

Harm Reduction Vending Machines

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Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is an evidence-based approach that is critical to engaging with people who use drugs and equipping them with life-saving tools and information to create positive change in their lives and potentially save their lives.

– *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*

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Harm Reduction

The U.S. is experiencing the most significant substance use and overdose epidemic it has ever faced, exacerbated by the recent worldwide pandemic, and driven by the proliferation of highly potent synthetic opioids (containing fentanyl or fentanyl analogs) and animal tranquilizers (like xylazine) into many types of drugs (including stimulants and counterfeit prescription pills).

There were more than 100,000 drug-involved overdose deaths in 2023.

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Harm Reduction

Harm reduction services save lives by being available and accessible in a manner that emphasizes the need for humility and compassion toward people who use drugs. Harm reduction plays a significant role in preventing drug-related deaths and increasing access to healthcare, social services, and treatment. These services decrease overdose fatalities, acute life-threatening infections related to unsterile drug injection, and chronic diseases (such as HIV and hepatitis C).

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Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is part of a **comprehensive prevention strategy** and the continuum of care. Harm reduction approaches have **proven to prevent death, injury, disease, overdose, and substance misuse**. Harm reduction is effective in addressing the public health epidemic involving substance use as well as infectious disease and other harms associated with drug use.

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Vending Machines

According to an article published by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health: “Harm reduction vending machines are an evidence-based strategy to provide essential harm reduction supplies to people who use drugs. Harm reduction vending machines...may be stocked with supplies such as naloxone, sterile injection equipment, condoms, sharps containers, first aid kits, and pregnancy tests. Harm reduction vending machine implementation has been associated with reductions in syringe sharing and overdose mortality...”

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Vending Machines

During an overdose, timeliness can save a life; therefore, it is vital for community members to have consistent, community-based access to naloxone and other harm reduction supplies.

Additionally, harm reduction vending machines can also function as a way to engage community members in other health services and resources.

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Vending Machines

In Missoula County...

- Substance Use Disorder Coalition (SUDC) committee was strategizing on other approaches, one of them being vending machines.
- Missoula Drug Safety Coalition (MDSC) was focused on overdose education and prevention
- In Lewis & Clark County, learned they installed 3 vending machines

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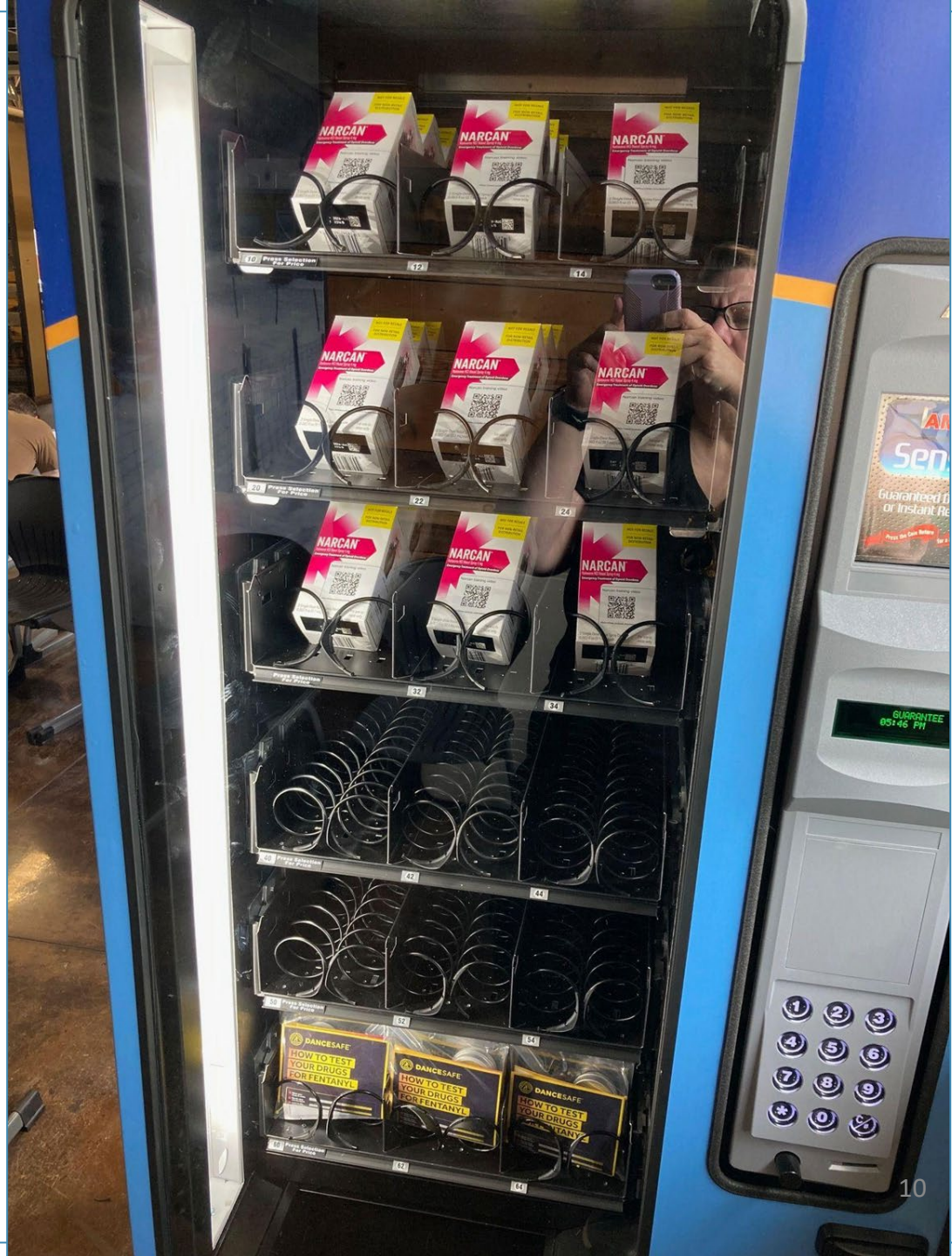


