

# North Carolina's Public SUD Services & Supports for Youth

Kelly Crosbie, MSW, LCSW

Director

Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance  
Use Services (DMHDDSUS)

# Kelly Crosbie, MSW, LCSW, DMH/DD/SUS Director



- 30 years in MH/SU/IDD Field
- 13 years in DHHS
- DMHDDSUS since Dec 2022
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
- Person with lived experience

# DMHDDSUS' Mission, Vision, and Principles



## Our Principles

**Lived Experience.** We value lived experience by listening to and advocating for individuals and families, championing the expertise of peers, promoting natural and community supports, and creating opportunities for meaningful partnership.

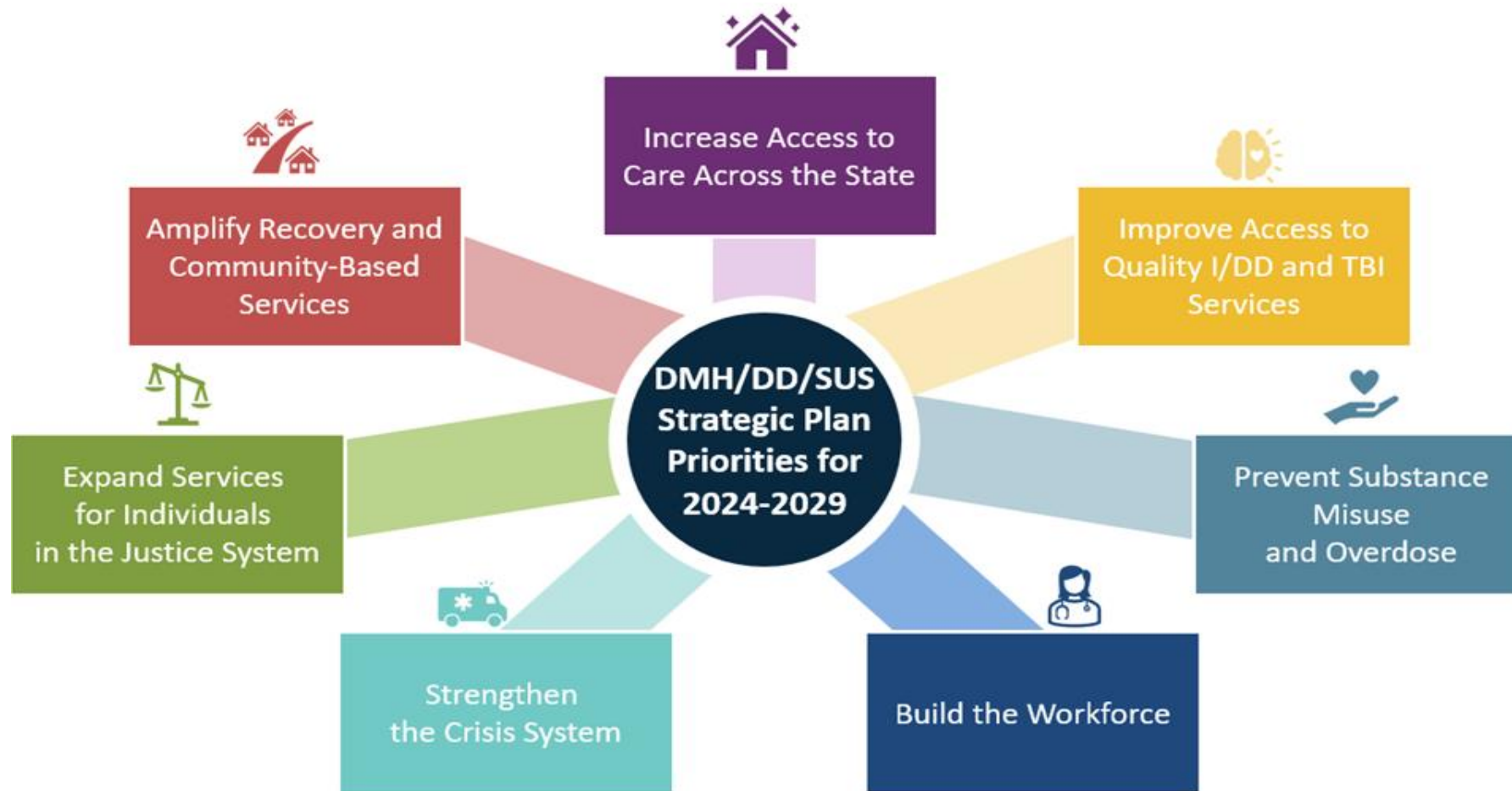
**Equity.** We create policy that helps everyone get what they need to live healthy lives in their communities, with particular focus on improving access to services for historically marginalized populations.

**Inclusivity.** We commit to ensuring that everyone who uses our systems feels welcomed, and our policies support the health and well-being of all North Carolinians, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, religion, ability, culture and experience.

**Quality.** We promote the provision of high-quality, evidence-based services and supports that leverage the expertise and best-practices of our clinical partners.

**Trauma-Informed.** We recognize the reality of trauma and promote a culture of kindness, understanding, and respect for every person.

# DMHDDSUS Strategic Priorities 2024-2029



# Priority 3: Priority 3: Prevent Substance Misuse and Overdose



## Goals

- **Increase Primary Prevention Engagement.** Delay initial substance exposure or use and deter access to substances that can be misused by children and adolescents, and use harm reduction strategies to prevent escalation and misuse in young adults.
- **Increase Access to Evidence Based SUD Treatment.** Increase timely access to SUD services, especially for geographies and populations with low penetration rates.



# Focused Interventions



## Prevention

Establish a statewide program for evidence-based substance misuse prevention models, focusing on community-level initiatives that encourage socialization for teens.

## Updated Naloxone Saturation Plan and Distribution

Revise the naloxone plan to enhance availability through funding, training support, and inclusion in crisis response team service definitions.

## Office-Based Opioid Treatment (OBOT) Expansion

Expand the NC-PAL program to include MOUD support for physicians offering Office-Based Opioid Treatment (OBOT).



## Collegiate Harm Reduction


Fund Collegiate Recovery Programs (CRPs) that support students in recovery through housing, dedicated staff, and regular recovery meetings.



## Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) Saturation Plan

Collaborate with providers to increase the availability of Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) across more counties and programs.

## Recovery Communities and Workplaces



Revamp prevention approaches to promote healthy communities and socialization for teens using evidence-based strategies.



