

# Responding to Overdoses in an Ever-Changing Environment

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INDIANA MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION CONFERENCE

# Learning Objectives

Describe syndromic surveillance and understand how it is utilized to enhance timely overdose response across local communities in Indiana.

Learn the epidemiology of xylazine and the health implications for patients exposed to xylazine in the illicit drug supply.

Describe the Fayette County Connection Café's overdose prevention strategies and evaluation as an illustration of a successful community-based approach.

# Syndromic Surveillance

## Ongoing collection and assessment of health-related data

- Near “real time”
- Precedes diagnosis and lab results
- Identify sufficient probability that a case or an outbreak may warrant public health response

# Overdose Surveillance

## Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-Based Epidemics (ESSENCE)

- Online database with patient records from reporting hospital and urgent care facilities
- Detection algorithm identifies increases in baseline activity across syndromes

# Overdose Response

ESSENCE detects when the count of overdose-related ED visits has exceeded the baseline



The epidemiologist validates the records and determines if the activity may warrant further public health response

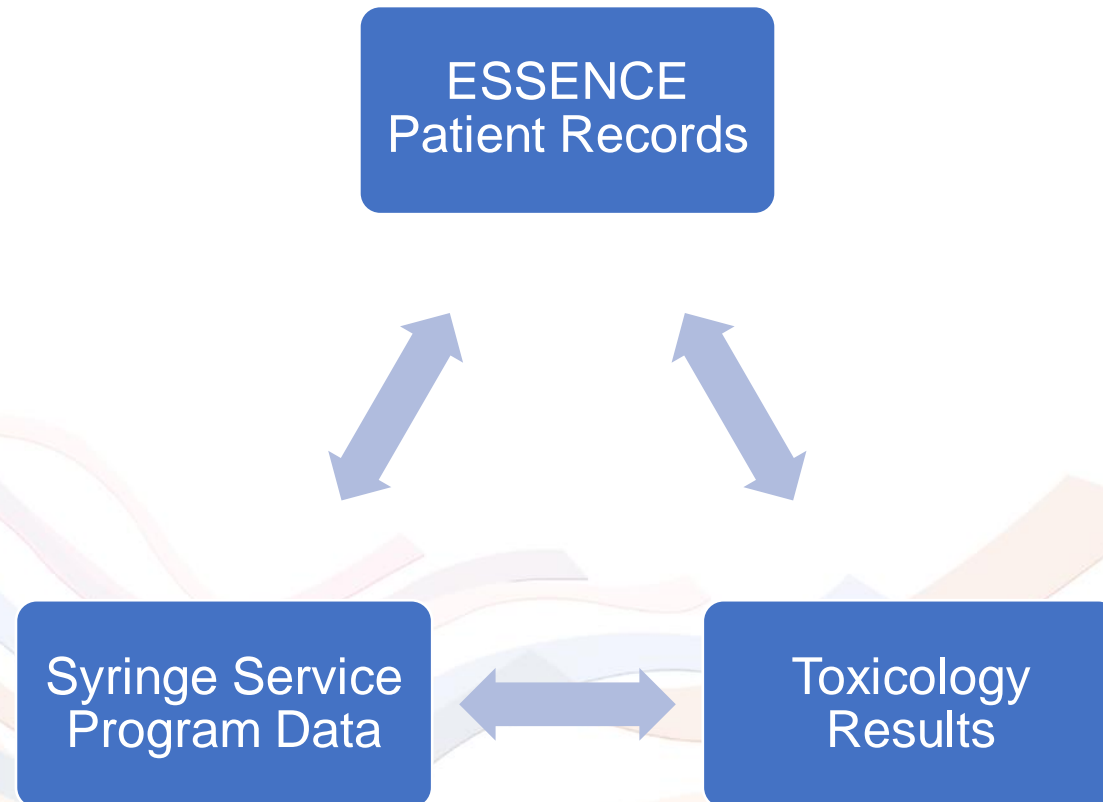


The epidemiologist collects and analyzes demographic, geographical, and situational information



The epidemiologist sends out an alert to local health department and other relevant local and state partners

# Surveillance of Emerging Substances



On April 12, 2023, the White House designated fentanyl combined with xylazine as an emerging threat facing the United States due to its role in the ongoing opioid crisis.

