

Reach out and help communities

As the mother of an addict son now in prison, I stood alone in my cul-de-sac neighborhood trying to make sense of it all. I felt the urge to scream: "Somebody please help me." When no one answered, I began to solve the problems myself. This is my journey. This is what I have learned.

The challenges suburban families face are complex and could potentially devastate lives and derail futures. Kids are becoming addicts, being arrested, going to prison and dying from suicide and overdoses.

Recently, Forsyth County held a drug summit with a panel that included former Braves pitcher John Smoltz, judges and a county commissioner among others but, most importantly, the mother of a child who committed suicide because of his heroin addiction and looming prison time. Here's a haunting statistic: 15 Forsyth County kids have died from overdoses this year. I looked around the room of nearly 500 people and recognized the faces of scared parents. I have begun to realize this story needs to be told, and the disconnect must stop. I have also begun to realize the African-American community and so-called inner cities have dealt with similar issues for decades. Until the problem hits home, people will pay little attention. Children are being destroyed in every corner of metro Atlanta. .