## Expand SUD Treatment Access for Adolescents

Target services for adolescents with tailored programs that integrate substance use treatment with existing mental health services.

## Mobile Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) Implementation

Launch more mobile OTP units to improve access to opioid treatment for marginalized, homeless, rural, and underserved communities.

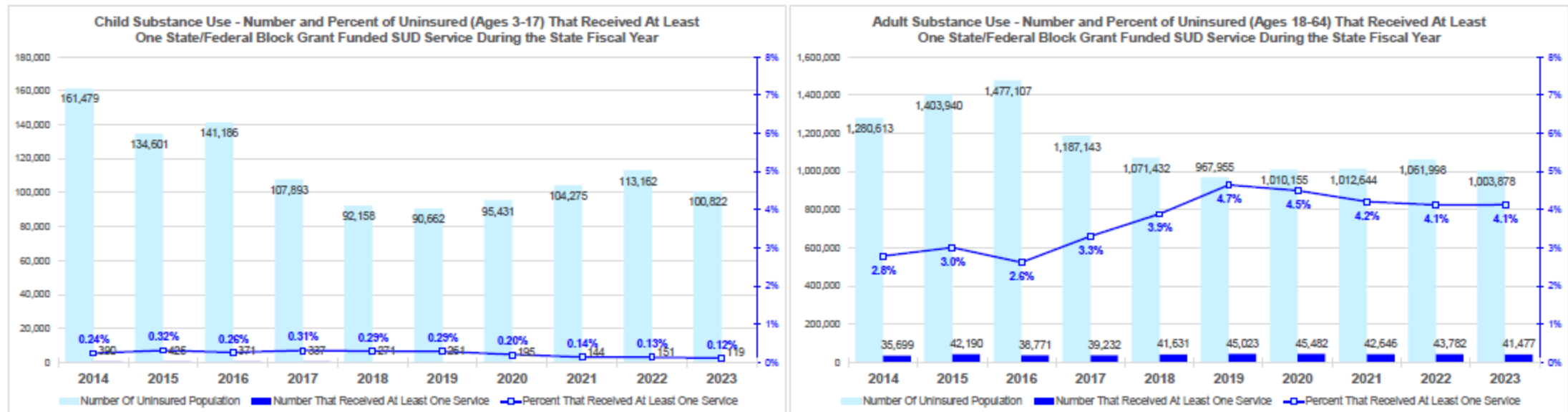
# SUD Prevalence & Treatment Rates

## SUD Prevalence

16.36% of adults ages 18+ (1 in 6 adults)

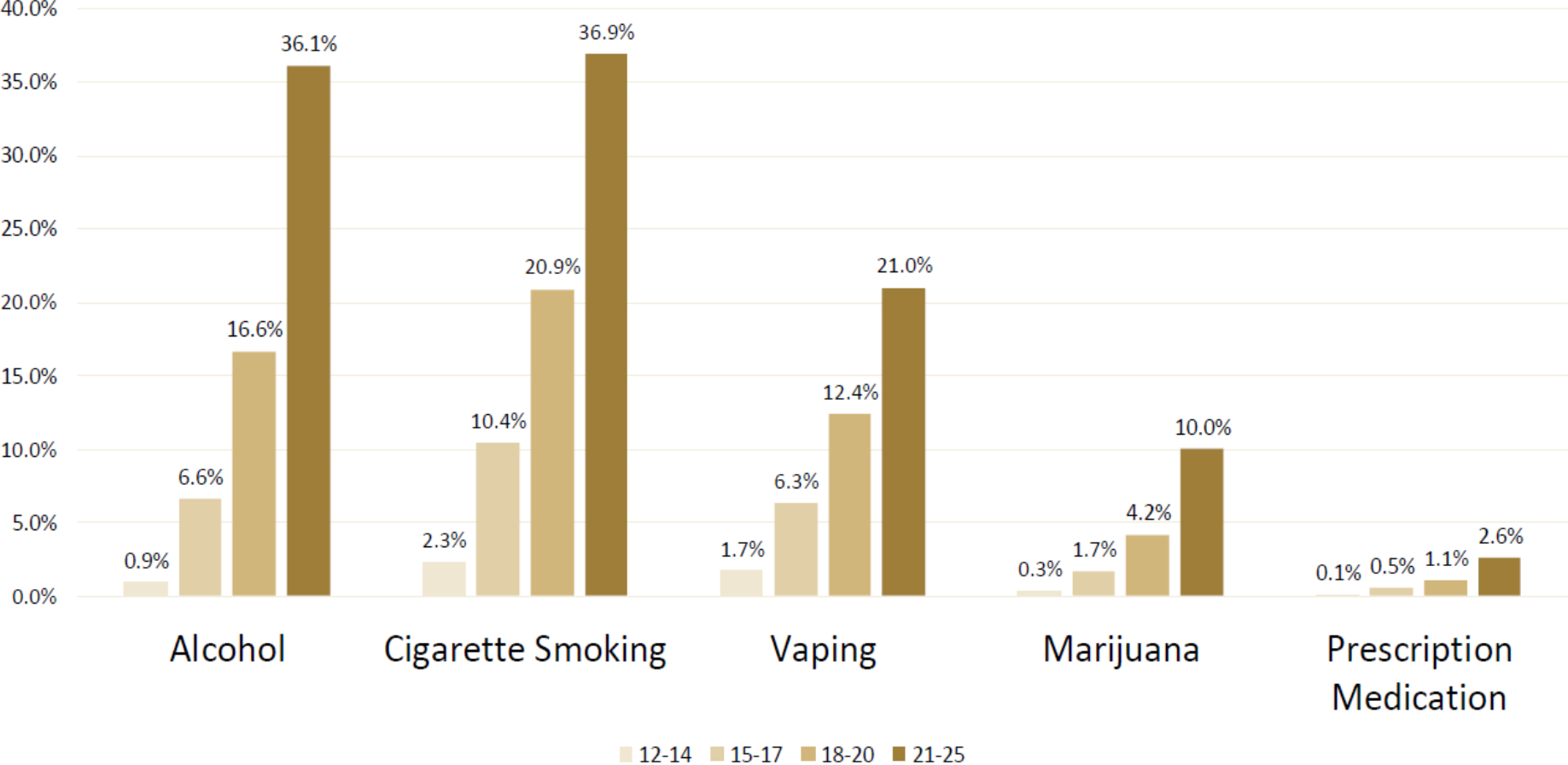
7.70% of youth ages 12-17 (1 in 13 youth)

### State/Federal Block Grant Funded



- In FY23, for Medicaid enrollees **6.3% adults** and **1.13% of children** received at least one SUD service.
- For the uninsured population, **4.1% of adults** and **<1% of the children** received at least one state/block grant service.

