


# What Student Led Harm Reduction Looks Like: Our Work in Spokane

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Health  Equity Circle



# What is Health Equity Circle?

Non-profit organization that educates, develops, and supports future health equity leaders by training and mentoring undergraduate, graduate and professional students in the principles and practices of community organizing.

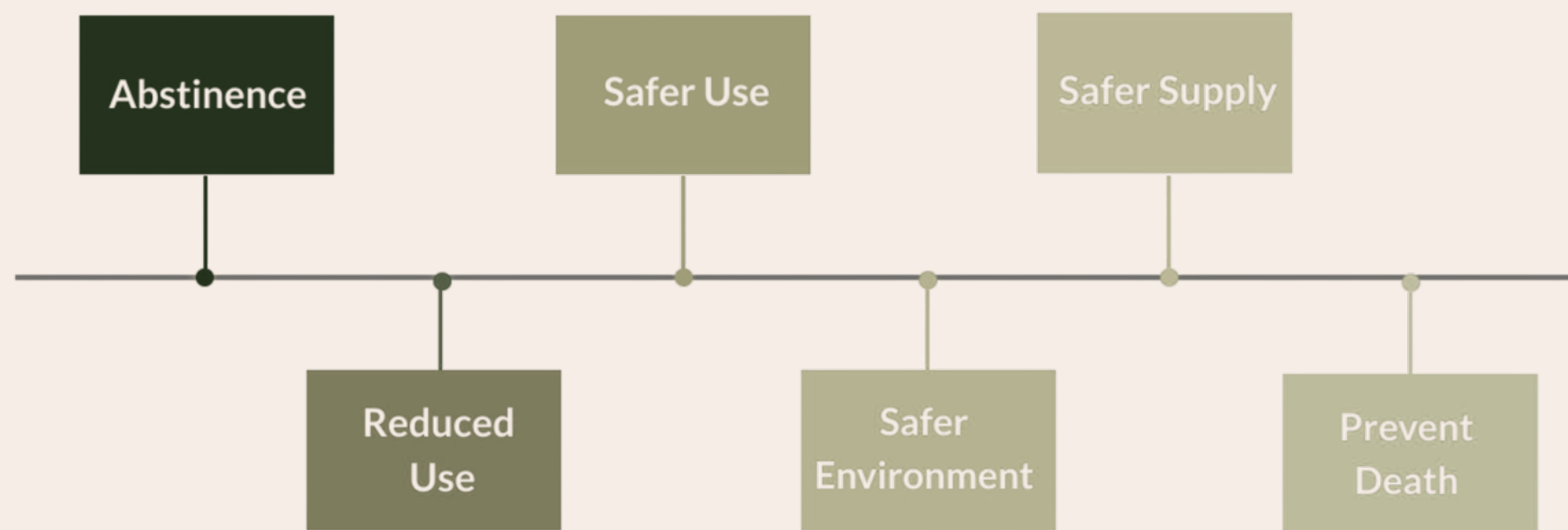


Spokane Chapter Action Teams: Harm Reduction, Child Health, Food Justice, Immigrant and Refugee Health



# What is Harm Reduction?

- a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use (NHRC)
- a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs