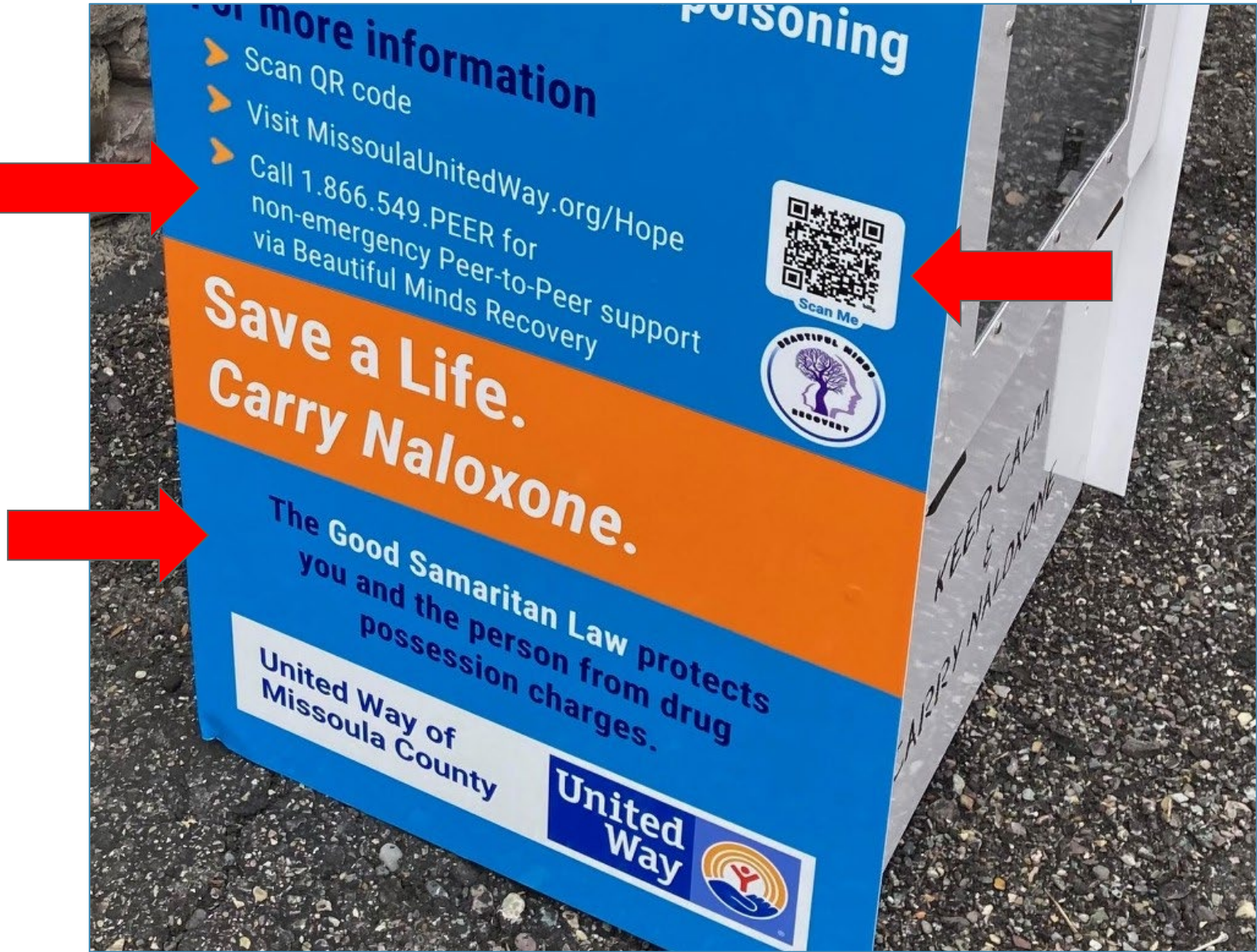
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Vending Machines







