

Cook County Department of Public Health Quarterly Report to the Cook County Board of Commissioners in their capacity as the Cook County Board of Health

4th Quarter Report 2025 – Community Behavioral Health Unit

Presenters:

Kiran Joshi, MD, MPH, Chief Operating Officer

Hanna Kite, MPH, Director of Community Behavioral Health

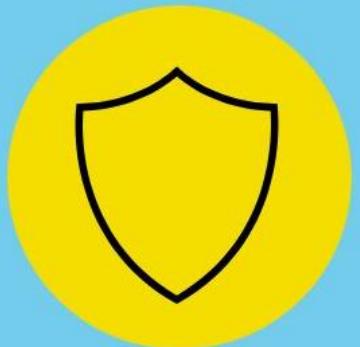


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BUILDING
HEALTHIER
COMMUNITIES

We Are Your Local Health Department



Protect Health

- ✓ Outbreak Investigations
- ✓ Disease Control
- ✓ Inspections
- ✓ Emergency Preparedness & Response



Prevent Disease

- ✓ Policy, Systems & Environmental Change
- ✓ Screenings
- ✓ Vaccines
- ✓ Home Visits - Public Health Nursing



Inform & Engage

- ✓ Public Information & Media
- ✓ Community Partnerships
- ✓ Health Education & Outreach
- ✓ Guidance to Schools and Healthcare Providers

