

OVERDOSE PREVENTION & TREATMENT COURTS

Center
for
Court
Innovation



Georgia's Statewide
Accountability Court
Conference 2022





OVERVIEW

- Overdose crisis, by the numbers
- The role drug courts can play
- Existing OD prevention strategies, locally and abroad
- Adding (and editing) the drug court 'toolbox'
 - Take stock of what already works
 - ID opportunities integrate new OD prevention strategies
 - Reflect on potential gaps or risk-producing practices

...unfortunately, there is no finish line with this work.





WHO WE ARE:

The Center for Court Innovation works to achieve justice and equity; create safe, healthy, and thriving communities; and ultimately transform justice systems.



We do this in 3 ways:

- **Operating programs**
- **Research & Policy**
- **Technical assistance**



Center
for
Court
Innovation



WHO WE ARE:

Sheila McCarthy, MSW

Senior Program Manager

Technical Assistance

Treatment Courts

mccarthy@courtinnovation.org



Dave Lucas, MSW

Clinical Advisor

Technical Assistance

Treatment Courts

lucasd@courtinnovation.org





overdose

&

the experience and expertise

in this room





A NOTE ON LANGUAGE & TERMINOLOGY

- Overdose crisis (vs. Opioid Epidemic)
- Drug checking (vs. drug testing)
- Contaminated (vs. laced)
- Illicit fentanyl (vs. fentanyl)
- Substance use (vs. abuse)

OVERDOSE CRISIS, A SNAPSHOT

- 107,622 OD deaths in US in 2021, up 15% from 2020
- Georgia OD deaths up 56% from 2019 to 2021
- April 2021-22, Georgia reported a 17% increase, compared to ~4% nationally (provisional data)

Key features:

- Not an overprescribing crisis anymore
- **Not just fentanyl** – also a steady rise in stimulant, benzo, (ie., polysubstance) involved overdose
- Borders: traditional interdiction efforts not effective
- Increasingly stark racial disparities
- Homelessness crises in cities
- Service gaps in rural areas

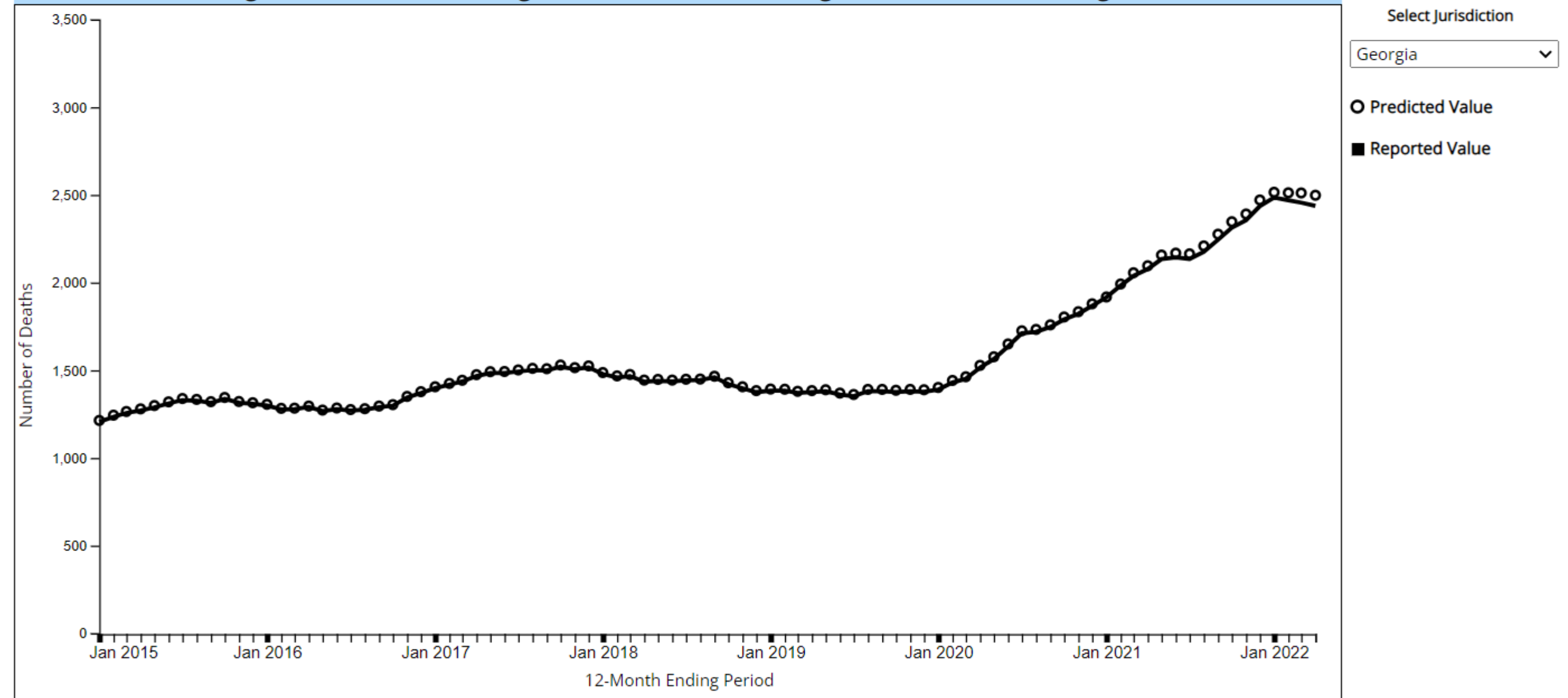
(as of Oct 2022)



