

*Exploring Challenges,
Opportunities, and Best
Practices for Opioid
Communication in
Appalachia*

March 29, 2019

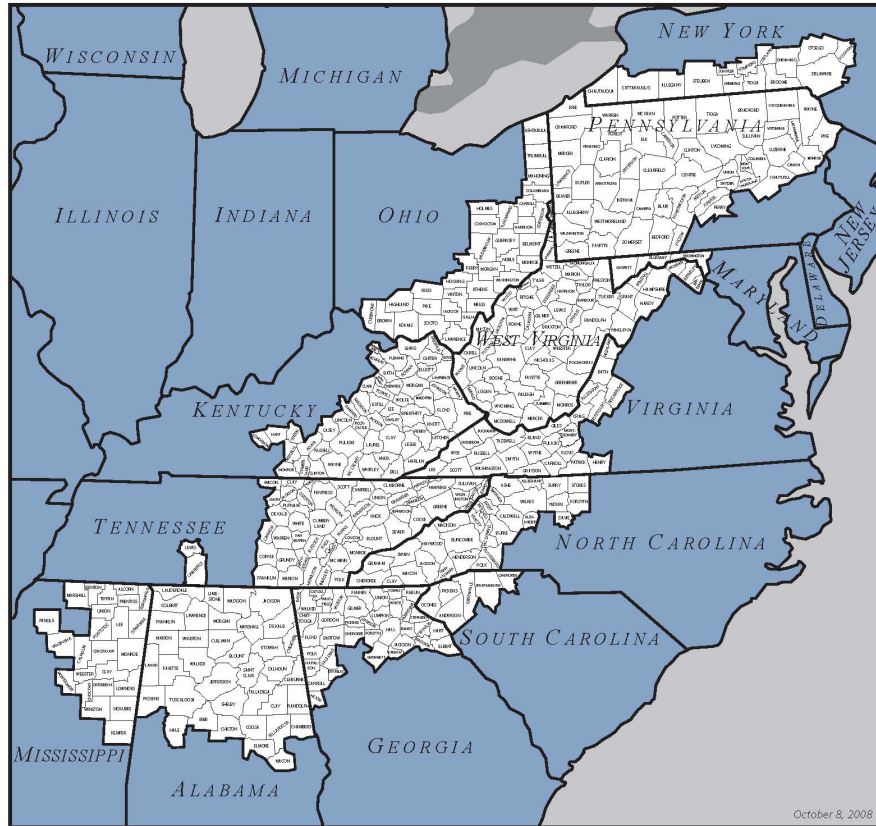


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About Appalachia



APPALACHIAN REGION



- 205,000 – square miles
- Encompasses all of West Virginia and part of 12 other states







Exploring opioid communication

- 2015 – Began conducting social media training for 5 community-based organizations in Appalachia



- Operation UNITE – London KY
- S.T.A.N.D. – Oneida, TN
- Roane County Anti-Drug Coalition – Kingston, TN
- ACTION Coalition – Mountain City, TN
- Community Connections, Inc – Princeton, WV





City of East Liverpool, Ohio
Like This Page · September 8, 2016 · 🌐

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share 📷

👤 3.8K ⌵ Chronological

2,347 shares 1.7K Comments

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Biskraa Biskra Sa fait mal de voir ça surtout pour l'enfant je pense qu'il doit pas voire cette photo que dieu lui vient en aide
See Translation
Like · Reply · June 28 at 9:14am

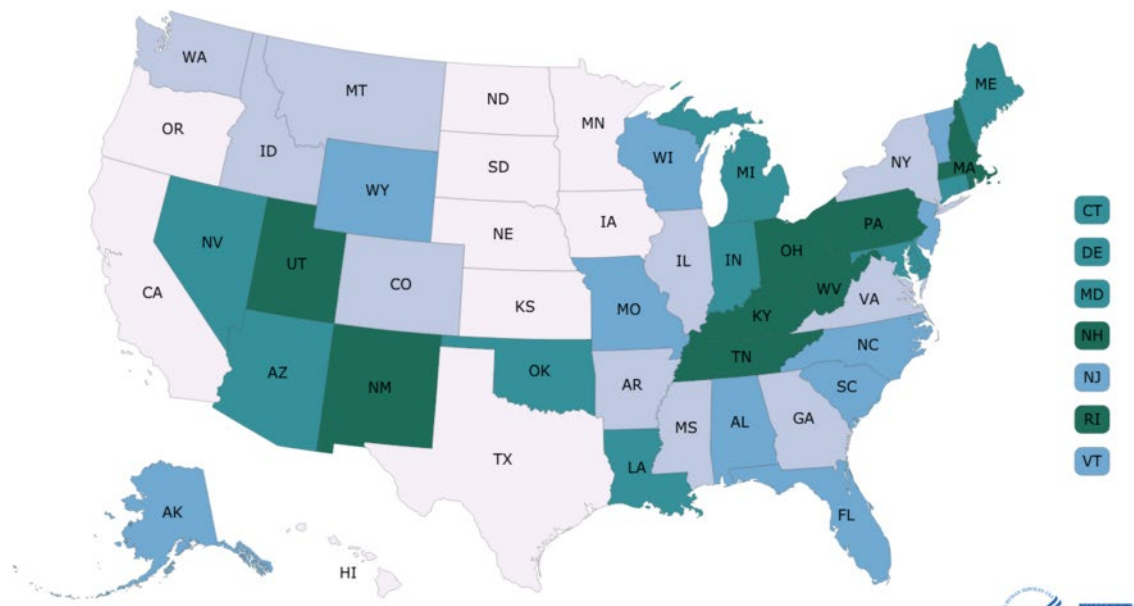
Heather Ellsworth Why is there an arm reaching in, apparently pushing the woman's head?
Like · Reply · 1 · August 2 at 4:58pm

