

2025

CAB's Presentation

Harm Reduction: What is it and why does it matter

Partnered with Twin City Harm Reduction Collective

CAB Members: Jacob Taylor, Laila Johnson, Taylor Davis, Jeremiah Washington, Trey Mazza, Jacob Burnette, Joella Clearly, Sky Sykes, Nanu Aurora Pardo

Table of Contents



1. Healthcare Access and Quality
2. Neighborhood and Built Environment
3. Economic Stability
4. Social and Community Context



Healthcare Access and Quality

Healthcare Access and Quality

- Winston-Salem's Health Equity Report shows that people with health insurance are more likely to access quality care—yet racial and economic disparities limit coverage for many Black and minority residents.
- White residents in metro areas are more likely to be insured, leading to better health outcomes, while communities of color face systemic barriers to consistent, preventive care.
- Black neighborhoods also face limited access to affordable, healthy food, increasing chronic health risks and compounding the need for regular medical attention.
- These overlapping issues—lack of insurance, racial inequity, and poor food access—highlight the need for harm reduction strategies that address healthcare access holistically, not in isolation.

Neighborhood and Built Environment

Neighborhood and Built Environment

- **Access to Safe & Supportive Spaces**
 - Supervised consumption sites or harm reduction centers in accessible areas help reduce overdose deaths and promote safer substance use practices.
- **Availability of Healthcare & Harm Reduction Services**
 - Mobile health units in underserved areas provide outreach and harm reduction resources where traditional healthcare facilities are scarce.
- **Housing Stability & Quality**
 - Supportive housing models (e.g., Housing First) reduce harm by providing stable shelter and access to social services without requiring abstinence.

Neighborhood and Built Environment

- **Transportation & Infrastructure**
 - Reliable public transportation ensures that individuals can reach harm reduction services, medical care, and support networks.
- **Environmental Safety & Crime Prevention**
 - Community-led safety initiatives and violence prevention programs help create environments where harm reduction services can be more effective.
- **Access to Nutritious Food & Clean Water**
 - Food deserts (areas with limited access to fresh, healthy food) contribute to poor health outcomes, exacerbating vulnerabilities to substance use and chronic disease.

Economic Stability

Economic Stability

- **Definition – An individual's ability to consistently meet basic financial needs, such as housing, food, healthcare, and employment**
- **In the context of harm reduction, economic stability plays a crucial role in preventing and mitigating substance use disorders**
- **When individuals face financial hardship, they are more likely to experience:**
 - **Stress**
 - **Housing Instability**
 - **Limited Access to Healthcare**

Economic Stability

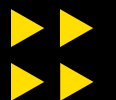
- Economic stability directly influences harm reduction by addressing the root causes of substance use and providing individuals with resources to achieve financial independence
- Those who struggle with unemployment, poverty, or lack of social support are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors associated with drug use
- Solution: Integrate harm reduction services with job training, housing assistance, and mental health support

