

Providing evidence-based substance misuse prevention services by enriching life-skills through education and strength-based practice, providing creative outlets and enhanced youth protective factors.



NEWSLETTER

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MEET OUR PREVENTION SPECIALIST



BRANDON

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Born and raised in Spartanburg, South Carolina, I earned my B.S. in Psychology from the University of South Carolina. My passion for inspiring and motivating others

has been at the heart of everything I do—especially since I began coaching football and basketball.

Outside of sports, my free time is filled with activities that bring relaxation and peace—video games, spending time in nature, and meditation are my top three go-to's.

Above all, helping others is my purpose, and I truly love being a Prevention Specialist and making a meaningful difference in the lives of the youth we serve.

COPING CORNER

Journaling

Journaling can be a valuable coping skill, helping individuals manage stress, anxiety, and other difficult emotions. It provides a safe space to express our thoughts and allows for self-reflection, emotional processing, and the development of healthier coping strategies.

By writing down thoughts and feelings, people can gain perspective, identify patterns, and develop a greater understanding of themselves and their experiences. All of these can help improve mood and help to regulate emotions like anger and sadness and help boost self-esteem.



DID YOU KNOW?

The human brain continues to develop and mature well into the mid-to-late 20s. While some brain regions, like the prefrontal cortex responsible for decision-making and impulse control, continue developing into adulthood, other areas like the amygdala (involved in emotions) and the reward system (responsible for motivation and pleasure) also continue to mature and change.

Understanding these ongoing developmental processes can help individuals and those who support them, such as parents, teachers, and caregivers, to better understand the behaviors and decision-making processes of children, adolescents, and young adults.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Preparing meals and eating together

With busy work schedules, after-school sports, and more, it can be hard to find the time to simply be together as a family. One way to get that quality time is in the kitchen.

Prepping meals and eating together as a family has other serious benefits that positively affect our physical, mental, and emotional health. By doing this simple activity that we all take part in daily, you can help your child develop and strengthen skills like decision-making, goal-setting, communication, self-confidence, and a greater sense of resilience.

[Click below for a fun and easy recipes you can do at home.](#)

[Click Here](#)



Each school day we work with youth on ways to build their personal strengths.

Join our efforts in ensuring they **LIVE BEYOND** these activities and have an opportunity to practice these skills with you and with their community.

PREVENTION TOPIC: DECISION MAKING

Decision-making is simply the process of choosing between different options. It helps people make smart choices and avoid mistakes that could affect them for a long time.

Learning how to make decisions teaches kids to spot dangers, think about their choices, predict what might happen, and choose better options. When kids practice making good decisions, they feel more confident saying "no" to risky situations. It also helps them understand the consequences of their actions, respect their personal limits, and stand up to peer pressure.

When decision-making is combined with important life skills like good communication, managing emotions, and standing up to peer pressure, people can handle tough situations with confidence. Learning these skills early on helps them feel more in control of their choices, allowing them to face everyday challenges with a clear mind and make smarter, healthier decisions.



SOME TIPS TO HELP WITH DECISION-MAKING:

- Define your goals
- Consider alternatives and outcomes
- Collect information
- Recognize your emotions
- Seek different perspectives
- Apply learned lessons/experience



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