

Harm Reduction: Keeping Communities Healthy



Harm Reduction Basics

- People practice harm reduction everyday to keep themselves safe. Wearing seatbelts and helmets, driving the speed limit, and exercising are everyday examples of harm reduction.
- Harm reduction is a public health approach that engages directly with people who use drugs to prevent overdoses and the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C.
- Harm reduction programs can include a range of services. Some of the most well-known services are syringe service programs (SSPs) and Naloxone distribution.

Myths

SSPs increase drug use and enable people to use drugs.

If SSPs are put in place, more people will overdose and die.

SSPs mean there will be more needle litter.

Naloxone is not safe and causes harm when given to someone.



Facts

SSPs teach ways to use drugs more safely.

Naloxone is given out for free at SSPs to prevent fatal overdoses.

SSPs allow people to safely get rid of used syringes.

Naloxone is extremely safe, effective, and saves lives.

Benefits of Harm Reduction Programs



Distribute Naloxone and sterile syringes to prevent fatal overdoses and diseases.



People receive referrals to mental health services, substance use disorder treatment, and medical care.



Offer HIV, hepatitis C, and STI testing and treatment.



Provide law enforcement with the tools they need to respond to certain calls.

Questions? Contact our Harm Reduction Response Team at: DHSDPHharmreduction@wi.gov