12 Month-ending Provisional Number and Percent Change of Drug Overdose Deaths

Based on data available for analysis on: September 04, 2022

Figure 1a. 12 Month-ending Provisional Counts of Drug Overdose Deaths: Georgia



<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>





OVERDOSE PREVENTION & TREATMENT COURTS

Treatment courts are:

- Uniquely positioned, both upstream & downstream
- Well-funded, staffed, and resourced (compared to PH models)
- Offered a wide range of training and education
- Subject to oversight and QA standards (at least in GA)

However, treatment courts cannot:

- Improve a toxic drug supply
- Force everyone to be abstinent, forever
- Correct for all other system failures (housing, healthcare, poverty, etc)



OVERDOSE PREVENTION STRATEGIES (in the US)

Longstanding public health/community-based interventions:

- Syringe Access Services
- Naloxone distribution
- Drug checking kits
- Addiction medicine (MOUD/MAT)

Newer interventions (in some states):

- Overdose Prevention Sites
- Mass spectrometry services
- Never Use Alone hotlines
- Decriminalized 'diverted' buprenorphine

OVERDOSE PREVENTION STRATEGIES (outside the US)

Longstanding interventions:

- Supervised Consumption Sites or Overdose Prevention Centers
 - Injection and (sometimes) inhalation infrastructure
 - Provision of sterile supplies and naloxone
 - Provision of sexual health supplies and education
 - Overdose reversal (oxygen and naloxone)
 - Onsite counselling and assessment services
 - Housing access and support
 - Bad drug and date alerts
 - Onsite wound and infection care
 - Food and cold weather supplies

OVERDOSE PREVENTION STRATEGIES (outside the US)

Longstanding interventions:

- Safer Supply models
 - Agonist therapies (methadone and buprenorphine)
 - Heroin-Assisted Therapy (HAT programs)
 - Hydromorphone prescribing (Canada and Europe)
 - Drug User Union-led distro (BC, Canada)



OVERDOSE PREVENTION & TREATMENT COURTS: DECISION POINTS

- Early Identification & Assessment
- Treatment Planning & Engagement
- Case Management & Supervision
- Phase Advancement
- Program Completion



IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT

Questions for drug court teams:

- How are we identifying/assessing for OD risk factors specifically?
- If necessary, what immediate resources are available in the first interaction?
- *Put down the clipboard* (i.e., have a human conversation about OD)



THE 'OTHER' SUD: *SYSTEM UNDERPERFORMANCE DISORDER*

Consider person's history with:

- Schools / teachers
- Child welfare / social workers
- Healthcare / doctors, nurses
- Social services / housing
- Psychiatry / doctors
- Jails and prisons / police
- Courts / judges, lawyers
- Media / journalists, public opinion

