

SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION

In Tennessee

When we support individuals at risk of misusing substances like alcohol, tobacco, and drugs with trauma-informed resources and community support, we can prevent or lessen negative consequences to their social well-being, economic achievement, and lifelong health.

Risk factors for substance use include:

- Biology
- ACEs
- Chronic Stress
- Poverty
- Unstable Housing
- Legal System Involvement

"The relationship between trauma and SUDs is believed to be bidirectional" ¹

If a person experiences ACEs or other trauma, they may cope by using substances



Substance use may put people in dangerous situations that cause trauma

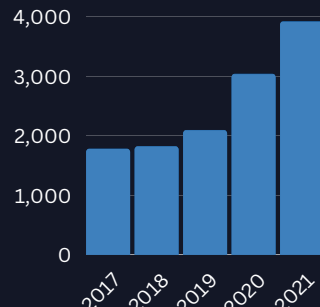
Substance use increases the risk of:

- Bloodborne infectious diseases
- Certain cancers & heart disease
- Fatal overdose
- Incarceration
- Accidents & injuries
- Job loss or lowered productivity

Groups Most Impacted



Veterans
Racial & Ethnic Minorities
Older Adults
Rural Residents



3,814
Tennesseans died of a drug overdose in 2021, up **26%** from 2020

Fatal overdoses have consistently increased since 2017²

Substance-related offenses accounted for **18% of all incarcerated individuals** across TN's prison system in FY 2019-2020 ³



Electronic vapor use in TN high schoolers jumped from **3.3%** in 2017 to **10.7%** in 2019 ⁴



POLICIES & PROGRAMS

- **Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine, 1-800-QUIT-NOW** is a toll-free service that provides support for people seeking to quit smoking or chewing tobacco
- **Tennessee REDLINE, 1-800-889-9789** is the main resource for substance use disorder treatment referrals in the state
- **Tennessee Recovery Navigators** are peers with lived experience who provide support to people in recovery

BARRIERS TO CHANGE

Stigma against people who use drugs

Incarceration reliance over treatment-first model

Rural areas lack accessible treatment options

PLANNING FOR COLLABORATIVE ACTION

- **Partner with your local Substance Use Prevention Coalition**
- **Destigmatize Substance Use Disorders** by using non-stigmatizing language
- **Promote the voices of people with lived experience**
- **Advocate for local tobacco prevention policy** in schools and businesses
- **Encourage Harm Reduction Strategies** like fentanyl test strip distribution, syringe services programs, Take-Back events, Medication-Assisted Treatment, and naloxone training
- **Focus on prevention by promoting Positive Childhood Experiences**



Read More Here

¹ Marya T. Schulte & Yih-Ing Hser

² Tennessee Department of Health

³ Substance Misuse and Addiction Resource for Tennessee (SMART) Initiative at UT Institute for Public Service

⁴ Youth Risk Behavioral Survey.