NORTH Dakota
Be Legendary.
Health & Human Services

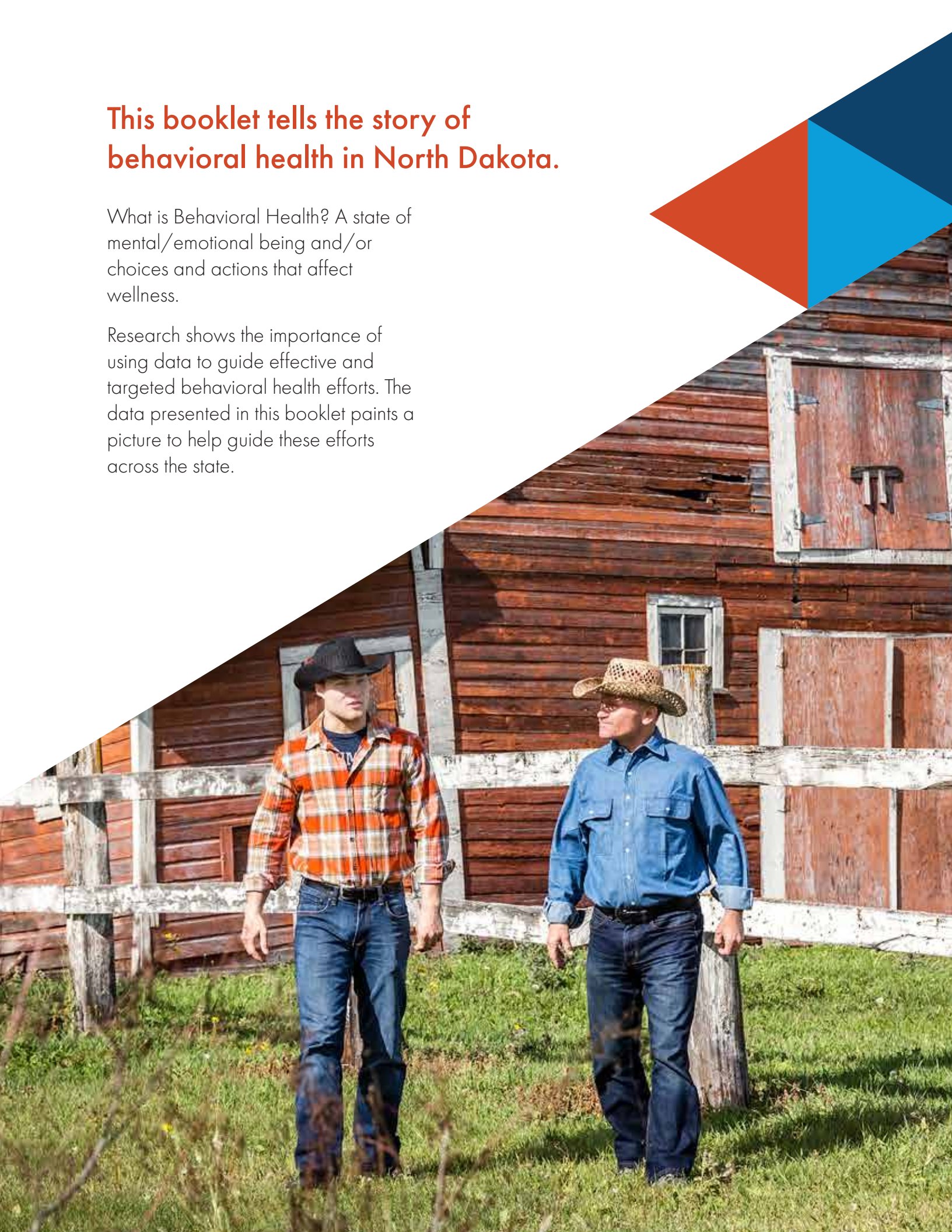
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

DATA BOOK 2025

This booklet tells the story of behavioral health in North Dakota.

What is Behavioral Health? A state of mental/emotional being and/or choices and actions that affect wellness.

Research shows the importance of using data to guide effective and targeted behavioral health efforts. The data presented in this booklet paints a picture to help guide these efforts across the state.



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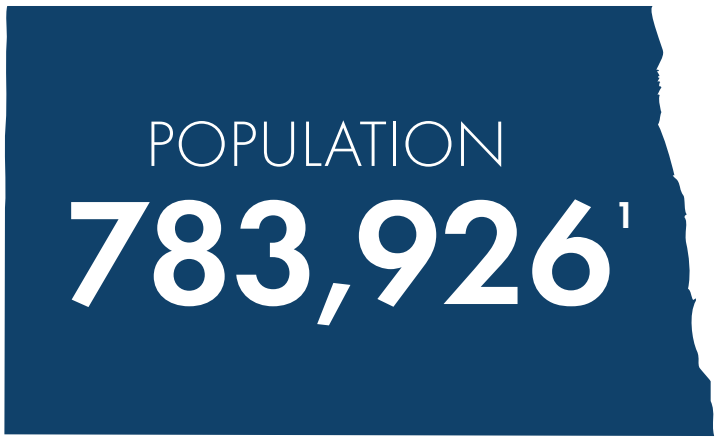
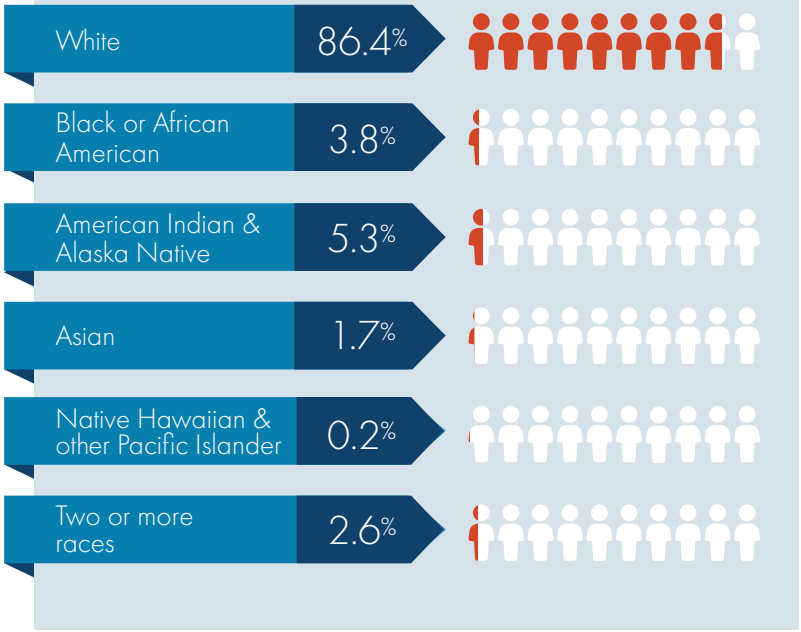
NORTH DAKOTA
Demographics Overview



RACE/ ETHNICITY[2]



4.9% of North Dakotans identify as Hispanic or Latino.[2]

7.2% of North Dakota's populations are veterans, compared to 6.1% in the United States.[2]

11.3 people per square mile in 2020, compared to 9.7 people per square mile in 2010.[19]

One in ten (9.8%) North Dakotans are currently living in poverty.[2]

There are **five** federally recognized Tribes and one Indian community located at least partially within the state.

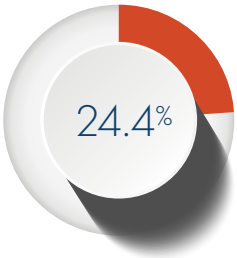
23.6% of North Dakotans are under age 18 and 17% are over age 65.[2]

North Dakota has a **2.3%** unemployment rate.[2]

Behavioral Health

Behavioral health is broad and inclusive of overall wellness.