<https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002969>

<https://www.recoveryanswers.org/addiction-101/etiology-what-causes-addiction/>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232060659 Risk Factors Associated with Drug Use The importance of 'risk environment'](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232060659_Risk_Factors_Associated_with_Drug_Use_The_importance_of_'risk_environment')

https://www.brucekalexander.com/pdf/roots_addiction_2001.pdf

FLIPPING THE SCRIPT: SYSTEM *SURVIVORSHIP*

Flipping the script:

- “Mistrusting” ...intuitive
- “Hesitant” ...cautious
- “Unmotivated” ...pragmatic
- “Indifferent” ...protective
- “Ambivalent” ...seeks clarity
- “Overconfident” ...hopeful
- “Challenging” ...passionate
- “Critical” ...has standards

<https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002969>

<https://www.recoveryanswers.org/addiction-101/etiology-what-causes-addiction/>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232060659 Risk Factors Associated with Drug Use The importance of 'risk environment'](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232060659_Risk_Factors_Associated_with_Drug_Use_The_importance_of_'risk_environment')

https://www.brucekalexander.com/pdf/roots_addiction_2001.pdf



TREATMENT PLANNING & ENGAGEMENT

Questions for drug court teams:

- How can we collab better; 'make room' for treatment hesitancy?
- How do our treatment options impact clinical/cultural fit and safety?
- Can we balance treatment and social goals more effectively?
- Prepare equally for risks associated w/ both treatment completion and breakdown



MEDICATIONS FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER (MOUD/MAT)

Questions for drug court teams:

- Are we treating MOUD as a first line of defense or adjunct?
- What burdens/barriers to MOUD treatment to our participants face? (logistical, informational, philosophical, cultural, etc.)
- Are we unconsciously diminishing or discouraging MOUD-based recovery?

Volume II

Best Practices in the Justice
System for Addressing the
Opioid Epidemic

JOURNAL
for Advancing Justice

MEDICATIONS FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER (MOUD/MAT)

Results from forthcoming NADCP (Marlowe) research will show:

- 169 drug courts surveyed across the country
- 99% of responding courts offered some form of MOUD
- 73% offered all three FDA-approved medications
- 8% offered Naltrexone only*
- Key finding: *only 25% opioid-using drug court participants are using MOUD*

*data re OD prevention is inconclusive



CASE MANAGEMENT & SUPERVISION

Questions for drug court teams:

- What program requirements do have that could contribute to OD risk?
- What sanctions do we use that could contribute to OD risk?
- How are measuring success beyond the usual metrics?

