



Substance Use Resource Guide

Updated 2024

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Substance Use Language Guide

Lead with empathy when talking about substance use.

Instead of...

Addict

Clean

Habit

Abuse

Use...

Person who uses drugs.

Not using drugs or in recovery

Substance Use Disorder or Addiction

Use

Because...

They are a person first. Their identity is not just their drug use.

Clean implies that the person was “dirty” before and also furthers drug use stigma.

Habit undermines the severity of the condition and implies that it is easy to stop using drugs.

Abuse has a negative undertone that adds to the stigma around drug use.

Helpful Definitions

Substance Use Disorder: a chronic but treatable condition that affects a person's brain and behavior and leads to an inability to control the use of a legal or illegal drug

Tolerance: refers to the amount of a drug needed overtime to experience a “high.” For example, if someone is new to using drugs they will have a lower tolerance than someone who has used drugs regularly for awhile.

Withdrawal: the physical and psychological symptoms that occur after regular drug use has been abruptly reduced or stopped. Symptom severity depends on the type of drug and how frequently it has been taken.

PWID or PWUD: person who injects drugs or a person who uses drugs



Substance Use and The Brain

1.) The brain seeks reward.

Our brains are hard-wired to seek pleasure and reward. Nearly all substances directly or indirectly target the brain's reward system, flooding it with feel-good chemicals at higher levels than normal.

One of those feel-good chemicals is dopamine. Dopamine is the reinforcer when it comes to substance use. It links the feeling of pleasure and the behavior that brought it about, creating the desire to want more. It's human nature to want to repeat behavior that makes us feel good.

2.) The brain adapts.

With consistent substance use, the brain adapts. A person may feel flat or unable to enjoy things that were previously pleasurable without the drug. This is due to a change in how the brain processes dopamine. As result, people need to take larger amounts of the substance to produce the similar pleasurable effects. This is called a tolerance.



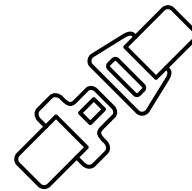
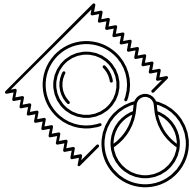
3.) The brain changes.

After prolonged substance use, the brain often needs the substance just to function. Without it, cravings take over and intense withdrawal symptoms can follow. Areas of the brain critical for judgment, decision-making, and behavior control become impacted. The body has now developed dependence.

Harm Reduction Overview and Tips

Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs.

Some examples of harm reduction that occur in our daily lives when engaging in a risky behavior:



[View the Principles of Harm Reduction](#)

Practical Tips for Reducing Drug Harm

1. Carry Naloxone to reverse an opioid overdose.
2. Avoid using drugs alone. Or use the [Never Use Alone Hotline](#) or [Brave App](#).
3. Test your drugs by using Fentanyl and/or Xylazine Test Strips.
4. Avoid mixing drugs as this can lead to negative outcomes.
5. Be mindful of tolerance changes, after periods of abstinence.
6. Test the strength of your drugs by only using a little at first.
7. Explore different modes of administration that have lower overdose risk.
8. Use sterile supplies to avoid infections and wounds.

Physical Signs of Substance Use

Type	How it Works	Physical Symptoms or Signs	Examples
Depressants	By slowing down the messages from the brain to the body; concentration, coordination, and response time are all affected.	Slurred Speech Relaxation Memory Loss Loss of Consciousness Slowed Breathing Pinpoint Pupils Sleepiness Dizziness Vomiting Low Blood Pressure Weight changes “Track Marks” - or marks from injecting drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Benzodiazepines (Valium, Xanax, or Ativan) • Barbiturates • Opioids (Morphine, Oxycodone, Heroin, Fentanyl)
Stimulants	By speeding up the messages between the brain and the body; alertness, confidence and energy levels all increase.	Elevated heart rate Increased motivation High Blood Pressure Sweating or Chills Weightloss Muscle Weakness Paranoia Involuntary Jaw Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphetamines (Adderall, Ritalin) • Caffeine • Cocaine • Ecstasy or MDMA • Methamphetamine • Nicotine
Hallucinogens	By distorting a persons sensations and perceptions; disorganized thoughts and confusion are common.	Elevated heart rate Feelings of Euphoria Feelings of Anxiety High Blood Pressure Dilated Pupils Sweating Blurred Vision Vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSD (Acid) • Psilocybin or Mushrooms • PCP • Ketamine