GAMBLING

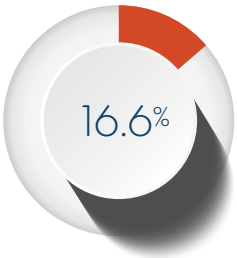


24.4% of ND **high school students** report gambling on sports, the lottery, or the internet in the last year.[3]

Support for problem gambling is available. Visit GamblerND.com for information, resources and links to treatment.

Call (877) 702-7848 to schedule a counseling appointment.

BRAIN INJURY



16.6% of ND **high school students** report having a concussion from playing a sport or being physically active at least once in the last year.[4]

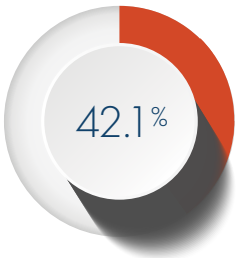
An **increase** from 14.3% in 2021.

The North Dakota Brain Injury Network has several programs that can help brain injury survivors, family members, professionals, caregivers and friends.

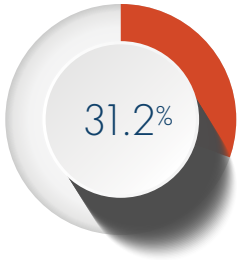
Visit www.ndbin.org

BULLYING

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

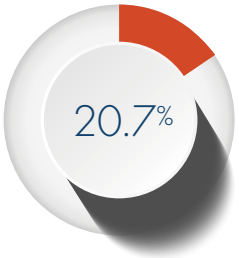


42.1% of ND **middle school** students report ever being **bullied on school property.**[4]



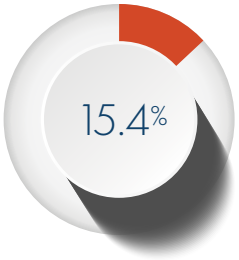
31.2% of ND **middle school** students report ever being **electronically bullied**.[4]

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



20.7% of ND **high school** students report being **bullied on school property** within the past year.[4]

An increase from 15.8% in 2021.



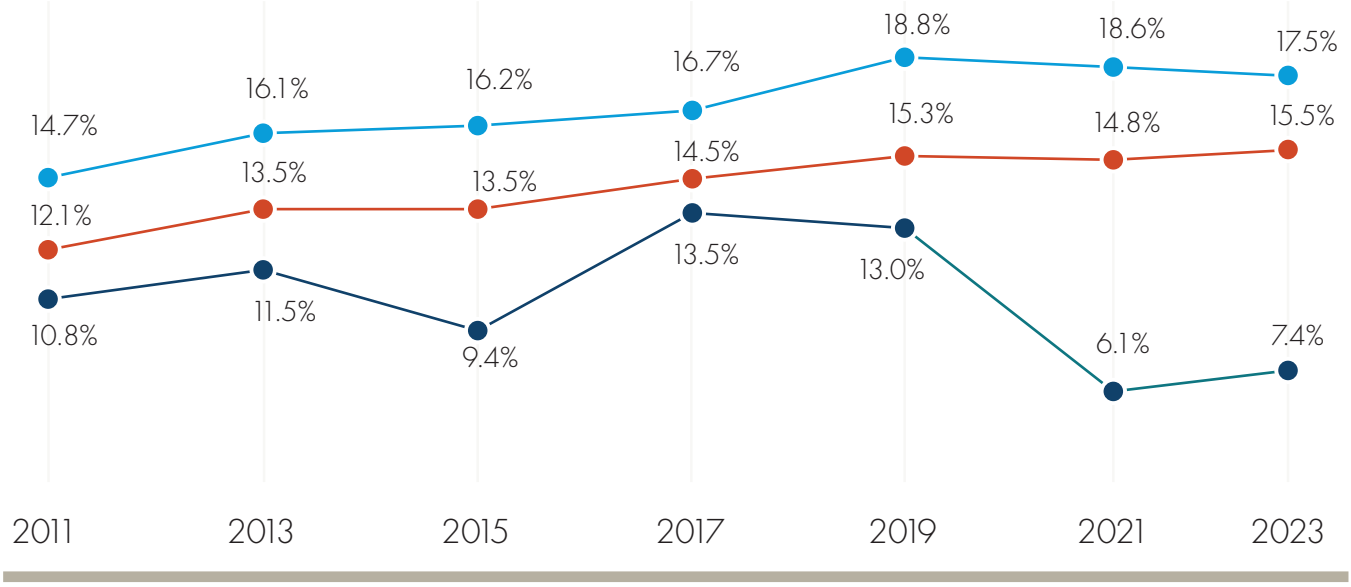
15.4% of ND **high school** students report being **electronically bullied** within the past year.[4]

An increase from 13.6% in 2021.

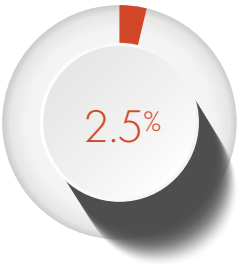
Suicide

YOUTH

NORTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS [4]

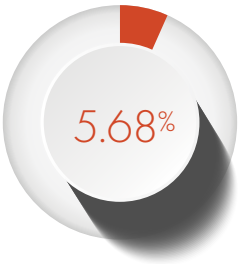


COLLEGE STUDENTS



2.5% of ND college students indicated they had attempted suicide within the last 12 months.[5]

ADULTS



5.68% of ND adults (age 18 and older) had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year.[6]

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
988
CALL, TEXT OR CHAT

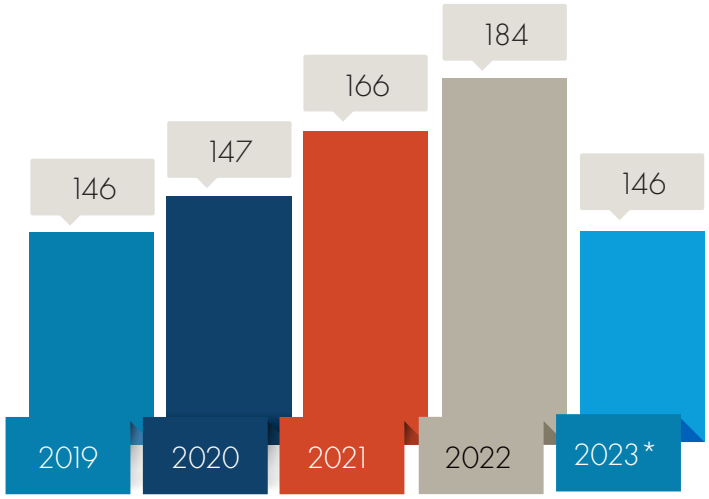
If you or someone you know needs support, call or text 988 or chat 988Lifeline.org.

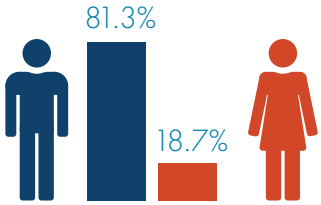
988 connects you with a trained crisis counselor who can help.

