



the**institute**

HARM REDUCTION COALITION

*Syringe Access  
Programs and Law  
Enforcement:*

*Building Alliances*

*Participant's Guide*

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# Building Alliances

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**About the Course**

The course will help syringe access program (SAP) providers develop the skills and knowledge necessary to help them improve organizational and client relationships with law enforcement.

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**Discussion Topics**

The Building Alliances workshop will include information on:

- Perspectives that drive the ways law enforcement and SAPs interact
- Syringe access laws and data
- Strategies and skills that lead to improved relationships between law enforcement and SAPs
- Strategies to help SAP clients preempt conflict with law enforcement

***“Syringe exchange programs play a unique role in facilitating engagement of injecting drug users [IDUs] in meaningful prevention interventions and treatment opportunities when implemented as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention and substance abuse strategy.”***

***U.S. Department of Health and Human Services***

## Introduction and Warm-up

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### About the Task

This task will help you understand more about SAPs' and individuals' experiences with law enforcement.

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### What You Will Learn

After completing this task, you will be able to illustrate the typical challenges SAPs and law enforcement encounter when they interact with each other.

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<b>Inner-Outer Circle Storytelling Instructions</b>	<p>Share an example of an experience with law enforcement through a personal or program story.</p> <p><b>Personal:</b> A personal story about an encounter with law enforcement, preferably about syringe access, or a story about someone you know who had an encounter with law enforcement.</p> <p><b>Program:</b> A story that talks about SAP relationships with law enforcement — for example, police entering a facility looking for a client, an effective program/law enforcement project, a client story about an incident with a police officer, etc.</p>
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**Which personal or program story stands out for you?**

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## Workshop Overview

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### About the Task

This task provides an overview of Building Alliances.

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### What You Will Learn

After completing this task, you will be able to maintain active participation in and contribute to the workshop exercises.

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<b>Achievement-Based Objectives</b>	<p>By the end of this workshop, you will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illustrated typical challenges syringe access communities and law enforcement personnel encounter in their interactions with each other</li> <li>• Explored the perspectives of law enforcement and the injecting drug user (IDU) community that drive conflicted or confrontational interactions with one another</li> <li>• Differentiated among the various local laws regulating syringe access services</li> <li>• Used data supporting the value of syringe access programs</li> <li>• Identified best practices that improve interactions between law enforcement and the syringe access community</li> <li>• Discovered existing strategies and formulated new ones for improving and/or building a working relationship between law enforcement and the syringe access community</li> </ul>
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# Perspectives

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## About the Task

This task examines the perspectives that shape the interaction between IDUs and law enforcement.

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## What You Will Learn

After completing this task, you will recognize the way perceptions can shape relationships among SAPs, IDUs, and law enforcement, and how these perceptions can create barriers to collaborative and effective partnerships.

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<b>World Café Instructions</b>	Select one person from your group to be the café owner. This person keeps the conversation going among the “café guests.”
<b>Part I</b>	<p>Respond to the following questions in keeping with the roles you have taken on. One group member writes the responses on newsprint.</p> <p><b>The IDUs discuss what they think of the police:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do IDUs think of the police?</li> <li>• What are their personal concerns about the police?</li> </ul> <p><b>The police discuss what they think of IDUs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do police think of IDUs?</li> <li>• What are their professional and personal concerns about IDUs?</li> <li>• What is the role of police when it comes to IDUs?</li> </ul> <p><b>You have 10 minutes for this exercise.</b></p>

## Perspectives

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<p><b>World Café Instructions</b></p> <p><b>Part II</b></p>	<p>Switch groups: Those who were at the IDU table move to the police table, and those who were at the police table move to the IDU table.</p> <p>The café owner remains at the table. He or she shares the first group's thoughts with the new group, so the police café leader summarizes the police's thoughts about IDUs, and the IDU café leader summarizes the IDUs' thoughts about the police.</p> <p>In your new roles, respond to the following questions:</p> <p><b>Police perspectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do police perspectives on IDUs affect how they behave when dealing with IDUs?</li> </ul> <p>The café owner may prompt discussion with any example, such as police officers arresting IDUs to “get them off the streets.”</p> <p><b>IDUs' perspectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do IDUs' perspectives on police affect how they behave when dealing with the police?</li> <li>•</li> <li>• The café owner may prompt discussion with any example, such as IDUs discarding syringes in public places so police don't harass them.</li> </ul> <p><b>You have 10 minutes for this exercise.</b></p>
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## Perspectives

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<p><b>World Café Instructions:</b></p> <p><b>Part III</b></p>	<p><b>Discuss your thoughts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do these different perspectives influence SAPs' relationships with the police?</li> <li>• How do these perspectives make IDUs behave? Law enforcement? SAPs?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fear of the Law</b></p>	<p>When IDUs are afraid of the police, they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tend to share needles 1.5 times more often.</li> <li>• Tend to inject in a hurry, resulting in unhygienic injecting, damaged veins, failing to test the strength of the drug to avoid overdose, etc.</li> <li>• Discard syringes unsafely</li> <li>• Tend not to carry enough injecting equipment to meet their injecting needs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Challenges</b></p>	<p>This fear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces the number of IDUs using SAPs.</li> <li>• Displaces IDUs, making them difficult to reach.</li> <li>• Renders IDUs less likely to take advantage of other services available through SAPs .</li> <li>• Makes IDUs less likely to report overdoses.</li> </ul>

**What else happens when IDUs are afraid of law enforcement?**

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## Know the Facts

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**About the Task**

This task tests your knowledge about syringe access facts, figures, and laws.

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**What You Will Learn**

After completing this task, you will have important syringe access information that can help you shape programs and accurately explain to clients what their syringe possession rights are.

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**Know the Facts Quiz Instructions**

Work with your group partners to find the answers to the *Know the Facts Quiz* on the following page. Write the correct answers in the *Answer* column.

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**Do you know the facts?**

## Know the Facts

Know the Facts Quiz	Question	Answer
1	<b>True or False?</b> SAPs lead to increased community crime rates and drug use.	
2	How many people in the US are newly infected each year with HIV and HCV due to syringe and equipment sharing?  A. 10,000 HIV & 5,000 HCV B. 8,000 HIV & 15,000 HCV C. 1,000 HIV & 3,000 HCV D. 4,000 HIV & 9,000 HCV	
3	<b>True or False?</b> Possession of sterile syringes is legal.	
4	<b>True or False?</b> Possession of used syringes with residue is legal.	
5	The number of syringes that someone may legally carry at any time is:  A. 0      B. 10      C. 100      D. No limit	
6	<b>True or False?</b> It is legal to carry other injecting drug equipment and other drug paraphernalia.	
7	<b>True or False?</b> Anyone over the age of 18 can purchase syringes at a pharmacy without a prescription.	
8	<b>True or False?</b> There is a difference in the legalities of drug paraphernalia/syringe possession among your city, county and state.	
9	<b>True or False?</b> SAPs lead to an increase in the number of syringes discarded in public places.	
10	What percent of police officers have had a needle-stick injury?  A.80%      B.10%      C.30%      D.60%	
11	<b>True or False?</b> There is a mechanism in place for SAPs and their clients to report negative interactions with law enforcement.	