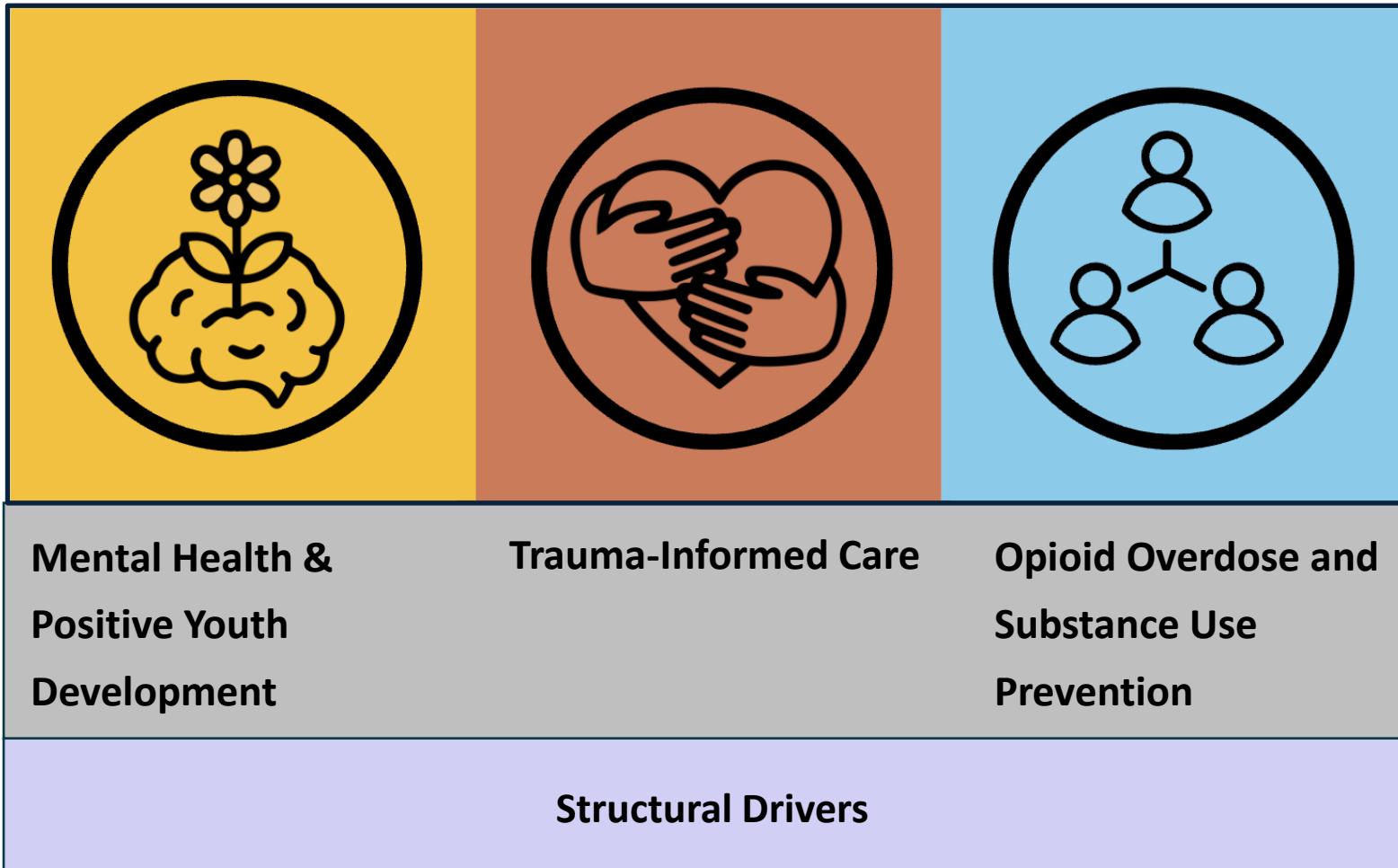


Data for Action

- ✓ Chronic diseases, social determinants, healthcare access
- ✓ Communicable diseases
- ✓ Vaccination data

Advance Health Equity

Program Areas



Mental Health & Positive Youth Development

- Cultivates partnerships through regional convenings and participation in community collaboratives and events
- Supports 27 funded partners:
 - **Promotes social/emotional learning, mentorship**
 - 88% of Southland youth engaged in Big Brothers Big Sisters program said they increased self-regulation and emotional management
 - **Creates safe spaces** such as Latina Women's Support Group (Hoffman Estates) and Queer Prom (KYC)
 - Provides **mental health treatment and education**
 - Provided telehealth visits for youth (South Cook ISC)
 - Hosted sessions on executive functioning for teens and parents (Pillars Community Health)
 - Produces in-depth analysis to drive action



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Building Healthier Communities Grantees

- Arab American Family Services
- Asian Health Coalition
- Aunt Martha's Health and Wellness
- Barbara W. Smith Family Life Center
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Black Alphabet
- Chicago Recovery Alliance
- Community Consolidated School District 21
- Family Guidance Centers
- Girls on the Run Chicago
- Hoffman Estates Department of Health & Human Svcs
- Housing Forward
- Kenneth Young Center
- Legacy Medical Care
- NAMI Chicago
- NAMI Metro Suburban
- North Cook Intermediate Service Center
- Northwest Center Against Sexual Assault
- Pathlights Human Services
- Pillars Community Health
- Proactive Community Services
- Playworks Illinois
- Quinn Center of St. Eulalia
- School District 89 Education Foundation
- Shelter Inc.
- South Cook Intermediate Service Center
- Thrive Counseling Center
- West40
- Youth Crossroads
- Youth Guidance
- YWCA Metropolitan Chicago