City of East Liverpool, Ohio Checking for a pulse.
Like · Reply · August 2 at 4:58pm


👇 View more replies

Write a comment... 🗨️ 📷

Drug Overdose Mortality by State: 2015



DRUG OVERDOSES KILL MORE THAN CARS, GUNS, AND FALLING.


-  **Falling** 26,852 deaths
-  **Guns** 31,672 deaths
-  **Traffic accidents** 33,687 deaths
-  **Drug overdoses** 38,329 deaths*

*30,006 of which were unintentional.
Source: CDC Wide-ranging OnLine Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER) on Mortality: <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mortsql.html> (2010)


Mathematics of Pain Relief

Healthcare providers wrote **>259 MILLION** prescriptions for **OPIOID PAINKILLERS** in 2012.

Rx _____



Overdose vs. Auto fatalities



Drug overdose – mostly from painkillers – now kill more people than car crashes.

Over the counter or prescription: What's most effective?

The most effective pain relief combination:
200mg of ibuprofen + 500mg of acetaminophen

Opioid painkillers may not always be the best way to treat acute pain.

ASAP of Anderson
Like This Page · January 25 · 🌐

FAST FACT: The most effective pain relief combination is 200mg of ibuprofen + 500mg of acetaminophen, according to recent research. #Opioid painkillers may not always be the best way to treat acute pain. #preventionworks

👍 12 💬 2 Comments ➦ 15 Shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share 📷

Most Relevant

Holly Bolling Farler Us old school nurses already knew this! Sometimes old ways still work better!
Like · Reply · 5w 🗨️ 3

April Davis Beddow Thank you!! Great share!
Like · Reply · 5w · Edited 🗨️ 1

Write a comment... 🗨️ 📷





Exploring opioid communication

- 2015-2016 – Identified a need for guidance on messaging
- 2016 – Literature review revealed no best practices for communicating about opioids in Appalachia
- 2017 – Began formative research to fill gap
 - Explore how the opioid crisis is uniquely affecting different communities within Appalachia
 - Identify effective communication strategies for CBOs to use to support opioid abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery





Methods

- 24 Virtual IDIs with experts from 12 Appalachian states
- 12 in-person focus groups with community members
 - London, Kentucky
 - Kingston, Tennessee
 - Oneida, Tennessee
 - Princeton, West Virginia





Focus Groups

- Audience segments
 - Ages 25-39
 - Ages 40-54
 - Ages 25-54 in recovery from opioid addiction
- 47 participants
 - Approximately 66% women, 34% men
 - Range of education and income levels



Key Findings

- Tremendous parity in findings between interviews and focus groups.
- Public health impact was the most commonly reported concern
 - Number of overdoses and fatalities
 - Neonatal abstinence syndrome
 - Outbreaks of HIV and Hepatitis C
 - Dental issues
 - Mental health issues
 - Malnourishment
 - Automobile accidents
 - Suicide





Key Findings

- Other concerns:
 - Crime
 - Local economy impacts
 - Impact to families
- Community awareness of the dangers of prescription opioids was mixed

"Everyone knows
someone
who has been affected
[by opioid addiction]."