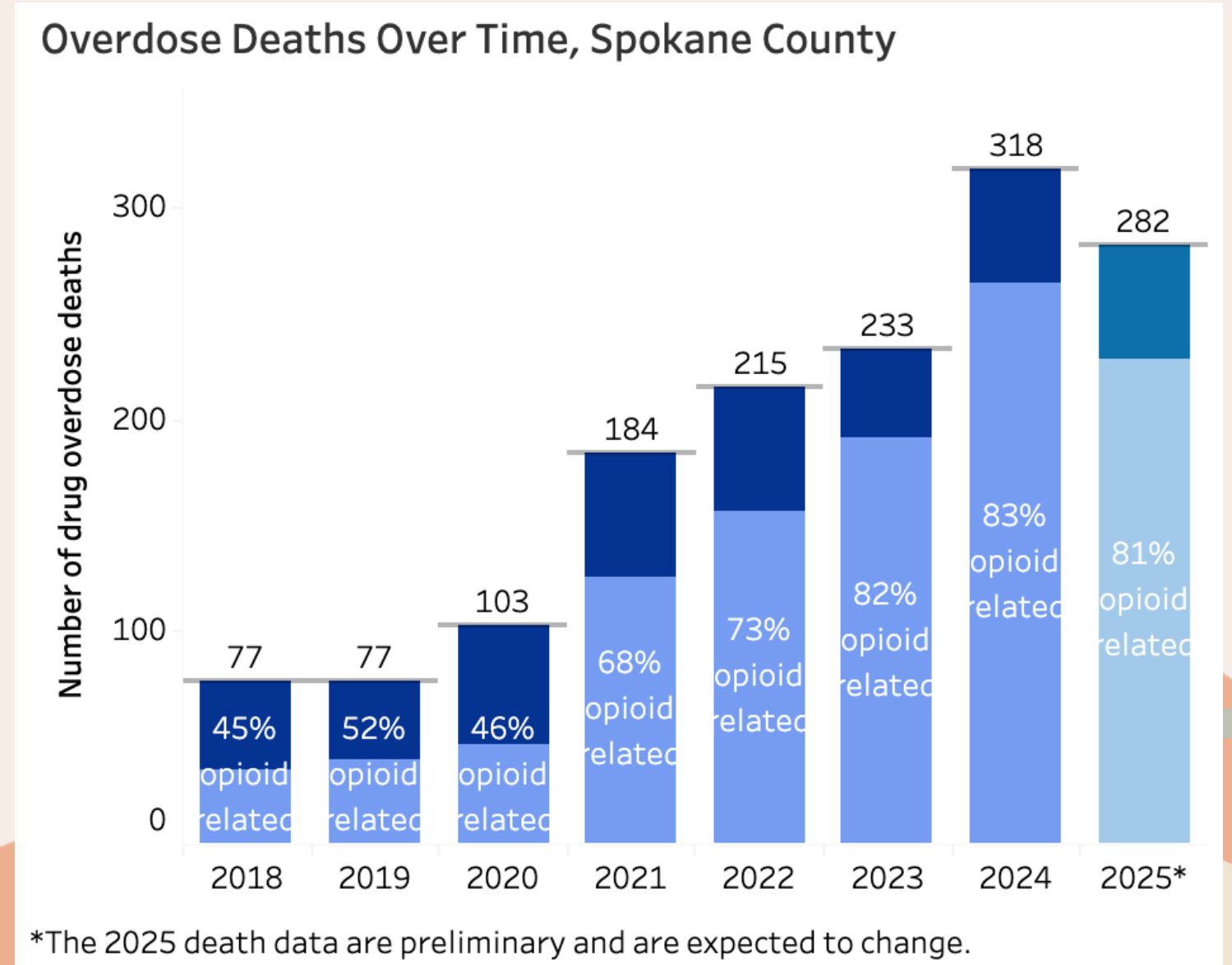


## CENTRAL HARM REDUCTION PRINCIPLES

- Accepts, for better or worse, that drug use is part of our world and chooses to work to minimize its harmful effects rather than simply ignore or condemn them
- Understands drug use as a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that encompasses a continuum of behaviors and acknowledges that some ways of using drugs are safer than others
- Establishes quality of individual and community life and well-being —not necessarily cessation of all drug use —as the criteria for successful interventions and policies

# Why is Our Work Important?

- City council declared WA state of emergency 4/25/24
- In 2024, opioid overdosed deaths were up 38%, 59% of which occurred inside a home
- **There is a need for more harm reduction interventions in Spokane**



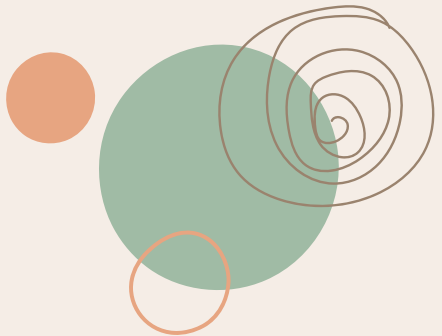
# Benefits of Harm Reduction

**AJE** American Journal of Epidemiology  
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Vol. 145, No. 8  
Printed in U.S.A.

## Discarded Needles Do Not Increase Soon After the Opening of a Needle Exchange Program

**Litter on the streets?**  
Decreases with harm reduction programs



### Crime?

Decreases with harm reduction programs

## Trends in Crime and the Introduction of a Needle Exchange Program

*Melissa A. Marx, MPH, Byron Crape, MSPH, Ronald S. Brookmeyer, PhD, Benjamin Junge, MSc, Carl Latkin, PhD, David Vlahov, PhD, and Steffanie A. Strathdee, PhD*

## Syringe Services Programs

50% reduction in HIV and HCV infections, increased when paired with MOUD  
SSP users are more likely to use condoms, 5x more likely to enter treatment, 3x more likely to stop using drugs

Decrease in health problems when SSPs introduced safe smoking supplies  
Smoking has lower risk of disease transmission than injecting