# Youth/Young Adult Last 30-Day Substance Use by Age



Source: NC Youth and Young Adult Survey, 2023

# Source of Substance Use for Youth & Young Adults

	Alcohol	Cigarette Smoking	Vaping	Marijuana	Prescription Medication
Friend	75.1%	62.5%	61.4%	69.6%	23.3%
Family	1.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.9%	14.1%
Someone Else	5.4%	7.1%	14.9%	27.1%	11.0%
Took w/o Permission	11.6%	13.2%	8.9%	2.1%	27.0%
Bought	6.4%	16.8%	14.2%	N/A	N/A
Dispensary	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.3%	N/A
Own Rx	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	24.5%

<sup>28</sup> Of the 15,000 youth and young adults, 9,962 (66.4%) were under 21 years old. 23.2% consumed alcohol, 24.0% smoked cigarettes, 15.8% vaped, 8.1% consumed marijuana, and 4.0% misused prescription medications.

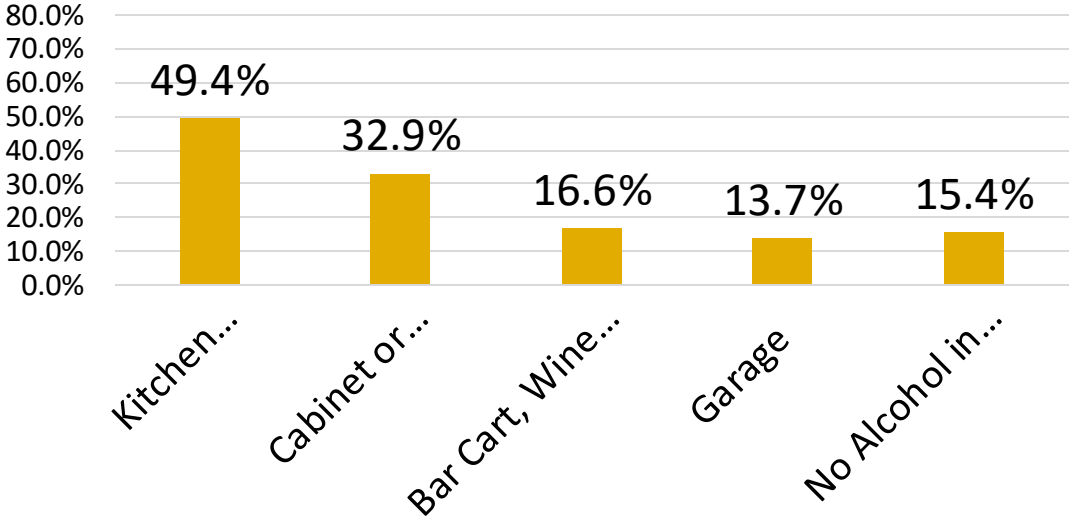


The academic core of Atrium Health

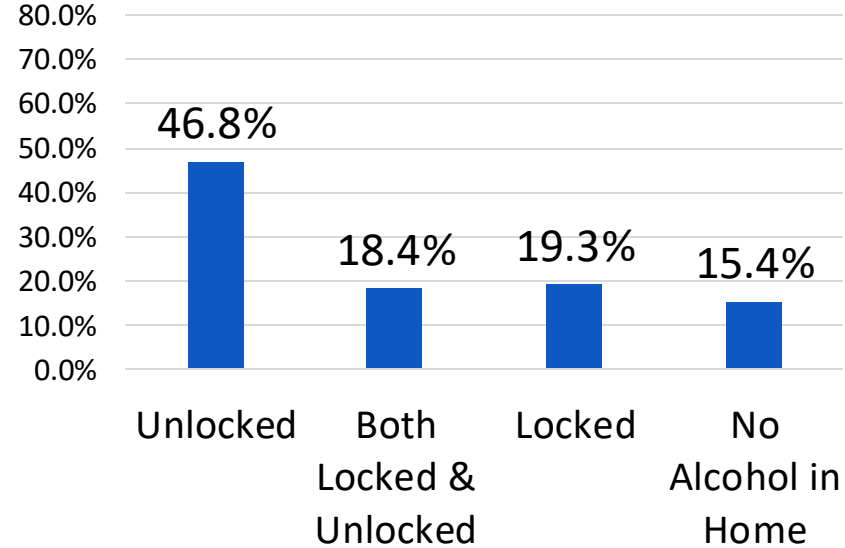
Source: NC Youth and Young Adult Survey, 2023

# Alcohol is Primarily Stored in the Kitchen Fridge and Unlocked

Percent of Homes with 12-20 Year Olds with Alcohol Stored in...

