



Comprehensive School Substance Use Policy Checklist



Evidence-based drug education

Does your school provide drug education to students that focuses on practical and effective strategies for reducing the risks associated with using substances? Are there safe spaces at your school where students are encouraged to ask questions about substance use and access credible information? Research shows that youth perceive harm reduction drug education as more helpful and practical than approaches focused entirely on abstinence. Additionally, many studies prove that harm reduction efforts do not encourage youth to experiment with substance use.



Naloxone access and overdose response protocols

Has your school done an overdose risk assessment? Do you have an overdose response policy? Is naloxone available onsite? Have staff been trained to identify and respond to an overdose? Is naloxone and overdose response training available at school for students? Is there information at school on where students can get naloxone in the community?



Focus on student health and wellbeing

How does your school respond to students who use substances? Does it aim to connect students to various supports (including counselling, harm reduction or treatment services) or does it focus more on punishing students (suspension, expulsion or loss of school privileges/activities)? Punitive responses perpetuate stigma, while isolating and disconnecting students from support, opportunities and their community.



Consistent with the Good Samaritan Act

Are students who call for help in response to a potential substance use related emergency protected from punishment (both school imposed and legal)? Are there opportunities for students to learn about the protection and safety provided by the Good Samaritan Act in the event of a substance use related emergency at school or in the community?

We are here to help! Please reach out to the Interior Health Harm Reduction Team for more information.

YHRC@interiorhealth.ca

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