**Community acquired infections and overdoses?**  
Decrease with harm reduction programs



# Student-Led Harm Reduction Distribution

## Why distribute safe smoking supplies?

- Reduce health risks from sharing smoking supplies
- Reduce the higher -risk practice of injecting
- Expand engagement opportunities with people who smoke drugs and do not inject
- Get naloxone to people at highest risk of overdose



## What we distribute :

- Safer smoking supplies
- Syringes
- Wound care supplies
- Narcan
- Hygiene supplies
- Condoms
- Food and water
- Clothing
- Sharps containers



We community outreach every other Saturday from 10a-12p at Bloom Psychiatry parking lot

## Medication for Opioid Use Disorder

**Be Well**  
Treatment  
Resources

**Camas Health: 509-481-4990**

10811 W 6th Ave, Airway Heights, WA

**CAT: 509-919-3362**

960 E 3rd Ave, Spokane, WA

**Bloom Psychiatry: 509-557-0450**

302 E Pacific Ave, Spokane, WA

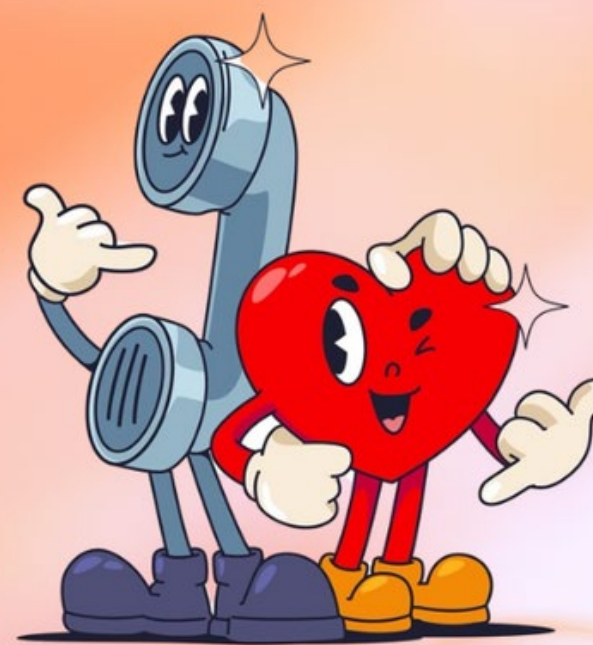
### Inpatient

**ABHS: 509-325-6800** 44 E Cozza Dr, Spokane, WA

**STARS: 509-570-7250** 105 W 3rd, Spokane, WA

**Pioneer Human Services: 866-789-1511**

**Royal Life: 888-324-9870** 324 E Francis, Spokane, WA



# SAFE SPOT

**1-800-972-0590**

SAFESPOT IS A 24/7 HOTLINE WHERE OUR OPERATORS WILL ASK YOU FOR YOUR EXACT LOCATION BEFORE YOU USE. IN THE RARE EVENT THAT YOU STOP RESPONDING TO US, WE WILL GET YOU HELP EITHER THROUGH A PREDETERMINED RESPONDER OR BY NOTIFYING YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.

[WWW.SAFE-SPOT.ME](http://WWW.SAFE-SPOT.ME)

