

Breaking Barriers: The Opioid Epidemic's toll on Black communities and Paths to Recovery

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Representative Tara Shephard

District 79

The Basics: What Are Opioids?

Opioids are a class of drugs that include both prescription medications, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, and morphine, as well as illegal drugs like heroin and fentanyl. While effective for treating acute and chronic pain, opioids also have a high potential for misuse and addiction due to their powerful effects on the brain's reward system.

Addressing the opioid epidemic requires a comprehensive approach, including legislative action to regulate prescriptions, increase access to addiction treatment, and implement harm reduction strategies.

Legislative Action

Opioid Overdose Rescue Kits

ACT 811

- Ensuring Safety in Schools and Higher Education Institutions
- Shephard – House Sponsor
- Chesterfield – Senate Sponsor





Overview of Act 811

- **Key Points:**
- The act mandates the presence of opioid overdose rescue kits in public high schools and higher education institutions in Arkansas.
- Deadline for implementation: January 1, 2024.
- The kits must be clearly visible and labeled appropriately.

High School Requirements

- **Key Provisions:**
 - **Collaboration:** Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Criminal Justice Institute, and Arkansas Drug Director.
 - **Kit Contents:** Narcan, Naloxone, or other approved medications.
 - **Accessibility:** Kits must be placed in public areas, particularly where automated external defibrillators (AEDs) are located.
 - **Responsibilities:** School nurses and resource officers must carry Narcan/Naloxone and report kit usage to the Arkansas Drug Director.



Higher Education Requirements

- **Key Provisions:**

- **Collaboration:** Division of Higher Education and Arkansas Drug Director.
- **Kit Placement:** Readily available in educational buildings, dormitories, student unions, sporting venues, fraternity/sorority houses, and health centers.
- **Kit Maintenance:** Regular inspections and replacement of used or expired kits.
- **Training:** Institutions must provide training on kit use and location during freshman orientation and make additional training available via the NARCANSas App or in-person sessions.



Reporting and Training

1

Reporting Requirements:

- Usage of kits must be reported to the Arkansas Drug Director through the Criminal Justice Institute or the NARCANSas App.
- Institutions must ensure all locations of the kits are registered and publicly accessible through campus health centers and the Department of Public Safety.

2

Training Initiatives:

- Training for students and staff on the use and location of the rescue kits.
- Utilization of digital tools (NARCANSas App) and in-person training campaigns to ensure widespread awareness and preparedness.



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H.R.4240 - To require that opioid overdose rescue kits be located at public elementary and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

118th Congress (2023-2024) | [Get alerts](#)

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Sponsor: [Rep. Carter, Earl L. "Buddy" \[R-GA-1\]](#)
(Introduced 06/21/2023)

Committees: House - Education and the Workforce; Energy and Commerce

Latest Action: House - 06/21/2023 Referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

Federal Support!

TARA DISTRICT 79
Shepherd
FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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OPIOID CRISIS

**SERIOUS NATIONAL
CRISIS THAT EFFECTS
SOCIAL SERVICES**

day, more than 90
after

**COMMUNITIES ASK HOW
DID THIS HAPPEN?**

In the late 1990s,
pharmaceutical companies
reassured the medical
community that patients would
become addicted to
opioid pain

What led to the opioid crisis?

The Perfect Storm!

- Overprescription of Opioids
- Lack of Awareness about Addiction Risks
- Economic and Social Stressors
- Increase in Illicit Drug Availability
- Inadequate Access to Treatment
- Regulatory and Policy Failures
- Pharmaceutical Industry Practices
- Healthcare System Issues
- Cultural Factors
- Chronic Pain Management

