



North Alabama Mental Health Coalition

Meeting minutes for January 13, 2026

Attendees (in person):

Daniel Adamek (Little Orange Fish)	Sarah Bailey (UAH RAN)	Randy Barbour (City of Huntsville)
Julia Barham (Thrive AL)	Jennifer Blazer (ALSP)	Crystal Bone (Fox Army Health)
Erica Bradberry (ADMH)	Annie Brasseale (VOP)	Breanna Burgess (Redstone Arsenal)
Darlene Burton (Salvation Army)	Melissa Caldwell (Wellstone)	Blake Carlyon (Pathway Healthcare)
Roxanne Crawford (Bradford at Madison)	Deione L. Crutcher (ADRS)	Jen Dawson (Aliya Health)
Melissa Foster (UAH Nursing)	Nola Hall (NCAC)	Traci Harris (Elm Foundation)
Alexis Harvey (ALSP)	Linda Howe (Just Serve)	Marc Hultquist (Regan's Clinic)
Michayla Johnson (First Stop)	Tammy Leeth (Probate Judge's Office)	Deliska Lombard (Kids to Love)
Michael Mathis (QUE Training & Wellness)	Beth McAnally (NOMA)	Diane McCrary (NACC)
Jessica Nall (Partnership for Drug Free)	Mikayla Percell (IOP Behavioral Health)	Alyssa Perry (Wellstone)
Karen Petersen (Wellstone)	Taralyn Rowell (Wellstone)	Audrey Rushing (Not One More Alabama)
Julie Schenck-Brown (Huntsville Police)	Audrey Smith (Grow Our Village)	Thomas Smith (Archway Recovery)
Jana Thomas (NCAC)	Matt Thompson (Living Life Counseling)	Christian Toney
Linda Ware (UAH RAN)	Don Webster (HEMSI)	J'Nada Williams (ADRS)
Hannah Willoughby (Project Transition)	Latisha Wilson (ADMH)	Mack Yates (SVDP/VOP)
Melissa de la Cerda (Wellstone)		

1. Welcome and Introductions – Mack Yates

Introductions are important because you need to be able find out who can help you.

Mack emphasized that we are still trying to get the attention of legislators to open a [long-term mental health facility in North Alabama](#).

2. Coalition Updates – Daniel Adamek

Great turnout today and we hope that continues for the rest of the year! 2025 was a good year for us. We made a lot of forward progress for the coalition, especially in terms of the internal structure of the coalition. We still need to work to get partnerships within the coalition in order to get things done. In 2026, we want to emphasize how to better coordinate among coalition members. Anyone with ideas on how to do this, please contact Daniel at daniel@littleorangefish.org. There was progress in getting better communication among coalition members. Daniel is still working on a Google group and getting a calendar together. Any ideas are welcome.

3. Featured Presentation – Kids to Love – Deliska Lombard

Deliska is the Executive Director of the Smith Family Wellness Center for Kids to Love. She has four children and her oldest daughter is adopted. She has a desire to help children.

Lee Marshall started out in TV news and had Friday spots called Kids to Love highlighting foster kids. It has grown and this year they provided Christmas for over 1600 foster children in North Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. They also provided over 6000 backpacks for schools. They also provided emergency assistance. They want a holistic approach (see a need and fill it).

They have a program called [KTECH](#) which is a semester system providing training for young adults (not college ready or college bound). Students can get up to 16 certifications over a semester and be job ready. Half of the students who enter the program are not ready to go out into the real world and then they also have lots of students from Downtown Rescue Missions. While they are in school, they also provide therapy for them. KTECH classes includes mechatronics, soldering, robotics, and VR. They typically have between 8 and 10 students per semester. They are also expanding into the Madison County school system.

Kids to Love also has a child placing agency (adoption services and foster needs) and they try to provide for all the needs of the families from health care to therapy as well as ongoing training for families.

Kids to Love also runs [Davidson farms](#) (a family run home in Ardmores) where they take in young girls 17-18. There are also 5 cottages on the property that are for young, unhoused women referred by community colleges. These young women want a better future. In order to stay in the cottages, there is a requirement to stay in school. While there, they are also taught how to budget, cook, and care for children.

The Smith Family Mental Wellness center opened in August. There are 4 therapists here to provide for their needs as well as an intern. They provide EMDR, TF CBT, CBT, PCIT (Parent Child Interaction) and PMT. New parents are often at a loss on how to parent and they offer classes to help.

They are hoping to have sufficient services so that families can meet their needs as quickly as possible. They also provide services for adults including “backdoor” access for privacy such as PTSD therapy for first responders.

They have an Event center available for training and meetings that can also be rented out. The main reason for the event center is so that people can get training and connected with resources they need.

Deliska mentioned that they want to connect with the coalition for services.

Someone asked about what are the requirements for the KTECH classes. Deliska said that you just call and set up an appointment for the young adults to be interviewed. They have to take a test to make sure they are mature enough for 16 weeks of class work. They also do a math assessment. They do have to be an adult to get in the program.

There was also a question about the family parenting classes. The classes are for foster and adoptive families first.

Deliska explained that they do take BC/BS, Medicaid, and Tricare (they are also working on Aetna and Cigna and on a sliding payment scale).

Don asked if they intervene in emergency calls dealing with children. Deliska said they would talk about it some more.

