



NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIALS

Leading the Way to Healthier Communities

AUGUST 2026

Harm Reduction Newsletter

Featured Resources

Cannabis Honestly Education Campaign | NYS Office of Cannabis Management

On July 13, 2026, The New York State Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) launched [Cannabis Honestly](#), a new **statewide cannabis education campaign** designed to provide young people and the trusted adults in their lives with clear, practical, and evidence-informed information about cannabis.

The campaign was developed following more than a year of statewide listening sessions involving over 450 New Yorkers, including nearly 300 young people and 140 parents, caregivers, educators, and other trusted adults. Participants consistently expressed a need for honest information, practical resources, and support navigating conversations about cannabis. OCM found that while nearly 60% of young people said they would turn to a parent or trusted adult with questions about cannabis, only about 1 in 10 adults felt prepared to have those conversations.

The Cannabis Honestly campaign includes a new website, cannabishonestly.org, featuring:

- Information on cannabis products, New York State laws, health effects, safe storage, myths and misinformation, and frequently asked questions
- Resources tailored for both young people and trusted adults
- An interactive Cannabis Conversation Starter Tool to help adults navigate discussions with youth
- A practical guide, How to Talk to Young People About Weed
- Downloadable and printable educational materials available in both English and Spanish

The campaign is intended for:

- Young people ages 11–17
- Parents, caregivers, and family members
- Teachers, coaches, mentors, faith leaders, and other trusted adults

OCM is encouraging community organizations, schools, and public health partners to help share campaign resources through newsletters, social media, community events, and existing youth and family programming. Free educational materials can also be ordered through OCM's Cannabis Education Library.

**Addressing the Intersection of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs),
Suicide, Overdose, and Mental Health Concerns |ASTHO**

Part of a new suite of resources, ASTHO's action guide helps support public health agencies addressing the interconnected impacts of ACEs, suicide, overdose, and mental health concerns through coordinated prevention strategies rather than siloed approaches. The [roadmap](#) serves as a starting point, offering a high-level overview of key prevention strategies and helping agencies identify the approaches most relevant to their priorities and programs. Additionally, it is encouraged to return to the [Suicide, Overdose, and Adverse Childhood Experiences Prevention Capacity Assessment Tool](#) to support ongoing capacity building by helping organizations assess progress, identify gaps, and strengthen coordinated prevention efforts. [Read more.](#)

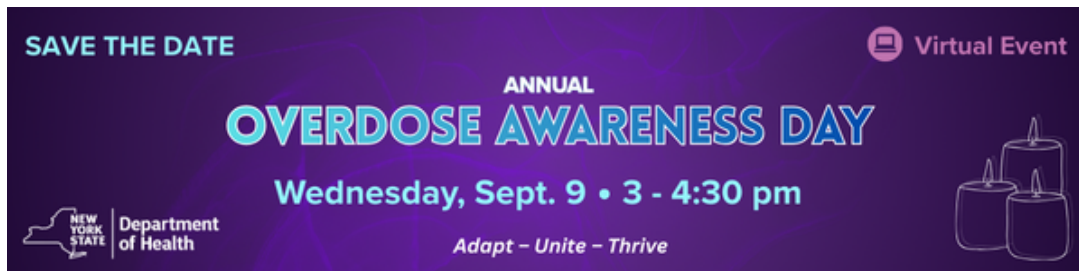
Upcoming Events

NYSACHO's 2026 Statewide Harm Reduction Symposium for LHDs | November 17-18 | Troy, NY



We are excited to announce that **registration is now open** for the 2026 Harm Reduction Symposium! It will take place on November 17-18, 2026, at the Hilton Garden Inn Troy. The theme for this year is, *"Meeting the Moment: Building Stronger Community-Based Systems."* LHDs are encouraged to identify **two representatives** to attend the symposium. Ideally, this would be one LHD staff, and one community partner you work with closely on overdose prevention and response activities. NYSACHO will provide lodging for these two representatives from each county.

On October 2, registration will close, and we will open the waitlist for counties looking to send additional representatives. [Click here to view more information and register for the symposium!](#) Please carefully review all details on the landing page, and feel free to contact **Danielle Pellino (dpellino@nysacho.org)** directly with any additional questions! We hope to see you in November 😊



New York State Harm Reduction Association (NYSHRA) Annual Conference | November 9-10 | Utica, NY



Join NYSHRA for their annual harm reduction conference at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Utica in Utica, NY on November 9-10, 2026! This event will bring together harm reduction professionals, advocates, people with lived experience, and community members from across New York State for two days of connection, learning, and collaboration. The theme of this year's event is *"Honoring the Past, Mapping the Future."*

[Click here for registration, more information on lodging, and agenda details to come!](#)

Funding and Training Opportunities

NEW NYSACHO Webinar!