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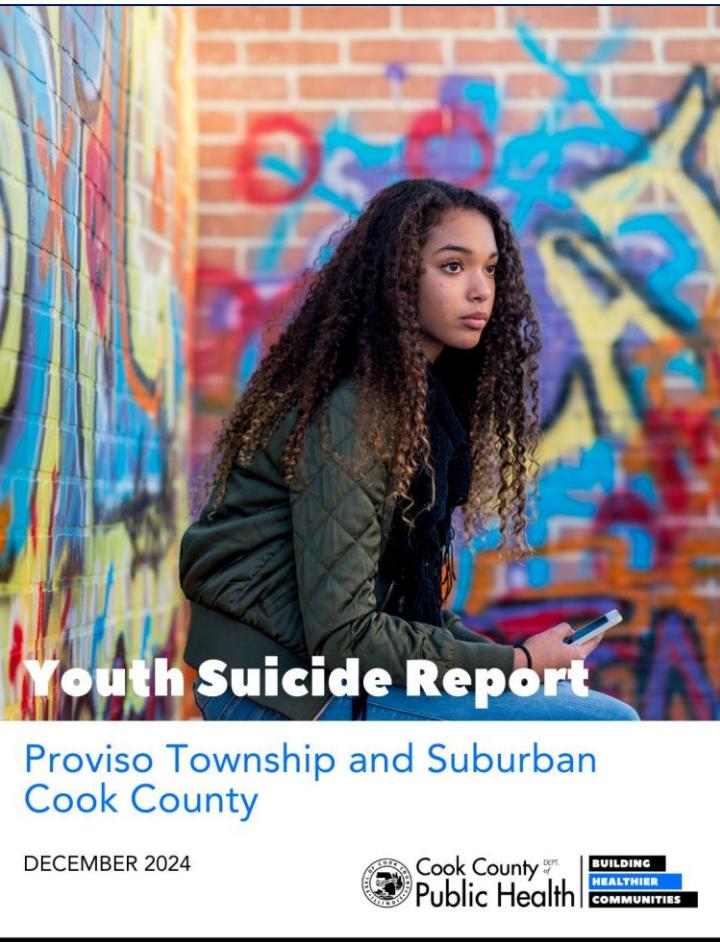
CBHU Convenings



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Suicide Prevention