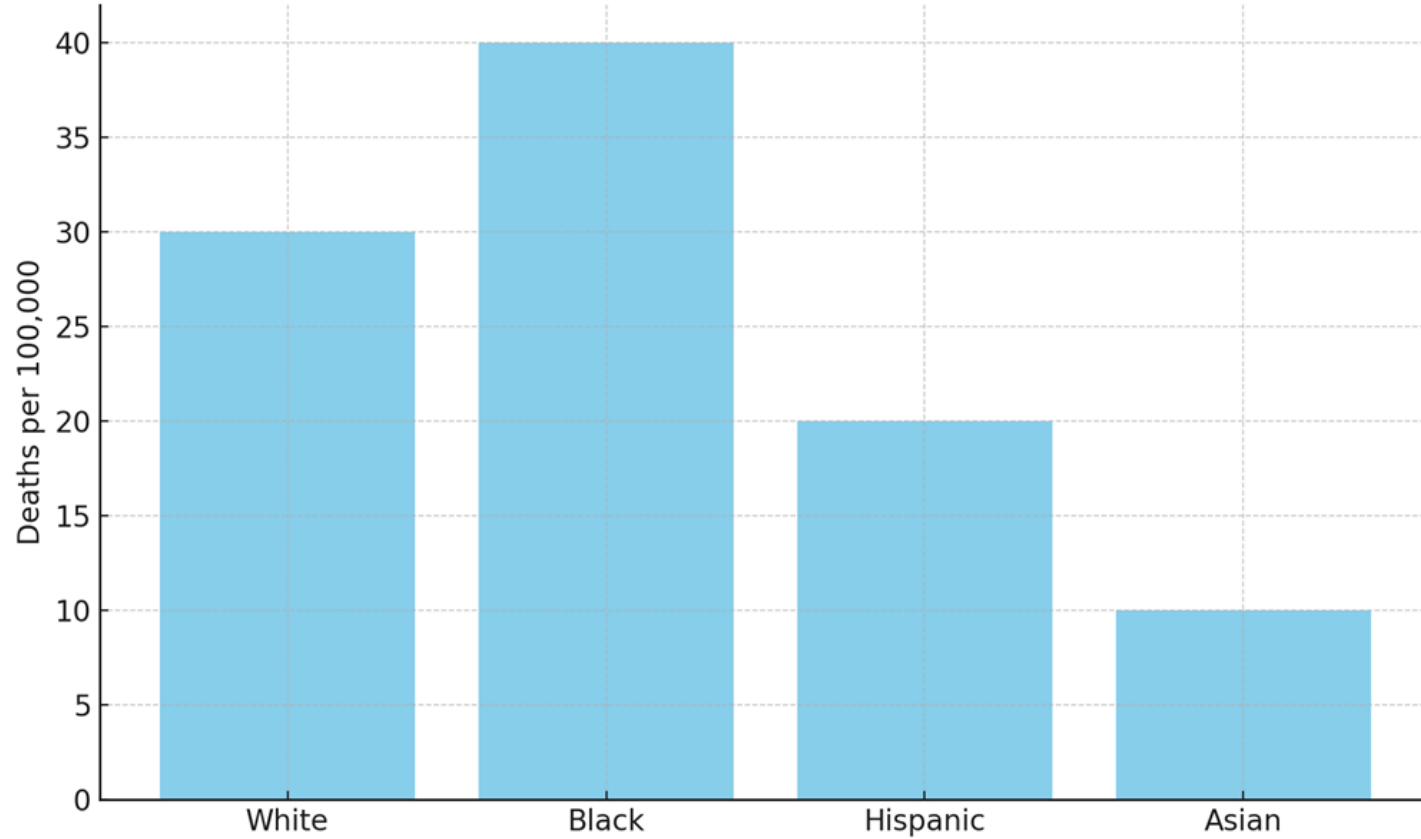


How has this
Impacted Black
Communities?

- The opioid epidemic has disproportionately affected Black communities, leading to higher mortality rates and socio-economic impacts.

