

**TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
*Information Saves Lives*  
**Opioid Settlement Grant FAQs for PATRONS**

**1. What is the Opioid Settlement Grant, how did the Library receive it, and how much was the Library given?**

Tompkins County was awarded \$700,000 after NY State reached a settlement with several companies that manufactured, distributed, and sold opioids. This was then distributed to a handful of local organizations in the form of grants, decided by the Tompkins County Opioid Task Force. TCPL's grant totaled \$37,500, with specific amounts pre-designated for goals outlined in a grant proposal submitted by the TCPL Foundation. (More [Information About NYS Opioid Settlement](#))

Other local organizations that received grants include OAR, REACH, ReUse, TST-BOCES, CARS, the Alcohol and Drug Council, and Ithaca United Soccer Club. ([What the Grants are Funding](#))

The Library's name for the programming provided by the opioid settlement grant is *Information Saves Lives*.

**2. How is TCPL spending the grant money?**

The Library is spending the funds in several areas to reduce stigma around substance use disorder, to educate the public, and to educate staff:

- A vending machine to dispense NARCAN and test strips for FREE to the community
- NARCAN training for the public and staff
- Harm reduction programming for the public including author visits, book clubs, mindfulness training, and a harm reduction resource fair
- Harm reduction and trauma-informed services training for staff
- Materials for the adult and youth collections that deal with substance use disorder, its impact on loved ones, destigmatization

**3. Why does an opioid settlement grant matter to Tompkins County and the Tompkins County Public Library?**

In 2017, the federal government declared the opioid crisis a public health emergency and stated that "This epidemic is a national health emergency."

In 2023, Tompkins County received 341 calls to 9-1-1 for overdose/poisoning, including

- 23 fatal overdoses

- 28 drug related deaths not attributed to an overdose

Like much of the United States, Tompkins County is experiencing the effects of the substance use and overdose epidemic. Addiction does not discriminate, it can affect anyone – but with knowledge and empathy it is possible to reduce overdose deaths, support people with substance use disorder, and empower our community to face these challenges head-on. ([Data About Opioid Use in Tompkins County](#))

TCPL's *Information Saves Lives* project aims to

- make information accessible
- foster discussion and destigmatization
- provide Tompkins County community members with harm reduction skills

#### **4. How does the free NARCAN vending machine work?**

Enter your zip code to receive free NARCAN, Fentanyl drug testing strips, and/or Xylazine drug testing strips. Those without a zip code may enter any five digits to receive free supplies. The Library also provides free drug testing strips in discreet locations throughout the library.

#### **5. Do I need to be trained to carry and administer NARCAN?**

You do not need training to carry or administer NARCAN. Training is recommended so you can recognize the signs of an overdose and feel confident in responding.

For more information about NARCAN, please visit their website:

<https://narcan.com/en/frequently-asked-questions>

*Information Saves Lives* is offering free NARCAN training, beginning on Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. at the Library. After the first session, free NARCAN training will take place the first Wednesday of each month.

#### **6. Who is the target audience for *Information Saves Lives* programs and information?**

The intention of the *Information Saves Lives* project is to provide programs and resources relating to harm reduction for everyone in Tompkins County, and especially for those who are affected by addiction. Whether you are personally affected by addiction or not, the library encourages you to participate in these programs and services. The more we learn and engage, the more we can support one another and our whole community.

## 7. What events and programs are planned for the *Information Saves Lives* project?

A variety of events and educational programs are planned for the rest of 2024 and into 2025. The TCPL website, [www.tcpl.org](http://www.tcpl.org), is the best place to find information via our [calendar of events](#) and our [opioid resources page](#).

*Information Saves Lives* kicks off on October 17 with our Harm Reduction Resource Fair from

## 8. Do I need a library card to participate in *Information Saves Lives* programs? Do I have to pay to attend?

All TCPL programs are free and open to the public. The NARCAN vending machine is free for NARCAN and test strips.

