



Foundational Principles of Hendricks County Harm Reduction and Recovery at Family Promise:

1. Does not attempt to minimize or ignore the real and tragic harm and danger that can be associated with illicit drug use.
2. Recognizes that the realities of poverty, class, racism, social isolation, past trauma, sex-based discrimination, and other types of inequalities affect both people's vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with drug-related harm.
3. The Harm Reduction approach is an alternative to abstinence-based treatments.
4. Harm reduction programs do not exacerbate drug use and undermine treatment efforts and should thereby occupy a well-deserved space within the continuum of programs and services offered to people who use drugs.
5. Accepts, for better or worse, that licit and illicit drug use is part of our world and chooses to work to minimize its harmful effects rather than simply ignore or condemn them.
6. Understands drug use as a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that encompasses a continuum of behaviors from severe use to total abstinence and acknowledges that some ways of using drugs are clearly safer than others.
7. Establishes quality of individual and community life and well-being – not necessarily cessation of all drug use – as the criteria for successful interventions and policies.
8. Calls for the non-judgmental, non-coercive provision of services and resources to people who use drugs and the communities in which they live to assist them in reducing attendant harm.
9. Ensures that people who use drugs and those with a history of drug use routinely have a real voice in the creation of programs and policies designed to serve them.
10. We are committed to respecting the rights and autonomy of people who use drugs. This means respecting their decisions, as well as their behavioral goals. So instead of focusing solely on preventing substance use, harm reduction approaches support any positive change in behavior, as defined by the individual.
11. Affirms that People Who Use Drugs (PWUD) themselves are the primary agents of reducing the harms of their drug use and seeks to empower PWUD to share information and support each other in strategies which meet their actual conditions of use.
12. The failed War on Drugs is in actuality a war against substance users, leading to the criminalization of substance users, increased drug use within communities, and families torn apart.