Suicide is preventable. If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, call or text the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline or chat at 988lifeline.org. Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

146 North Dakotans died by suicide.[7]

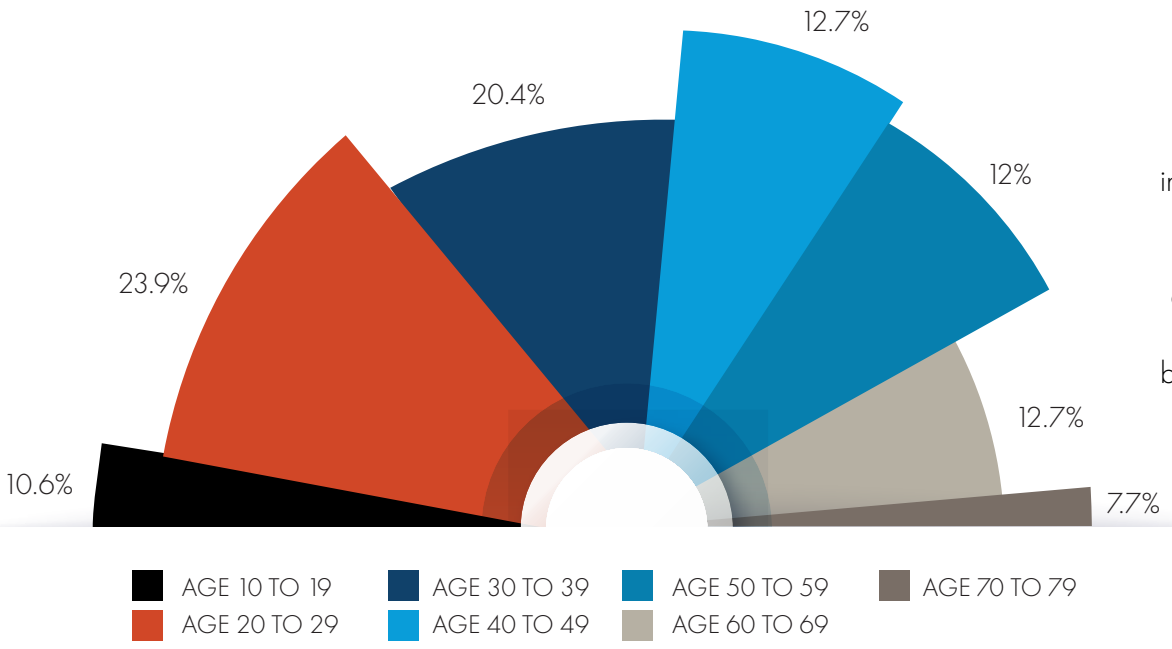
In 2023*, 146 North Dakotans died by suicide. In comparison, 184 North Dakotans died by suicide in 2022.





***81.3%** of individuals who died by suicide in 2023 were male, **18.7%** female.[7]

17.8% of individuals who died by suicide were current or former military (2023).[7]



*Over half of individuals who died by suicide **(57%)** were between the ages of 20 and 49. **24.7%** were between the ages of 50 and 69.[7]

*2023 data is preliminary

Mental Health

YOUTH

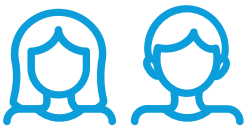
30.9% of ND **middle school** students report feeling sad or hopeless (almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row so they stopped doing some usual activities in the past year).[4]

24.3% of ND **middle school** students report their mental health was most of the time or always not good in the last 30 days.[4]

30.6% of ND **high school** students report their mental health was most of the time or always not good in the last 30 days.[4]

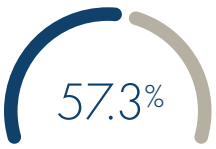
35% of ND **high school** students report feeling sad or hopeless (almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row so they stopped doing some usual activities in the past year).[4]

Among those who report feeling sad, empty, hopeless, angry or anxious, **20.1%** of ND **high school** students report they most of the time or always get the kind of help they need.[4]

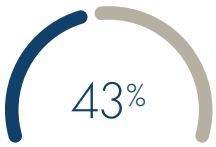


17.8% of ND **youth** (ages 12-17) had major depressive episode in the past year.[6]

COLLEGE STUDENTS



57.3% of ND college students report having counseling for a mental health condition in the last 12 months.[5]



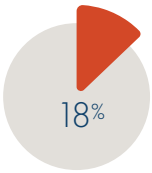
43% of ND college students report high levels of loneliness, based on a standardized loneliness scale.[5]

Among ND college students (in their lifetime)[5]:

36.2% diagnosed with anxiety

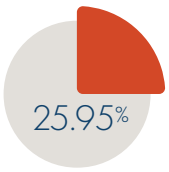
27.8% diagnosed with depression

ADULTS (ages 18+)

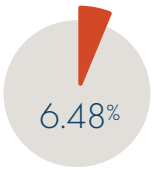


18% reported their **mental health was not good** 8 or more days in the last month.[6]

10.34% reported having a **major depressive episode** in the past year.[6]



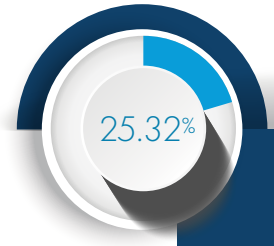
25.95% had **any mental illness** in the past year.[6]



6.48% reported a **serious mental illness** in the past year.[6]

Approximately 155,420 ND adults (18+) had any mental illness in the past year.[6]

Approximately 38,810 ND adults (18+) have serious mental illness in the past year.[6]



25.32% of ND adults (18+) received mental health services in the past year.[6]

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH IS FUNDAMENTALLY LINKED.

The average life span for people with serious mental illness is 25-30 years less than the general public. People with depression have a 40% higher risk of developing heart diseases than the general population.

NORTH DAKOTA MENTAL HEALTH **PROGRAM DIRECTORY**

A new tool is here to help

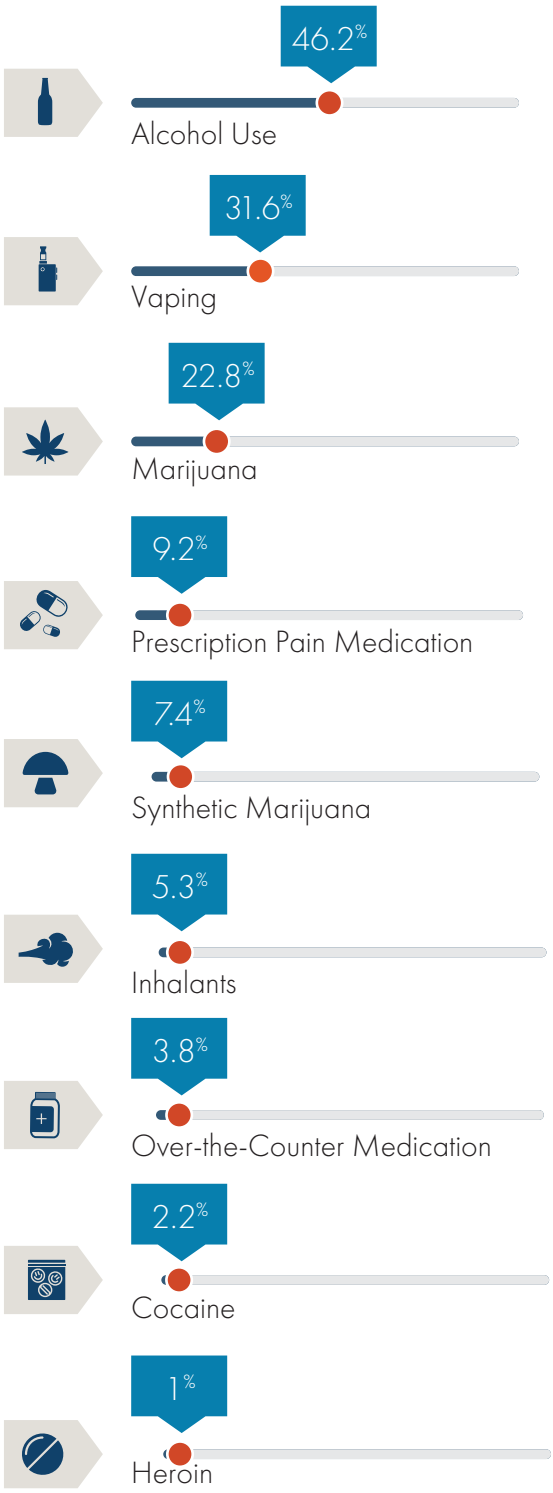
Find mental health services for you or your loved ones through the North Dakota Mental Health Program Directory.