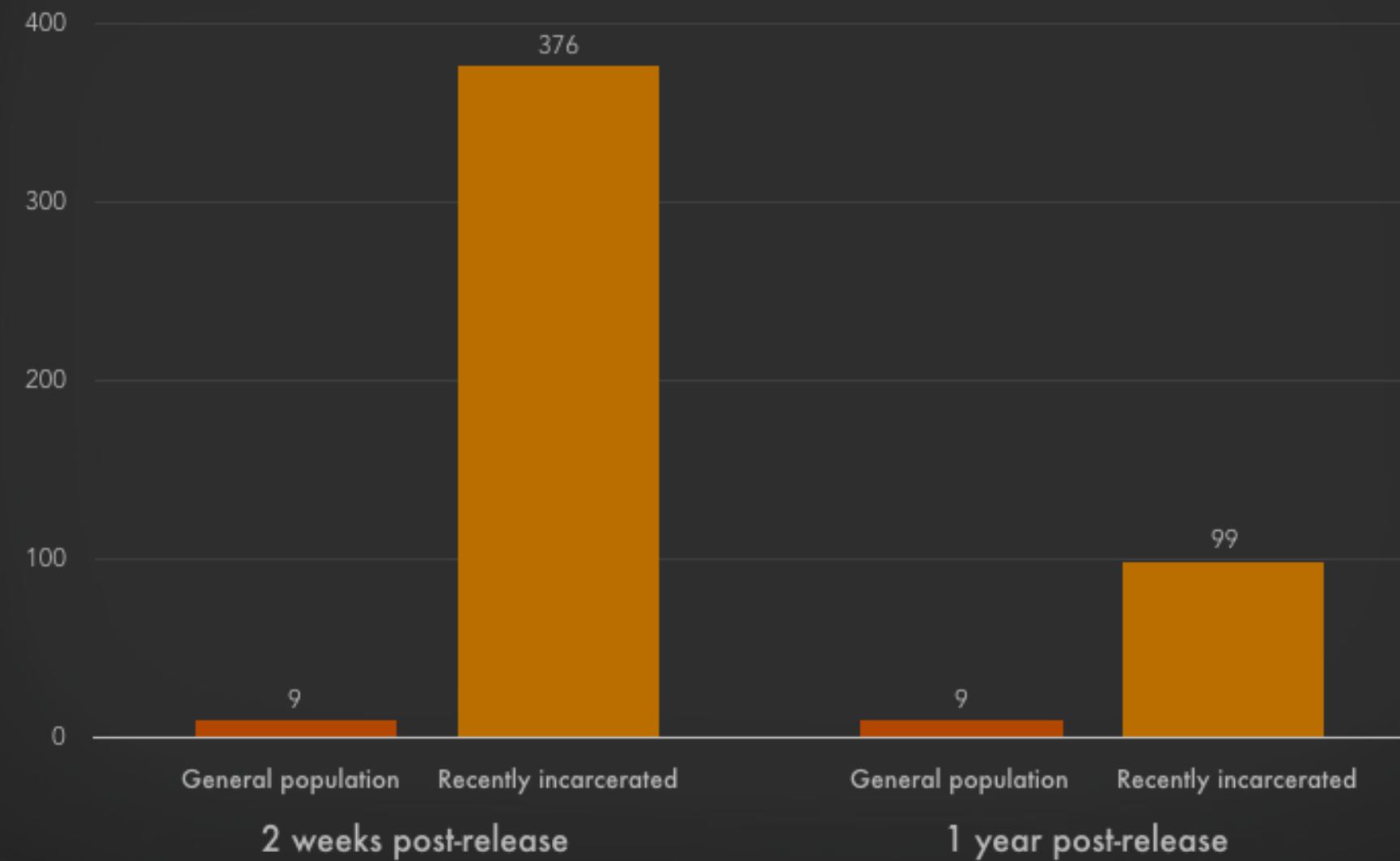




CASE MANAGEMENT & SUPERVISION

Recently incarcerated people are over 40 times
more likely to die from an opioid overdose

Number of opioid overdose deaths per 100,000 recently incarcerated people in
North Carolina compared to rate among the general population in North Carolina



Data Source: "Opioid Overdose Mortality Among Former North Carolina Inmates: 2000-2015" Table 1





PHASE ADVANCEMENT

Questions for drug court teams:

- As participants progress, how are we preparing for the possible emergence of unresolved trauma/other MH concerns?
- Are we offering phase-specific OD prevention strategies?
- Are we modelling a holistic, nuanced understanding of recovery progress (i.e., not just 'counting days')





PROGRAM COMPLETION/EXIT

Questions for drug court teams:

- Do we have any graduation criteria that could impact OD risk?
- Do our discharge plan protocols include OD prevention strategies?
- How are we framing graduation/program completion?