15%

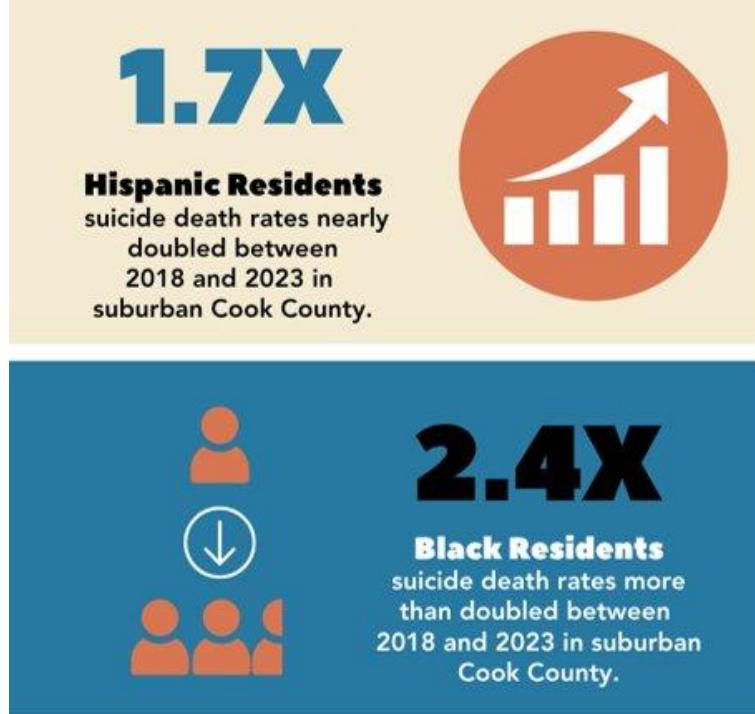
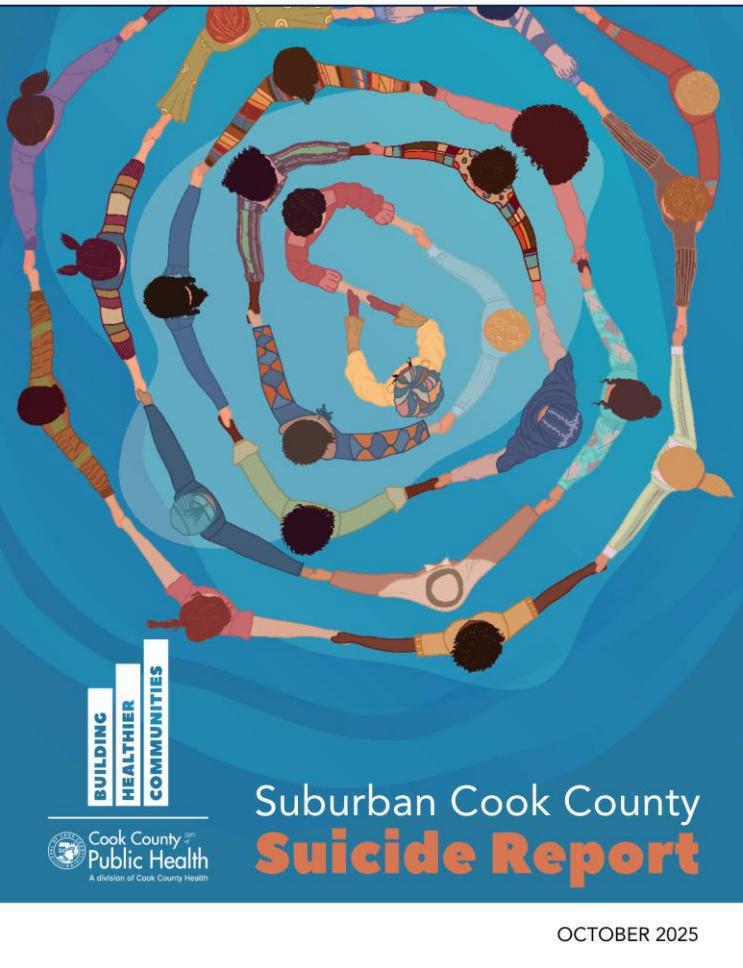
15% (16,540) of high school
students reported having
seriously considered
attempting suicide in 2022.