Key Findings

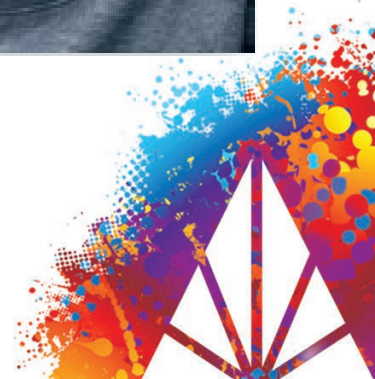
- Attitudes towards those with addiction and those who overdose
 - Awareness of the issue is growing
 - Topic often avoided in personal discussions
 - Stigma – “the new leprosy”
 - Resistance to use of Naloxone





Contributing Factors

- Healthcare providers
- Economic decline
- Multi-generational addiction
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Lack of access to health services
- Lack of support for prevention programs
- “Nothing to do”





Protective Factors

- Local anti-drug coalition/CBOs
- Religion/pastors/churches
- Drug/Recovery courts





Communication Best Practices

- General population
- Youth
- Parents/caregivers
- Individuals with addiction



OPIOID COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

General Public



KEY MESSAGES

- Stigma reduction towards individuals with addiction/substance use disorders
- Proper use, storage, and disposal of prescription opioids
- Help is available for those facing addiction; people can and do recover
- Risks of taking prescription opioids and questions to ask Dr.
- Opportunities to become engaged in local efforts
- Signs and symptoms of addiction



FRAMING / SPOKESPEOPLE

- Personal stories of individuals in active recovery
- Emphasize impacts of addiction on family relationships
- Include details about the "path to addiction"
- Consider "before" and "after" photos
- Pair messages about consequences of addiction with messages about hope
- Trusted local leaders (e.g., sheriff, high-school coaches, clergy)



DISSEMINATION

- Multi-pronged communication approach (e.g., social media, church bulletins, local media, community events, comments section of online news stories)

OPIOID COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

Youth



KEY MESSAGES

- Promote alternatives to using drugs
- Normalize not using drugs among peers
- Describe prescription and illegal opioids and the risks and consequences of misuse



FRAMING / SPOKESPEOPLE

- Focus on positive alternatives or "gain-frames"
- Avoid statistics unless they are specific to youth in that particular community
- Community-based organizations
- Sports coaches, teen leaders, celebrities
- Discuss risks without judgement and pair with messages aimed at decreasing stigma



DISSEMINATION

- Deliver in-person as part of school, church, or CBO-based program
- Social media via YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat

OPIOID COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

Parents
and
Caregivers



KEY MESSAGES

- It can happen to your child
- Signs/symptoms of substance use in children/teens
- Best ways to intervene if you suspect your child is using drugs
- Proper storage and disposal of prescription drugs
- How to intervene if you suspect your child is using; maintaining open lines of communication
- What to do if your child is prescribed opioids



FRAMING / SPOKESPEOPLE

- Emotional appeals
- Personal stories from community members in long-term recovery (who started as teens) and those who have lost loved ones to drug overdoses



DISSEMINATION

- School-based systems (e.g., school messaging platform - MailChimp, Schoology - emailing, letters, events/assemblies)

OPIOID COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

**Individuals
facing
addiction**



KEY MESSAGES

- Help is available! Talk to someone; find a local provider and get assessed; learn about your different treatment options
- Treatment works! People recover and you can too!
- Consequences of long-term addiction
- Who to call and how to get treatment without insurance



FRAMING / SPOKESPEOPLE

- Individuals in long-term recovery
- Focus on consequences to loved ones
- Convey compassion



DISSEMINATION

- Social media (Facebook, YouTube)
- Leverage networks of those in recovery
- Provide confidential and discrete ways to receive information and counseling on treatment options



Overarching

Communication Findings



- Reserve the term “opioid” for partner and professional audiences
 - Prescription pain meds, prescription pain pills for lay audiences
- Emphasize calls-to-action and solutions; awareness is not enough
- Use clear and vivid language; avoid “beating around the bush” (e.g., “he passed”)
- Use local organizations to drive conversations using local spokespeople and storytelling
 - Be mindful of Appalachian stereo-types

Conclusions



- Strongest findings:
 - Need for prevention activities targeting youth in Appalachia that address root causes (ACEs) and provide evidenced-based curriculum
 - Small, CBOs are best positioned to deliver prevention programs – often struggle to show long-term impact because of lack of sustainable funding
 - Need to address stigma

Conclusions



- Further Research
 - Specific channels (e.g., social media, video streaming services) being used by various age segments, in different communities, throughout Appalachia
 - Communication tactics that could be effective in reaching economically distressed and geographically/socially isolated Appalachian families, including home-schooled children
 - Role of and best practices for using faith-based communication channels and spokespeople?
 - Relationship between peer/drug using networks and the social media networks of those with substance use disorders? How can social media and peer-influencers be used to encourage treatment

Acknowledgements



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 - Martha Buchanan, Knox County Health Department
 - Amy RH Haskins, Jackson County Anti-Drug Coalition

For More Information:

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Questions?