Behavioral Signs of Substance Use

Recognizing substance use symptoms

- Lack of energy or motivation.
- Increase in energy and motivation.
- Frequent absence from work or school.
- A drop in performance at work or school.
- Irritable mood
- Depressed mood
- Confusion or being “spaced out”
- Paranoia
- Restlessness
- Sleep disturbances
- Frequent mood swings
- Giving up hobbies or leisure activities
- Increase in risk taking behaviors
- Personal time that is unaccounted for

<https://www.ihs.gov/asap/familyfriends/warningsignsdrug/>



An important note: exhibiting these symptoms does not automatically indicate that someone is using substances. Major life changes and stress are some reasons that may cause someone to exhibit these behaviors.

According to DSM-5, a substance use disorder (SUD) involves patterns of symptoms caused by using a substance that an individual continues taking despite its negative effects. Criteria for substance use disorder fall under four basic categories – impaired control, physical dependence, social problems and risky use:

- Using more of a substance than intended or using it for longer than you’re meant to.
- Trying to cut down or stop using the substance but being unable to.
- Experiencing intense cravings or urges to use the substance.
- Needing more of the substance to get the desired effect – also called tolerance.
- Developing withdrawal symptoms when not using the substance.
- Spending more time getting and using drugs and recovering from substance use.
- Neglecting responsibilities at home, work or school because of substance use.
- Continuing to use even when it causes relationship problems.
- Giving up important or desirable social and recreational activities due to substance use.
- Using substances in risky settings that put you in danger.
- Continuing to use despite the substance causing problems to your physical and mental health.

Syringe Access

Vivent Health

- Lifepoint Program



414-225-1608



1311 N Sixth St. Milwaukee, WI 53212

Sixteenth Street

- Safe Needle Exchange



414-897-5645



1243 S. Cesar E. Chavez Dr. Milwaukee, WI 53204

UMOS

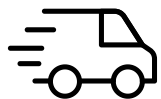
- Health Promotions



414-389-6504



2701 S Chase Ave. (Suite E) Milwaukee, WI 53207.



Mobile Services

Vivent Lifepoint Program



414-581-6169

UMOS Health Promotion



414-416-2655



Medication Disposal Sites & Events

Police Department Disposal

A permanent drop box is available at the Wauwatosa Police Department for all expired and unused prescription and over the counter medications. You must be a Wauwatosa resident and valid identification is required.

Collection Hours:

Monday - Friday: 7 am - 11 pm

Instructions: Pills will need to be emptied from their original container into a Ziploc/resealable type bag. Liquid medications must be in the original container and sealed.

Events

Each year, we host a bi-annual medication disposal event at City Hall in April & September. This event is called the Tosa Green Summit. For details on any upcoming medication collection events, call (414) 479-8936, or check our [events calendar](#).



Other Medication Disposal Sites in Milwaukee County:

- Hayat Pharmacy, 5928 W. Vliet St.
- Hayat Pharmacy, 1919 W. North Ave.
- Walgreen's, 3701 S. Howell Ave.
- Walgreen's, 3522 W. Wisconsin Ave.
- Walgreen's, 7600 W. Capitol Dr.
- Walgreen's, 6442 N. 76th St.
- Walgreen's, 4296 S. 76th St.

Milwaukee Municipal Court

- 951 N. James Lovell St.
- Any Police Department



Sites with Free Take-Back Mail in Envelopes:

- CVS Pharmacies:
 - 7550 W. Perkins Place
 - 3860 S. 27th St.
 - 1316 W. Forest Home Ave.
 - 1650 N. Farwell Ave.
 - 6330 N. 76th St.
 - 2607 N. Downer Ave.
 - 5929 W. Lisbon Ave.
 - 3030 W. Villard Ave.
 - 2607 N. Downer Ave.
 - 5929 W. Lisbon Ave.
 - 3030 W. Villard Ave.
 - 5740 S. Packard Ave
- Target, 2950 S. Chase Ave.