4. Directed Discussion and Gap Identification- Daniel Adamek

Daniel asked coalition members to identify the top issues that they are working on this year and discuss how the coalition might be able to help their organization.

Sarah Bailey from [RAN \(Regional Autism Network\)](#) mentioned that they are trying to get a child care survey completed so they can determine a needs assessment to plan summer camps or respite for families with special needs kids. She also suggested putting a wish list of skills needed on the website so that people can partner better.

Here is the link to the child care survey: <https://ran.uah.edu/care-survey>

Someone suggested putting small bios of coalition members on the website. Daniel mentioned that this has been discussed before. It's tricky for people to allow their information to be shared on a public website. A suggestion was to do a Google docs about the organizations and individuals in the coalition. Daniel has tried to make a Google space only accessible to members, but we have to figure out how to make that access happen. Daniel will shape these ideas and will try to present them at the next meeting.

Traci mentioned that [Charity Tracker](#) already exists which lists all the services provided by organizations that subscribe as well as contact information. She volunteered to help anyone on how to use Charity Tracker.

Audrey from [Grow Our Village](#) needs people to help get the word out about their organization. They have workshops for new and foster families. She asked for anyone who would like to be involved to contact her. They are having a Grand Opening on February 7th from 1 to 3 pm. They are launching a lending library for families to acquire baby essentials. Their focus is on infancy.

Don gave an update on the emergency response calls from December. Fentanyl and ODs are down dramatically for the area. This is the lowest level for 2025 (1.3 every 24 hours). We are seeing the numbers go down and the speculation is that the availability of Narcan is helping. They are seeing an increase in meth exposures.

Pediatric mental health issues are better in that there have not been as many out-of-town ambulance transport trips. Don is looking forward to the next addition of the Pediatric Emergency Services at Wellstone because they will be able to handle higher risk children.

Dr. Barbour (<https://www.huntsvilleal.gov/government/multicultural-affairs/>) mentioned that last week there was a legislative forum. The mayor of Huntsville had a meeting prior to that to discuss his priorities: roads, SSUT (Sales and Use Tax), and mental health. He was concerned about the severely mentally ill. He spoke with Jeremy Blair (Wellstone) and Tracy Dougherty (HH exec). The mayor sees the need for a place to house the seriously mentally ill (Mack's petition). Currently, they are sent to the hospital and there has been violence against the nurses and staff. The mayor and legislators are aware of the issue.

Daniel asked how we engage in this situation. Randy suggested pushing the petition more and he has a meeting next month with the mayor and will bring it up again.

Sarah Baily mentioned that RAN is hosting **Dr. Temple Grandin** at UAH on October 9th. This date is during fall break, so they may need a new location.

Partnership for a Drug Free Community had 67 assessments in December and were able to place 41 in treatment. January is hot month because everyone is trying to get sober, so they are busy. Their office also has 1,000 boxes of Narcan and they are willing to give them out...no questions asked. They work with a lot of uninsured people and they need places to go for help. They do get help from Bradford.

Someone questioned that since there are so many ODs, are there organizations that train drug users on how to administer Narcan? Tom Smith mentioned that the Jefferson County Health Department has training online. Someone else mentioned that ROSS Recovery also provides training. Don mentioned that the new Narcans are self-explanatory. A comment was made about how do people find out where to get Narcan. If you contact Alabama Department of Mental Health, (<https://mh.alabama.gov/faq/standing-order-for-naloxone/>) they don't respond, but you will have a surprise delivery. ROSS provides 24-hour access to Narcan in the form of a box outside their office.

Wellstone is working on lowering the age of adolescents that they will admit to the crisis center, hopefully to as low as age 8. They hope to do this in the next few months. Someone asked if they do substance abuse treatment. Wellstone will get them started (because they are a crisis center), but then they are referred elsewhere.

Melissa Foster with the College of Nursing program at UAH mentioned that they are starting their Neighborhood Nursing Program at the end of the month. The first four communities are: Northwood, Brookside, Triana and Bob Harriston Wellness Center. They are going to have health fairs at these locations to provide services that these communities may not have. Please let Melissa know if you are interested in partnering. She had flyers at the meeting.

Mike Mathis from the Youth Friendship Foundation mentioned that they are having the 3rd annual 5K race and mental health fair on May 16th at Big Spring Park. He mentioned that the coalition helps to bring awareness to organizations that help the mentally ill. This event supports scholarships for kids in Madison County (\$500,000 already donated). They also donate money to a local mental health organization. He encouraged organizations in the coalition to set up information booths at the health fair (it is free). The race is at 8 am and the health fair is right after that.

A Little Orange Fish fundraiser will be held on May 9th at the Shed at Stovehouse. The focus is on our coalition. It will be open to the public with live music.

Daniel mentioned that he is still working on the calendar, but we hope to only send out notices of events for organizations in the coalition when the minutes and agenda are sent out. Please let Daniel or Annie know of events you need to have sent out.

5. Recap and Adjournment – Daniel Adamek

Someone who works on the Arsenal mentioned that they have an increase in requests for psych evaluations (court ordered). Someone from [Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services](#) mentioned that they might be able to help as well as [Partnership for a Drug Free Community](#).

Next Meeting
Tuesday February 10, 2026
11:00 am at Wellstone