WEPA
We Engage in Prevention Awareness

COMMUNITY DATA, STRATEGY & REPORTS

Community Needs Assessment Summary 2025

How WEPA used national, state, and local data, along with community voices, to understand substance misuse in the Bronx and choose where to focus prevention efforts.

Area
Bronx, NY

Completed
June 2026

HOW WE GATHERED INFORMATION

Data plus community voices

4
community focus groups, Dec 2025–Feb 2026

43
parents, community members, educators, and advocates in focus groups

11
coalition members completed the Coalition Capacity Checklist, Feb 2026

Local findings were compared with national, state, and city sources, including NSDUH, CDC YRBS, the NYS Opioid Data Dashboard, the OASAS SUD Treatment Dashboard, and NYC DOHMH data.

WHAT THE DATA SHOW

Key findings

60.1
overdose deaths per 100,000 Bronx residents in 2024, the highest of NYC's five boroughs
NYC DOHMH Epi Data Brief No. 150, 2025

24%
drop in the Bronx fatal overdose rate from 2023 to 2024 (79.3 to 60.1 per 100,000), smaller than the 29% drop citywide
NYC DOHMH Epi Data Brief No. 150, 2025

10.3%
of Bronx adults reported misusing prescription pain medication in the past 12 months, up from 7.7% in 2018
BRFSS via NYS Opioid Data Dashboard, 2024

62+
hospital discharges involving opioid use per 100,000 in 2023, the highest rate in New York State
NYS DOH, 2025

26.5%
of New Yorkers who misused prescription pain medication got it from a friend or relative
NSDUH, 2023 (NYS)

13%
of NYC high school students reported past 30-day marijuana use, below the U.S. average of 17%
CDC YRBS, 2023

NEIGHBORHOODS OF FOCUS

Where WEPA concentrates its outreach

90.4
Highbridge–Morrisania
overdose deaths per 100,000

87.3
Crotona–Tremont
overdose deaths per 100,000

52.6
Fordham–Bronx Park
overdose deaths per 100,000

Among the neighborhoods with the highest overdose death rates in NYC (NYC DOHMH Epi Data Brief No. 150, 2025).

Need help now? Call or text **988**, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, available 24/7.

NYS OASAS HOPEline: **1-877-8-HOPENY** (1-877-846-7369) or text **HOPENY** (467369)

WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON

Priority risk and protective factors

After reviewing the data, the coalition scored each factor on how common it is, how strongly it relates to opioid misuse, and the community's capacity and will to change it. These four rose to the top.

RISK FACTOR

Social access to medications

Prescription medications are shared among family members and peers and are not consistently monitored or secured at home. Focus group participants named unsecured medications and sharing as ongoing concerns.

RISK FACTOR

Low perceived risk of harm

Some youth report lower perceived risk from opioid misuse. 46.56% of NYS youth ages 12–17 did not report perceiving great risk from trying heroin once or twice (NSDUH, 2023).

PROTECTIVE FACTOR

Prosocial involvement

Peer support services, youth engagement, and structured community activities that promote positive social connection and recovery support.

PROTECTIVE FACTOR

Community opportunities

Overdose prevention education, naloxone training, and community-based prevention programs that increase access to prevention resources.

COMMUNITY READINESS

A coalition ready to act

9 of 11
members say WEPA's vision, mission, and goals reflect community needs and views

90%
say the coalition has the relationships needed for environmental change strategies

90%
report engagement with diverse cultural groups and organizations

Focus groups show residents recognize substance misuse as a significant concern, particularly opioid use, overdose deaths, youth access to substances, and the need for more prevention education. WEPA partners with schools, healthcare providers, faith-based and community organizations, law enforcement, and local media.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next steps

- **Grow participation:** increase coalition-wide participation in reviewing data, expand youth leadership roles, and strengthen volunteer engagement.
- **Engage families:** 60% of members report the coalition engages parents and caregivers in planning, an area to keep building.
- **Close local data gaps:** many data systems don't produce reliable neighborhood-level estimates, so WEPA will pursue data partnerships with Montefiore and the Bronx Opioid Collective and continue local surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder interviews.
- **Measure readiness:** complete the Tri-Ethnic Community Readiness Survey, which is currently pending.

Sources: NYC DOHMH Epi Data Brief No. 150 (2025) and NYC OCME/DOHMH Bureau of Vital Statistics (2000–2024); NYS Opioid Data Dashboard (NYSDOH, 2024–2025), including BRFSS indicators; NYS DOH (2025); SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health (2023); CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2023); WEPA focus groups (Dec 2025–Feb 2026); WEPA Coalition Capacity Checklist (Feb 2026). Full source details are in WEPA's complete 2025 Needs Assessment Report.