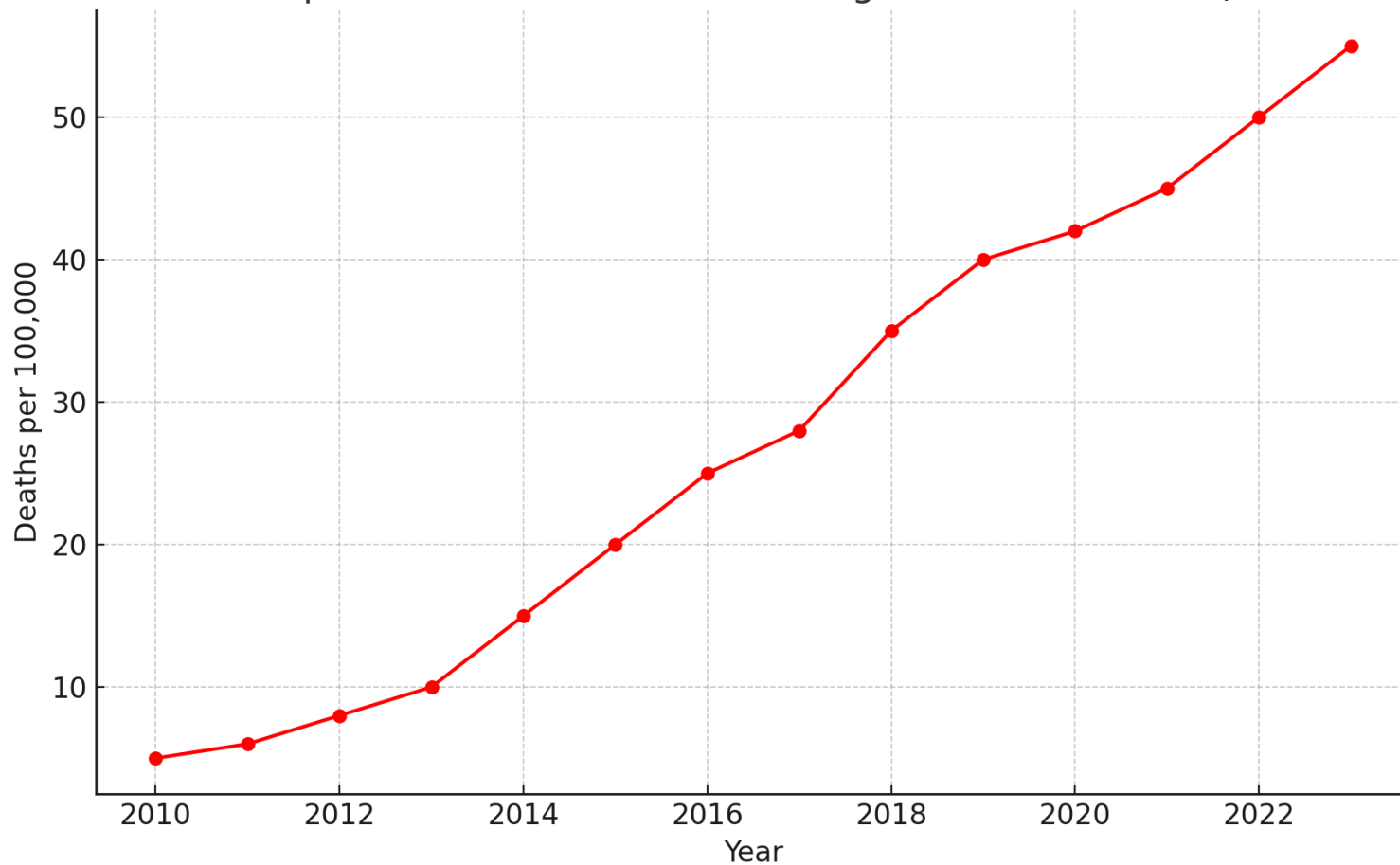


Opioid Overdose Death Rates by Ethnicity



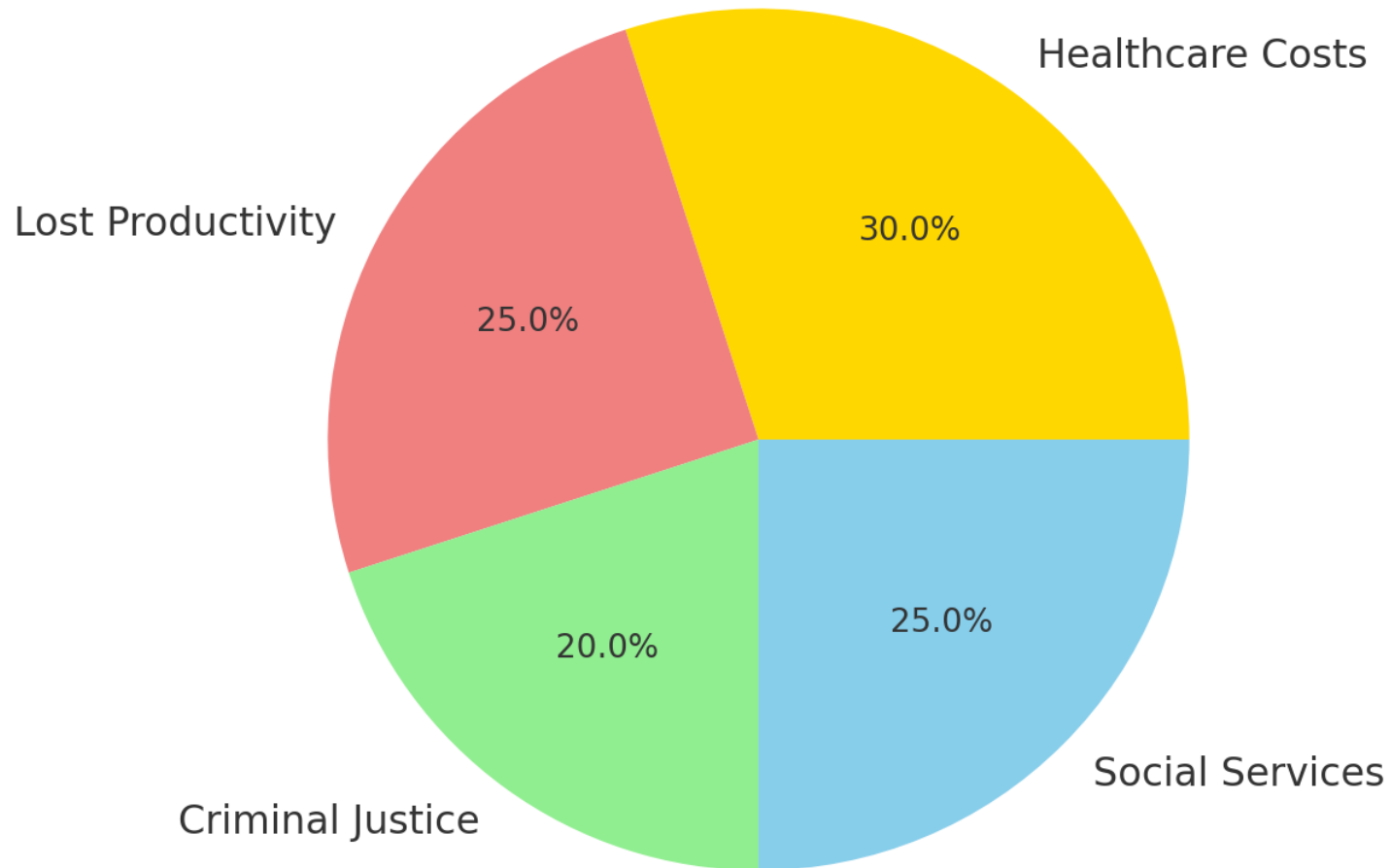
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Increase in Opioid Overdose Deaths among Black Individuals (2010-2023)



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Economic Costs of the Opioid Epidemic in Black Communities



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

Pathways to Recovery for African Americans

Top 3



Culturally Responsive Treatment Programs



Access to Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)



Holistic Approaches





Thank you!