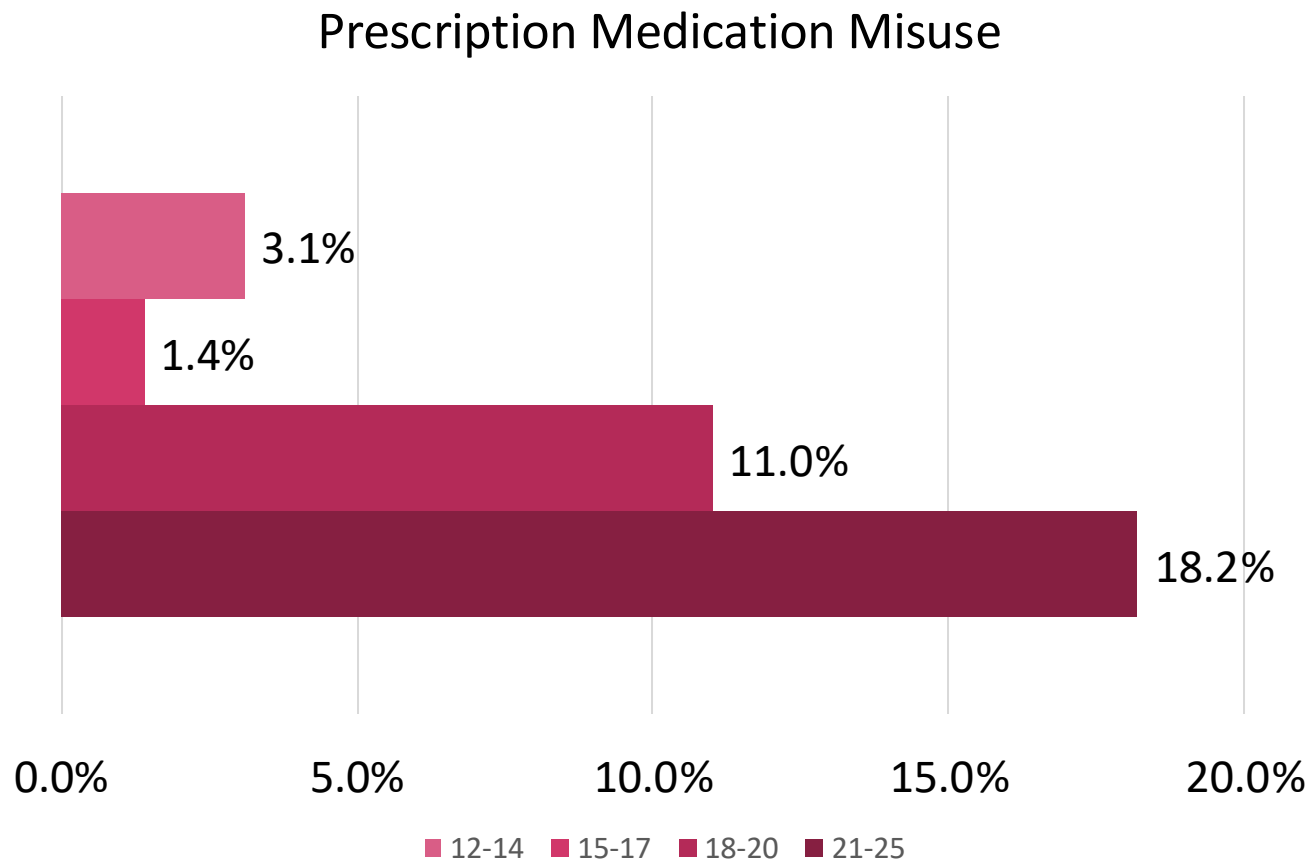


Percent of Homes with 12-20 Year Olds with Alcohol Stored...



Source: North Carolina Youth and Young Adult Prevention Survey, Surveying 15,000 12-25 year olds, December 2022-February 2023. 9,962 (66.4%) of which were under 21 years old

# Youth/Young Adult Prescription Medication Misuse

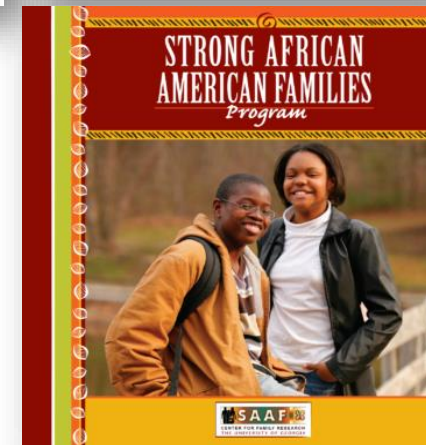


- Prescription medication misuse begins in the school years.
- But prescription medication misuse escalates in the young adult years (and beyond as indicated by overdose rates).
- Prevention efforts are critical across the life span.

*Source: North Carolina Youth and Young Adult Prevention Survey, Winter 2023*

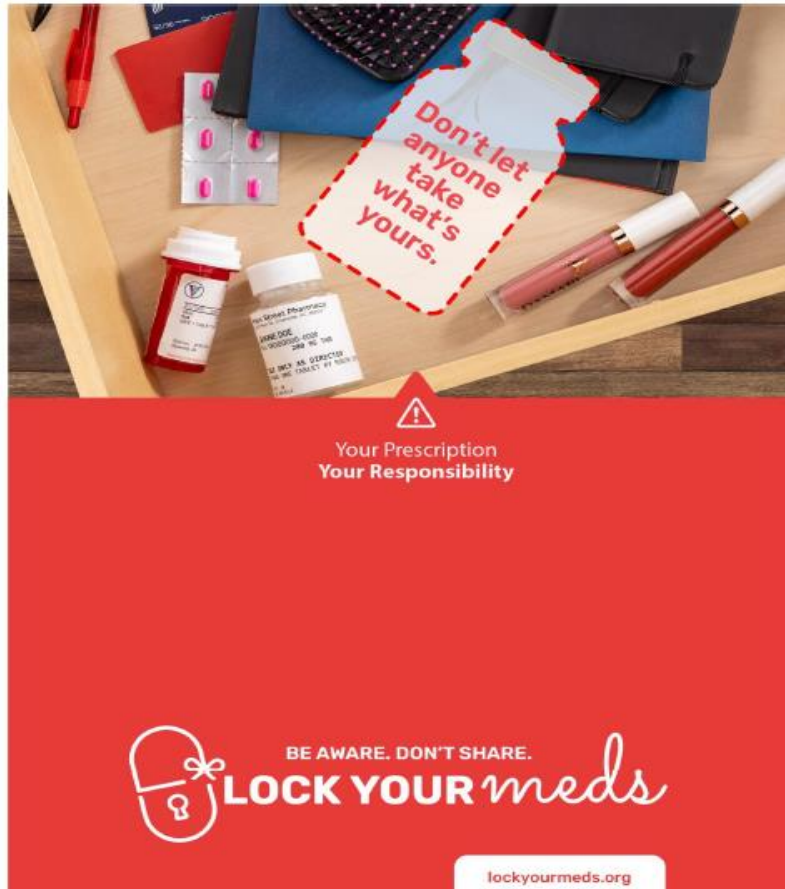
# Core NC Prevention Strategies

- **Prevention Education** – evidenced-based programs
- **Community-based Processes** – ongoing collaborative initiatives with statewide and community ATOD prevention groups and coalitions
- **Environmental Strategies**- communication campaigns, alcohol and prescription drug secure storage initiatives, local policy and retailer education
- **Synar** – reduce retail tobacco access to minors
- **Prevention Block Grant**
  - 20% of our total Substance Use Federal Block Grant (approximately \$9 million/year in prevention dollars)
  - Serve all 100 counties with funding



