



*The Initiative is a quarterly newsletter presented by the Saving Lives Task Force, the goal of this publication is to educate, inform and engage residents of Dare County.*

## A Spotlight on Teen Addiction

By Paris J. Murray, MSW, LCSWA

Are you one of the about 16.6 million viewers who tuned into HBO's "Euphoria" season 2 weekly? Are you also maybe one of the about 788,000 teens (ages 12-17 years old) who can relate to the main character Rue's struggle with addiction? Through this hit show, HBO revealed some raw truths about the realities of teen addiction, relapse, and withdrawals. Viewers watched as Rue lied, hid secrets, and ended up in sketchy situations to maintain her substance use habits. Rue grappled with the grief of losing her father, and pushed away all other loved ones in the process.

You may be one of the many loved ones that shared in the pain portrayed by Rue's family and friends: her mother, exhausted from efforts of "saving" one daughter, while protecting the other; her sister, forced to grow up too soon as she watched Rue suffer; the heartbreak of her friends, as they watched addiction become her life; the wisdom, tough love, and grace that had to be given by Rue's sponsor as he supported her through the anger outbursts and ugliest sides of addiction. Spoiler alert: All of these people became the strength, support, and love that Rue needed as she went through withdrawals and began recovery.

Not only did HBO provide insight to the life of a teen in addiction, but they also have brought awareness to many resources, which can be found at the end of the episodes and on their website. You can also find local and national resources for addiction, recovery, and mental health on our website at [www.savinglivesobx.com](http://www.savinglivesobx.com). There is help. There is hope. There is recovery!

Viewer discretion is advised, as there are possible triggers for abuse, drug use, sex, and violence. Euphoria is rated TV-MA

- Our Task Force is a team of professionals and community members working toward the prevention of substance use disorders and the availability of effective treatment for all Dare county citizens in need of help.
- **Join us for our In-Person Meetings** on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 2:00 pm.
- **For More Information** please contact Roxana Ballinger, Saving Lives Task Force Co-Chair, at 252.475.5619 or [roxana.ballinger@darenc.com](mailto:roxana.ballinger@darenc.com).

[savinglivesobx.com](http://savinglivesobx.com)  
[facebook.com/savinglivesobx](https://facebook.com/savinglivesobx)

## Addiction: A Universal Struggle Part One of a Three Part Series

By Kira Walters, Staff writer, First Flight High School

Habits are everywhere. Everyone has them. Brushing your teeth, going to the gym, showering every other day. All of these habits are norms in our society.

However, not all habits are practices meant to improve one's personal well-being. Many of them do the exact opposite. They become an all-encompassing thought and feeling that is seemingly impossible to break free of.

For instance, the worldwide nicotine epidemic: The harmful effects of smoking cigarettes and vaping are inescapable facts, to the point of kids learning about it in school.

But nicotine is only a tiny fraction of the substances that have taken over people's lives.

Continued on Page 2



# THE INITIATIVE Resources:

[savinglivesobx.com](http://savinglivesobx.com)

**PORT/New Horizons**  
2808 S Croaton Hwy,  
Nags Head, NC 27959  
**252.441.2324**

**Trillium Health Resources**  
[www.trilliumncaccesspoint.org](http://www.trilliumncaccesspoint.org)  
**877.685.2415** – 24 Hours a Day

**Mobile Crisis Team**  
24 Hours a Day / 7 Days a Week  
**866.437.1821**

**2-1-1 Directory**  
[www.nc211.org](http://www.nc211.org)

**Community Care Clinic of Dare**  
Syringe Services Program  
M-Th | 9 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
**252.261.3041**

Contact your insurance company to find out more information on local providers and your plan's benefits.

S M T W T F S

# EVENTS

## 13th Annual Walk Against Addiction

When: Saturday, September 24, 2022

Where: First Flight High School, Kill Devil Hills

We will have vendors from the field of recovery and vendors of alternatives to substance use (i.e. yoga, gym) Registration is \$10 and will include a tote bag. We will have free coffee from Starbucks and free cookies from Crumbl Cookies! Our speakers this year will address Adverse Childhood Experiences. We will also address how friends/family members should deal with those suffering from the disease of addiction. After our Walk, Gene Perry will be serving free hot dogs and hamburgers to participants. Before our Walk, Matt Costa of OBX Running Company will be sponsoring a 5k! This is a separate event from the Walk Against Addiction. Please contact Brenda Thacker at 252.202.1110 if you have any questions or if you wish to participate in any way!