The directory provides a single place for North Dakota citizens to search for mental health services that meet their needs. hhs.nd.gov/behavioral-health/directory

Substance Use

YOUTH (HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS)[4]

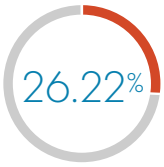
LIFETIME Substance Use



ADULTS (AGES 18+)[6]

PAST 30-DAY Substance Use

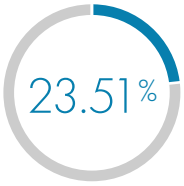
BINGE ALCOHOL USE



TOBACCO

MARIJUANA

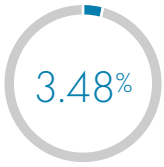
ILLICIT DRUGS (other than marijuana)



BINGE ALCOHOL USE

TOBACCO

MARIJUANA



ILLICIT DRUGS (other than marijuana)

NOTE: Binge alcohol use is defined as drinking five or more drinks (for males) or four or more drinks (for females) on the same occasion (i.e., at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other) on at least one day in the past 30 days.

Addiction and Recovery

An estimated 20.8% of ND adults (18+) **met the criteria for a Substance Use Disorder** within the last year.[6]

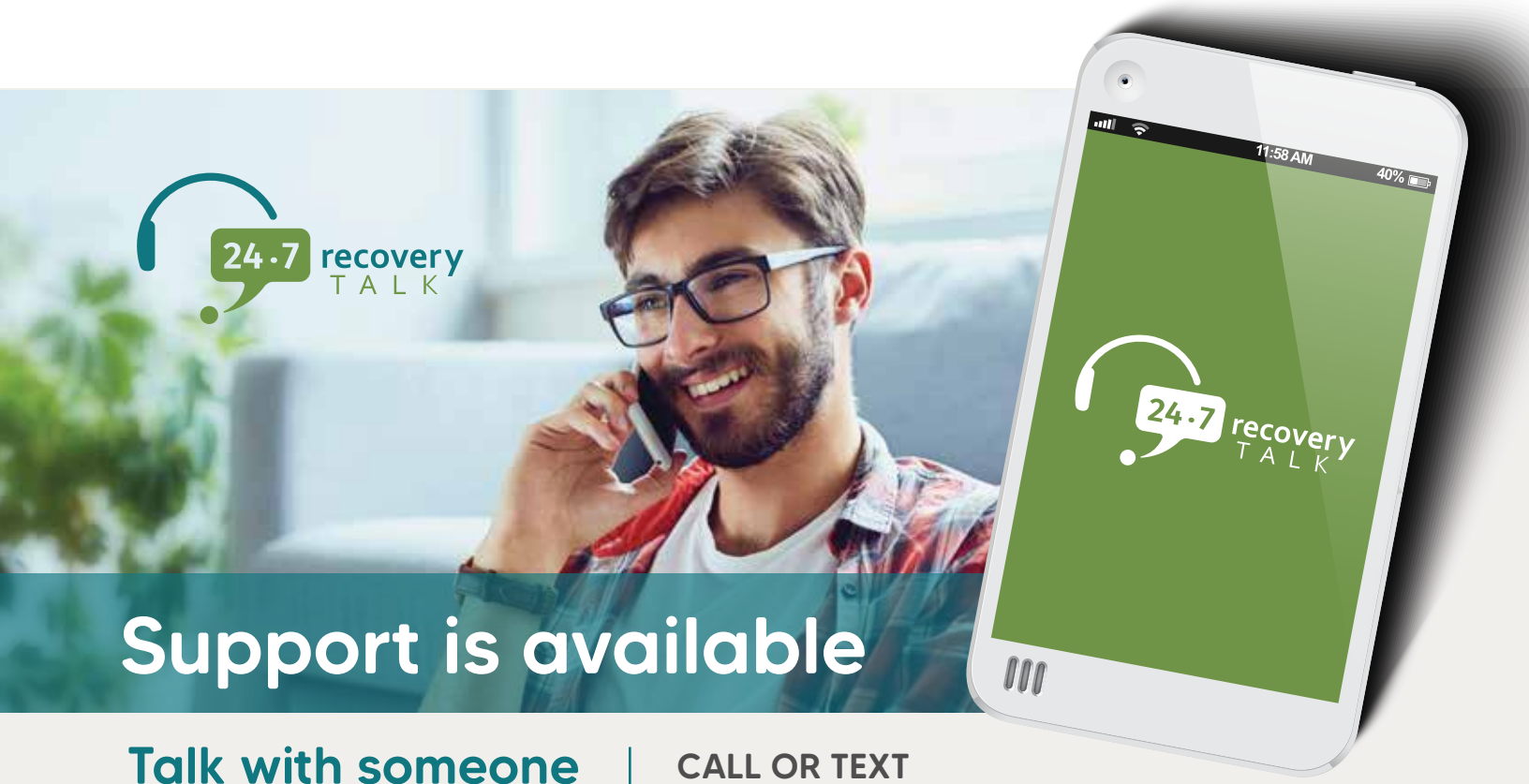
77.62%

An estimated 77.62% of ND adults (18+) who needed treatment for substance use **did not receive treatment in the past year.**[6]

2.5% of ND college students report being in recovery from alcohol or drug use.[5]

105

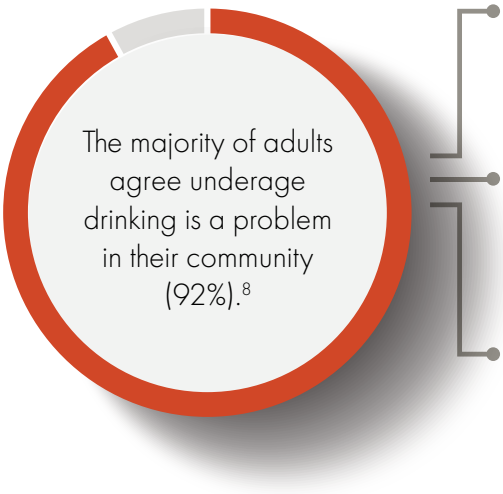
In North Dakota, there are 105 licensed Substance Use Disorder Treatment programs (as of 10/10/2024).



Talk with someone who's been there

CALL OR TEXT
701.291.7901

Alcohol: Underage Drinking



19.1% of ND **middle school** students report alcohol use in their **lifetime**[4]

a decrease from **24.8%** in 2013.

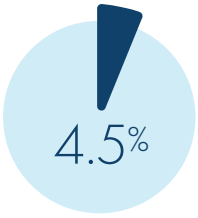
19.5% of ND **high school** students report **current alcohol use** (within the past 30 days)[4]

a decrease from **35.3%** in 2013.

10.3% of ND **high school** students report **current binge drinking*** (within the past 30 days)[4]

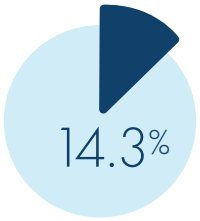
a decrease from **21.9%** in 2013.

Not only is underage drinking against the law, but there are also many consequences to underage drinking impacting the health and safety of North Dakota youth.



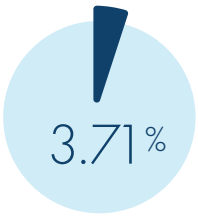
4.5% of ND high school students report **driving after drinking** alcohol within the past 30 days.[4]

a **decrease** from 10.7% in 2013



14.3% of ND high school students report **riding with a driver who had been drinking** alcohol within the past 30 days.[4]

a **decrease** from 21.9% in 2013



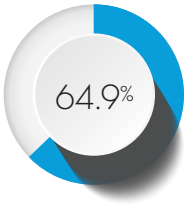
3.71% of ND youth (ages 12-17) met the criteria for **alcohol use disorder** in the past year.[6]

Research shows brain development is not complete until around age 25.

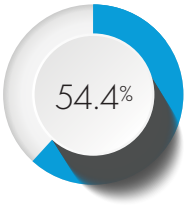
Among the last parts of the brain to be developed are those responsible for impulse control and extended reasoning. Alcohol use among youth and young adults can result in irreversible changes impacting problem-solving skills, performance at school, and potentially their body, mood and mental health.

