



Prevalence of opioid abuse



- In 2017, **1,268 Tennessee residents** died of an opioid-related drug overdose. People **ages 45–54** experienced the most overdose deaths, followed by people **ages 35–44**.
- In 2017, **126 Tennessee** residents ages **15–24** died of an opioid-related overdose.
- An estimated **4.5 percent** (approximately 70,000) of Tennesseans are **addicted to opioids**.
- In Tennessee, **90.2 percent** of people suffering from drug dependence or abuse go **untreated**.
- The state placed **6,210 children** in **foster care**, and in **29 percent** of these placements, **parental substance use** was a factor.

Identified education system needs



Expanded capacity for early intervention services

Reported by Zachary Stone in "Opioids and the Need for Additional Tennessee Early Intervention System Personnel"

- Given the increasing prevalence of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) and its connection to learning disabilities, "a lack of action around expanding capacity to effectively provide early intervention services is likely to have serious and long-ranging consequences for Tennessee's youth."

Current strategies/initiatives



- **TN Together.** Multi-faceted plan using legislation and state/federal funds to attack the state's opioid epidemic through prevention, treatment, and law enforcement. In the 2018–19 budget, Governor Haslam proposed \$16 million to fund this initiative.
- **TN Prevention Network.** 19 agencies across the state provide prevention education on substance abuse. Services are available to youth up to the age of 18, who have an increased likelihood of abusing substances.
- **TennCare's Opioid Strategy.** A state-sponsored health insurance program with goals to reduce the risk of members becoming newly addicted to opioids, increase patient engagement, and provide high-quality addiction and recovery treatment services for members who are abusing opioids.
- **Legislation.**
 - **Senate Bill 458.** "Narcan in Schools" authorizes schools to maintain opioid antagonists in schools.
 - **House Bill 1460.** Bill authorizes local education agencies to establish "recovery high schools" for students recovering from opioid addiction.
- **Research.**
 - **The Center for Disease Control, the Tennessee Department of Health, the Tennessee Department of Education, and Vanderbilt University School of Medicine** recently conducted a study on the effects of enrollment in early intervention and special education programs on children born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS).
 - **Vanderbilt Center for Addiction Research.** Conducts local and global research, education, and outreach on the disease of addiction.
 - **The Sycamore Institute.** Helps policymakers, the media, and the public understand how complex public policy issues, including the opioid epidemic, affect Tennesseans.
- **Children and schools.**
 - **Building Strong Brains: Tennessee ACEs Initiative.** Statewide effort that works to prevent and mitigate adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and their impact. This includes providing ACEs-related training for school leaders and teachers.
 - **Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN)** will lead group members from several state agencies and other stakeholders in identifying strategies to increase education, funding, and access to assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of infants and young children in Tennessee.

Funding sources impacting schools, school-age children & families



- **State Targeted Response (STR) to the Opioid Crisis Grant.** The three populations of focus for the Tennessee Opioid STR grant are: individuals at high risk for overdose, individuals with a diagnosis of opioid or heroin use disorder, and pregnant women abusing opioids or heroin. Tennessee received \$27.6M to be distributed equally over two years.
- **Tennessee AWARE Grant.** Federal grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) that established a state management team to support the integration of state and local policies and resources, and expand and enhance the continuum of school-based mental health training, mental health services, and behavioral supports.
- **Cardinal Health's Opioid Action Program.** Awarded more than \$3 million in grants to more than 70 nonprofit organizations in Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Ohio to support local efforts to combat the opioid epidemic, specifically in the area of prevention education.