## Be Safe Events

**Mon-Thur 230-430p:** SRHD Exchange  
(no glass)

**Every Friday 9a-11a:** Denny Murphy  
(no glass)

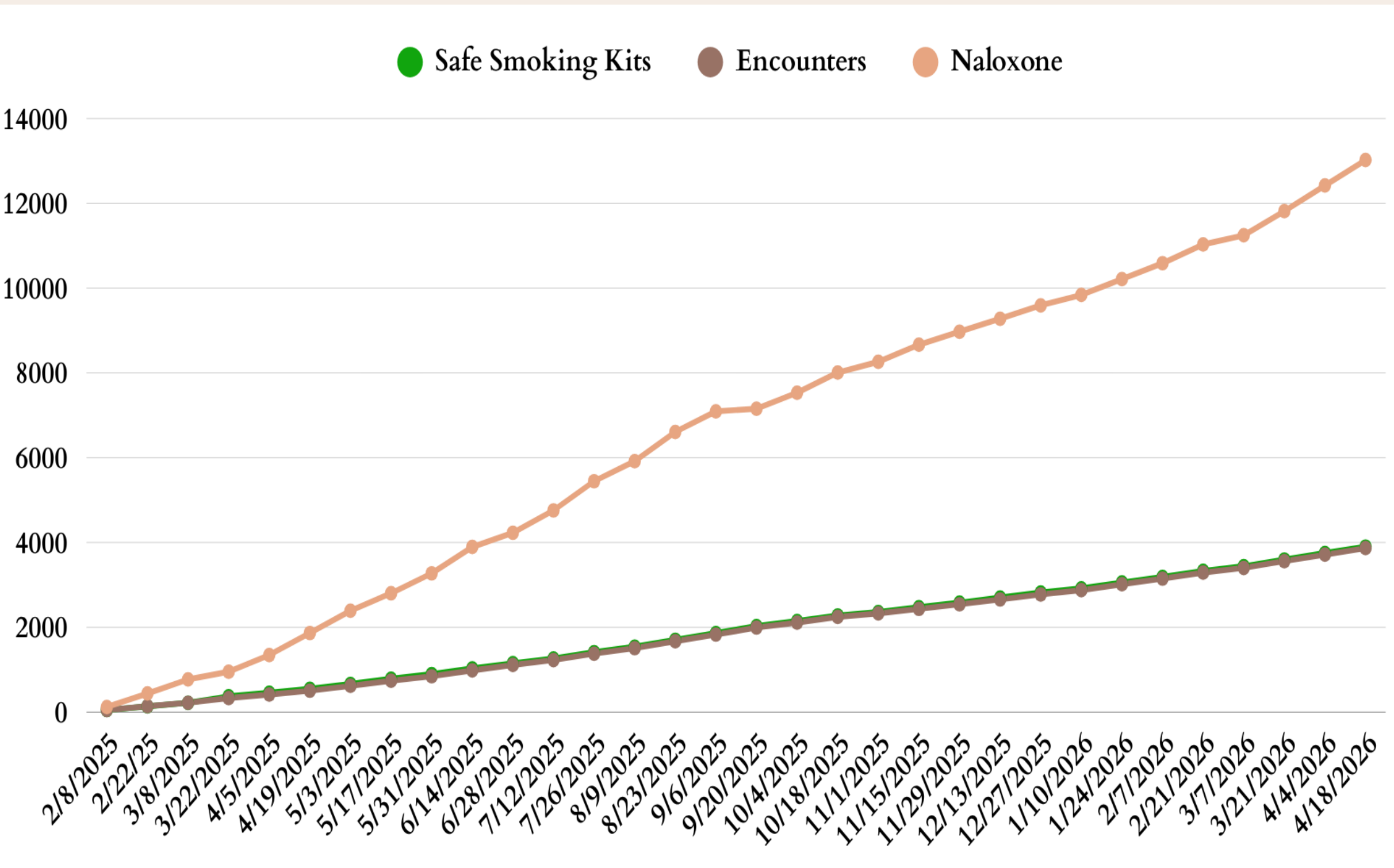
**Every other Saturday 10a-noon:**  
302 E Pacific (glass)

### Welcome!

- ❖ **Bubble or Hammer Kit**  
(1 per person)
- ❖ **Cleans** (shorts/longs)
- ❖ **Nasal/Injectable Narcan**  
(as many as you need)
- ❖ **Condom Kits**
- ❖ **Water Bottles**
- ❖ **Band-Aids**
- ❖ **Foil**
- ❖ **Snacks**
- ❖ **Pads**

ASK US ABOUT  
GETTING STARTED  
ON  
BUPRENORPHINE  
TODAY!