DOSE OF HOPE

Recognizing Opioid Overdose

Opioid overdose is life-threatening and requires immediate emergency attention. Recognizing the signs of opioid overdose is essential to saving lives.

Call **9-1-1 immediately** if a person exhibits **ANY** of the following symptoms:

- + They cannot be awakened or are unable to speak
- + Their body goes limp
- + Their face is extremely pale and/or feels clammy to the touch
- + Their fingernails or lips have a purple or blue color
- + They start vomiting or making gurgling noises
- + Their breathing or heartbeat slows or stops

*SAMHSA



About Overdose

Overdose Awareness Day
Events

> [DOSE OF HOPE](#)

I WANT TO

[GET INVOLVED](#)

Dose of Hope

As time moved forward, the two committees melded into one and worked together to identify where to place machines.

- Used ODMap to identify local areas where overdoses were occurring and then sought partners that were in that physical area
- Reached out to businesses to partner together
 - Mountain Line bus transfer center, downtown
 - Missoula Food Bank & Community Center
 - Johnson Street Shelter
 - Hope Rescue Mission Drop-In Center

Dose of Hope

What goes in machines?

- Naloxone
- Fentanyl Test Strip Kits
- *Wound care kits, Syringes, sharps containers, generic Plan B for \$5, free pregnancy tests, condoms, lube, dental dams, free pads and tampons*



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UNITED
WAY

Dose of Hope Data



1,605 boxes of naloxone
1,182 fentanyl test strip kits

Dose of Hope Data

- In cases in 2025 to-date it was found that naloxone was administered in 86% of cases that were found to be likely opioid overdoses.
- At first look, it seems that Missoula County has a low naloxone administration rate – but 64% of cases were typically cases where naloxone was administered prior to EMS arrival.
- Other tracking? Nope...

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www.RecoveryFriendlyMT.org

www.MissoulaUnitedWay.org/dose-of-hope





Open Aid Alliance works with the unique potential of each individual to overcome stigma as they seek greater health.

Open Aid Alliance began in 1986 in Missoula, MT

Housing support for people living with HIV/AIDS

Testing and risk reduction for infectious diseases like HIV, HCV and STI

Syringe Service Program (SSP)

Mail Order Safe Supply Program / naloxone distribution

Overdose recognition and response training

Safer smoking program

Same-day referrals to substance use treatment, case management, mental health, and basic needs.