Sharps Disposal

Help keep the Wauwatosa community safe and healthy!

What is a "sharp"?

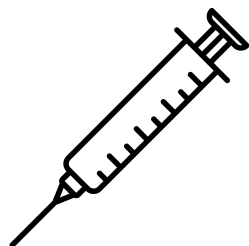
Needles, lancets, syringes, epi pens, insulin pens, and other injection devices are all types of sharps.

Why do I need to get rid of my sharps safely?

If sharps are not properly disposed of, they can cause accidental needle sticks to family members, children, healthcare workers, or sanitation workers. This increases the risk of transmission of HIV, Hepatitis C, or other bloodborne diseases from person to person.

How do I properly dispose of my sharps?

You can either use a commercial grade sharps container (available for sale at the Wauwatosa Health Department) or a laundry detergent container with a twist on cap. You can then drop off your sharps container at any of the locations listed to the right! Do not throw your sharps in the trash or flush them down the toilet – make sure they get to a safe place to be disposed of properly.



Sharps Disposal Sites in Wauwatosa:

- Wauwatosa Health Department
7725 W North Ave.
Telephone: (414)-479-8936
- Aurora Psychiatric Hospital
Pharmacy 1220 Dewey Ave.
Telephone: (414) 454-6796
- Assisted Living Pharmacy Service
1441 N. Mayfair Road #202
Telephone: (414) 433-1700
- Aurora Pharmacy - Mayfair Clinic
10400 W. North Ave.
Telephone: (414) 479-2500
- Pick-N-Save Pharmacy
1717 N. Mayfair Road
Telephone: (414) 778-1884
- Pick-N-Save Pharmacy
6950 W. State St.
Telephone: (414) 475-1932
- Scheele Pharmacy
957 Glenview Ave.
Telephone: (414) 774-7700
- Swan Serv-U Pharmacy
9130 W. North Avenue
Telephone: (414) 258-9550

NARCAN® Training & Access

What is NARCAN®?

Carrying NARCAN® (Naloxone) can save lives. NARCAN® is the nasal spray version of naloxone, the drug that blocks the harmful effects of opioids on the brain. If opioids are not involved with the overdose, it will not cause any harm.

Where can you get NARCAN®?

NARCAN® is widely available in Wisconsin.

It can be purchased over-the-counter at many stores with pharmacies, including CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Metro Market, and Pick 'n Save.

It can be purchased without a prescription through pharmacists at many pharmacies.

And it is available at no cost to people who attend a free training session offered by the dozens of agencies participating in the NARCAN® Direct Program.

It is also available at no cost through harm reduction vending machines placed in many public locations throughout the county.

[Find one near you!](#)

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/opioids/safer-use.htm#Narcan>

NARCAN® at the Wauwatosa Health Department

The Wauwatosa Health Department participates in the NARCAN® Direct Program and is able to provide the community with NARCAN® at any time.

If you or someone you know could benefit from being trained on how to administer NARCAN®, you can stop in anytime or attend one of our more in depth training sessions on overdose response that are held bi-monthly. For more information, please visit our

[community events calendar.](#)



<https://narcan.com>

Opioid Overdose Response Overview



Signs of an Opioid Overdose



Unresponsiveness or unconsciousness



Slowed or stopped breathing



Snoring or rattling sounds



Cold or clammy skin



Discolored lips or fingernails

How to Administer Nasal Naloxone



Call 911 and follow the operator's instructions. Give rescue breaths, if needed. Continue breaths every 5-6 seconds.



Place tip of naloxone nozzle in either nostril until your fingerstouch the nose.



Press the plunger firmly to release the dose of naloxone.



If there is no response after 2-3 minutes, give a second dose. Stay with the person until help arrives.