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Suicide Prevention



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Suicide Prevention



Strengthen economic supports



Create protective environments



Improve access and delivery of care



Promote healthy connections



Teach problem-solving & coping skills



Identify and support people at risk



Lessen harms and prevent future risk



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Crisis Care System

“Before today none of us had even heard of 988. If it works like you say, it sounds great, but I still worry they might take us to jail instead.” —

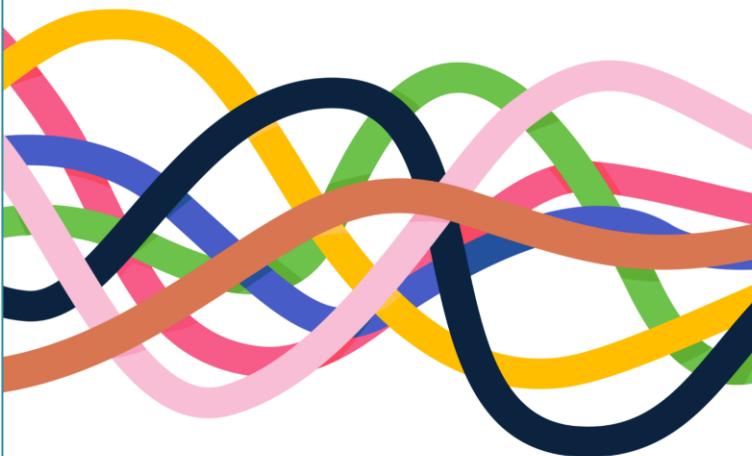
Community member

“We’re listed as a 988 crisis provider and offer Mobile Crisis Response but sometimes calls meant for 911 wellness checks get mishandled. It’s critical these services coordinate clearly.” — *Provider*

Focus groups were held with community members and providers as part of a strength and needs assessment of the suburban Cook County crisis system.

