

NL Educator Survey

What is DECYDE?

- youth **harm reduction** substance use education strategy
- resources for NL youth, educators, and guardians
- open-access website at www.decyde.ca

Drug Education Centred on Youth Decision Empowerment

- **harm reduction** offers evidence-based information to help individuals make safer choices and reduce the harms of substance use

Educator Survey

In 2022-23 we asked NL educators about their:

- 1 attitudes toward harm reduction
- 2 needs in order to deliver harm reduction education
- 3 preferences for training and receiving curriculum

Participants

170 educators participated

77% identified as female

59% were classroom teachers

ages ranged from **25-60+**

59% had more than 10 years experience



Results

92% believed harm reduction was an effective approach

100% agreed students need honest information about substance use to reduce harms

68% believed they would be able to recognize if a student was under the influence of cannabis

77% of educators would be comfortable supporting a student who had consumed cannabis

However...

16% felt that teaching students about safer substance use would encourage substance use

However...

46% thought that youth who use substances should be expected to pursue abstinence

However...

61% felt uncertain how to properly respond to student cannabis use

However...

8% thought their teacher training would allow them to intervene and prevent cannabis-related harms

Professional Learning

- **98%** thought that teachers require training for reducing cannabis-related harms
- **89%** were personally interested in receiving harm reduction teacher training

- **70%** preferred that harm reduction training be interactive
- **57%** preferred to receive curriculum materials online
- **80%** were interested in receiving e-learning resources to share with students

Delivery of Substance Use Education

i) Early education

"We need realistic, evidence-based drug education programs."

ii) Evidence-based

iii) Content

"More human resources are needed in schools to address this issue."

iv) Educator needs

School context

i) Prevalence of substance use

"Substance use has become normalized in our society and students feel a lot of pressure to partake."

ii) Normative attitudes

Harm Reduction

i) Educational approach

"I can't even get a naloxone kit in the school."

ii) Safe supply

iii) Driving under the influence of cannabis

"Many students are driving high and if something isn't soon done, I am afraid that we will see a student hurt or dead."

iv) Knowledge gaps

Stigma

i) Non-judgmental support

"Some students may not have anyone to talk to, and teachers could play an important role in changing their paths."

ii) Medical use

ii) Stereotypes

"Break the stigma of 'bad' for cannabis use."

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

i) Community supports

ii) Mental health

"It is a very sensitive topic to teach as some students are dealing with the effects of family members using substances at home."

What We Learned



- NL educators are open to a harm reduction approach to substance use education
- Educators feel unprepared to teach substance use and harm reduction
- Both **educators and students** urgently need harm-reduction substance use education
- Educators require harm reduction **training and additional support** in order to successfully teach and support students.