*Binge drinking: 5 or more drinks of alcohol on an occasion or in a row

Alcohol: Young Adult & College Students



64.9% of ND **college students** report **using alcohol** in the last three months.[20]



54.4% of ND **college students** report **binge drinking*** one or more times in the last two weeks.[5]

15%

of ND **college students** report **driving after having any alcohol in the last 30 days** (of those students who reported drinking alcohol in the last 30 days and those who reported driving in the last 30 days).[5]

*binge drinking: five or more drinks (males) or four or more drinks (females) containing any kind of alcohol at a sitting.

ND college students who drank alcohol reported experiencing the following in the last 12 months when drinking alcohol[5]:

19% did something they later regretted

12.4% blackout

6.8% physically injured themself

Among ND Young Adults (18-25 year olds)[6]

64% report alcohol use in the past month.

Compared to 50.57% nationwide

40.43% report binge drinking in the past month.

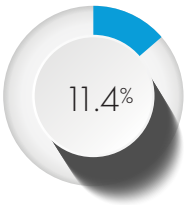
Compared to 29.73% nationwide

Alcohol: Risk Factors

There are many risk factors that influence a person's likelihood of engaging in illegal or risky substance use. Effective prevention focuses on reducing these risk factors.

Research shows that individuals who start drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely than individuals who start drinking at the age of 21 to meet criteria for alcohol use disorder at some point in their lives.[20]

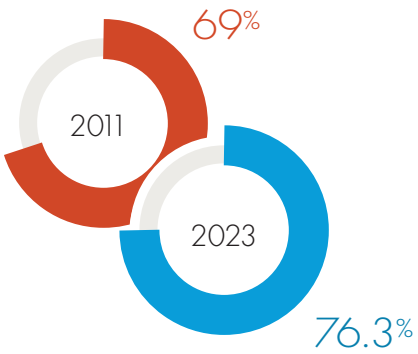
4x

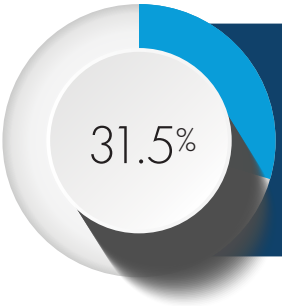


11.4% of ND **high school** students report their first use of alcohol before the age of 13.[4]

Generally, individuals do NOT believe binge drinking is risky.

The percentage of ND high school students who believe binge drinking one or two times a week does NOT pose a great risk has increased from **69%** in 2011 to **76.3%** in 2023.[4]





31.5% of ND **high school** students report living with someone who had a problem with alcohol or drug use at some point in their life.[4]

Alcohol: Risk Factors

The easier it is to obtain alcohol, the higher the likelihood for use and abuse.

North Dakota ranks highest in the nation for the number of bars per capita, with 49.73 bars per 100,000 people. Compare this to New Hampshire, with 1.54 bars per 100,000 people.[9]

There is one alcohol beverage license (restaurant serving alcohol, bar or liquor store) in ND for every 445.5 people.[10]

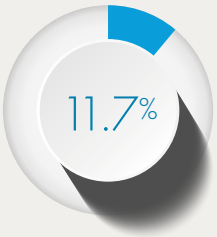
Early intervention is an important piece of the behavioral health continuum of care and helps to reduce the risk of harmful behaviors such as drug and alcohol use.

18

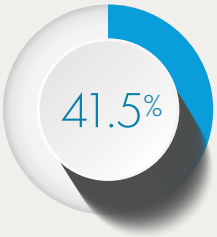
In North Dakota, there are 18 certified Minor in Possession education providers (as of 10/10/2024).

68.3%

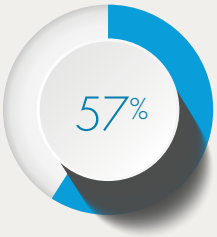
68.3% of ND adults support requiring evidence-based interventions for youth with Minor in Possessions. [8]



11.7% of ND adults believe it is not at all difficult for youth to **buy alcohol at a store** themselves.[8]



41.5% of ND adults believe it is not at all difficult for youth to **get an older person to buy alcohol** for them.[8]



57% of ND adults believe it is not at all difficult for youth to **sneak alcohol from their home** or a friend's home.[8]

Alcohol: Adult

Adult binge drinking in North Dakota is a serious public health issue, resulting in many consequences impacting individuals, families and communities.

91.4% of ND adults agree that **adult alcohol use is a problem in their community.**[8]

Among North Dakota adults age 26 and older:

59.87% used alcohol in the past month.[6]

3rd

ND ranks 3rd in the nation for **binge alcohol use** (past month) (26.81%).[6]

The economic costs of excessive alcohol consumption in ND are estimated at **$487 million**, which is $725 per person or $1.40 a drink.[11]

One in six (16.7%) adult arrests in ND are for driving under the influence.[12]

36% of fatal crashes in ND are alcohol-related.[13]

13.39% of ND adults age 26 or older met the criteria for Alcohol Use Disorder in the past year.[6]

23% of new domestic violence cases in ND involve alcohol.[14]

Not all drinks are created equal. Some can be the equivalent of three and even four drinks, which is why we say speak in volumes and you'll speak volumes about how much you're drinking.

SPEAK VOLUMES .ND.GOV

12-ounce beer (5% ABV) = 1 drink

5-ounce glass of wine (12% ABV) = 1 drink

16-ounce craft beer (7.5% ABV) = 2 drinks

Martini = 1.5-2 drinks

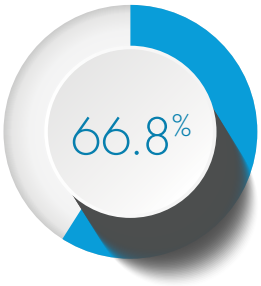
Long Island Iced Tea = 3-5 drinks

Margarita = 2-3 drinks

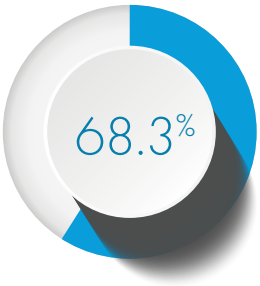
Alcohol: Prevention Works

Prevention is a proactive approach; creating an environment that promotes the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities, which prevents problems before they occur.

ADULTS



believe it is possible to reduce alcohol and other drug problems through prevention.[8]



believe prevention programs are a good investment.[8]

CHANGE COMES FROM

Increased awareness of the risks associated with underage drinking and adult binge drinking.

Strengthened policies to reduce access to alcohol.

65.5% of ND adults believe that alcohol servers and bartenders should be specifically trained.[8]

Enforcement of laws and policies related to alcohol.

75.7% of ND adults support the legal drinking age of 21.[8]

64.3% of ND adults support DUI checkpoints.[8]

83.4% of ND adults support compliance checks.[8]

Shifting community norms to be supportive of healthy decisions, and not supportive of excessive alcohol consumption.

72.3% of ND adults support penalties for adults who provide alcohol to minors.[8]

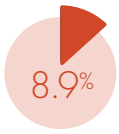
Protective parental behaviors such as ongoing conversations, healthy role-modeling, monitoring, support and engagement.

Tobacco

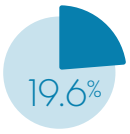
Generally, cigarette use is declining among youth in the state. However, use of other tobacco products has remained steady or increased.

YOUTH

92.2% of ND adults believe **TOBACCO USE AMONG YOUTH** is a problem in their community.[8]



8.9% of ND **middle school** students report cigarette use in their lifetime.[4]



19.6% of ND **high school** students report current (past 30-day) use of tobacco.[4]

5.4% of ND **high school** students report current (past 30-day) use of cigarettes.

decrease from 8.3% in 2019.[4]

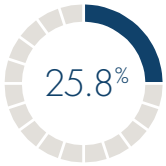
ELECTRONIC VAPOR PRODUCTS

of ND **middle school** students report using electronic vapor products at one point in their life.[4]

of ND **high school** students report current use of electronic vapor products.[4]

decrease from **33.1%** in 2019.