Economic Stability

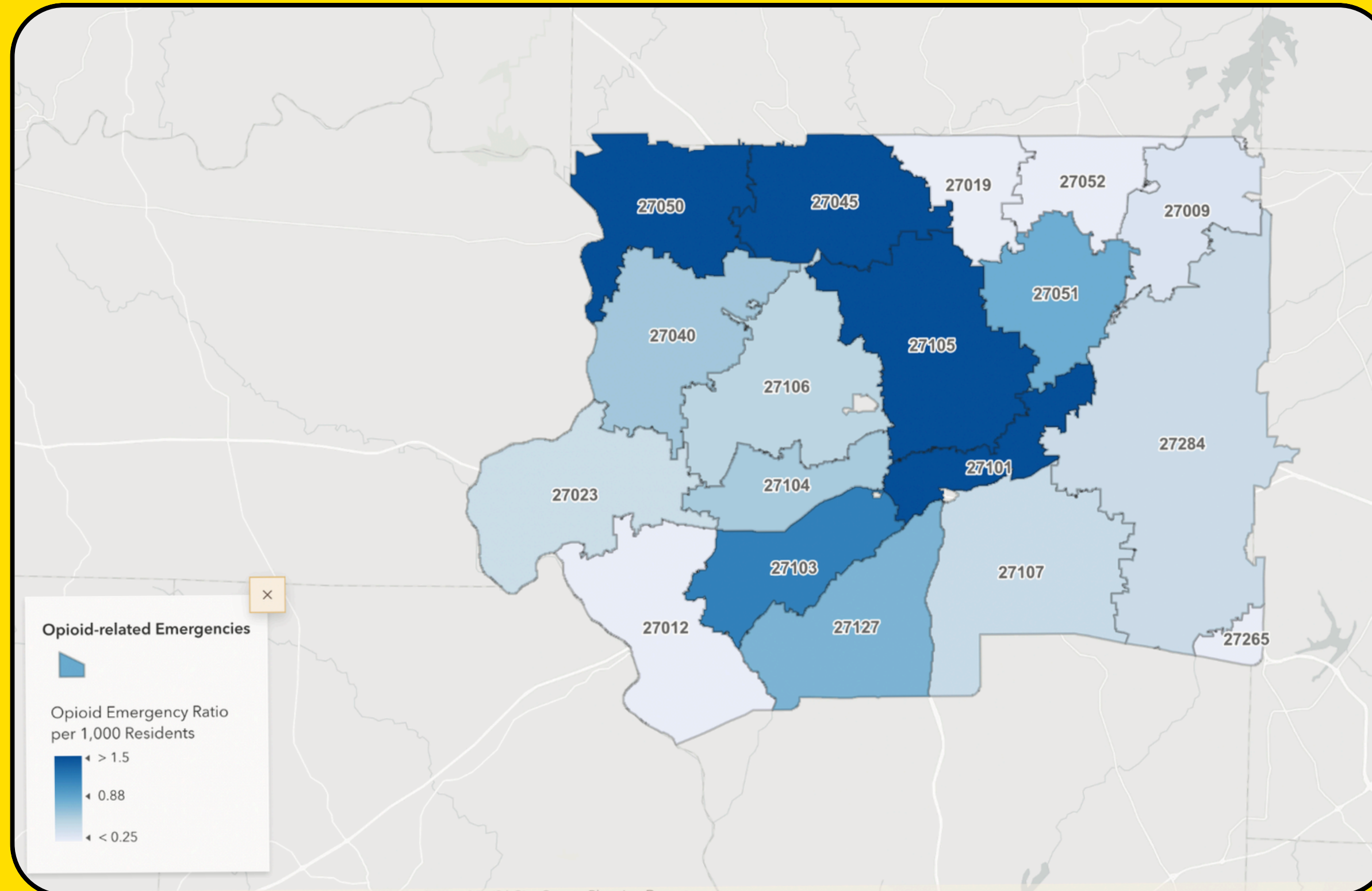
Drug Use Data in Winston-Salem

- Opioid-related overdose rates in Forsyth County have increased in recent years, with emergency department visits rising.
- High-poverty areas in Winston-Salem report higher rates of substance use and limited access to harm reduction services.
- Economic instability, such as low wages and lack of affordable housing, contributes to higher rates of addiction and relapse.
- The Twin City Harm Reduction Collective provides essential services to mitigate these issues, but more investment in economic support programs is needed.