Community education and capacity building



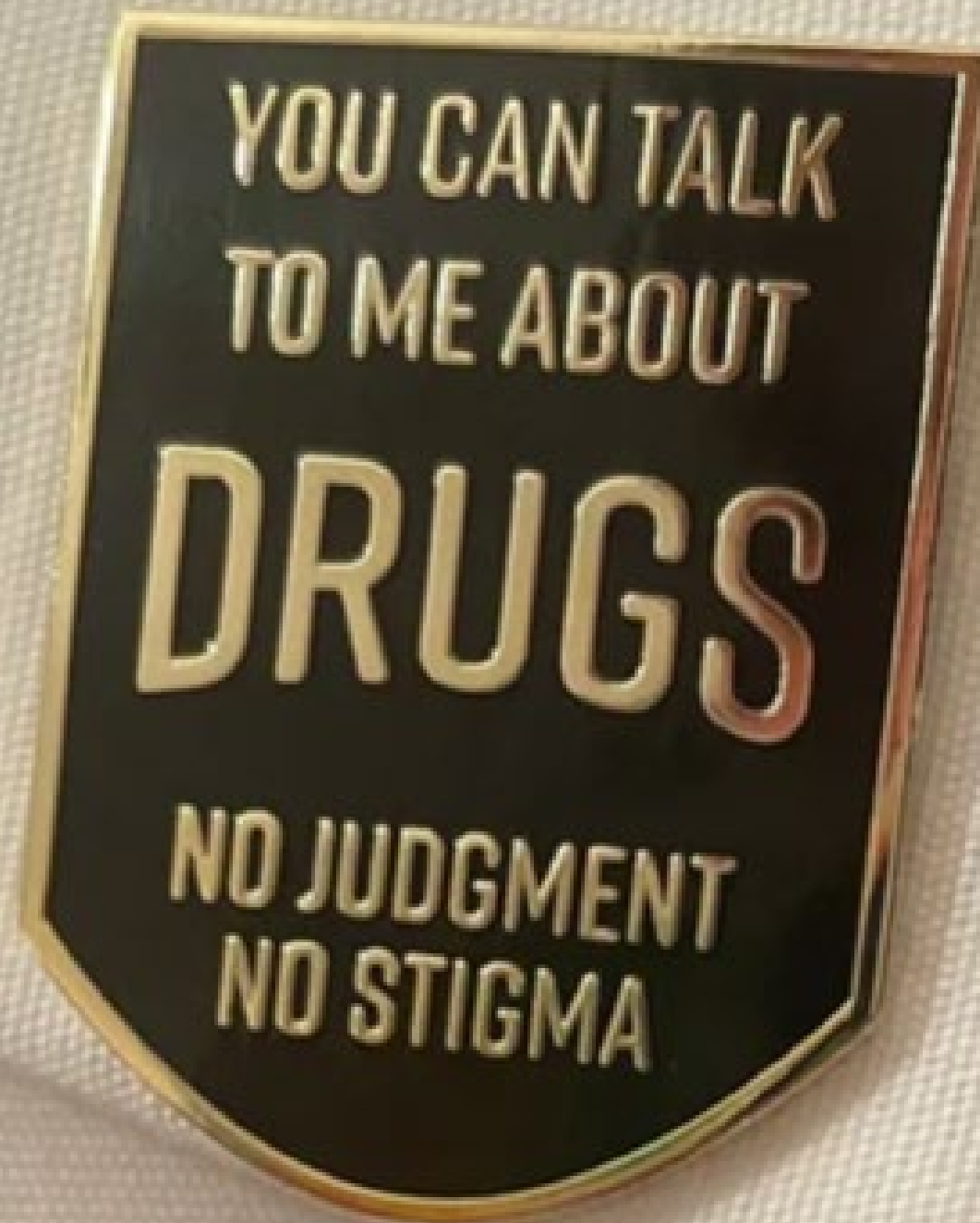


What is Harm Reduction?

“Harm reduction refers to policies, programs and practices that aim to minimize negative health, social and legal impacts associated with drug use, drug policies and drug laws.

Harm reduction is grounded in justice and human rights. It focuses on positive change and on working with people without judgement, coercion, discrimination, or requiring that they stop using drugs as a precondition of support.”

- Harm Reduction International



**Why do we
need Harm
Reduction?**

Why must we meet people where *they* are?

Trust takes time to earn

Transportation, cost, insurance

Financial concerns/Insurance Issues

Fear of criminalization/imprisonment

Privacy really matters

Care must be culturally appropriate

Lived Experience / Peers make an impact

Syringe Service Programs (SSP) reach people that other health service programs simply can't.





Housing Program from people living with HIV/AIDS

HOPWA
Ryan White



Testing and Prevention

- HIV + HCV and syphilis
- Chlamydia + Gonorrhea
 - Treatment including partner treatment thru Blue Mountain Clinic
- Pregnancy Testing
- Free emergency contraception
- Counseling and referrals
- Free condoms, dental dams, gloves, finger condoms in our office or by mail anywhere in MT
- At-home HIV tests by mail
- PrEP and PEP referrals
- No age limit
- MCCDC (Missoula Jail) testing HIV/HCV



Wound Care

- Walk-in Wound Care
- Not limited to Injection Drug Use!!
- Warm handoffs to specialized community care
- To-go wound care kits
- Street Outreach
- Confidential Consultations



Overdose Prevention

Intramuscular naloxone, Narcan, and ReVive nasal spray

Statewide mail order program (free)

47 overdose reversals reported to our Missoula location in 2025

Fentanyl test strip kits + educations

Community Sharps Disposal

24 Hour access to
secure sharps disposal

Discreet & accessible

Found Syringe Hotline



UPDATE:

406-209-9882

is the **NEW** number to call if you
find improperly disposed syringes.

