



Heroin Task Force Fact Sheet

Our Mission:

- **Educate** Boone County citizens on the effects heroin and prescription opioid painkillers are having in the Boone County community.
- **Empower** Boone County citizens to take preventative steps and pursue rehabilitative services for heroin and prescription opioid painkiller abuse.

About Us:

The Heroin Task Force is a division of the Boone County Alliance for Healthy Youth –a community coalition with the mission of building community partnerships to reduce and prevent substance abuse among youth, their families and those in future generations. The Heroin Task Force works in partnership with local businesses, government, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, volunteers, libraries and schools to raise awareness about the issues surrounding increased heroin and prescription opioid painkiller abuse throughout Boone County. Additionally, the Heroin Task Force works with its partners to provide information about an array of heroin and prescription opioid painkiller prevention strategies and treatment services.

Our History:

The Heroin Task Force was formed in June 2013 in response to increased heroin and prescription opioid painkiller abuse, related crimes and deaths in Boone County.

Who We Serve:

The Heroin Task Force's efforts are meant to benefit all Boone County citizens.

Heroin's Impact on Boone County:

Heroin abuse is associated with a number of serious health conditions, including fatal overdose, spontaneous abortion, and infectious diseases like hepatitis and HIV. Chronic users may develop collapsed veins, infection of the heart lining and valves, abscesses, constipation and gastrointestinal cramping, and liver or kidney disease. Pulmonary complications, including various types of pneumonia, may result from the poor health of the user as well as from heroin's effects on breathing.

In addition to the effects of the drug itself, street heroin often contains toxic contaminants or additives that can clog blood vessels leading to the lungs, liver, kidneys or brain, causing permanent damage to vital organs.

During the past five years, various Boone County agencies have reported exponential growth in heroin abuse, related crimes and overdose deaths. For example:

- In 2008, The NKY Drug Strike Force issued 53 arrests for heroin possession in Boone County. That number grew to 312 arrests in 2012.

- In 2008, The NKY Drug Strike Force issued two arrests for heroin trafficking. That number grew to 35 arrests in 2012.
- In 2009, the Florence Police Department reported 19 heroin-related cases. Through August 2013, the Florence Police Department has handled 96 heroin-related cases.
- In 2010, The Boone County Coroner reported 27 opiate overdose deaths. In 2012, The Boone County Coroner reported 35 opiate overdose deaths.

[Source: [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#) (NIDA)]

Prescription Opioid Painkiller’s Relationship to Heroin:

Prescription opioid painkillers such as Oxycodone and Hydrocodone can have effects similar to heroin when taken in doses or in ways other than prescribed, and they are currently among the most commonly abused drugs in the United States. Research now suggests that abuse of these drugs may open the door to heroin abuse.

A new report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) shows that people aged 12 to 49 who had used prescription opioid painkillers nonmedically were 19 times more likely to have initiated heroin use recently (within the past 12 months of being interviewed) than others in that age group (0.39 percent versus 0.02 percent). The report also shows that four out of five recent heroin initiates (79.5 percent) had previously used prescription opioid painkillers nonmedically.

While not every Oxycodone or Hydrocodone dose will be abused, the prevalence of these drugs is astounding in Boone County.

- In Q1 2013, there were 670,236 doses of Oxycodone in Boone County
 - 5.6 doses for every Boone County citizen
- In Q1 2013, there were 667,916 doses of Hydrocodone in Boone County
 - 5.6 doses for every Boone County citizen

[Source: [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#) (NIDA)]

[Source: [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA)]

[Source: [Kentucky All Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting](#) (KASPER)]

Our Partners:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boone County Commonwealth Attorney’s Office • Boone County Coroner • Boone County Fiscal Court • Boone County Public Library • Boone County School District • Boone County Sheriff’s Office • City of Florence • City of Union • City of Walton • Department of Public Advocacy • First Church of Christ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florence Police Department • Florence Rotary Club • Kentucky Agency for Substance Abuse Policy NKY • Northern Kentucky Health Department • Northern Kentucky Drug Strike Force • NorthKey Community Care • Probation & Parole Office • Transitions • Tabatha’s Fight • Walton-Verona School District |
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