Youth Substance Use

Risk Factors for Teen Substance Use

- A family history of substance use
- An existing mental health condition
- Low self esteem or feelings of social rejection
- Peer substance use
- Lack of supervision
- Favorable parental attitudes towards the behavior
- Family rejection of sexual orientation or gender identity
- Lack of school connectedness
- Low academic achievement
- A history of trauma
- Poverty

Protective Factors for Teen Substance Use

- Parent or family engagement
- Family support
- Parental disapproval of substance use
- Parental monitoring
- School connectedness



Talking With Your Teen About Substance Use

Ask open-ended questions

Examples of what to say:

- **“You haven’t been hanging out with us lately. What have you been up to?”**
- **“I heard your hours got cut at work. What’s been going on?”**
- **“How are you coping with getting cut from the team?”**

Listen with empathy

Examples of what to say:

- **“It’s a lot to deal with right now. It’s okay to feel overwhelmed.”**
- **“You can always talk to me.”**
- **“I imagine that this change is hard.”**
- **“Sounds like you are dealing with a lot of things right now and this is your way of feeling better.”**

Problem-solve with them

Examples of what to say:

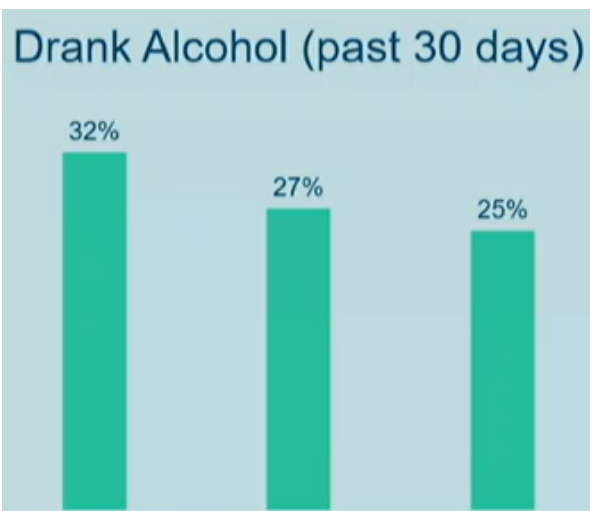
- **“What do you usually do when you feel stressed?”**
- **“What do you think you could do to get back on track?”**
- **“Is there someone else that you feel comfortable asking for their support to find help?”**
- **“What can I do to support you?”**

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/real-talks/start-talking.htm>

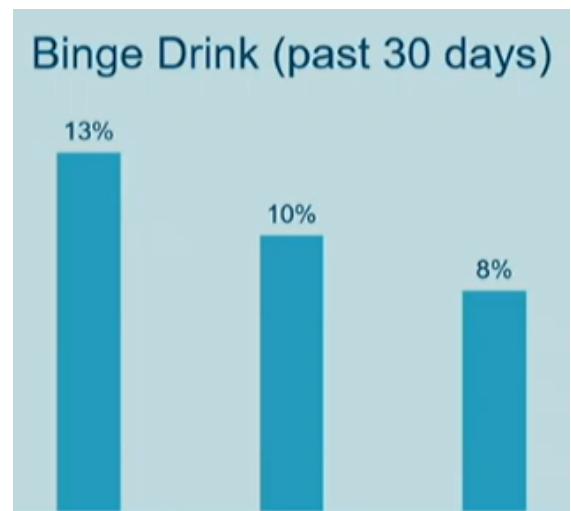
[Click for Conversation Starters for alcohol use as young as age 8.](#)

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System

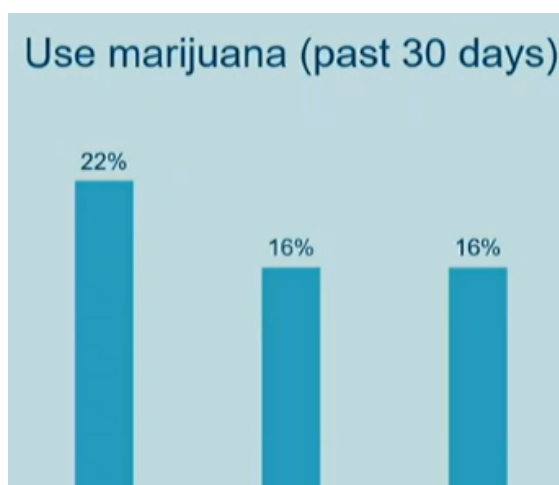
The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) is a set of surveys that track behaviors that can lead to poor health in students grades 9 through 12. The below data reflects Wauwatosa East and Wauwatosa West High Schools.