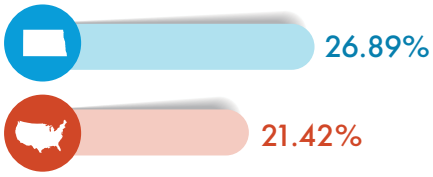
COLLEGE STUDENTS & ADULTS



25.8% of ND **college** students report using tobacco or nicotine delivery products in the last three months.[5]

89.5% of ND adults believe **TOBACCO USE AMONG ADULTS** is a problem in their community.[8]

Among adults age 26 and older, **26.89%** of ND adults report tobacco product use in the past month; compared to **21.42%** of US adults.[6]



Tobacco is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States and has a tremendous impact on lives in North Dakota. By preventing tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke, we reduce disease, alleviate suffering, save lives, and cut health care costs and productivity losses.

The majority

62.9%

of North Dakotans (age 12 or older) believe smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day poses great risk.[6]

In the 2022-2023 school year, there were 1,234 suspensions/expulsions related to tobacco. This corresponds to 3,373.25 days removed from school.[15]

Exposure to secondhand smoke causes more than 41,000 deaths each year among adults in the United States.[16]

The life expectancy for smokers is at least 10 years shorter than for nonsmokers.[16]

39.4%

of ND high school students report it would be very easy to get tobacco products if they wanted some.[18]

11.6%

of ND **high school** students usually obtain their own cigarettes by buying them in a store or gas station.[18]

6.5%

of ND **high school** students usually obtain their own electronic vapor products by buying them in a store.[18]

Tobacco affects everyone, even non-users. In North Dakota, smoking-related costs include:[23]

Annual health care costs directly caused by smoking: **$379 million**

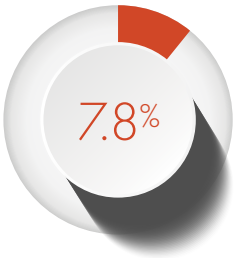
Medicaid costs caused by smoking: **$61.1 million**

Residents' state and federal tax burden from smoking-caused government expenditures: **$970 per household**

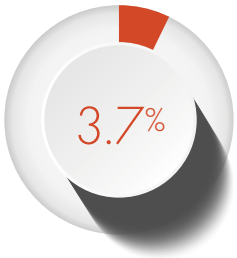
Smoking-caused productivity losses: **$715 million**

Marijuana

YOUTH

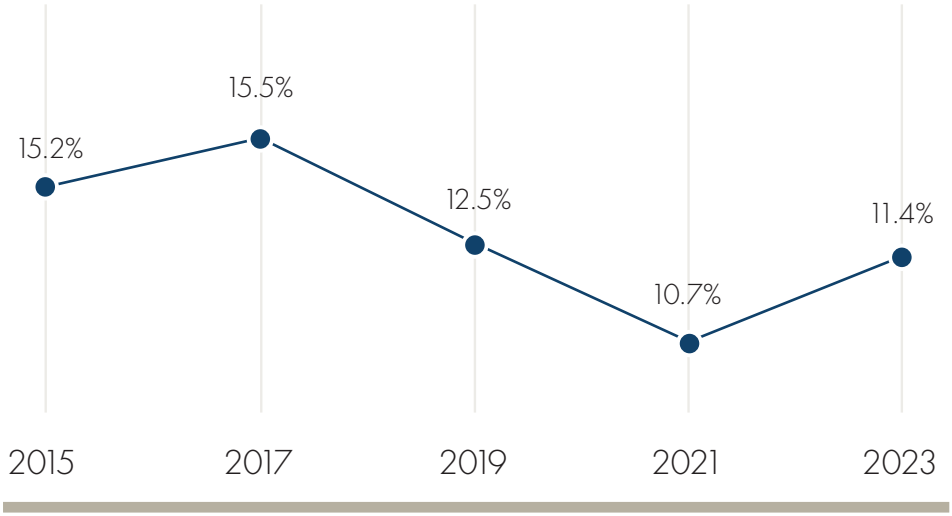


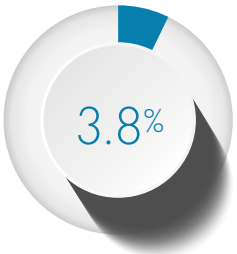
7.8% of ND **middle school** students have used marijuana one or more times in their **lifetime**.[4]



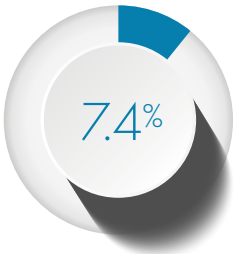
3.7% of ND **middle school** students have used marijuana one or more times in the **last 30 days.**[4]

11.4% of ND **high school** students have used marijuana one or more times in the last 30 days.[4]

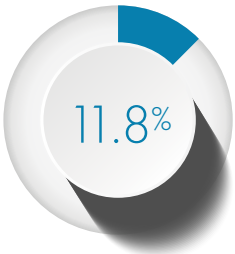




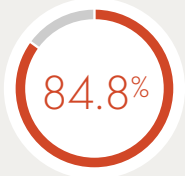
3.8% of ND **high school** students tried marijuana for the first time before the age of 13.[4]



7.4% of ND **high school** students report using synthetic marijuana sometime in their life.[4]



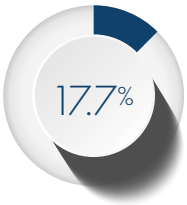
11.8% of ND **high school** students report riding in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been using marijuana in the last 30 days.[4]



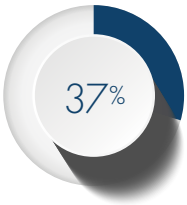
The majority of ND **adults believe YOUTH** marijuana use is a problem in their community (84.8%).[8]

As efforts to legalize marijuana continue, there is an increasing perception marijuana is not harmful or addictive. The reality is marijuana can cause major health, safety, social, and learning problems, especially in adolescents.

COLLEGE STUDENTS



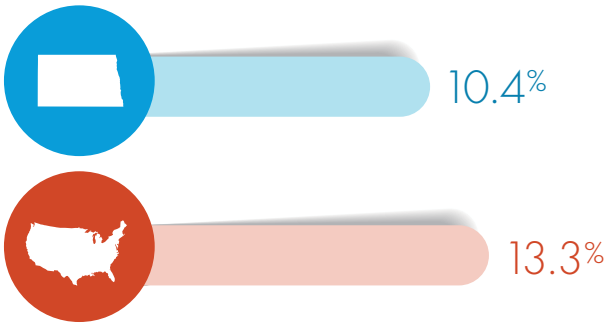
17.7% of ND **college** students reporting using nonmedical use of cannabis in the last three months.[5]



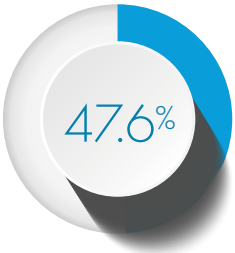
37% of ND **college** students reporting driving within six hours of using cannabis/marijuana in the last 30 days (of those reporting using cannabis in the last 30 days and those reporting driving in the last 30 days).[5]

ADULTS

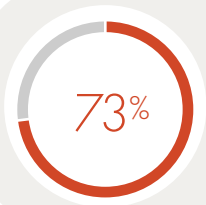
10.4% of ND adults (age 26+) report using marijuana in the past month, compared to **13.3%** nationwide.[6]



82.2% of North Dakotans (age 12+) do NOT perceive great risk from smoking marijuana once a month.[6]



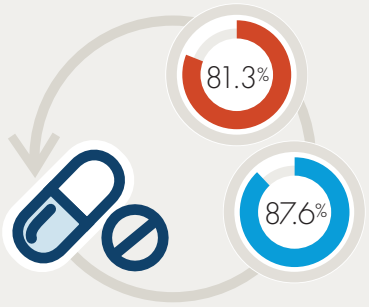
Marijuana/hashish was found in **47.6%** of cases where drugs were seized in 2023.[12]



Three out of four ND adults believe it is a problem for ADULTS (73%).[8]

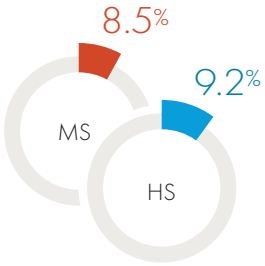
Opioids

Opioid misuse and overdose is a growing concern across the nation and in North Dakota communities.