# Statewide Prevention Campaigns

## Lock Your Meds



## Talk It Up. Lock It Up.



# Prevention: NC Preventing Access to Opioids

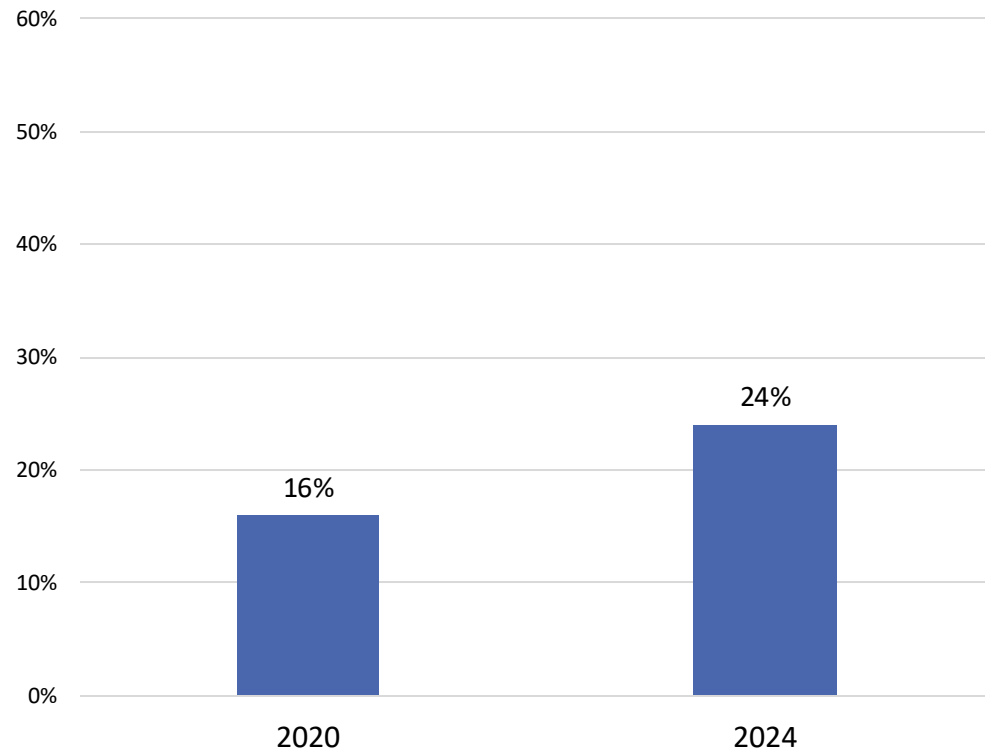
## Lock Your Meds.

- **79.8%** of North Carolinians strongly agree/agree they give careful consideration to how medication is stored
- Compared to 12 months ago, **31.8%** are more likely to securely store prescription medications found in their homes.
- **21.1%** of North Carolinians have a medication lock box in their home that is used to store medications.
- The secure storage “Lock Your Meds” campaign reached in **8.7m** impressions
- [lockyourmeds.org/nc/](https://lockyourmeds.org/nc/)

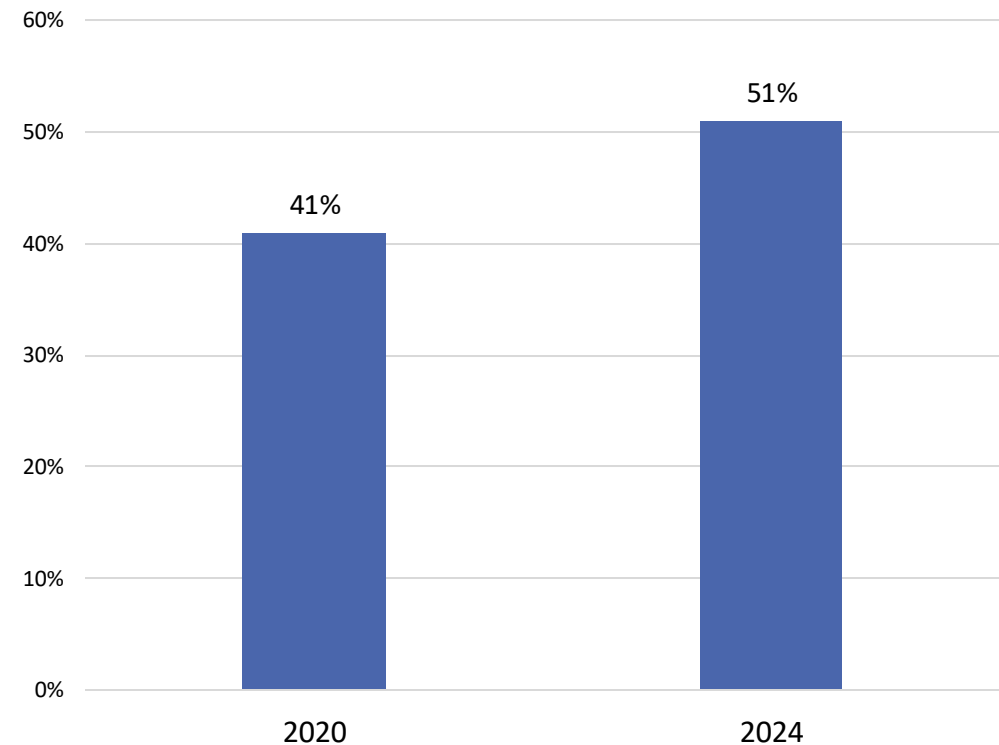
The advertisement features a red header with the "LOCK YOUR meds" logo, which includes a padlock icon. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links: Home, The Problem, Rx Drug Misuse, Take Action, Safe Disposal, Signs of Misuse, Get Involved, and LYM en Espanol. A secondary menu includes Contact Us and Store. The main image shows a pharmacy shelf with several prescription bottles. A red dashed box highlights a white sign that reads "Don't let anyone take what's yours." Below the sign is a red warning triangle icon. At the bottom, a red banner contains the text "Your Prescription Your Responsibility".