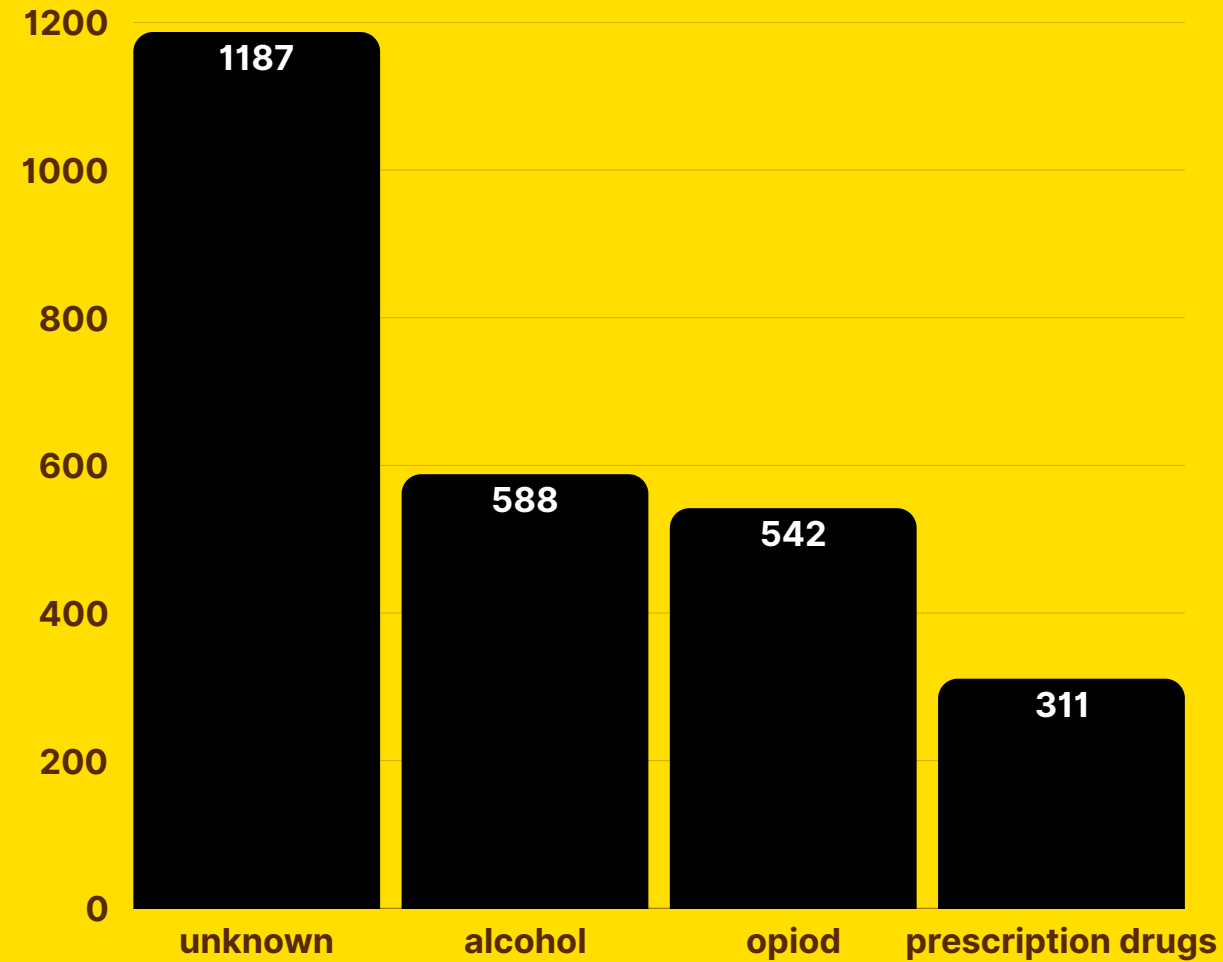
Opioid-related Emergencies by Zip Code



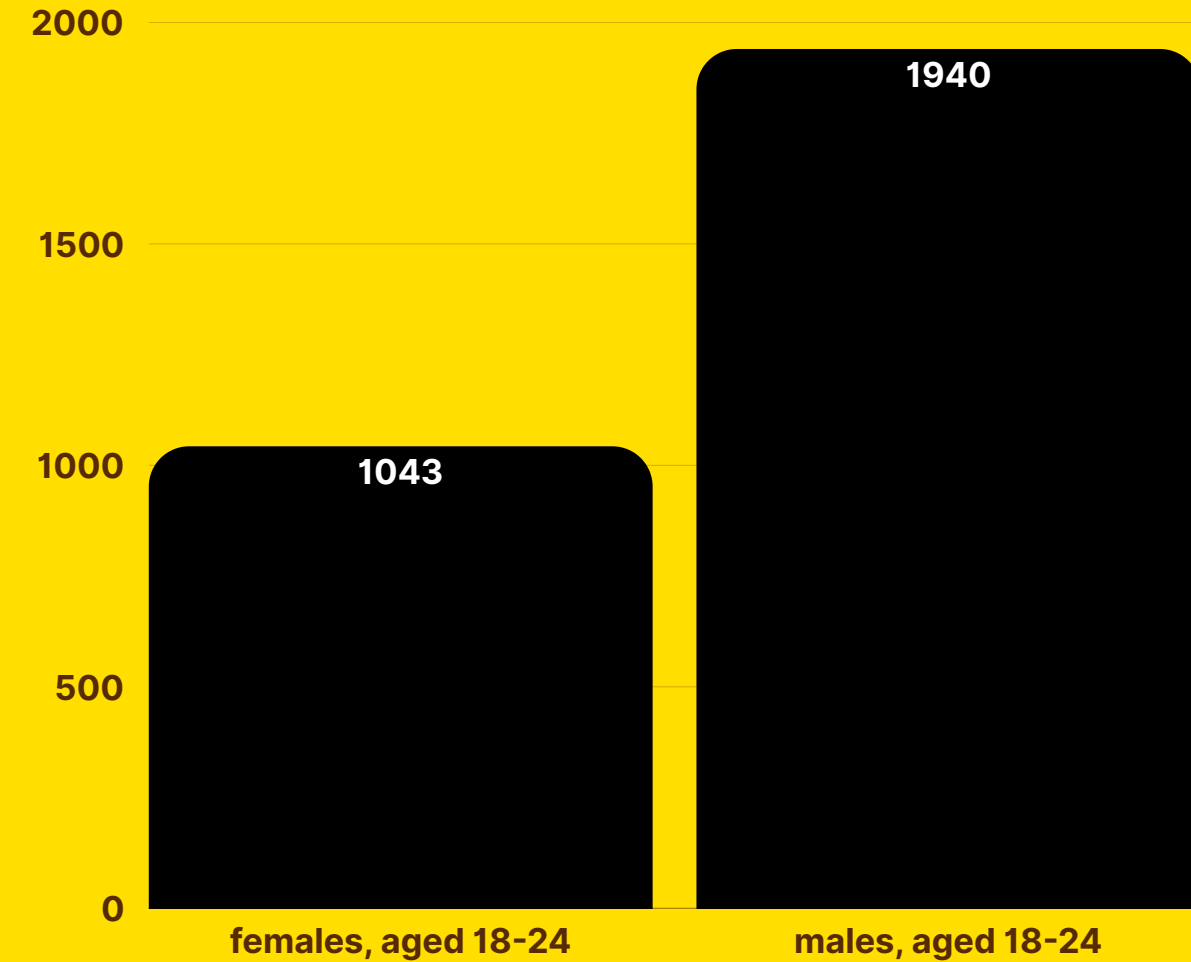
- Ratio per 1,000 Residents
- Data gathered from Unseen Patterns



Continued Data



18-24-year-olds in Forsyth County are most likely to experience overdose from “Unknown” drugs and substances



Among 18-24-year-olds in Forsyth County, males are almost twice as likely to overdose as females

(Unseen Patterns, by MapForsyth and Forsyth County Health and Human Services, 2024)

Social and Community Context

Social Community and Context

- **Definition: The environment where people spend their lives, and the relationships made within said environments (The Network for Public Health Law, n.d)**
- **According to SAMHSA, formulating ways to connect with those who use drugs can prevent overdose and positively influence sectors of well-being**
- **SAMHSA also expresses the benefits of community-based harm reduction programs, in which they “meet people where they are — on their terms, and may serve as a pathway to additional health and social services, including additional prevention, treatment, and recovery services”**

