

WHAT IS HARM REDUCTION?



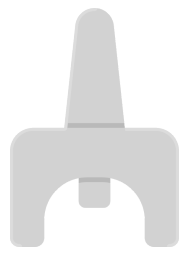
Definition

Harm Reduction is an approach aimed at reducing the negative consequences associated with substance use for an **individual, community and society** as a whole. It includes a variety of strategies that includes **safer use, managed use, abstinence**, and “meeting people where they are at”.

What does Harm Reduction look like?



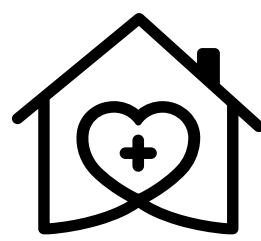
Needle Exchange and Drug-Use Equipment Distribution



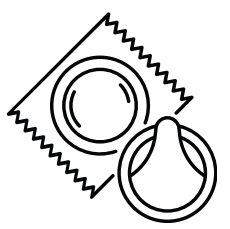
Naloxone



Bio-Hazard Bins for Needle Disposal



Supervised Consumption Sites



Safer Sex Supplies

Harm Reduction Examples in Everyday Life



Sunscreen



Seatbelts



Helmets

49,000

Overdoses & Drug-Related Emergencies at Canadian Supervised Consumption Sites (2017 - 2023)

0

Deaths at Canadian Supervised Consumption Sites (2017 - 2023)

What are the Benefits of Harm Reduction?

- **Increased access** to health, social services and support programs
- **Reduced** HIV and Hepatitis C transmission
- **Prevents deaths and harms** related to substance use
- **Increases knowledge** around safer substance use practices
- Individuals are treated with **dignity and respect**

Why not just Abstinence?

For many people, substance use is not necessarily harmful. For others, it may be more challenging and debilitating. Research indicates that forcing individuals who aren't ready to quit using substances to seek treatment is **not effective**, and different people need different supports and strategies.

Harm Reduction encompasses various strategies **including abstinence**, but provides choices and strategies that are suited to each individual.

Resources and Further Learning:

Homeless Hub

www.homelesshub.ca

National Harm Reduction Coalition

www.harmreduction.org

Peterborough Drug Strategy

www.peterboroughdrugstrategy.com

Ontario Harm Reduction Network

www.ohrn.org

CATIE

www.catie.ca