More than **three quarters of ND adults** believe prescription drug use among both youth (81.3%) and adults (87.6%) is a problem in their community.[8]

YOUTH



8.5% of ND **middle school students and 9.2%** of ND **high school students** report using prescription pain medication without a doctor's prescription one or more times during their lifetime.[4]

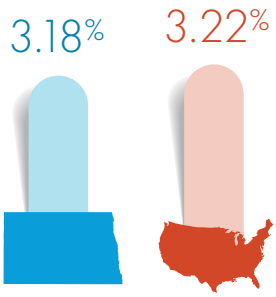
1% 1% of ND **high school** students report using heroin one or more times during their lifetime.[4]

COLLEGE STUDENTS

0.7% of ND college students report nonmedical use of prescription opioids in the last three months.[5]

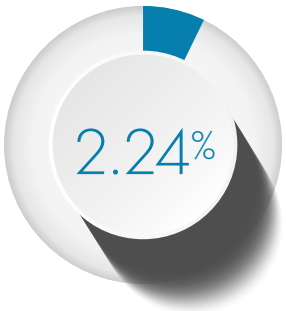
0.3% of ND college students report heroin use in the last three months.[5]

ADULTS



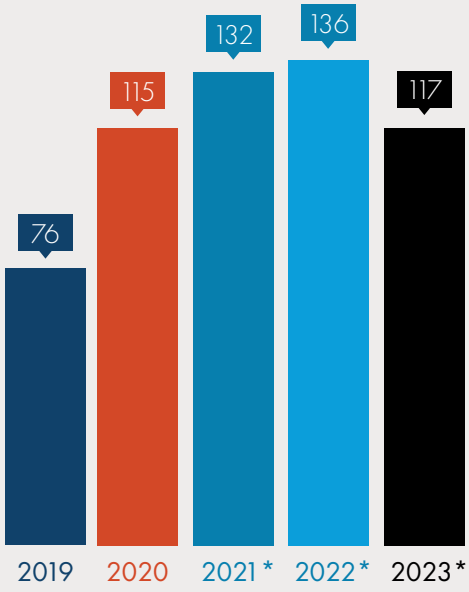
3.18% of ND **adults** (26+) report past year misuse of prescription pain relievers, compared to 3.22% in the U.S.[6]

0.46% of ND **adults** (26+) report past year heroin use.[5]



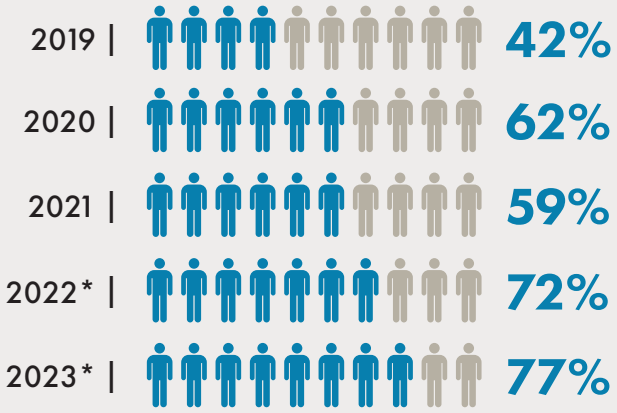
2.24% of ND **adults** (age 26 and older) meet the criteria for opioid use disorder within the past year.[6]

Drug Overdose Deaths in North Dakota[7]



*preliminary data

Percentage of Drug Overdose Deaths Where Fentanyl Was Present in Toxicology[7]



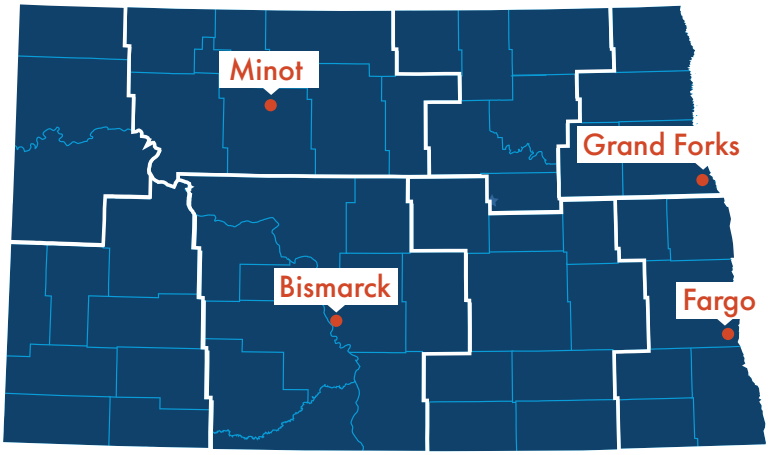
Nearly **84%** of drug overdose deaths in 2023 involved an opioid.[7]

24.5% of ND **adults** believe it is NOT at all difficult for youth or adults to access prescription drugs in their community.[8]

There are four opioid treatment programs in North Dakota.

As of July 1, 2022, 819 individuals were being served.

This is an increase from 761 individuals in July of 2020.



Save a loved one.

Know how to respond to an opioid overdose

1. Call 911 and administer naloxone.
2. Do rescue breathing or chest compressions. Follow 911 dispatcher directions.
3. Remain onsite until assistance arrives and cooperate with first responders.

Other Illicit Drugs

YOUTH

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS[4]
LIFETIME Substance Use

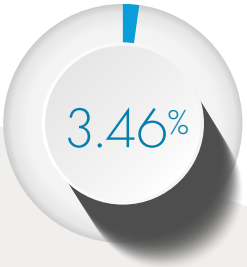
- Inhalants | 5.3%
- Cocaine | 2.2%
- Ecstasy | 2.4%

COLLEGE STUDENT

ND COLLEGE STUDENTS[5]
(Use in last three months)

- Inhalants | 0.7%
- Cocaine | 1.2%
- Hallucinogens | 2.0%
- Methamphetamine | 0.4%

ADULT



3.46% of ND **adults** (age 18 and older) report using illicit drugs (other than marijuana) in the past month.[6]

Drug/ narcotic violations offenses increased by

2.54%

from a total of 5,866 in 2022 to 6,015 in 2023.[12]

1,505 individuals received services at an authorized **syringe service program** in the state in 2023.

