

HUDSON COMMUNITY FIRST NEWSLETTER


 UPCOMING
EVENTS
February 27

Toast to Hudson
Lake Forest Country Club
6:30pm

March 5

Career Panel
Hudson High School
7:00pm

March 17

Uncharted Waters
Hudson High School

March 19

Michael-Waly Award
Nominations Due

March 23-27

Spring Break

April 21

Speaker: Jessica Lahey -
The Gift of Failure
Hudson Middle School
7:00pm

April

Webinar: Addictive
Behaviors

HUDSON COMMUNITY FIRST'S HOLIDAY SHOPPE & CRAFT FAIR WELCOMES RECORD CROWD



Hudson Community First's Annual Holiday Gift Shoppe & Community Craft Fair once again turned East Woods into a winter wonderland of giving, gratitude, and community spirit. This year more than 320 young shoppers (a new record!) in preschool through age 12 visited the Holiday Gift Shoppe, each escorted by our cheerful crew of middle school "elf" volunteers as they carefully chose gifts for moms, dads, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and even the family pet. A few shoppers couldn't resist also picking up a little something for themselves as well. Our team of high school volunteers wrapped and tagged hundreds of presents, so each gift left ready for a grand reveal.

While the kids shopped in the supervised Gift Shoppe, parents and community members explored the Craft Fair, which featured 25 talented local vendors. Tables were filled with handmade holiday ornaments, baked goods, custom crafts, knitted items, toys, jewelry and more, creating a warm and festive marketplace that truly showcased the creativity in our community.

Hudson Community First extends heartfelt thanks to all of our student and adult volunteers, our vendors, and our community partner, Primrose School, who made this year's Holiday Gift Shoppe & Craft Fair such a success. Events like this are only possible because of you, and together we are giving Hudson's kids meaningful opportunities to serve, give, and grow. We look forward to welcoming you back next year!

THE 40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS: THE “WHY” BEHIND EVERYTHING HUDSON COMMUNITY FIRST DOES



Hudson Community First (HCF) was founded on a simple, powerful idea: when young people have the right supports, relationships, and

opportunities around them, they thrive. That belief is rooted in the **40 Developmental Assets**, a research-based framework created by Search Institute that identifies the experiences and qualities proven to help kids grow into caring, responsible, and productive adults.

The 40 Developmental Assets are often described as the “building blocks” of healthy development. They include both:

1. **External assets:** the supports kids receive from family, school, peers, and the broader community (things like encouragement, boundaries, safety, and meaningful involvement)
2. **Internal assets:** the strengths young people develop within themselves (things like values, social skills, confidence, and a positive sense of identity)

As HCF shares on our [40 Assets page](#), the message is clear: **the more developmental assets a young person has, the more likely they are to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally**, and the less likely they are to engage in high-risk behavior.

The 40 Assets framework is powerful because it gives all of us a role. Not just parents. Not just schools. A teacher. A coach. A neighbor. A youth leader. A family friend. A local business owner who hires teens. A community member who takes time to listen and encourage.

HCF works to strengthen the assets in all Hudson youth by bringing in speakers and programs that help families and community members better support young people, especially through the Community of Care series. This year’s Community of

Care focus is The Power of Human Connectedness, highlighting the importance of the relationships and support systems that help kids thrive.

The 40 Developmental Assets aren’t just a list, they’re a shared roadmap for raising confident, capable, compassionate kids.

“

*"Pursuing the **common good** is the work of all the community's residents and institutions, and **Developmental Assets** become a language and a tool for discussing this common good. When community members commit to building assets for and with young people, they **nurture youth** who are more likely to grow into responsible neighbors, citizens, parents, and workers."*

- Peter Benson (President, Search Institute)

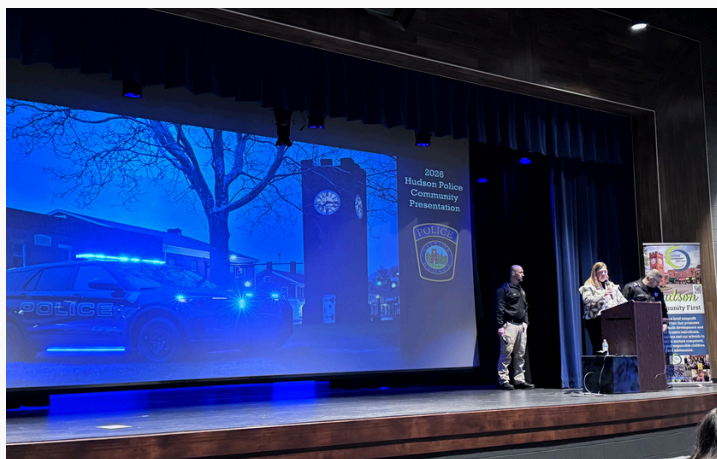
”

And thank you to everyone who has supported HCF through their time, talents or monetary donations, Hudson Community First is continuing to invest in the programs and conversations that help those assets grow one relationship, one tool, and one meaningful moment at a time.

Want to learn more or take the quiz to see how many assets your youth has? Head over to our website [HERE](#).



HUDSON PD'S 2026 SAFETY UPDATE: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW NOW



Hudson Community First welcomed the Hudson Police Department to HMS on February 4 for this year's Community of Care presentation, **"What you don't know, and why you should."**

Although this program is offered annually, HPD updates it each year to reflect current trends and the situations they are seeing with students. Several School Resource Officers presented alongside a Hudson detective and the Chief of Police, sharing what they are teaching in classrooms and what families can do to stay informed and supportive at home.