Community & Provider Voices

Strengths and Opportunities in the Suburban Cook County Crisis Care System



NOVEMBER 2025

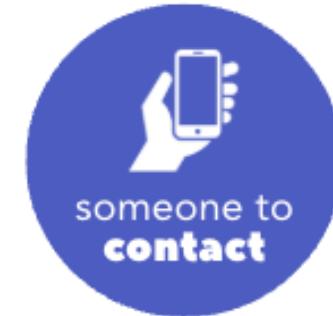


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Crisis Care System

- Increase awareness of 9-8-8 in the community using outreach through trusted community leaders, organizations, and institutions.
- Improve access to culturally responsive crisis care in all regions of suburban Cook County.
- Improve coordination between service providers for smooth transitions of care and “no wrong door” entry points, in coordination with CESSA oversight bodies, and balancing regional assets and needs with consistency across the state.
- Invest in diversification and a reinforced crisis workforce
- Create systems for ongoing aftercare support and engagement, including opportunities to address social determinants of health



Restorative Justice



860

School Districts in
the State of Illinois



143

School Districts in
Suburban Cook County



13.5%

IL School Districts in Top 20%
in Suspension Rate



14.7%

SCC School Districts in Top 20%
in Suspension Rate



10.6%

IL School Districts in Top 20%
in Racial Disproportionality Rate



16.1%

SCC School Districts in Top 20%
in Racial Disproportionality Rate



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Opioid and Substance Use Prevention

- Distributes naloxone and test strips to community organizations through CCDPH's distribution program and funded partners.
 - Since December 2020, at least 186 naloxone doses have been used in an overdose events.
- Provides free trainings on how to recognize and respond to an opioid-involved overdose
- Supports four funded partners to expand harm reduction services in suburban Cook County
- Produces analysis of opioid risk factors, harms, root causes, and opportunities to influence policy and systems change



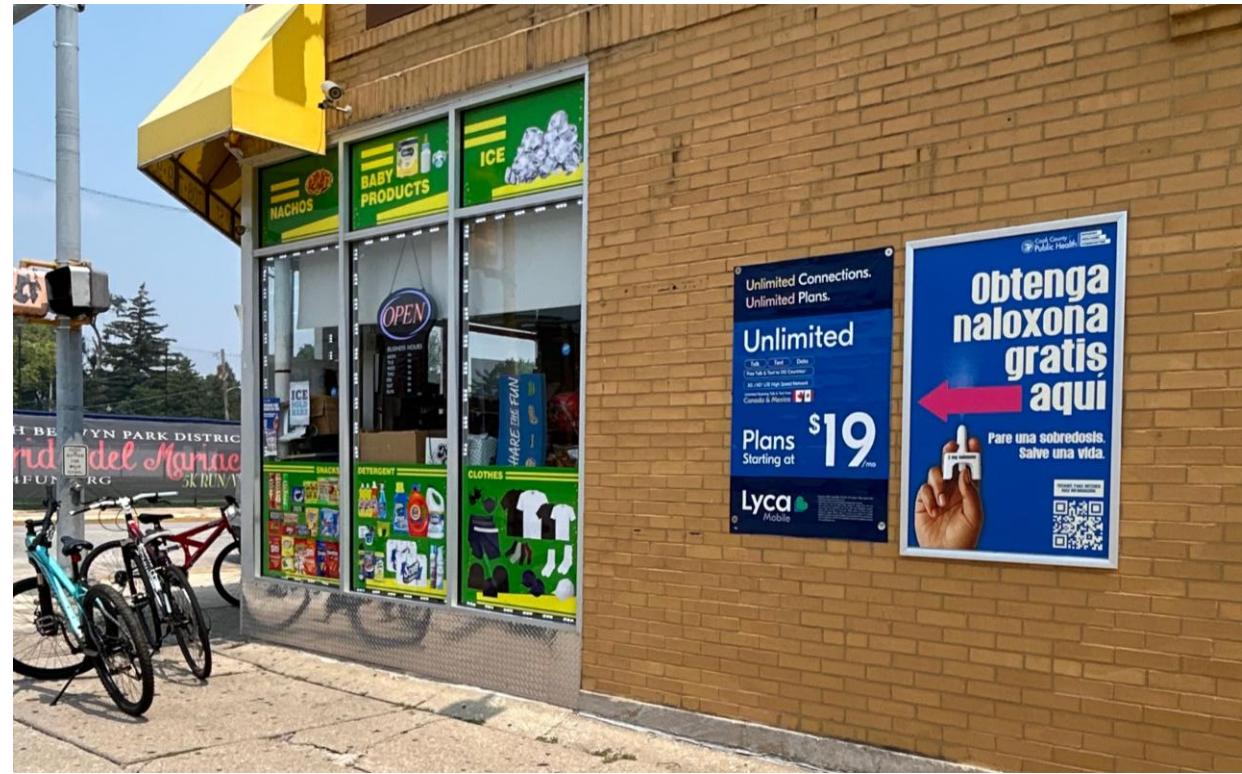
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Community Naloxone Box Program