Service available
Mon-Thurs. 10-5



OpenAidAlliance

UNCOVERY

radically committed to hope and healing



Goals of our SSP

- Empowerment and advocacy
- Risk reduction counseling
- Needle collection/return
- Safer use supply distribution
- Education and engagement
- Referrals to resources – SUD treatment, housing assistance, food boxes, healthcare, etc.
- Advocate for the rights of people who use drugs (PWUD) as experts in their own lives



Syringe Service Options in Montana (202

Butte-Silver Bow Health Dept

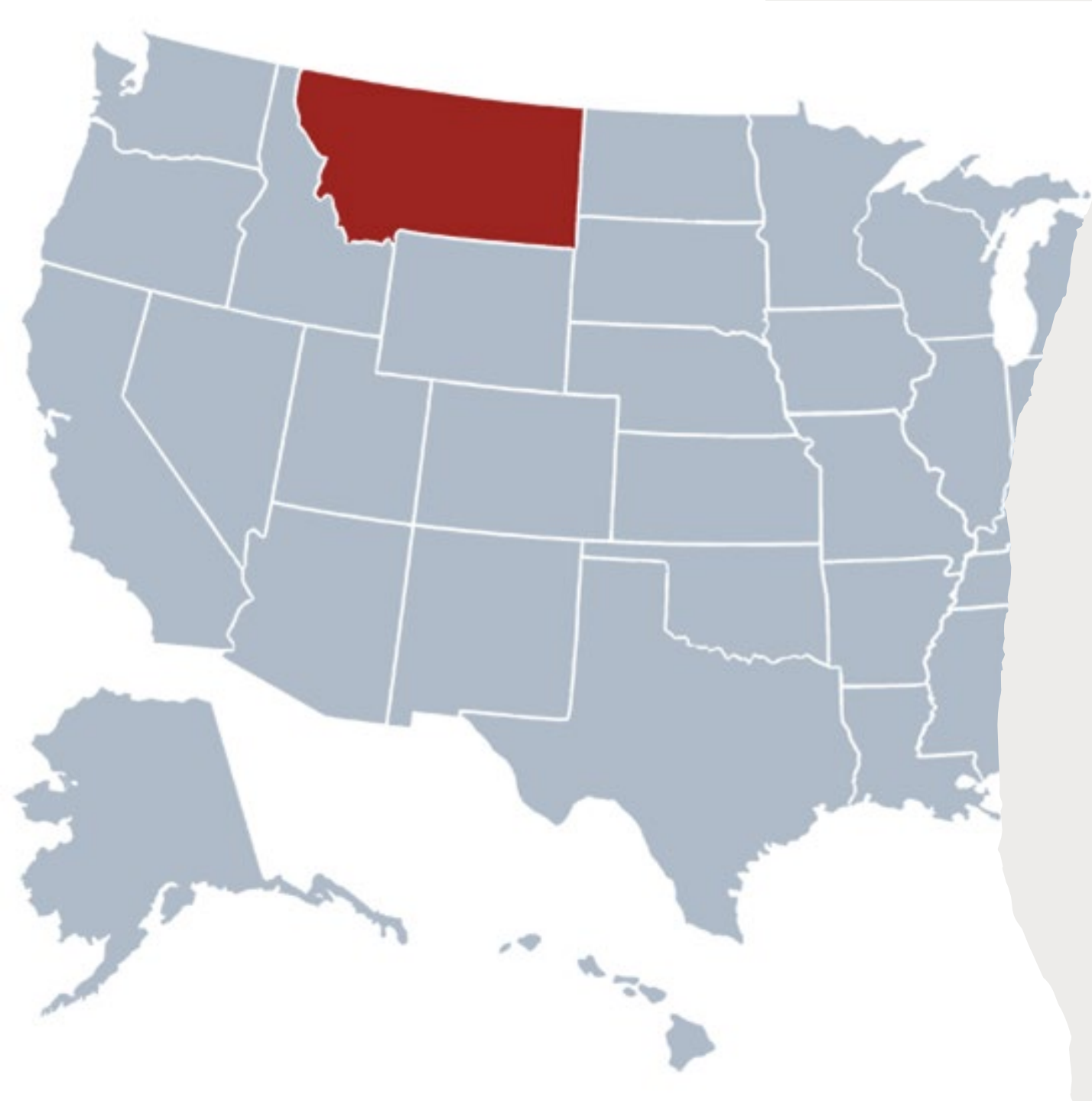
Flathead Family Planning (Kalispell)

Open Aid Alliance (Polson)
inside Lake County Health Dept

Blackfeet Opiate Response Project
(Browning)

RISE (Billings) @ Riverstone Health
Center

Breaking Chains for Recovery
(Great Falls)





SSP programs do not...

Increase rates of drug use within communities

-

Promote or enable drug use

Coerce participants into abstinence or treatment or promote abstinence above other definitions of Recovery

Discourage participants from treatment

Require change for continued participation

Ignore the real danger and harms associated with drug use