HPD's central message was the importance of communication within the family. Officers encouraged parents to establish consistent, nonjudgmental conversations early so children know they can come to a trusted adult if something feels wrong or if they need help.

The presentation reviewed warning signs of substance use, including sudden behavior changes, physical changes such as decreased interest in appearance, falling grades, shifting social patterns, and unexplained financial issues. Officers also discussed peer pressure and teen risk-taking, especially related to driving. They noted that risk increases significantly when teens are riding with other teens.

HPD addressed common substances, including vaping, alcohol, and prescription drugs. They emphasized that vaping is not a safe alternative to cigarettes, and that modern vape products can contain very high nicotine levels. They also noted that marijuana products today may contain higher THC levels than in the past. The officers shared that Hudson High School uses tools like vape detectors and camera systems to support school safety efforts.

Digital awareness was another major focus. HPD encouraged families to talk early and often about internet safety, to set clear expectations on usage and consequences, and to help students understand that their digital footprint can have lasting impact. Officers reviewed platforms that commonly surface in investigations or concerns, including YouTube, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, and Google Docs.

Officers also discussed sextortion and explained how these scams can begin with friendly messages, then move to private one-on-one communication, and escalate into threats or demands for money or more content. They advised families to respond calmly and to take specific steps if a student is being targeted. Students should tell a trusted adult right away, stop communication with the perpetrator, and preserve evidence by saving screenshots, usernames, and messages.

HPD addressed emerging concerns related to Generative AI, including tools that can manipulate images into explicit content. They also shared a helpful resource through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children called **Take It Down**. This free service allows families to create a digital fingerprint of an explicit image or video involving a minor, which can help participating platforms detect and remove that content if it is posted or re-shared.

If you missed the presentation or would like to revisit the information, you can visit our website for a replay of the program.

A PEEK INTO LIFE AT HHS: CHARTING YOUR COURSE

Hudson City Schools recently launched **Charting Your Course**, a new program that welcomed 8th grade students for a tour of Hudson High School and a student panel Q&A about what life is really like at HHS. Hudson Community First was proud to support the day by providing raffle prizes and little notebooks so students could jot down what they learned as they explored what's ahead.

NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN FOR THE MICHAEL-WALY AWARD

Hudson seniors: don't miss the Michael-Waly Community First Award – a scholarship-style recognition that honors a graduating senior who has made a significant, positive impact in another person's life. If you know a senior who has stepped up for someone when it mattered, this is the time to recognize them. Nominations are due March 20, 2026, and can be submitted by a teacher, peer, or parent with a short essay sharing the story and impact. Learn more and complete the nomination form [HERE](#)



STUDENTS AND PARENTS ARE INVITED

CareerPANEL

THURSDAY, MARCH 5 • 7:00 P.M.
HUDSON HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER

ARCHITECTURE ✓	JOHN C. WORKLEY Architect of Record, Principal Vocon
PHARMACY ✓	RONDA AMBROZIAK, PHARM.D. Clinical Pharmacist Opioid Stewardship Specialist Cleveland Clinic
LAW ✓	ELLIOT KOLKOVICH Summit County Prosecutor
MARKETING ✓	VALERIE OTT Director of Communications First Congregational Church of Hudson
ACTING ✓	JAMES MADIO Actor & Producer

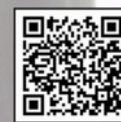


Hudson Community First is a nonprofit organization that promotes positive youth development.
Visit our website at www.hudsoncommunityfirst.com





Community OF CARE



More Info

MARCH 17, 2026

ATTENTION all HHS Seniors!



UNCHARTED WATERS



EMPOWERING 18-YEAR-OLDS FOR LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Since 2017 this presentation has supported young adults as they transition into the real world with practical knowledge, real talk, and empowering insight.

THIS YEAR'S TOPICS INCLUDE:

- ✦ Legal realities of turning 18
- ✦ Personal and campus safety essentials
- ✦ Budgeting basics for young adults
- ✦ Smart strategies for managing stress
- ✦ Essential fire safety tips

APRIL WEBINAR

Understanding Addictive Behaviors: Science, Empathy, Action

A clear, evidence based conversation to help parents navigate addictive behaviors in children and teens. Featuring a pre-taped expert dialogue from Akron Children's Hospital with:

- **Talia Brown, MA, LPCC S, LICDC CS** — Senior Behavioral Health Clinical Manager
- **Michelle Bestic, PharmD** — Clinical Pharmacologist & Toxicologist
- **Laura A. Markley, MD, FAPA, FACLP, FAAP, FASAM** — Medical Director of Addiction Services & President of the Medical Staff

This event will be available for viewing on HCTV, the HCTV app and at HUDSONCOMMUNITYFIRST.COM

Community Partners

Sponsored in Part By



Tim & Amy Clepper
 Ron & Lydia Harrington
 Jason & Stephanie Kokrak
 Jack & Becky Lieske
 Rick & Ellen Malson
 William & Cassandra Markwell
 Mike & Marietta Marquart

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Marietta Marquart, President
 Alisa Wright, Vice President
 Jim Yurak, Treasurer
 Tim Clepper, Secretary
 Lynn Krapf, member
 Jack Lieske, Emeritus Member

CO-DIRECTORS

Jennifer Fisher
jfisher90@yahoo.com
 Laura Jones
joneslau@windstream.net

VOLUNTEER BOARD

Looking to get more involved in the community? We are always happy to have more members as part of our volunteer board. Volunteer Board members assist with various events and programs throughout the year. Contact a director for more information.