# Safe storage and disposal of medications have improved in NC in recent years

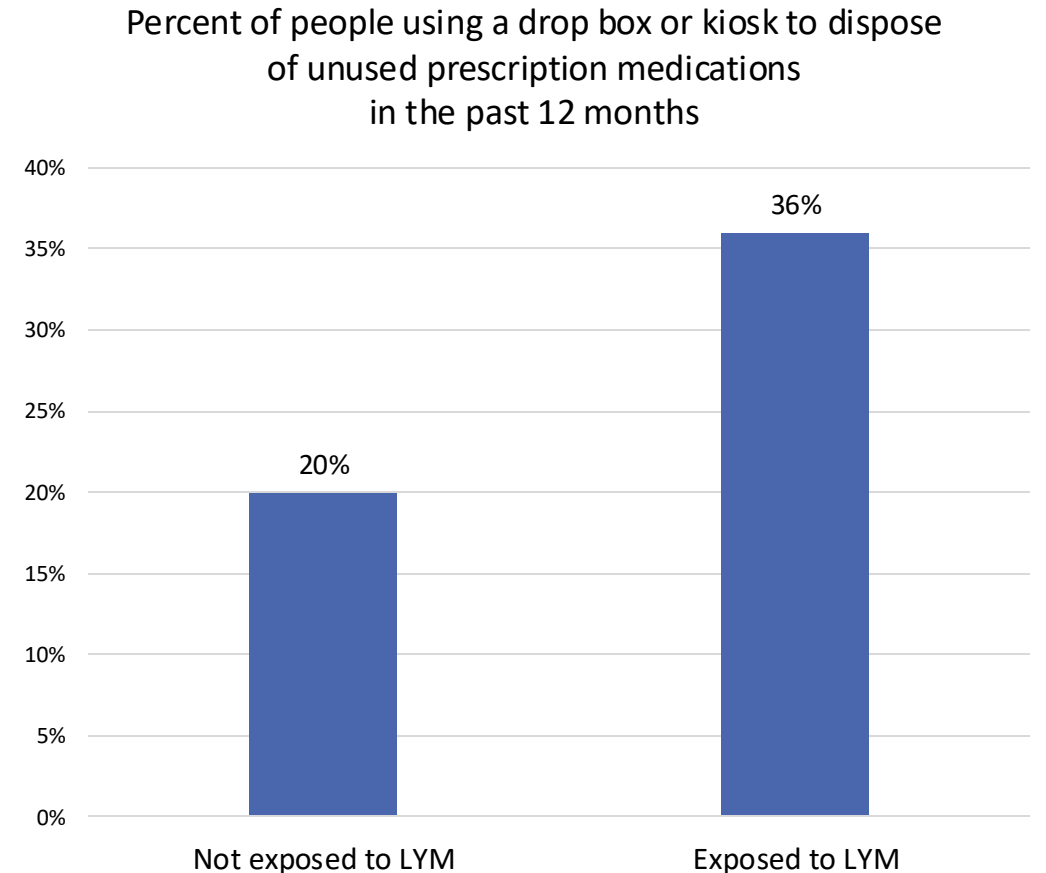
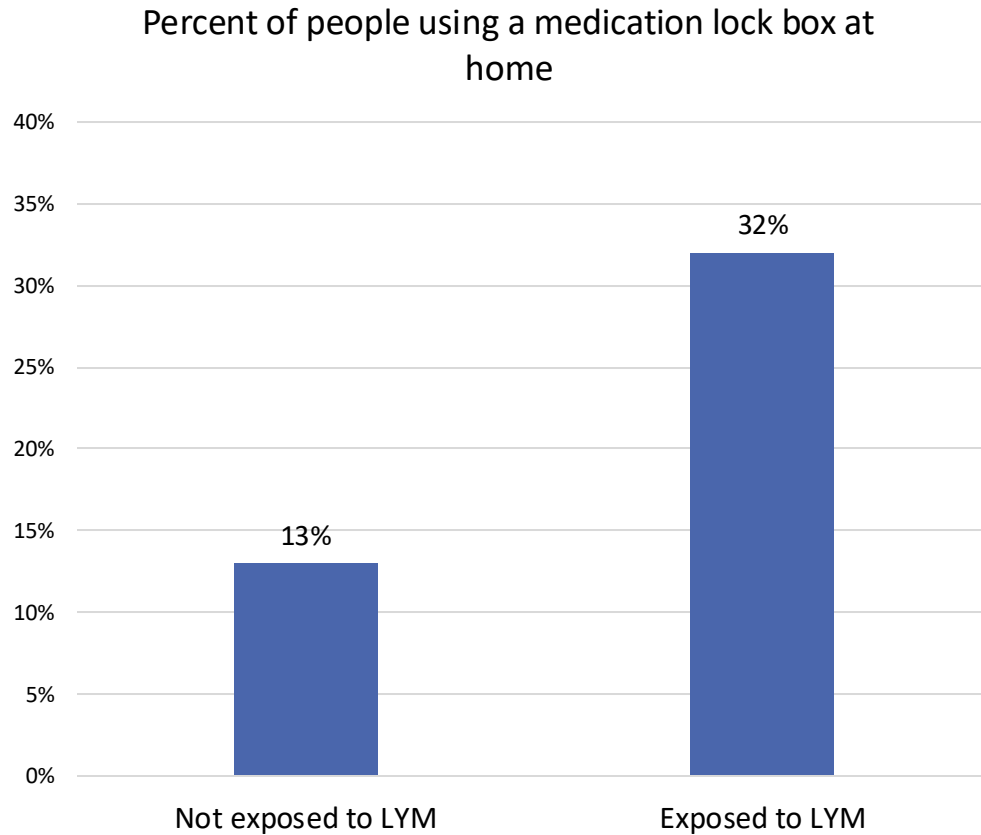
Percent of people having a medication lock box in their home that they used to store medications



Percent of people disposing of unused medications in their home that were not used within the prescribed timeline



# Higher percentages of those exposed to the *NC Lock Your Meds (LYM)* campaign report safe medication storage and disposal behaviors



