



Capital Area Human Services provides mental health, addiction recovery (including opioid and heroin addiction) and developmental disability services.

For additional information about the toolkit contact **Ricki.Davis2@la.gov** or call **225-922-2700**

*Innovative, compassionate care for over 20 years.*



# FAITH-BASED Opioid Epidemic Toolkit

Faith-based leaders have an important role to play in helping educate people about the dangers of opioid misuse, offering support for those affected by the opioid crisis, and directing people to treatment services in their community. A faith-based forum convened by Capital Area Human Services engaged over 80 faith-based leaders from our community to discuss information and resources to better respond to the opioid crisis and meet the needs of their congregation. As a result of the feedback from faith-based leaders, Capital Area Human Services developed a practical toolkit, that can serve as a jump start to increase awareness within the faith communities.

**Overdose deaths in East Baton Rouge Parish in 2019 hit the highest number recorded.** An official count from the East Baton Rouge Parish Coroner's Office shows 127 people died of overdoses in the parish in 2019, with the majority being opioid-related. These numbers are compared with 28 overdose deaths in 2012.

## OVERDOSE DEATHS IN EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

**127** OVERDOSE DEATHS  
in the parish in 2019

**28** OVERDOSE DEATHS  
in the parish in 2012



Source: [https://www.theadvocate.com/baton\\_rouge/news/crime\\_police/article\\_9079ddb2-43cc-11ea-8ce1-1f8611bd528b.html](https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/crime_police/article_9079ddb2-43cc-11ea-8ce1-1f8611bd528b.html)

  
**X 1,000,000**

**In Louisiana, nearly 5 million prescriptions for opioids were written in 2017**— more than the entire population of the state.



Source: Louisiana Opioid Data and Surveillance System and National Survey for Drug Use and Health

# The first step in bringing hope and healing to those in need is to understand addiction.



## Addiction is a Disease

Substance use disorders change the structure and functioning of the brain, which can seriously and significantly impair decision-making. Communities of faith help create cultures of acceptance and support that reduce stigma and connect people to the treatment they need to recover. [Read More](#)



## Adverse Childhood Experiences

Children who suffer from abuse, neglect, and other challenges are more likely to develop substance use disorders. Faith-based institutions can provide critical support for children and families that can help mitigate adverse childhood experiences and help families heal. Building positive relationships through meaningful conversations in a nurturing environment and purposeful activities are key to promoting resilience in youth. [Read More](#)



## Trauma-Informed Approach

Faith leaders are often the first point of contact when individuals and families face mental health problems or traumatic events, which is why faith-based institutions should seek to understand the impact of trauma and recognize signs and symptoms of trauma so they can respond to trauma compassionately and effectively. Learn ways that can help congregations promote healing and recovery after adversity. [Read More](#)



## Capital Area Human Services is here to help

Confidential and professional help is available, including screening, assessment, referrals, and treatment. Medicaid, Medicare, and most private insurance is accepted. Affordable, sliding fee scale. Call (225) 925-1906 or visit [realhelpbr.com](http://realhelpbr.com) for more information.

# Toolkit Resources

This Faith-Based Opioid Epidemic Toolkit is designed to provide free, easy to use materials that can be shared by faith leaders to increase awareness and promote a supportive community for those suffering with addiction. The toolkit includes:

- **Church Bulletin Insert** (customizable)
- **Social Media Posts** (customizable)
- **Conversation Starter Tips**
- **Tonja Myles "Words to Live By"**
- **Videos** "What are Opioids?" | "What is Addiction?" | "Opioid Addiction Treatment" | "Safe Medication Practices"
- **Greater Baton Rouge Referral Resource Guide**

Capital Area Human Services has also identified and developed several resources to help you meet the diverse needs of your faith community including youth, women and seniors.



## YOUTH

Helping youth to develop Emotional Intelligence is one way to ensure they make good decisions, including avoiding opioid misuse. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to be aware of, control and express one's emotions. It also helps a person handle relationships with others well. The toolkit includes **Emotional Intelligence information cards** that you can download and give to youth and their parents.



## WOMEN

Women are at higher risk for opioid misuse because of unique differences in their bodies related to hormones, menstrual cycles, fertility, pregnancy, breastfeeding, and menopause. The toolkit includes a **Recognize the Risk brochure** that clearly explains these risks and offers tips on how women can avoid opioid misuse.



## SENIORS

Senior Citizens are at higher risk of opioid misuse because they are more frequently prescribed opioids due to a higher prevalence of chronic pain conditions. Within this toolkit you can download a **Safe Medication Practices brochure** and a **Medication Chart** that can help seniors understand the importance of medication safety and the importance of keeping a record of their medications.

All toolkit resources can be downloaded at: <http://bit.ly/hopeinrecovery>