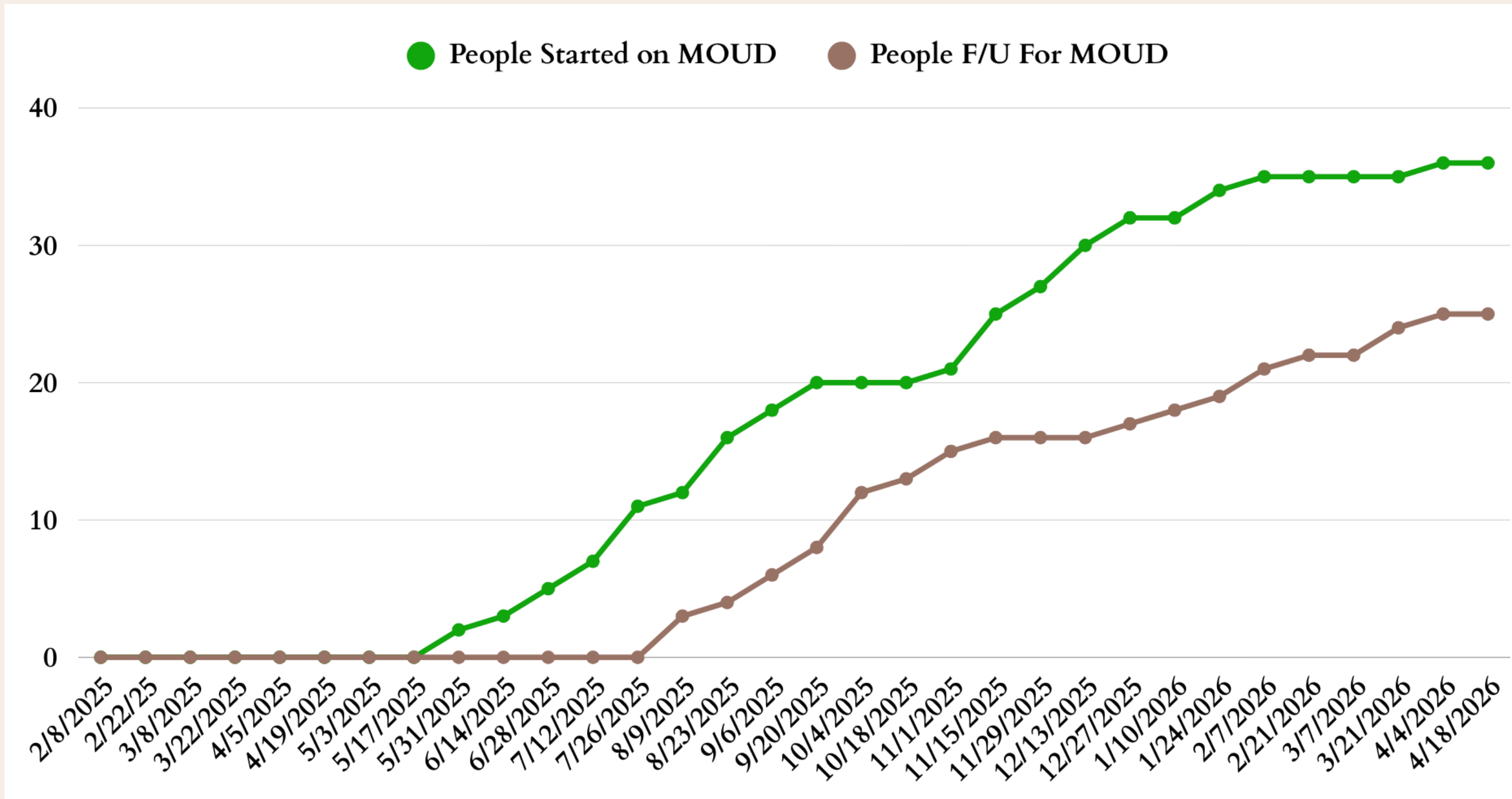
# Harm Reduction Distribution Numbers



Since we started in February 2025, we have distributed

- 3093 safe smoking kits
- An estimated (not tracked) 3000 hygiene supply kits
- 7743 doses of nasal Narcan
- 5760 doses of IM Narcan
  - A total of 13,020 doses of Narcan funneled into the University District!

# People Started on Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)



Since February 2025:

36 individuals have been connected to medication for opioid use disorder through our distribution events.

25 individuals have continued to follow-up with medication management services, with many follow-ups planned or in progress.

# Cost Of Distribution:

On average, we distribute ~300 safer smoking kits per month:

- Each kit costs ~\$1.90 to make
  - Lighter = \$0.13
  - Pipe, resource brochure, foil = free
  - Slider pencil case = \$1
- We also assemble hygiene kits
  - Cough drops (4) = \$0.20
  - Chapstick = \$0.23
  - Flossers (2) = \$0.04
  - Toothbrushes and toothpaste = \$0.30
- we spend **\$410** for kit supplies each month

On average, we spend **\$180** on non-kit related items per month:

- baby wipes (2 boxes) = \$40
- food (4 boxes of bulk snacks) = \$60
- water (6 cases) = \$30
- plastic baggies = \$15
- miscellaneous items = \$35

**Monthly Budget = \$590**

**Yearly Budget = \$7,080**

# Why Should You Support Harm Reduction?

**Our Mission :** Decrease harms and death related to drug use by providing accessible, non-judgmental services to improve the overall health and wellness of a vulnerable population in our community through direct service and outreach .

We believe community partners have a vital role in our work ; we have the capacity to execute our operation, but not necessarily adequate, consistent resources .

**Engagement with drug users increases opportunities to create a healthier community :**

- Prevent death from overdose with naloxone and drug testing strips
- Engage in treatment services
- Provide medical care visits and establish with primary care
- Prevent infectious disease from drug use itself
- Treat infectious disease in a high-risk population



HARM REDUCTION

is

EMPATHY



**Thank You!**

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**Questions?**