

# HARM REDUCTION: SYRINGE SERVICE PROGRAMS REPLACE COERCION WITH COMPASSION.

**DHD10.ORG**



## HARM REDUCTION DOES NOT “ENABLE” DRUG USE. INSTEAD, IT REPLACES COERCION WITH COMPASSION.

According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), harm reduction helps people who use drugs avoid negative effects, like infection or overdose. But, it’s also more than that: “Many understand harm reduction as a way to meet people where they are with kindness and respect.”

## SYRINGE SERVICES PROGRAMS (SSPs)

These programs give people who inject drugs a place to safely discard used syringes and acquire new ones. They also have a high success rate in terms of treatment and recovery: “the majority of SSPs offer referrals to medication assisted treatment.”

Research shows that involuntary addiction treatment is not effective and can increase the risk of overdose. Harm reduction is so valuable because it empowers people with substance use disorders to make their own decisions about their lives and health, which in turn increases rates of treatment initiation and long-term success in recovery.

**SSPs are associated with:**



**50% reduction in HIV.**



**50% reduction in  
Hepatitis C Infections.**

**5x**

**Utilizers are 5 times more likely to  
enter drug treatment.**

**3x**

**Utilizers are 3 times more likely to  
stop using drugs.**

## CORE TENANTS

Embraced by many organizations working in this space.

### 1 Any Positive Change

You decide exactly what needs to change in your life and when it happens. Harm reduction honors the choice to abstinence, but it doesn’t see it as the only option for people to improve their lives.

### 2 Meet People Where They Are

Harm reduction doesn’t put conditions on who deserves health and safety. Instead, it seeks to provide judgment-free support for people at all points of the substance use spectrum.

### 3 “Nothing About Us Without Us”

Emphasize the importance of people who use drugs being meaningfully engaged and empowered to intervene in policy decisions affecting their lives.

### 4 Drug Use is Here to Stay

Efforts should be directed toward minimizing harm instead of the near impossible task of eradicating drug use.

### 5 It’s Complex

Simply consuming a drug, even daily, does not mean you’re addicted to it. Many factors help define what drugs mean for you in your life.