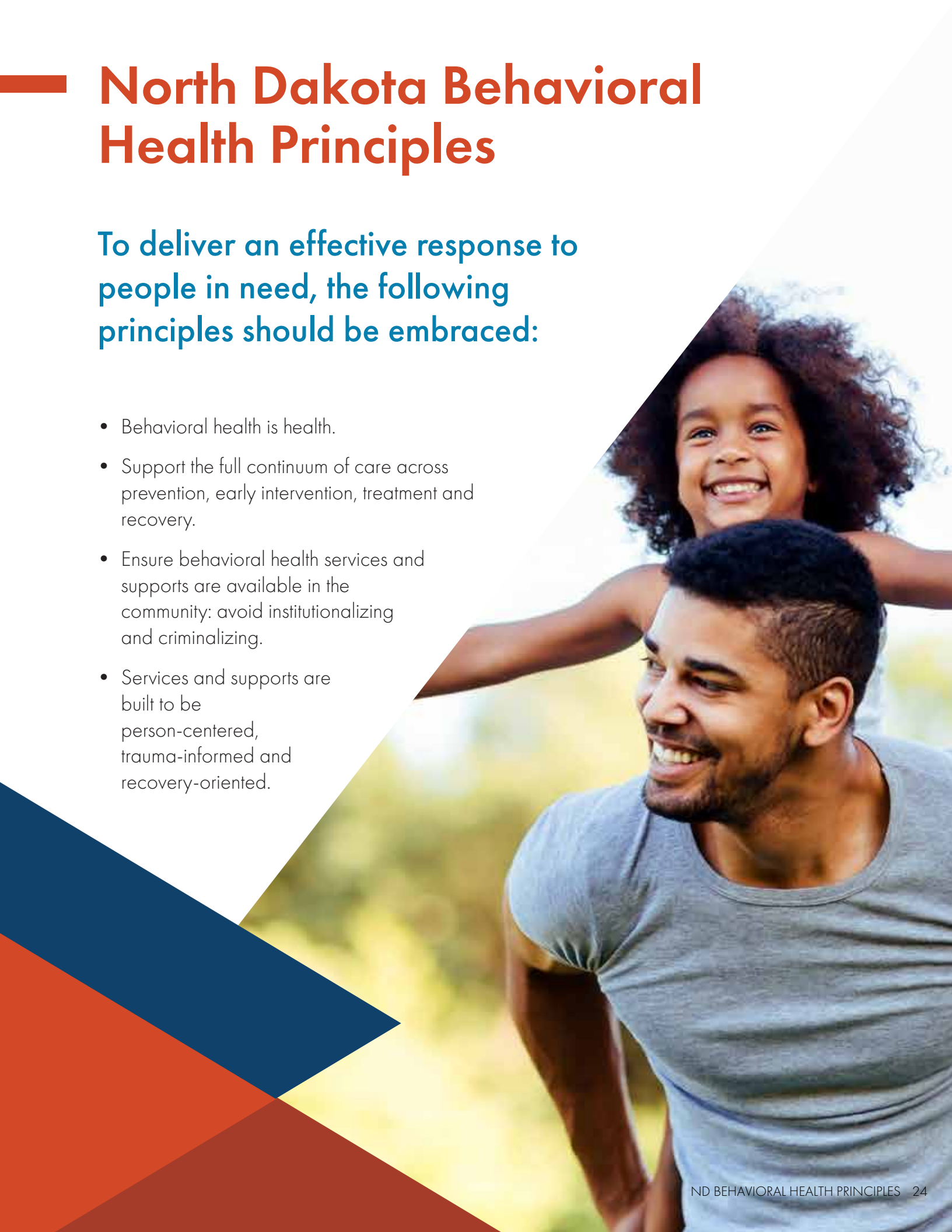
Syringe Service Programs are an important component to both disease prevention and connecting people to services. In 2023, **378** individuals were referred to substance use treatment as a result of syringe service programs.

694 individuals indicated that they had used Narcan for a total of **1,403** lives saved.

North Dakota Behavioral Health Principles

To deliver an effective response to people in need, the following principles should be embraced:

- Behavioral health is health.
- Support the full continuum of care across prevention, early intervention, treatment and recovery.
- Ensure behavioral health services and supports are available in the community: avoid institutionalizing and criminalizing.
- Services and supports are built to be person-centered, trauma-informed and recovery-oriented.



Foundation of Well-being

WE WANT TO SEE:

Individuals and strong, stable families thriving with their behavioral health while supported by communities and businesses that prioritize well-being.

Individuals struggling with behavioral health conditions achieve independence and live a self-directed life in recovery.

WE ACHIEVE THIS BY:

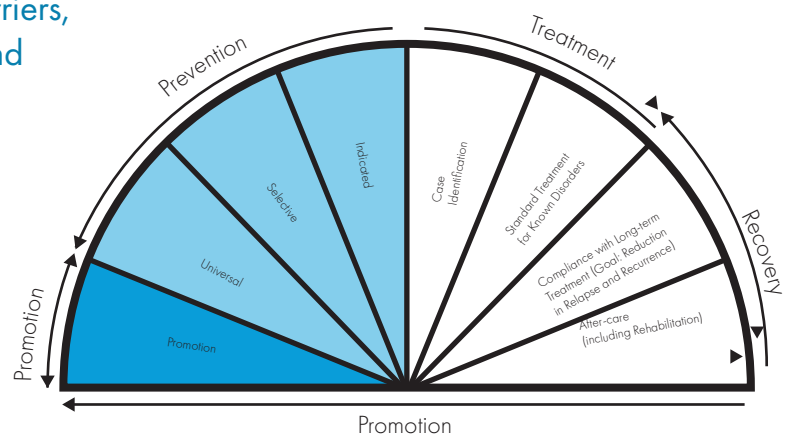
Identifying and addressing the many factors that influence an individual's likelihood to develop a substance misuse or related behavioral health problem.

These can be described as:

- Social determinants of health
- Risk and protective factors
- Building resiliency
- Adverse Childhood Experiences

Behavioral health is an essential part of overall health in which promotion removes barriers, prevention works, treatment is useful and people recover.

Services throughout this continuum of care should reflect current knowledge, technology and evidence-based practice. Throughout all levels of the continuum, there should be continuous promotion of healthy behaviors and lifestyles, a primary driver of health outcomes.



SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION:

What it is, Why it Matters & What Works

What is Prevention?

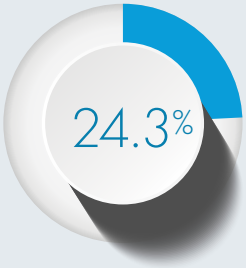
Prevention is a proactive approach; creating an environment that promotes the health and well-being of individuals and communities, which prevents problems before they occur.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

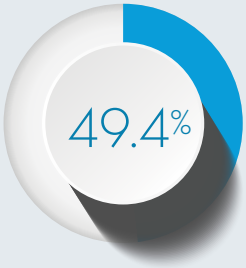
- Prevention is cost-effective; saving $64 for every $1 invested (on average).[26]
- Prevention improves the health of individuals, families and communities.
- Prevention decreases consequences and saves lives.

WHAT WORKS?

- Prevention focuses on reducing risk factors, strengthening protective factors and building resiliency of individuals, families and communities.
- Prevention follows the Public Health Model, focusing on population-level change.
- Prevention requires a multi-faceted approach, implementing a variety of evidence-based strategies working toward a common goal.
- It can take time to see the results of prevention.



24.3% of ND **adults** report their community is taking strong action to prevent the misuse of alcohol and other drugs.[8]



Half of ND **adults (49.4%)** are concerned about whether their community has sufficient alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs.[8]

Behavioral Health Resource Highlights

Find Behavioral Health Services

The North Dakota Mental Health Program Directory provides a single place for North Dakota citizens to search for mental health services that meet their needs. This registry allows users to:

- Search by location and other details
- View program information, including program name, address and phone number

Find a mental health program near you:
hhs.nd.gov/behavioral-health/directory

North Dakota Human Service Centers (Community Behavioral Health Clinics)

North Dakota Health and Human Services' Behavioral Health Division operates eight regional clinics that provide behavioral health services to North Dakotans. Each center serves a designated multi-county area.

Visit www.hhs.nd.gov/HSC to find a location near you.

Behavioral Health Resource Highlights

Recovery Talk

If you don't know where to begin getting help with addiction for yourself or someone you know—start here. Call or text 701.291.7901 to speak to a trained peer support specialist with lived experience in addiction to chat and receive support.

988 Crisis Lifeline

If you or someone you know needs support, call or text 988 or chat 988Lifeline.org. 988 connects you with a trained crisis counselor who can help.

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