Opioid Use in the United States (2015)

- 60% of the 55,000 drug overdoses in the U.S. were opioid-related.
- 10.4 per 100,000 persons in the U.S. died of opioid-related drug overdoses. The death rate was higher in males, individuals between 25-34, and non-Hispanic White people.
- In 2015, 5% of Americans over 12 years old misused opioids, with highest misuse among 21-25 year olds at 9.4%. Opioid misuse dropped in 2016 with 4.4% of the total population using, and 7.6% of 21-25 year olds.

Opioid Use in Wisconsin

- Rates and dosage of opioid prescriptions have decreased from 2014 to 2016. In 2016, Wisconsin’s prescribing rate (62.2 prescriptions per 100 people) was lower than the national average (62.6/100 people) though rates of opioid prescriptions differ by county.
- Opioid-related hospitalizations have increased over 75% from 0.9 per 1,000 (2005) to 1.6 per 1,000 (2014).
- The rate of opioid-related deaths increased over 60% between 2009 and 2016 to 18 per 100,000 (below). This reflects an increase of over 100% from 2008-2016, doubling the number of opioid deaths from 396 to 827.
- The Wisconsin opioid death rate was highest among black people in 2012-2016.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Stress, and Drug Use

Experiences in Childhood:
- Children who are sexually abused are nearly five times more likely to inject drugs in adulthood as those who are not while children who witness violence are about three times more likely.
- Neglect, emotional abuse, parental incarceration, and parental binge drinking were associated with 25-55% increased odds of prescription pain reliever misuse.

Stress in Adulthood:
- Parents report that opioids provide relief from emotional distress.

Methamphetamine (Meth) Use

- Meth use has well-documented negative effects on families and communities. Communities with high usage see increased violence, domestic abuse, and social isolation. Communities also see a high economic burden due to increased health care costs and lost wages.
- Nationally, in 2016, 69,000 12-17 year olds (<1%) and 14,464,000 adults over 18 (6%) had ever used meth.
- Wisconsin meth arrests, charges, and seizures have tripled since 2011, with greatest increases occurring in rural areas (see map).

Drug Use Among Children and Youth in the United States

- Opioids are the leading cause of teenage drug deaths.
- Drug overdoses from all drugs among adolescents 15-19 decreased from 2007-2014, but increased in 2015.
- Prescriptions for opioids decreased in 2014-2016 from 2.6 prescriptions per 100 people to 2/100 for youth under 14, as well as for 15-19 year olds, from 12.8 to 11.6/100.
- Meth use decreased from 9% to 3% of youth from 1999 to 2015. Wisconsin data indicates that the state follows this national trend, with youth meth use dropping by 50%. In Milwaukee, however, meth use doubled to 6.6% from 2005-2013.

Key Findings

- Wisconsin rates and dosage of opioid prescriptions have decreased from 2014 to 2016.
- Wisconsin opioid related hospitalizations and the number of opioid-related deaths are increasing.
- More Wisconsin children are removed from their home due to adult drug use, and more infants are being born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome and other drug-related health issues.
- Use of methamphetamines has increased in Wisconsin.
Impact on Drug Misuse on Children and Families

- In 2016, 9% of U.S. children lived with someone with an alcohol or drug problem. Those children typically had co-occurring ACEs (91%).
- Children of caregivers who use and/or make meth are at risk for physical and sexual abuse, neglect, fires and explosions, medical problems, and exposure to hazardous lifestyles.
- Children of mothers who had a substance use disorders have higher levels of externalizing problems, depression, and school difficulties.
- Babies born dependent on addictive drugs may lower the parent’s confidence and satisfaction resulting in challenges with bonding and attachment.

Impact of Opioids on Infants

- Between 2009 and 2014, Wisconsin maternal opioid use has tripled resulting in an increase in babies born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS).
- Babies born to mothers using opioids have a 50% risk of being born with NAS, and an increased likelihood of other negative outcomes, including premature birth, poor fetal growth, or death.
- Opioid treatment programs increase positive outcomes for pregnant women and their children.

Wisconsin Out-of-Home Care

- The number of children removed from their homes increased steadily from 2012 to 2017, reaching a ten year high in October 2017 with 7,826 children in placements on October 1. The growth in out-of-home care placements has been almost entirely in non-Milwaukee counties.
- Over the past seven years, the number of children removed from their home and placed in an out-of-home care setting due to parent/caregiver drug abuse has more than doubled from 479 in 2009 to 1,252 in 2016. It is likely that this data under-represents the actual number.

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