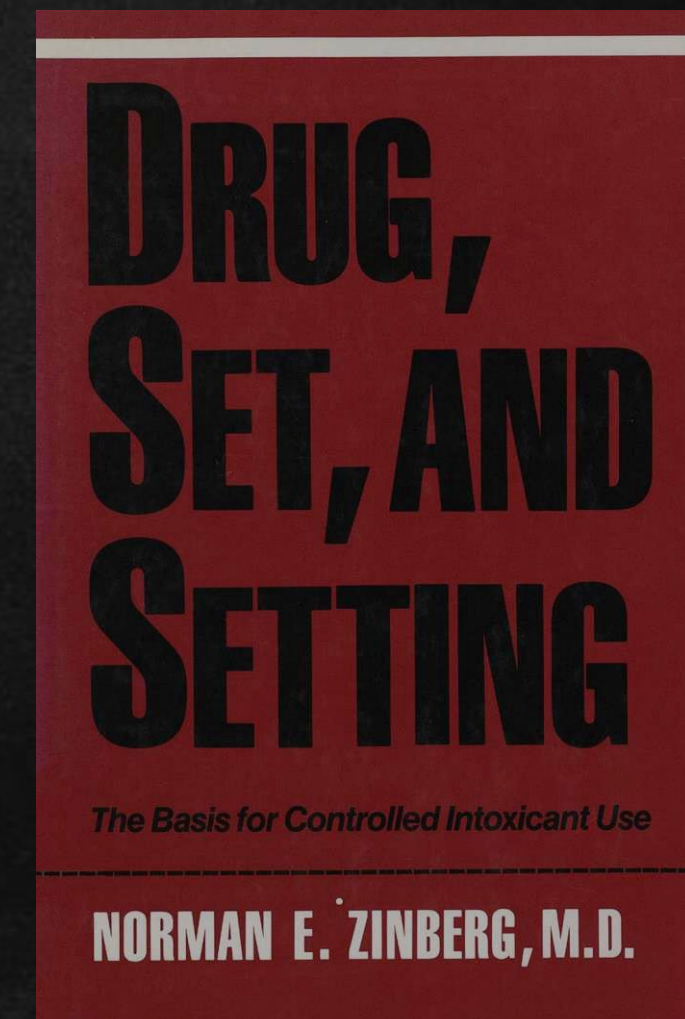


A NOTE ON 'GRADUATION DAY'

- Replace “you were there, now you’re here” storyline with ideas like “*you’ve had these qualities and skills all along*” and “your life has always had value, even if it hasn’t always felt that way.”
- Balance appreciation of the person’s concrete achievements and growth with acceptance of their wholeness (i.e., their *complex and imperfect integrated self*)
- Always highlight the self-directed efforts: “*You did this! This belongs to you!*”
- Always highlight something your court team has *learned* from the participant
- Ask ourselves, if they were to struggle again in the future, *would they feel too ashamed to come back to us?*
- As the saying goes: *too much praise or blame takes us away from the center*

OD PREVENTION & TREATMENT COURTS: TEAM MEMBER EDUCATION

- Listen to participants
- Naloxone, rescue breathing training
- Drug, set, and setting 101
- Motivational interviewing 101
- Designate team members to
 - ✓ monitor local drug trends/alerts
 - ✓ circulate relevant research or reports
 - ✓ maintain a map of key resources
 - ✓ liaise with local community-based risk reduction agencies



OVERDOSE CRISIS

MYTHS & MISINFORMATION:

- All fentanyl is toxic
- Overdose from passive fentanyl exposure (skin and/or inhalation)
- Rainbow-colored drugs, marketing to kids
- 'Naloxone-proof'

INFORMATION >>> FEAR



OD PREVENTION & TREATMENT COURTS: PARTICIPANT EDUCATION

- Survival vs. sobriety
- Drug, set, setting
- Naloxone training
- Drug checking & alerts
- Recurrence of use *safety planning*
- Community resources



Center
for
Court
Innovation



OVERDOSE PREVENTION RESOURCES IN GEORGIA

OVERDOSE PREVENTION RESOURCES IN GEORGIA

Visit: georgiaoverdoseprevention.org/ or nextdistro.org/Georgia



DON'T RUN
CALL 911

[Home](#) [Request Naloxone Kit](#) [Report Reversal](#) [Resources](#) [Photo Gallery](#)

Fatal Opioid Overdoses are Preventable with Naloxone

Beloved victims of fatal overdoses whose loved ones worked with Georgia Overdose Prevention for the passage of GA's 911 Medical Amnesty Law, and our cofounder Jeremy Gall



