



2021

INJURY-FREE NC ACADEMY

HARM REDUCTION AS TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICE



WHAT IS THE

INJURY-FREE NC ACADEMY?

The Injury-Free NC Academy is a training and program development resource for injury and violence prevention practitioners in North Carolina. Each cycle of the IFNC Academy focuses on a timely topic affecting North Carolinians.

The IFNC Academy on Harm Reduction as Transformative Practice will focus on moving from theory to practice and implementing a variety of harm reduction programs to serve people who use drugs.

Over the course of the seven month training, participants will work together to learn how to operationalize harm reduction practices in their communities. Sessions will be held, at most, twice per month between January and July 2021.

This structure is intended to foster regional collaboration, with harm reduction experts providing insight on best practices and lessons learned from the field.

What is harm reduction?

Harm Reduction is a framework for reducing the negative consequences of drug use and promoting the health and dignity of people who use drugs that meets people where they are rather than making judgments about where they should be in terms of their personal health and lifestyle.

A harm reduction approach means understanding that people using drugs, even if they are not seeking treatment, should be given the care, resources, and information necessary to reduce health risks associated with drug use, and improve their general health and well-being. Harm reduction based programs provide helpful information and tools to people and empower them to use risk-reducing strategies.

Harm reduction programs do not have abstinence requirements for participants or use abstinence as a measure of success in ones' recovery. Rather, programs operating with a harm reduction framework consider a person's happiness, stability, and overall well-being as metrics to gauge successful recovery.

Harm reductionists also recognize that issues like untreated mental health conditions, homelessness/insecure housing, involvement with the criminal justice system, inadequate employment, and other social determinants of health can exacerbate harms, including drug use, and that chaotic drug use cannot be effectively and sustainably addressed without also addressing other areas of health, wellness, and justice.

ACADEMY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

HISTORY & PHILOSOPHY

Present the history and philosophy of harm reduction and discuss what applying a harm reduction framework looks like in practice

CULTURAL HUMILITY

Define cultural humility and explore best practices for integrating this perspective into our work

UNDERSTANDING HARM

Demonstrate what harm looks like and how it is created by individuals, policies, systems and our programs

PREVENTING HARM

Describe how we can work to prevent harm for participants, our colleagues, and ourselves

HARM REDUCTION PROGRAMS

Recognize what harm reduction looks like in practice and describe specific examples of harm reduction programs

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Apply the framework provided in this academy and strengthen skills through case studies and role playing

CENTERING LIVED EXPERIENCE

Analyze the importance of centering lived experience in our work and how to do it meaningfully

JUSTICE & EQUITY

Understand how harm reduction, social justice, and equity intersect

You are encouraged to apply if you...

ARE CURRENTLY WORKING WITH PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS

Are working on drug user health issues, including but not limited to: overdose prevention and response; infectious disease prevention and treatment, (e.g. HIV, hepatitis B and C, STIs); resources for people who have been incarcerated; and/or healthcare access for underserved populations, including mental healthcare

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HARM REDUCTION

Are planning or have taken steps to establish an overdose prevention or harm reduction program or coalition in your community and want to learn more about harm reduction principles

***CAN COMMIT TO ATTENDING SEVEN DIFFERENT MEETINGS**

Can attend the training sessions and the cohort gatherings throughout the course of January – July 2021 (see full schedule on page 5)

ARE A CURRENT OR FORMER GRANTEE OF DHHS

Are currently funded through one of the many NC Department of Health and Human Services initiatives for overdose prevention and response, including but not limited to: Community Linkages to Care, Healthy Communities, Mental Health Trust Fund, and Bureau of Justice Assistance

AND/OR

HAVE LIVED EXPERIENCE

Are a person with lived experience of drug use, homelessness, incarceration, and/or sex work and are interested in learning about harm reduction and working with people who use drugs (PWUD)

**We understand that schedules change, and things can arise unexpectedly. If this happens, we will work with applicants on an individual basis to ensure that knowledge is not lost.*

RECOMMENDED APPLICANTS

- People with lived experience interested in providing/supporting SSP services
- Organizations with experience serving PWUD or other underserved populations (including AIDS service organizations)
- Healthcare providers, including primary care, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and pharmacists
- Community organizers/mobilizers
- Social service providers, including housing and employment support, reentry services, family support services, and recovery support
- First responders with experience or interest in working with PWUD, including emergency medical services, fire departments, and law enforcement agencies
- Faith communities with experience or interest in working with PWUD

WHEN IS THE ACADEMY?

Training Sessions

1 FEBRUARY 10
FEBRUARY 17

2 APRIL 14
APRIL 21

3 JUNE 16
JUNE 24

All training sessions will take place
10 am-3 pm EST with an hour lunch break

Cohort Gatherings

1 JANUARY 13

2 MARCH 10

3 MAY 12

4 JULY 14

All cohort gatherings
will take place 1-3 pm EST

APPLY VIA ONLINE FORM [HERE](#)

APPLICATIONS DUE: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Apply soon—space is limited!

Approximately 40 individuals will be invited to participate in the Academy following the application review. We will contact you by December 7 to let you know the status of your application.

Need more information?

Email Leah Taraskiewicz at leahkt@unc.edu