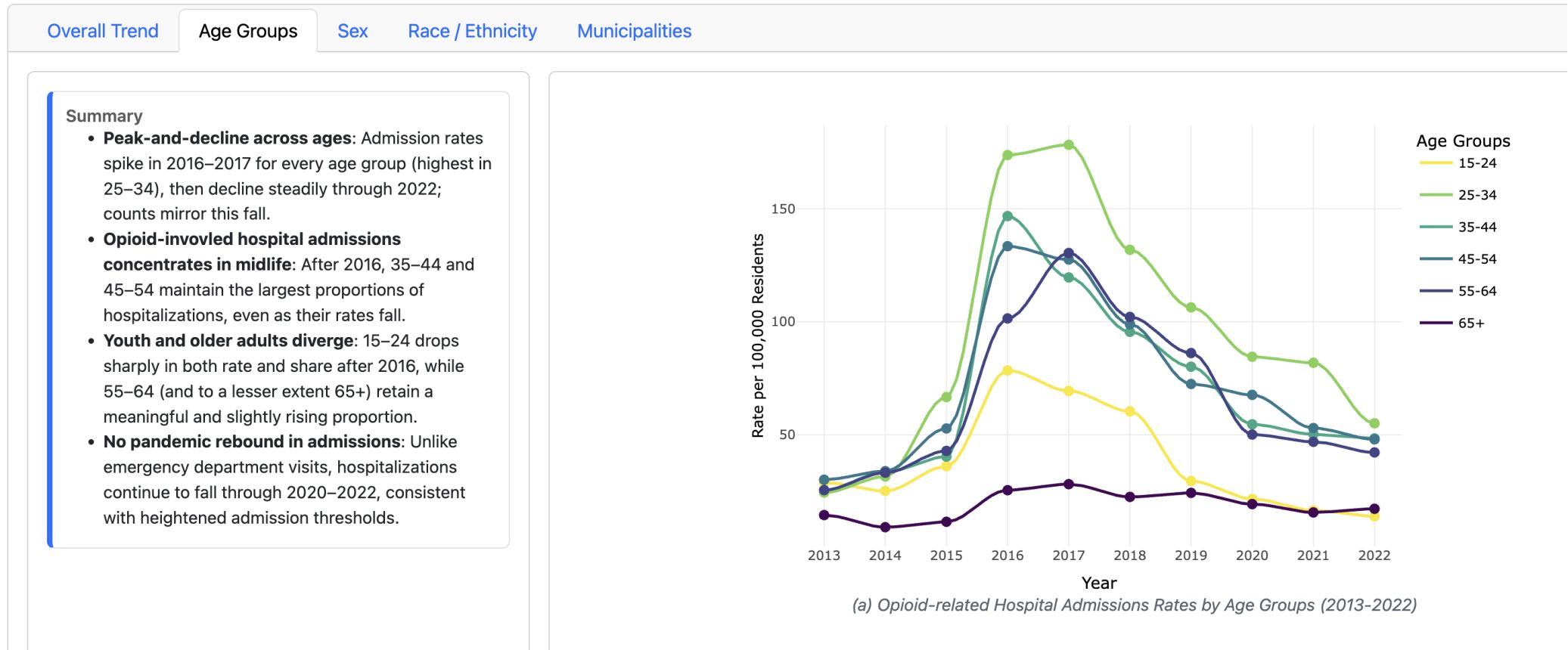
Get Naloxone Ad Campaign



Between August and October 2025:

- 1.4 million video views
- 86,293 website clicks

Data & Policy Analysis



Data & Policy Analysis

HARM REDUCTION RESEARCH BRIEF • February 2022

 Cook County Public Health
Promoting health. Preventing disease. Protecting well-being.

Overdose Prevention Sites

Based on the scientific literature, Cook County Department of Public Health has found that Overdose Prevention Sites (OPS) are a vital harm reduction strategy with clear public health benefits

Government-sanctioned OPS started in the 1980s as places for people who use drugs to inject, heroin, cocaine, and other drugs under the supervision of medical personnel.¹ OPS are a harm reduction strategy that aim to reduce overdose deaths and other harms from drug use. Over 100 sites now exist across the globe.² Scientific studies published in peer-reviewed journals have demonstrated that OPS decrease overdose deaths and suggest that OPS also reduce the transmission of HIV, Hepatitis C, and other blood-borne infectious diseases. OPS also connect people who use drugs (PWUD) to substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs.³

Based on the scientific evidence, Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) believes that OPS are a vital harm reduction strategy with clear public health benefits. Harm reduction services in CCDPH's jurisdiction of suburban Cook County are few and far between, and there is a need for OPS and expanded harm reduction services in the suburbs.

Medical professional organizations have also supported OPS. In 2017, The American Medical Association endorsed the development of pilot OPS as part of a comprehensive strategy to address synthetic and injectable drugs. In its statement, the American Medical Association cited research on the reduction in overdose deaths and disease transmission, and the increase in people starting substance use disorder treatment as a result of OPS.⁴ The American Society of Addiction Medicine also released a statement of support for OPS, further arguing for their necessity given the surge in drug overdoses during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵

Both Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx and Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul have expressed support for OPS.^{6,7} State's Attorney Foxx traveled with a delegation of Illinois advocates to Toronto to visit an overdose prevention site in June 2019, and later signed a legal brief in support of OPS.⁸ In August 2020, following mounting pressure upon the growing support for innovative solutions to the opioid epidemic, Governor Pritzker issued an executive order calling for the implementation of programs that may promote safer drug use and prevent drug overdoses.