# What is Xylazine?

- Non-opioid tranquilizer used in veterinary medicine
  - Sedative with analgesic and muscle relaxant properties
- First approved by the FDA in 1972 for use in veterinary medicine

Commonly used as an anesthetic and pain reliever for:

- Cattle
- Horses
- Sheep
- Dogs
- Cats
- Exotic Animals





# Xylazine, an emerging adulterant

- Xylazine is *not* approved for use in humans
- Xylazine is often mixed with illicit substances such as *heroin, fentanyl, meth, cocaine, and benzodiazepines*
- Xylazine may be used *intentionally or unintentionally*
- Users may ingest xylazine through smoking, snorting, or injecting

Also known by its street names: *tranq, tranq dope, sleep-cut, philly dope*

# Xylazine, clinical effects

- Rapid onset within minutes
- Development of skin ulcers and wounds
  - Often severe and painful, presenting with necrosis and black eschars
  - Commonly found among users who inject the drug

## Common Clinical Effects

- Hypotension (↓ blood pressure)
- Bradycardia (↓ heart rate)
- Arrhythmias
- Hyperglycemia
- Skin lesions and necrotic ulcers
- Unconsciousness
- Drowsiness
- Coma
- Death

# Xylazine, overdose risk

- Xylazine in combination with opioids or other central nervous system depressants increases the risk of an overdose
- Xylazine is not an opioid
  - Naloxone administration may not be as effective at fully reversing a xylazine overdose
  - Administer naloxone and call 911 when an overdose is suspected

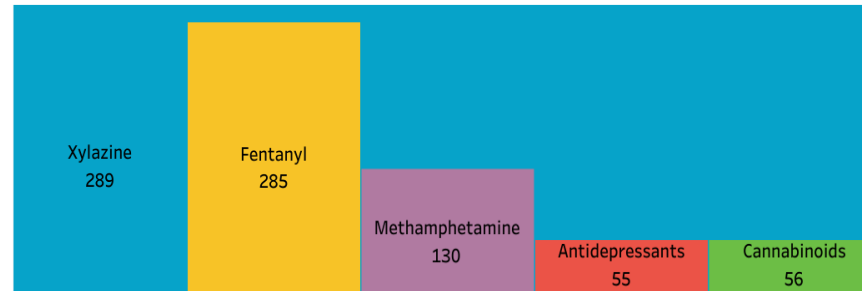


# Xylazine, Indiana prevalence

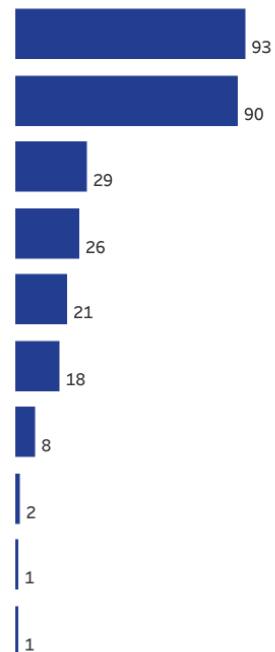
- From 2020 to 2023, 322 decedents in Indiana have had a positive toxicology result for xylazine
  - Xylazine is a required substance on the IDOH toxicology testing panel

<b>Xylazine</b>	<b>Year</b>					
Frequency	2020	2021	2022	2023	<Null>	<b>Total</b>
Positive	47	120	120	30	5	<b>322</b>

# Occurrence of Xylazine, Fentanyl, Methamphetamine, Cannabinoids, and Antidepressants in 2020 to 2022 Decedents in Indiana



Decedents who tested positive for:



Substance Combination	Xylazine	Fentanyl	Methamphetamine	Antidepressants	Cannabinoids
Xylazine and Fentanyl	✓	✓			
Xylazine, Fentanyl, and Methamphetamine	✓	✓	✓		
Xylazine, Fentanyl, and Antidepressants	✓	✓		✓	
Xylazine, Fentanyl, and Cannabinoids	✓	✓			✓
Xylazine, Fentanyl, Methamphetamine, and Cannabinoids	✓	✓	✓		✓
Xylazine, Fentanyl, Methamphetamine, and Antidepressants	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Xylazine, Fentanyl, Antidepressants, and Cannabinoids	✓	✓		✓	✓
Xylazine	✓				
Xylazine and Cannabinoids	✓				✓
Xylazine and Methamphetamine	✓		✓		

# Summary

Access to near real-time data through syndromic surveillance allows information for rapid response to increases in overdoses across the state

Overdose surveillance provides insight into new or emerging substances of interest, such as xylazine

Responding to overdoses in ever-changing environment requires partnership, engagement, and collaboration

# Fayette County, IN

- Rural population of **23,376**
- **15.1%** have a Bachelor's degree (or higher)
- **13.6%** are in poverty
- Median household income is **\$48,101**
- **62.6** deaths (per 100,000) in Fayette County due to **any opioid** compared to **34.1** deaths (per 100,000) in Indiana in 2021



# Project Timeline

## 2020

Awarded three-year HRSA RCORP-Implementation funding to launch prevention, treatment, and recovery interventions in Fayette County

## 2019

Awarded HRSA RCORP-Planning funding to draft assessment & proposal for addressing opioid use in Fayette County

Previous SSP was under the local health department and served ~20 people/week

## 2022

After being open for a year, the Connection Café becomes its own independent entity and a certified 501(c)3

Street outreach efforts were launched in October

## 2021

Launched Fayette County Connection Café, a harm reduction hub offering supplies and recovery coach services, with 1 employee

## 2023

Connection Café becomes a certified Recovery Community Organization (RCO)

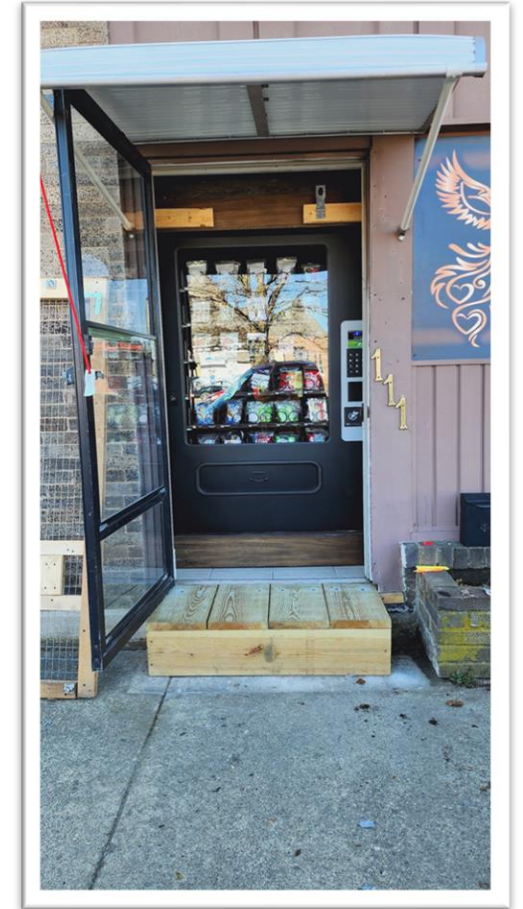
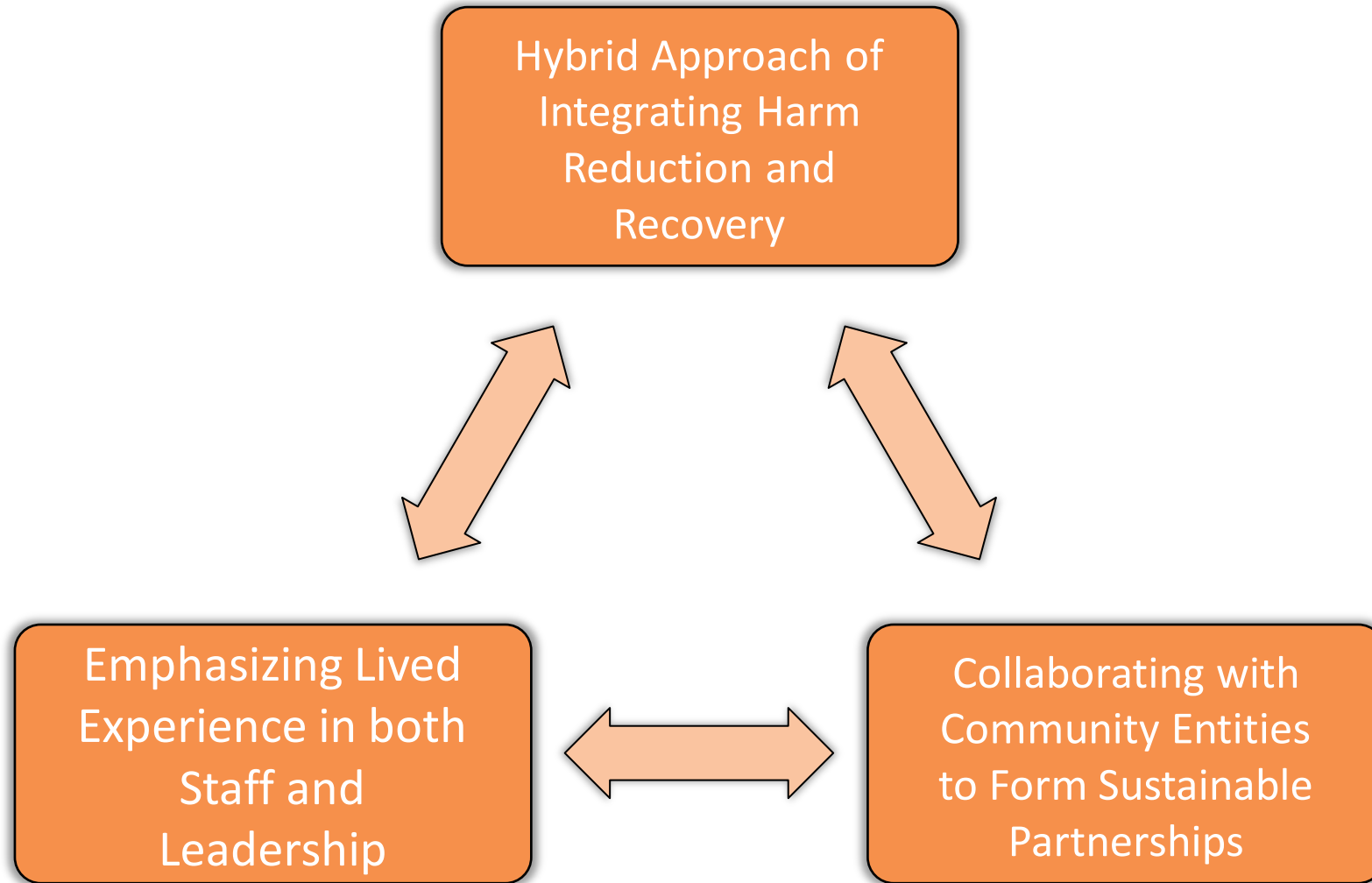
Added a harm reduction vending machine in February for anonymous, 24-hour service



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# Connection Café Model



# Hours, Activities, and Staffing



## Schedule

- The Café is currently open 6 days/week for 32 hours/week
- The Café provides a variety of harm reduction services and support groups during these hours

## Street Outreach

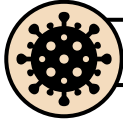
- On Mondays and Wednesdays, Café staff engage in street outreach efforts
- The goal is to bring supplies and support to those who are not engaging with the Café

## Staff

- The Café currently has 10 employees (5 interns)
- Café staff have trained 15 community health workers
- All Café staff and over 50% of the Board have lived experience

# Connection Café Services

## Harm Reduction



HIV/HCV Testing

Safer Sex Supplies



Referrals to Services



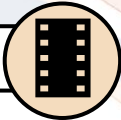
Syringe Access/Disposal



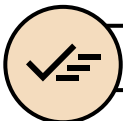
Naloxone Access



Fentanyl Test Strips



HR Vending Machine

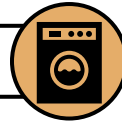


## Quality of Life



Shower Facility

Washer & Dryer



Peer Support



Computer & Printer Use



Coffee & Water



## Prosocial



Live Music

Poetry



Card Games



Storytelling

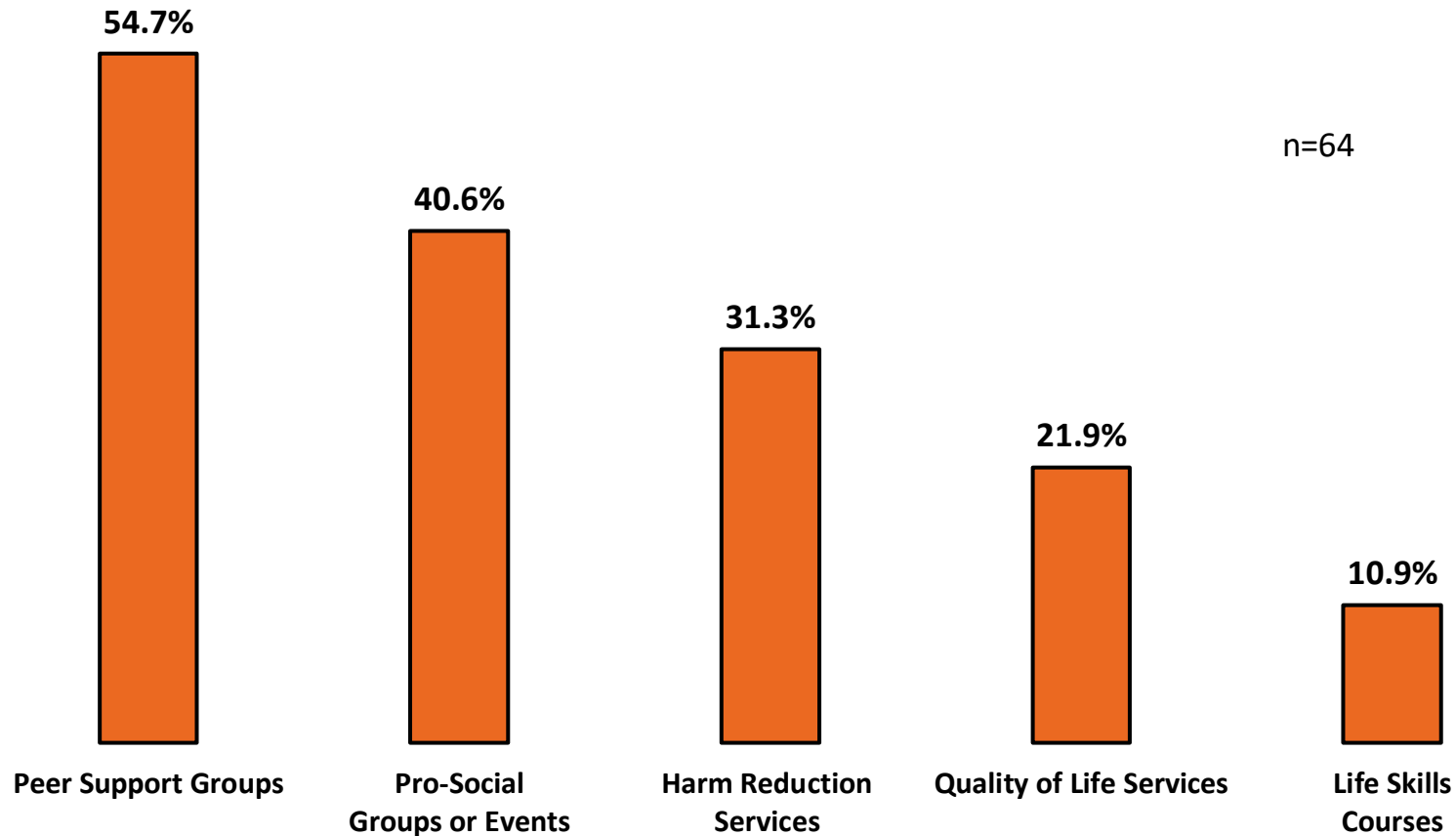


Open Mic Nights



# Connection Café Survey Results

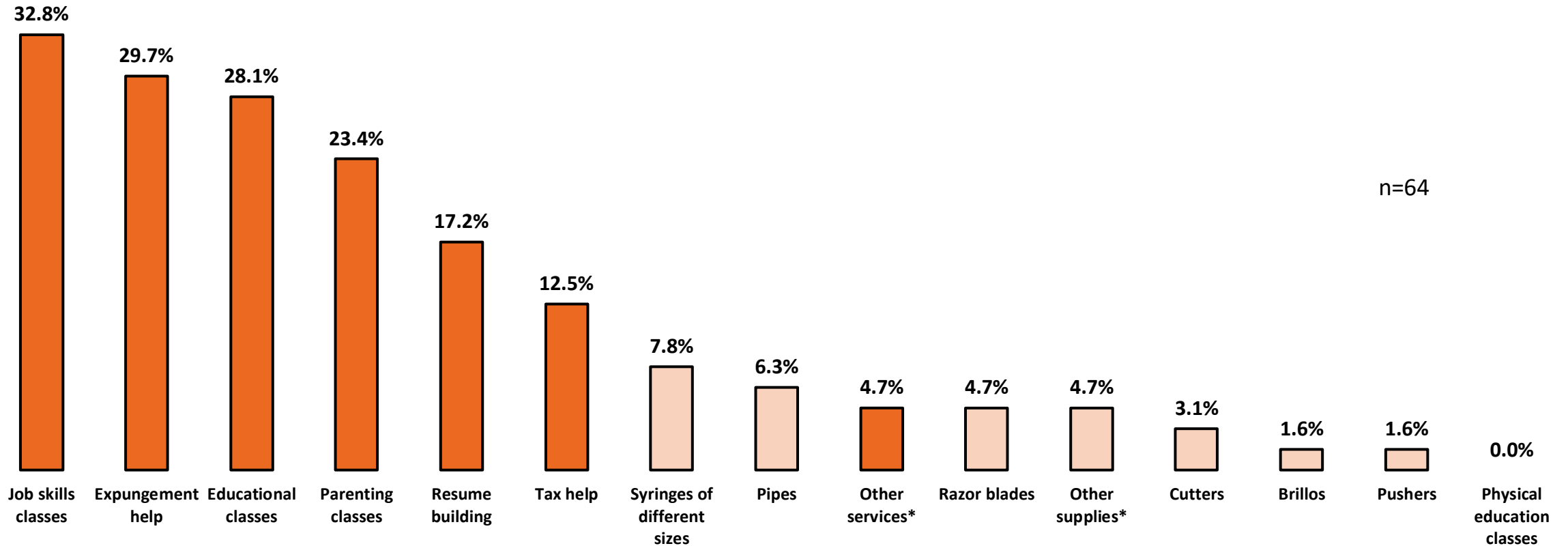
What Services Are Connection Café Participants Using?



\* Participants could select more than one service

# Connection Café Survey Results

What Supplies And/Or Services Do Connection Café Participants Need?



\* Other supplies included 1) Clothing and 2) Food

\* Other services included 1) PTSD support, 2) Financial assistance for legal matters, and 3) Emotional regulation courses

\* Participants could select more than one supply/service

# Fayette County Naloxone & Overdose Data

**6,449** Naloxone Doses  
Distributed Since January  
2020

**1,883** Reported Naloxone  
Doses Used on Self

**1,001** Reported  
Naloxone Doses Used on  
Others

**91.9** Opioid Overdoses  
in Fayette County in  
**2019** (per 100,000)

**62.2** Opioid Overdoses  
in Fayette County in  
**2021** (per 100,000)

[Health: Overdose Prevention: \(in.gov\)](https://www.in.gov/health/overdose-prevention/)



# Thank you!

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