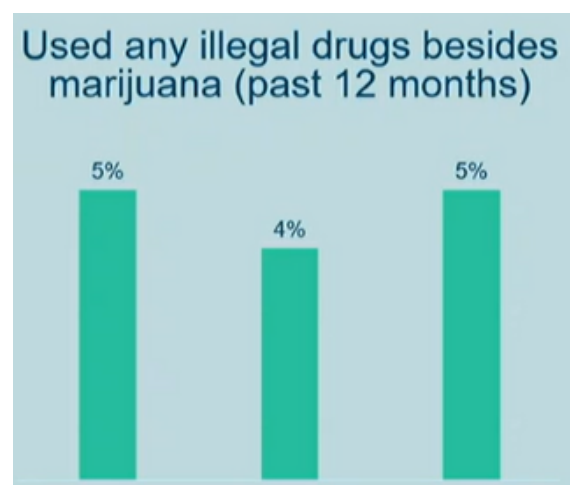
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Local Treatment Resources

Substance use treatment programs offer a range of activities to help people living with a substance use disorder. Programs include:

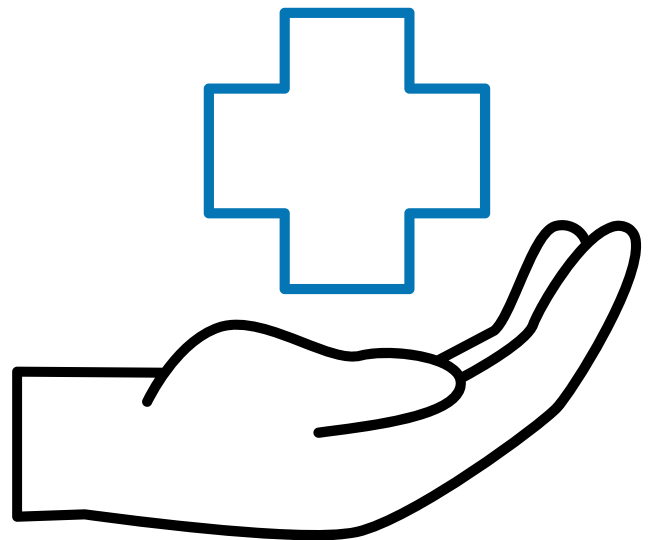
- Intervention and prevention efforts
- Withdrawal management centers
- Day treatment
- Inpatient (checking into a hospital) and outpatient facilities
- Residential programs

[Access the state community substance use service directory.](#)

[Take the State Treatment Quiz to find options that fit your needs!](#)

Wauwatosa Area Resources

- **Aurora Psychiatric Hospital**
Offers detox, inpatient, and outpatient treatment options.
- **West Grove Clinic**
Offers intensive outpatient programs, as well as medication assisted treatment (MAT) or medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD).
- **American Behavioral Clinic**
Offers outpatient programs for young adults through seniors, as well as MOUD.





Good Samaritan Laws

Good Samaritan laws are meant to encourage people to:

- Call 911 for help when someone overdoses.
- Administer naloxone as soon as possible.

Current Wisconsin Law provides the following protections for the aider (the 911 caller)

A person who helps someone who is overdosing is immune from criminal prosecution for:

- Possession of a controlled substance.
- Possession of drug use paraphernalia.

Current Wisconsin Law does not provide the following protections for the aider (the 911 caller)

- Immunity from criminal prosecution if on parole, probation or extended supervision

Current Wisconsin Law does not provide the following protections for the overdose survivor.

- Immunity from criminal prosecution if on parole, probation or extended supervision.
- Immunity from prosecution for possession of controlled substances
- Immunity from prosecution for possession of drug use paraphernalia.

Legal Action of Wisconsin



People who use(d) drugs may require legal help to find and maintain safe and affordable housing, remove barriers to employment, receive public benefits, or resolve consumer debt issues.



414.639.7976



legalaction.org



legalhelpwi@legalaction.org