Laura
Hope Laws
1996-2013



Jeffrey
Gay
1990-2012

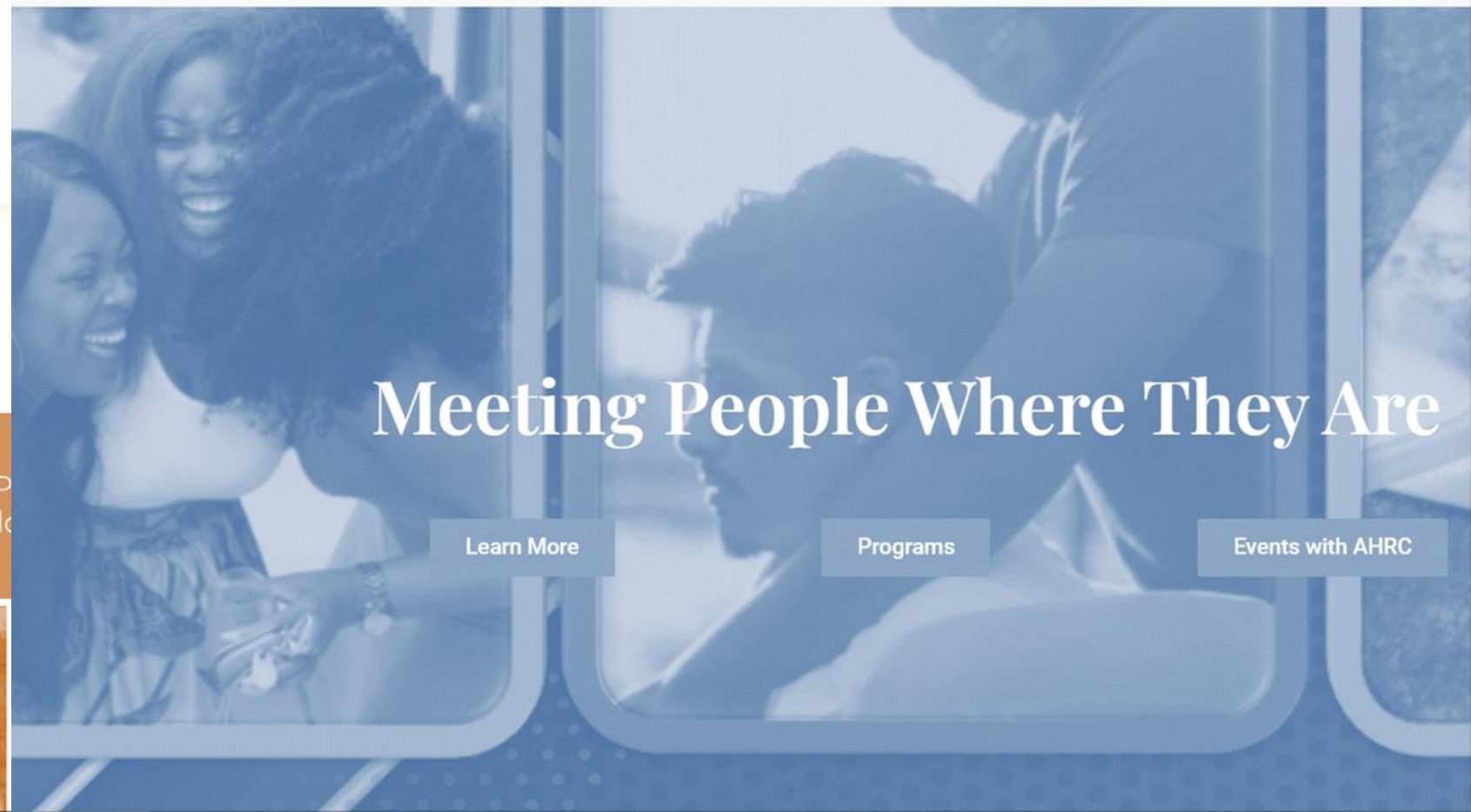


[COVID-19 Response](#)

[Programs & Services](#)

[About Us](#) [▼](#)

[AHRC Opportun](#)



Meeting People Where They Are

[Learn More](#)

[Programs](#)

[Events with AHRC](#)

Center
for
Court
Innovation



Any
question?



THANK YOU!

CONTACT:

lucasdcourtinnovation.org

mccarthys@courtinnovation.org

MORE INFO:

<https://www.courtinnovation.org/publications>