Social Community and Context

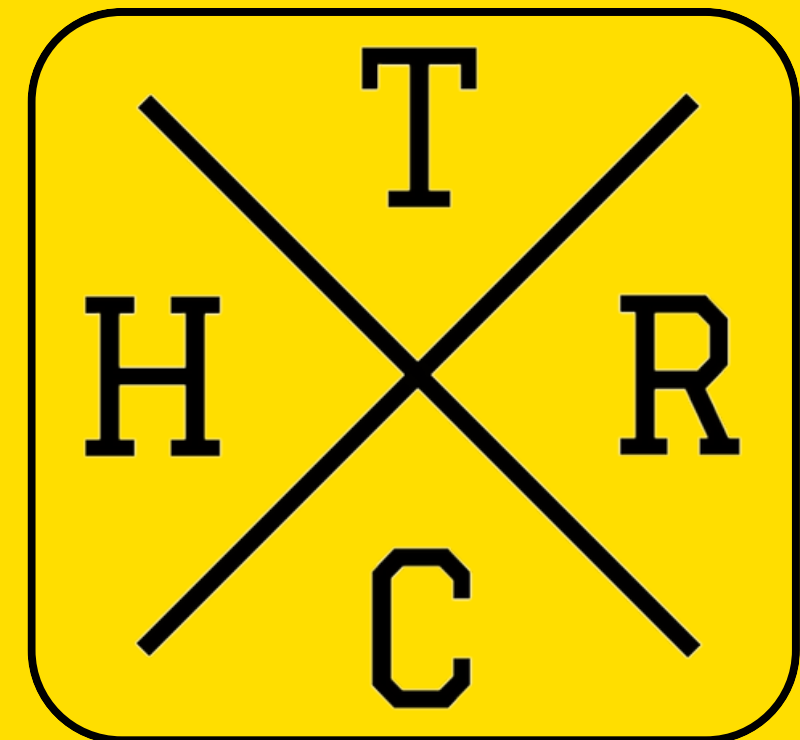
What North Carolina has done to Promote Harm Reduction Efforts

- **Syringe Exchange Programs (SSPs)**
- **Job Training & Workforce Development**
- **Community Grants & Housing Assistance**
- **The North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition (NCHRC)**
- **Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP)**
- **Forsyth Regional Opioid and Substance Use Team (FROST)**

Social Community and Context

Winston-Salem Harm Reduction Organizations and their Outreach

- Twin City Harm Reduction Collective
- Coalition of Drug Abuse Prevention
- GreenTree
- Forsyth Regional Opioid Substance Use Team (FROST)
- Wake Forest University



2025

Call to Action

Call to Action

1. Healthcare Access and Quality

- Educate residents on affordable health insurance options in Winston-Salem
- Improve access to preventive care in underserved communities

2. Neighborhood and Built Environment

- Install more Narcan and prescription drop boxes in parks and public areas
- Use local data to target vulnerable neighborhoods for outreach and support

Call to Action

3. Economic Stability

- Integrate harm reduction services with job training and housing assistance
- Support investment in programs that address poverty-related addiction risks

4. Social and Community Context

- Promote community-based harm reduction that meets people “where they are”
- Strengthen local partnerships with groups like NCHRC and FROST
- Collaborate with schools and universities to expand harm reduction education

Statement from the Twin City Harm Reduction Collective

As Winston Salem Forsyth County's only harm reduction program, we strive to not only connect with local individuals and organizations but to also educate them on harm reduction practices and overdose response and reversal, as we believe this is a very important part of combatting overdose deaths in our community. This is why we were so pleased to host a group of students from the College Advisory Board (CAB), who volunteered their time to make naloxone kits for our program. The students learned about harm reduction and our programs operations and community impact while packing a couple hundred life saving kits for us to distribute. We are grateful for the conversations and connections that this collaboration provided and hope to have the opportunity to host students from CAB again in the future.

