

CALL 1-844-HELP4WV



FUNDED IN PART BY



EVERY CHILD DESERVES A GOOD START

If you have an Infant or toddler at home and have concerns about their development with moving, talking, hearing, vision, playing, learning, or growing, we are here to help.

West Virginia's Infant and Toddler Early Intervention Program. Telehealth and In Person appointments are available at NO COST TO YOU.

(304) 267-3595 ext 132





Get the facts about electronic cigarettes, their health effects and the risks of using e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes (also called “vapes”) have been the most commonly used tobacco product among U.S. youth since 2014. Educators can make a real difference by engaging in meaningful conversations with their students about the dangers of vaping for young people and ways to quit.

CDC launched the Empower Vape-Free Youth™ campaign in 2023 to encourage middle and high school educators to speak with students about the risks of e-cigarettes and nicotine addiction. The campaign also provides resources for educators to help students avoid or quit vaping.

EMPOWER
Vape-Free
YOUTH™



Info Provided by the Center for
Disease Control and Prevention



i talk
they hear you®



START TALKING BEFORE SHE HEADS OFF TO SCHOOL.

It's never too early to have a conversation about alcohol and other drugs.

The sooner you talk about the dangers of underage drinking and substance use, the greater chance you have of influencing your child's decisions about using alcohol and other drugs. For tips on how—and when—to begin the conversation, visit

www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov

#TalkTheyHearYou

PEP20-03-01-041



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration



A MODEL SOLUTION

TO A NATIONAL PROBLEM

Our mission is to prevent substance use disorders, build strong families, and empower the Martinsburg community through police, school, community, health, and education partnerships.

1

Increase awareness

of how to prevent substance use disorder through community empowerment.

2

Mitigate negative consequences

Resulting from substance misuse or trauma through community interventions, medication overdose.

3

Identify, risk stratify and offer appropriate interventions

for individuals experiencing risk factors of trauma or substance misuse.

4

Evaluate and report performance.



THE
MARTINSBURG
INITIATIVE

A POLICE, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP