We are seniors at Smith College concentrating in Community Engagement & Social Change. In addition to the concentration, Callin is majoring in Psychology. Samya is double majoring in Africana Studies & English.

**What is Harm Reduction?**

According to The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), "Harm reduction is a practical and transformative approach that incorporates community-driven public health strategies — including prevention, risk reduction, and health promotion — to empower people who use drugs (and their families) with the choice to live healthy, self-directed, and purpose-filled lives. Harm reduction centers the lived and living experience of people who use drugs, especially those in underserved communities, in these strategies and the practices that flow from them.”

In simple terms, harm reduction is having compassion and meeting individuals where they're at to prioritize safety under their own authority without judgement or interfering beliefs placed upon the individual by societal expectations.

**War on Drugs:** “The CIA admitted in 1998 that guerrilla armies it actively supported in Nicaragua were smuggling illegal drugs into the United States-drugs that were making their way onto the streets of inner-city black neighborhoods in the form of crack cocaine. The CIA also admitted that, in the midst of the War on Drugs, it blocked law enforcement efforts to investigate illegal drug networks that were helping fund its covert war in Nicaragua.”

On September 28, 2022, Mayor London Breed released a strategic roadmap to address drug overdose deaths: “Overdose Deaths are Preventable: San Francisco’s Overdose Prevention Plan”.

The main goals of the plan are to:
1) lower disparities and morbidity associated with drug use in San Francisco
2) reduce overdose deaths and increase treatment among people at high risk
3) reducing racial disparities in overdose deaths by 30% by 2025
4) and increase the number of people receiving medications for addiction treatment by 30% by 2025

**What’s going on?**

- Opioid related deaths are 2x the national average in MA
- Plateau of overdose related deaths is likely due to increased access to naloxone
- NE is a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Region

**What can be done?**

- Get trained in overdose prevention & carry naloxone
- Get involved in local HR efforts (Tapestry Health, MANNA Community Kitchen)
- Submit drug samples to drug checking agencies like Tapestry Health to increase data on the local drug supply
- Complete the MA Opioid abatement funds survey & track your state’s status

**Opioid Abatement Funds**

- Nationwide settlements to rectify effects of over prescription of opioids
- MA will receive $900 million over next 14 years
- 40% allocated to municipalities & 60% to Opioid Remediation Fund

**EXAMPLES OF HARM REDUCTION**

- **IN OTHER AREAS**
  - SUN SCREEN
  - SEAT BELTS
  - SPEED LIMITS
  - BIRTH CONTROL
  - CIGARETTE FILTERS