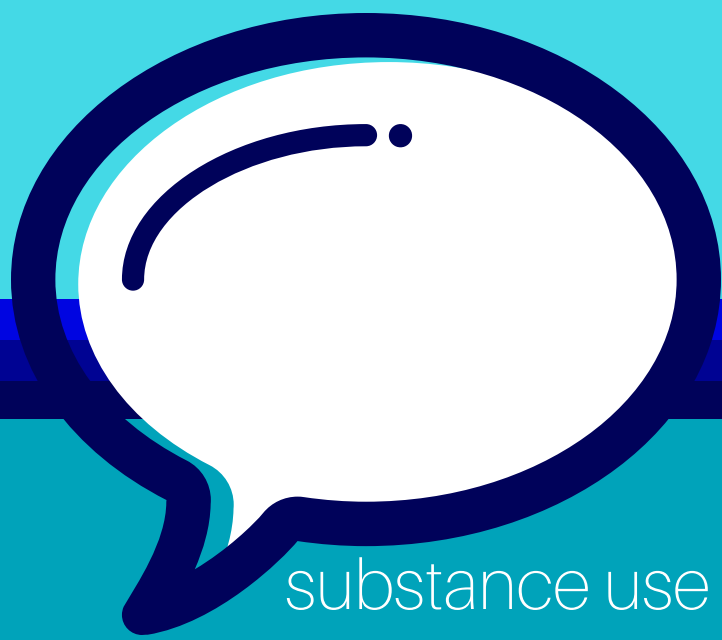


Substance Use

why words matter!



Sometimes the words we use to describe substance use can cause stigma that hurts our community. These words shape opinions, create negative stereotypes, influence how people are treated, and can stop people from getting support.

Instead of...

Addict, drug abuser, junkie, alcoholic, druggie, user, etc.

Clean/Dirty needles

Relapse/Lapse

Someone is *clean*

Someone is *dirty*

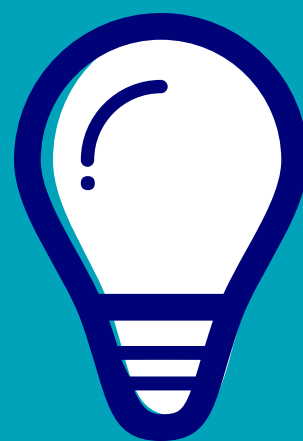
Substance abuse/misuse
Drug Habit

Methadone maintenance
Opioid replacement

Try...

- Person who uses substances
- New or sterile/Used needles
- Resumed using substances
- Substance-free, not using, Abstinent
- Actively using, Using substances
- Substance use
- Medication Assisted Therapy, Treatment

Try to use neutral words when talking about substance use. Language is a powerful tool in our community. It can either build people up or tear them down.



What will you do with your words?