OVERDOSE PREVENTION SITES AT-A-GLANCE

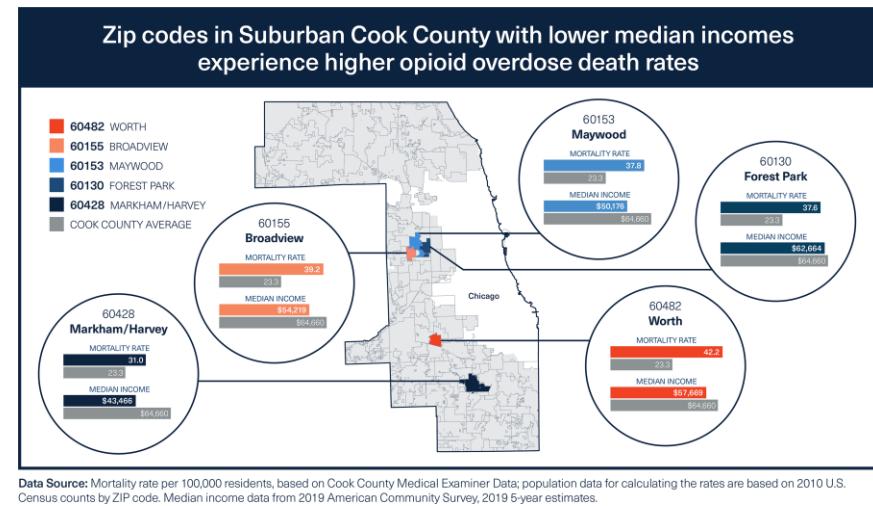
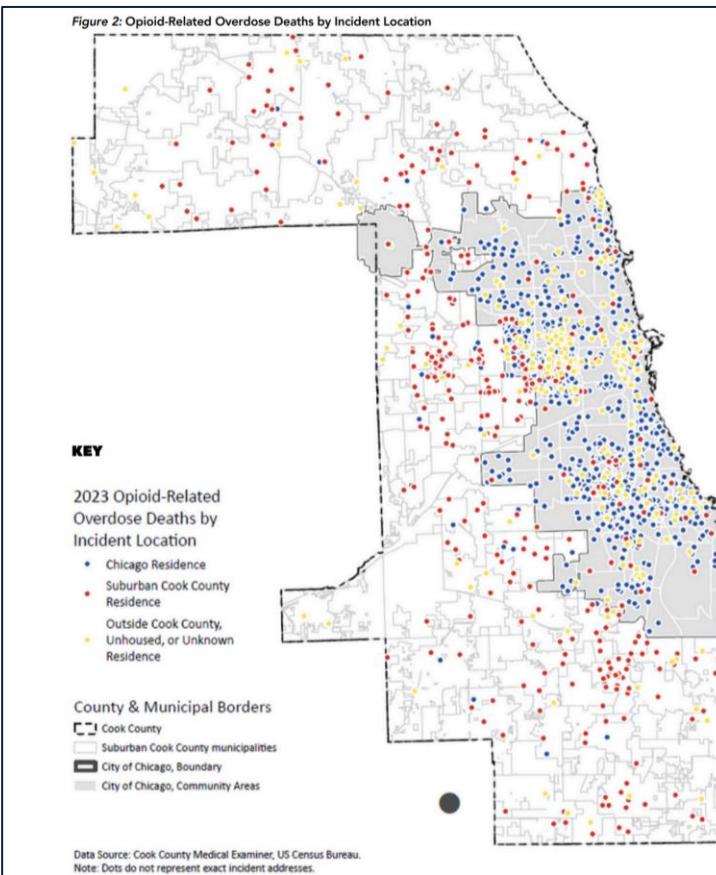
Over 100 OPS exist across the globe. Studies demonstrate the potential to:

- Reduce overdose deaths
- Decrease disease transmission
- Decrease area crime
- Increase addiction treatment and social services



InSite, an overdose prevention site in Canada, provides clean equipment for people who use drugs to consume pre-obtained drugs. Clinical staff, like nurse Tim Gauthier above, are also on hand to respond to overdose events.

Photo credit: Sound Publishing



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Trauma-Informed Care

- Since 2018, CBHU has facilitated the implementation of Trauma-informed Care at Cook County Health
- CBHU:
 - Trains CCH employees
 - 756 employees trained in 2025
 - Convenes CCH TIC Collaborative
 - Facilitates four committees:
 - Organizational Assessment, Screening, Policy, and Communications



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The Team



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What to Watch for in 2026

- Supporting community-based power building organizations to address structural drivers of behavioral health
- Elevating youth voice and advocacy
- Creation of safe and healing spaces through the Community Mental Health Forums
- Supporting the creation of a more equitable crisis care system
- In-depth analysis of restorative practices implementation and support for schools



Graduates of NAMI Metro Suburban's CRSS Success Program celebrate after receiving their Recovery Support Specialist certification.



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Thank you