We want everyone in Tompkins County to have a FREE library card! If you attend an opioid grant program, stop by one of our service desks and sign up for a card with your photo ID and proof of address.

## 9. What language should I use when speaking with people impacted by opioids?

- The national health crisis is broadly referred to as the *opioid crisis* or *opioid epidemic*.
- First-person language is best: *person with substance use disorder* or *person experiencing addiction*.
- Someone in recovery is a person *in recovery*.
- Someone who is not seeking recovery or who is in relapse is a person *in active use*.

A person with substance use disorder may use their own language to describe themselves and their circumstances. Avoid telling someone what language they should or should not use to refer to themselves, their loved ones, or their lived experiences.

## 10. Will the grant cause more people with substance use disorder to visit the Library?

The Library's mission is to be a welcoming and trusted resource to our community. The library already serves patrons with addiction and will continue to do so. Making these programs and resources available can help people access support they may not otherwise receive. Staff will be trained in trauma-informed librarianship and will be empowered to direct patrons to other local resources that may help them.

Substance use disorder does not discriminate or look a specific way and the goal is for everyone to feel safe and welcome in the library, while offering our community resources to help each other thrive.

We hope that destigmatizing substance use disorders and having more free resources available in a location that is not a medical or religious setting will encourage everyone to learn more about addiction recovery and harm reduction.

### **11. Will *Information Saves Lives* cause more overdoses in the Library?**

Our goal is to prevent and reduce the number of overdoses in our community. Library staff and security guards are trained in administering NARCAN. Amric security guards are present during all hours of operation. In 2023, library staff saved four lives using NARCAN. While we hope to never have to use it again, staff are prepared to intervene if necessary.

### **12. What should I do if I find needles or drugs in the library?**

If you find needles or drugs in the library, please calmly notify a staff member or a security guard. TCPL follows all federal, state, and local laws regarding drugs and drug use is not allowed in the Library.

### **13. Does the opioid grant project include a needle exchange program in the Library?**

No. Giving out needles or hosting needle exchanges is beyond the scope of the Library's mission.

Patrons looking for a needle exchange or drug composition checking program can be directed to the [Southern Tier AIDS Program \(STAP\)](#).

### **14. How can I get involved?**

Information saves lives and anyone can help:

- Share information about the TCPL's *Information Saves Lives* program far and wide. Feel free to share print materials or share digitally by email or social media.
- Spread the news about the Library's free NARCAN and test strip vending machine.
- Attend our programs to learn more about harm reduction.
- Learn how to administer NARCAN and carry it with you.
- Thank the Tompkins County Legislature for the opioid settlement grant program.
- Support harm reduction efforts in Tompkins County by showing up, speaking out, and staying informed.
- Donate to harm reduction non-profits and vote to support harm reduction initiatives when they're on the ballot.

**TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
*Information Saves Lives*  
**2024 and 2025 One-Time Programs**

Date Time Location	Program
10/17/2024 4:30 - 7:00 pm Avenue of Friends	<a href="#">Harm Reduction Resource Fair</a>
11/12/2024 4:00 - 5:00 pm Digital Lab	<a href="#">Teen Book Club: "Gather" by Kenneth M. Cadow</a>
11/14/2024 6:00 - 7:00 pm BorgWarner Room	<a href="#">Adult Non-Fiction Book Club: "Raising Lazarus" by Beth Macy</a>
02/21/2025 11:00 am - 12:00 pm BorgWarner Room	<a href="#">Trauma Informed Librarianship Workshop with Karina Hagelin</a>
02/22/2025 1:00 - 3:00 pm Cinemapolis	<a href="#">Documentary Screening at Cinemapolis: Anonymous Sister</a>
03/13/2025 4:00 - 5:00 pm BorgWarner Room	<a href="#">Survivor 101 Workshop with Karina Hagelin</a>
04/19/2025 1:00 - 2:00 pm BorgWarner Room	<a href="#">Author Visit: Maia Szalavitz, author of "Undoing Drugs"</a>

**TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
*Information Saves Lives*  
**2025 Recurring Monthly Programs**

Date Time Location	Program
Every 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday 5:00 - 6:30 pm BorgWarner Room	<a href="#">Meditation and Mindfulness with Anna Salamone</a>
Every 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday 4:00 - 5:00 pm BorgWarner Room	<a href="#">NARCAN Training with REACH</a> (NOTE: first one is the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of January – 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesdays thereafter)

**TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
*Information Saves Lives*  
**Terms to Know**

**Fentanyl**

“Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is at least 50-100 times more potent than heroin and morphine. Depending on the analog, the potency can be even higher than that. Pharmaceutical fentanyl is approved for treating severe pain, typically advanced stage cancer pain. Illicitly made/distributed fentanyl has been on the rise in many states across America. Nearly half of all overdose deaths in New York State now involve fentanyl or its analogs.”

(From NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports. <https://oasas.ny.gov/prevent-overdose>)

**Harm Reduction**

“Harm reduction is an evidence-based approach that is critical to engaging with people who use drugs and equipping them with life-saving tools and information to create positive change in their lives and potentially save their lives ... Harm reduction is a practical and transformative approach that incorporates community-driven public health strategies – including prevention, risk reduction, and health promotion – to empower people who use drugs (and their families) with the choice to live healthy, self-directed, and purpose-filled lives. Harm reduction centers the lived and living experience of people who use drugs, especially those in underserved communities, in these strategies and the practices that flow from them.

Harm reduction emphasizes engaging directly with people who use drugs to prevent overdose and infectious disease transmission; improve physical, mental, and social wellbeing; and offer low barrier options for accessing health care services, including substance use and mental health disorder treatment.”

(From Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/harm-reduction>)

**Naloxone (NARCAN)**

“Naloxone, commonly known by the brand name Narcan, is a medication approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) designed to reverse opioid overdose rapidly. It is an opioid antagonist—meaning that it binds to opioid receptors and can reverse and

block the effects of other opioids, such as heroin, illicitly manufactured fentanyl and its analogues, morphine, oxycodone, and the nitazene analogues.”

(From NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports. <https://oasas.ny.gov/projectcope>)

## **Opioids**

“Opioids are a class of substances that reduce pain, including physical pain, psychological pain, and emotional pain. An individual can develop a physiological dependence to opioids, experience opioid withdrawal symptoms between doses or use, and ultimately, develop opioid use disorder.

Opioids can be naturally occurring (derived from the poppy plant), semi-synthetic (made in a lab but similar in structure to naturally-occurring opioids), or synthetic (made in a lab and not similar in structure to naturally occurring opioids). Opioids attach to opioid receptors in the brain to reduce pain but cause additional effects like drowsiness. Currently, the most commonly used opioids are: prescription opioids, heroin, and illicitly manufactured fentanyl and its analogues.”

(From NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports. <https://oasas.ny.gov/opioids>)

## **Substance Use Disorder**

“Substance use disorder (SUD) is a treatable mental disorder that affects a person’s brain and behavior, leading to their inability to control their use of substances like legal or illegal drugs, alcohol, or medications.”

(From National Institute of Mental Health  
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/substance-use-and-mental-health>)

## **Xylazine**

“Xylazine is a non-opioid sedative commonly used for procedural sedation in veterinary medicine. Xylazine is in a class of medications called alpha-2 adrenergic agonists. This means it is not an opioid, but instead is more chemically similar to other sedative medications that decrease activity and have a calming, relaxing effect such as clonidine (an antihypertensive medication). Xylazine was never approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in humans because in clinical trials it caused severe central nervous system (CNS) depression or sedation in humans.

Xylazine is seen primarily as an additive in the unregulated drug supply and is not typically a substance that is used on its own. Although it has been found to be mixed in



with other substances, xylazine most commonly is being added to illicitly manufactured fentanyl.”

(From NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports. <https://oasas.ny.gov/xylazine>)