## Crossroads OBX

Crossroads OBX is Christ-centered outreach offering discernment, guidance and objective planning for those who desire to change the course of their lives and help those who have been thrown off course by homelessness, addiction, incarceration or other events. For more information contact 252.455.2510, [crossroadsobx.org](http://crossroadsobx.org) or [crossroadsobx@gmail.com](mailto:crossroadsobx@gmail.com)

## Recovery & Overdose Support Services (ROSS)

Recovery and Overdose Support Services (ROSS) provides support groups, harm reduction education and resources, overdose response, and assistance with recovery planning. Dave Edmonds, PSS, 252.473.7923 and Katy Haslar, PSS, 252.473.7861 or [RecoveryServices@DareNC.com](mailto:RecoveryServices@DareNC.com)

## SMART Recovery OBX Addiction Support Group

When: Mondays, 6-7pm for 60 minutes

Where: Nags Head Treatment Center,

2224 S. Croatan Hwy., Nags Head

Facilitators: Scott and Katy Haslar,

[smartrecoveryobx@gmail.com](mailto:smartrecoveryobx@gmail.com)

## Alcoholics Anonymous: Meetings 7 days a week.

Visit the website [AAOBX.com](http://AAOBX.com) for current virtual meeting schedule. Outer Banks AA Hotline 252-256-0850 <https://aaoxb.com/>

## Outer Banks Alateen, Outer Banks Alateen Meeting, Saturdays, 10-11am, Kitty Hawk Baptist Church,

email [alateen@alanonobx.com](mailto:alateen@alanonobx.com) for information. Alateen is a fellowship of young people whose lives have been affected by alcoholism in a family member or friend.

## OBX Nar-anon is a means of coping with the insanity brought about from having a family member or friend struggling with addiction. For more details, please contact Holly Henry West at 252-489-7778.

## Recovery Learning Circle

A peer facilitated, virtual support, coping skills and recovery planning group for everyone. We will be learning awareness and coping skills for dealing with depression, anxiety, isolation, substance use, stress, emotions, interpersonal skills and mindfulness. We develop awareness of our own strengths and priorities, and learn from and support each other in recovery by building hope, empowerment, resilience, personal responsibility and support.

Call Dave Edmonds 252-305-4056 or

[David.Edmonds@darenc.com](mailto:David.Edmonds@darenc.com)

## Women of Worth

Groups are being held virtually on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00am-12:00pm. The groups will focus on recovery from the evidence-based curriculum, "Helping Women Recover."

Please contact Catisha Bryant at [catisha.bryant@darenc.com](mailto:catisha.bryant@darenc.com) for more information or if you would like to join the group.

## Breaking Through Task Force, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 8:30 am

The Breaking Through Task Force is composed of community members who wish to address communication and stigma concerns about mental health conditions and substance use disorders.

Contact [Kelly.Nettin@darenc.com](mailto:Kelly.Nettin@darenc.com)

[www.breakthestigmaobx.com](http://www.breakthestigmaobx.com)

## Dare Community Collaborative, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 1:30-2:30 pm

A partnership among providers and families of youth and adults with mental health issues and/or substance use issues. Together, they identify services, support needs and try to find ways to meet those needs.

Contact [Stephanie Webb,](mailto:Stephanie.Webb@trilliumnc.org)

[stephanie.webb@trilliumnc.org](mailto:stephanie.webb@trilliumnc.org)

# Addiction: A Universal Struggle

## Part One of a Three Part Series

Continued from Page 1

An eighth-grade student from FFMS, an FFHS senior and a local adult shared their experiences with substance abuse anonymously in order to raise awareness about this sensitive topic. They will be referred to as Sophia, Grace and James in order to keep their identities confidential.

## The Sophia Chapter

Most people could tell you without hesitation that drugs are a negative thing. Sophia, on the other hand, still can't quite tell. Drugs and alcohol were the things that shattered her family, but they were also the things that made her home life bearable.

"My mom was on drugs my whole life and when she wasn't, she would get really mad at me and my brother and hit us," Sophia said. "Whenever she was on drugs, she was happier, so I kind of thought it was a good thing, I guess."

Substances have been a part of this middle-schooler's life for as long as she can remember. A number of her family members have dealt with substance use issues and made no effort to hide it from her.

"Two of my family members killed themselves and I was told that it was because of the drugs they did," Sophia said. "So I still don't really know how to feel about it. A lot of people from my family died because of drugs and I've seen a lot of stuff."

Unlike her family, Sophia has now managed to avoid using substances as much as possible, presumably because she got such an early start.

"I don't remember how old I was, but I think I might have been 8," she said. "I took my mom's wine and I got really drunk."

At 8 years old, you may have been worrying if you could get home in time to catch your favorite cartoon. Sophia was worrying about her future.

"I was anxious that I was gonna get caught, obviously, but I couldn't stop seeing myself turning into my mom and I was scared," Sophia said.

When Sophia was 13 years old, she found her mother unresponsive one day after an overdose. This would be a scarring experience for anyone, but Sophia has managed to let the loss of family members affect her as minimally as possible.

"I wish I could tell myself that there are a lot of hard times and I just need to be strong," she said.

*Kira Walters is a sophomore writer for Nighthawk News Magazine, the student-run newspaper of First Flight High School. Walters and her classmates wrote six stories surrounding drug issues on the OBX following the accidental overdose of an FFHS senior in January. Walters can be reached at [24walterski77@daretolearn.org](mailto:24walterski77@daretolearn.org). Journalism teacher Steve Hanf oversees the newspaper classes and can be reached at [hanfst@daretolearn.org](mailto:hanfst@daretolearn.org). Look for copies of the spring edition at the school and a variety of establishments on the OBX.*

"I have found that the process of discovering who I really am begins with knowing who I really don't want to be."

– Alcoholics Anonymous



⚠️ Your Prescription. Your Responsibility

BE AWARE. DON'T SHARE.  
**LOCK YOUR meds**

[lockyourmeds.org/nc](http://lockyourmeds.org/nc)