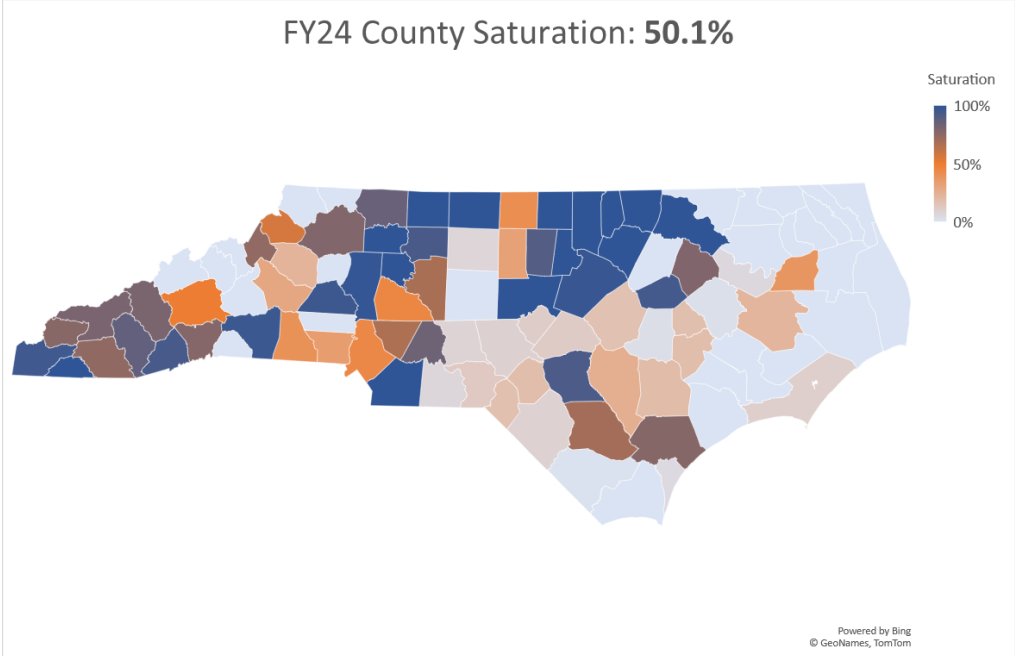
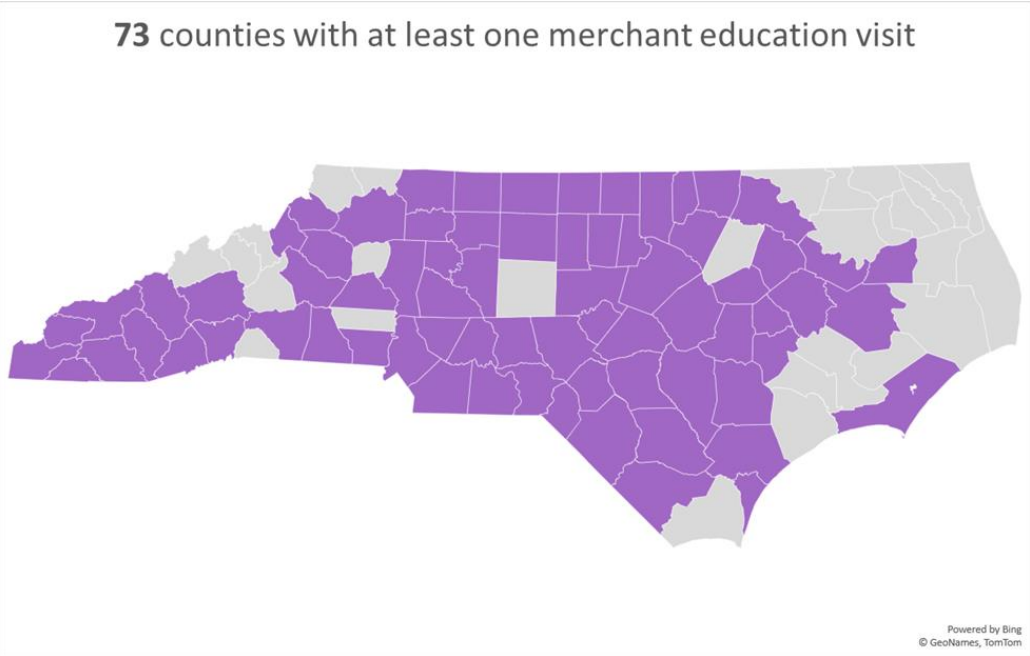
# Synar: North Carolina's Tobacco Retail Violation Rate

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Reported	14.3	18.5	20.8	12.2	N.R.	14.9	11.8	21.9	14.2*

\*FFY2025 Unofficial weighted retailer violation rate

States must comply with the Synar Amendment in order to receive their full Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUBG) awards. Synar is about enacting and enforcing laws prohibiting the sale or distribution of tobacco products to individuals under the age of 18.

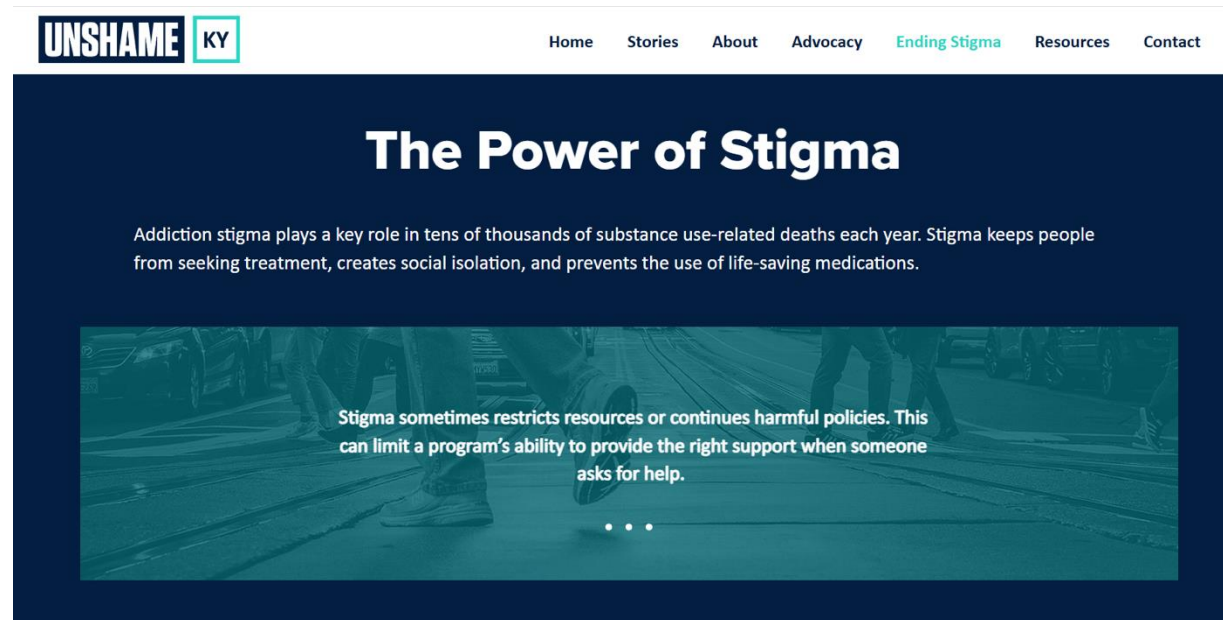
# Prevention providers completed 6,577 merchant visits in 73 counties with a 50.1% saturation of tobacco retailers