Innovations in Polysubstance Overdose Response: Responding More Effectively and Compassionately | August 27 from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM |

[Register here!](#)

As the unregulated drug supply continues to evolve, overdose response must evolve with it. This webinar will provide participants with practical, evidence-informed strategies for recognizing and responding to polysubstance overdoses using a compassionate, person-centered approach.

Participants will learn about current drug supply trends, common adulterants, and overdose presentations, as well as a practical assessment approach to determine when naloxone is appropriate and when airway support, breathing assistance, and monitoring are the most effective response. Drawing on more than 30 years of harm reduction experience, Dr. Ramsey will share real-world lessons to help participants strengthen overdose response in today's rapidly changing drug landscape.

Kelly S. Ramsey, MD, MPH, MA, FACP, DFASAM is a board-certified internal medicine and addiction medicine physician who has treated substance use disorder since 2004. She has focused her career on providing care for people who use drugs, treating HIV, hepatitis C (HCV), and substance use disorder. Dr. Ramsey has been an ardent harm reductionist for over 30 years since she volunteered at the Santa Cruz Needle Exchange in the mid-1990s.

Integrating Substance Use Prevention for Youth Into Physical Health Care Systems | August 11 at 2:00 PM | [Register here!](#)

Join the Center of Excellence for Integrated Health Solutions and the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Agency Directors on Aug. 11, 2026, 2-3:30 p.m. ET, for a webinar exploring how youth substance use prevention can be integrated into physical health care settings.

Presenters will discuss how integrated care can promote early intervention within health settings to support long-term wellbeing for youth. Participants will hear real-world examples from states and providers that are partnering across systems to bring prevention into primary care, pediatric care, school-based health centers and community clinics.

Protecting Young Minds: Free Prevention Resources for Youth, Families, and Communities | August 19 at 10:00 AM | [Register here!](#)

Discover free, evidence-informed prevention resources designed to support youth, families, educators, healthcare professionals, and community organizations. Join Addiction Policy Forum and Prevention Action Alliance for Protecting Young Minds: Free Prevention Resources for Youth, Families, and Communities. Learn about the [Protect Your Brain](#) and [Protege tu Cerebro](#) self-paced e-courses, along with additional no-cost tools that can strengthen prevention efforts in schools, healthcare settings, and communities.

Doing More With Less: How Counties Can Successfully Address Behavioral Health Crisis Response Needs | August 20 at 2:00 PM | [Register here!](#)

Increased workforce strain and rising complex care needs test county health departments' ability to deliver high-quality care. Join John Eller, County Manager, Cabarrus County Government, Ben Wehmeier, President and CEO of Watertown Community Health Foundation and Kevin Denmark, Senior Vice President of Behavioral Health at Bamboo Health, for a practical discussion on strategies county health departments can use to maximize resources and improve care outcomes. Whether you're a county health officer, behavioral health director, or a local administrator navigating the realities of constrained resources, this session will give you a tangible roadmap for turning real-time technology into your most powerful and scalable workforce multiplier.

This webinar will explore:

- Key considerations for supporting high-need, complex populations — justice-involved individuals, Medicaid recipients, and rural residents with limited access
- Why the crisis care continuum is a critical area of focus for improving clinical and financial outcomes
- How automated, real-time data and crisis management tools help county health leaders improve care outcomes, workforce satisfaction, and the bottom line

Articles and Reports

****Specific to NY**

(8/4) [U.S. Overdose Deaths Are Declining, Just Not for Everyone](#)

(8/1) [Centering Veteran expertise: advancing peer-led harm reduction in the Veterans health administration](#)

(7/30) [New York State addiction commissioner visits Western New York to hear from recovery community**](#)

(7/30) [Strategies to Address the Rural Access Gap in Substance Use Services](#)

(7/22) [Schuyler County to Begin Life-Saving Leave Behind Initiative**](#)

(7/7) [Trends in Hospital Stays Associated With Alcohol, Opioid, and Stimulant Use](#)

(7/6) [The habitus of care: Overdose normalization, reversal expertise, and the invisible moral labor of people who use drugs](#)

(7/1) [Measuring What Matters: Using OSPRI and OMM to Strengthen Overdose Prevention](#)

(6/29) [Motivators, Barriers, and Likelihood of Contacting 988 for Substance Use Support: Implications for Marketing, Promotion, and Practice](#)

NYSACHO | 8 Airport Park Blvd | Latham, NY 12110 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!