**Synar: SFY24 Tobacco Merchant Education**

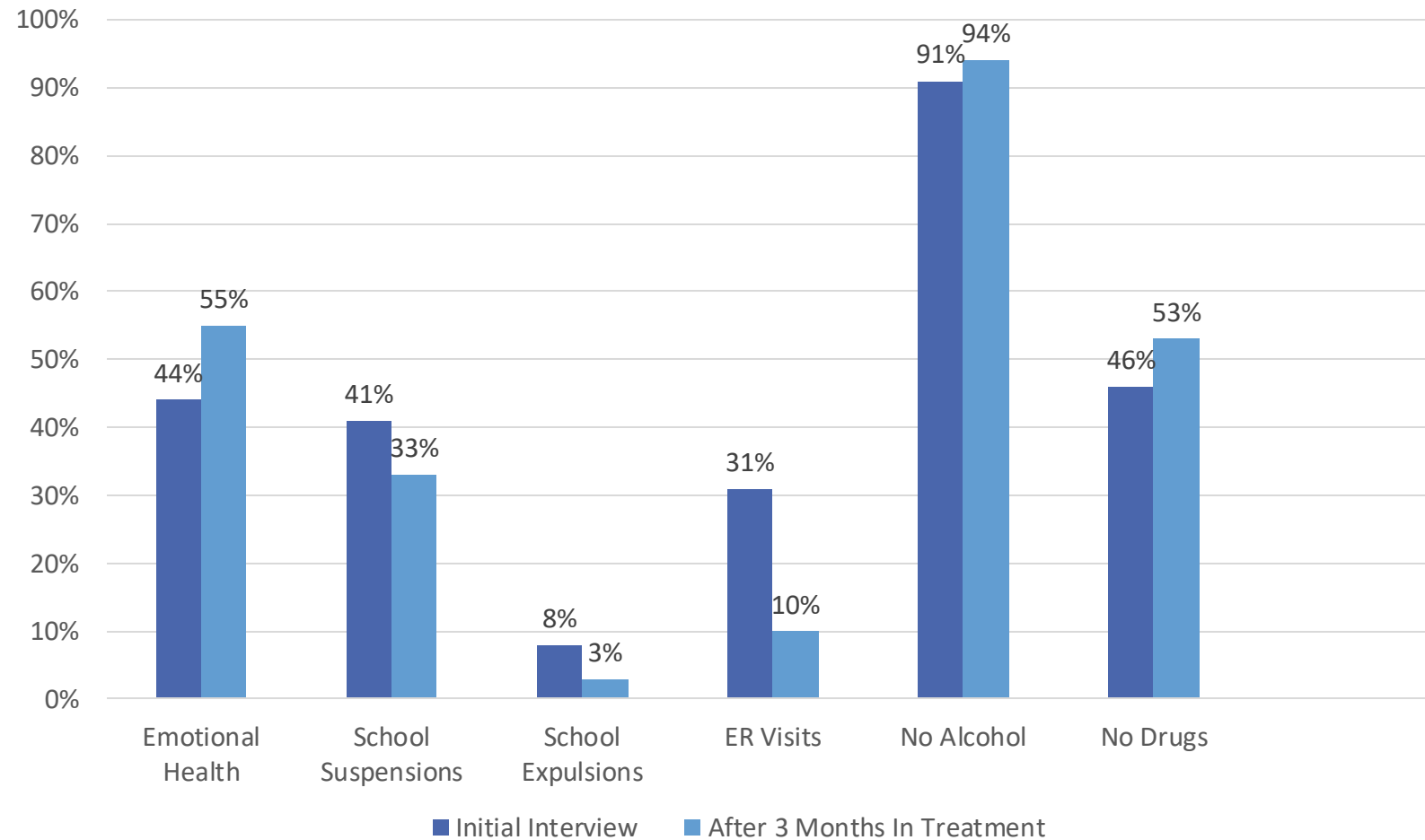
# Reducing Substance Use Stigma

**Coming Soon: UNSHAME NC**



# NC-TOPPS Recovery Potential (Youth)

Prior to Treatment (Initial Interview) & 3-Months After Being Treatment  
For Youth In SUD Treatment



Positive outcomes give hope for resilience to youth and families.

In calendar year 2024 youth in SUD treatment reported:

- Improved emotional health
- Fewer school suspensions
- Fewer school expulsions
- Fewer emergency room visits
- Less alcohol use
- Less drug use

# Collegiate Recovery Programs

Supporting recovery and reducing harm for college students in NC.

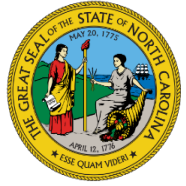
- NC DHHS first began funding 6 schools in 2015, this number has grown to 18, including 5 HBCUs and 2 Minority Serving Institutions
- Funds support staffing, sober events, conferences, dedicated program spaces, and student activities.
- NC leads the nation in supporting its students who are in or seeking recovery with a total of over 30 programs across the state, including 5 community colleges.
- As of 2023, North Carolina has been awarded 6 Association of Recovery in Higher Education (ARHE) honors, including Staff of the Year (3), Student of the Year, Champion Award for Student Support, and a Lifetime Achievement Award.



# Supporting Transition Age Youth with Opioid Use Disorders

- DMH/DD/SUS awarded [\\$1.8 million through the State Opioid Response \(SOR\) grant](#) to support youth aged **16–25** with opioid use disorders (OUD).
- Funding supports pilot programs providing:
  - **Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)** and recovery supports
  - **Family-based treatment and education**, aiming to reduce foster care placements and juvenile justice involvement
  - Essential life supports, including recovery housing, education, and employment opportunities for older youth
- Initiative targets a critical need in NC, where approximately **162,000 youth** face substance use disorders, often complicated by mental health or additional challenges.



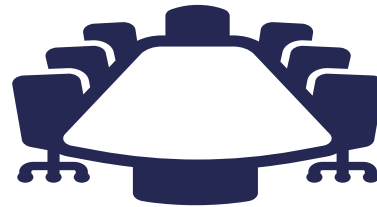


NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
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Division of Mental Health,  
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Substance Use Services

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