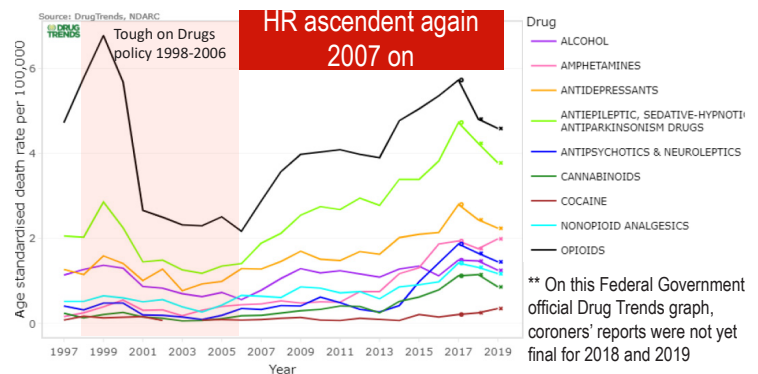
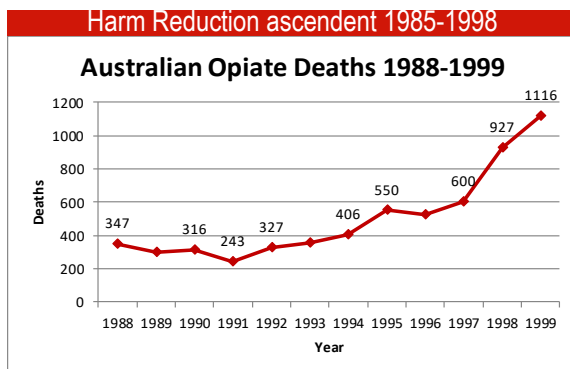


# Harm reduction exponentially increased our drug deaths

Why this Drug Summit must reject new Harm Reduction interventions and prioritise Drug Prevention

## Australia's drug deaths skyrocketed under a Harm Reduction priority



- **whenever Australia has made Harm Reduction its central focus, drug-related deaths have skyrocketed**
- **1985 to 1999** - deaths sharply increased as Australia moved to the highest drug use in OECD countries
- 1998 to 2006 - the Federal Prevention approach (shaded area Graph 2) saw deaths from all drug types plummet
- **2007 on** - Harm Reduction prioritised again - deaths from every drug type skyrocketed - a clear policy failure

## What failed Harm Reduction will demand from this Drug Summit (and how these interventions will only cause more deaths)

### Pill Testing

- from scientific study of 392 coroners' reports of Ecstasy deaths in Australia 2000-2018:
- **14%** died from an **allergic-like reaction** to Ecstasy for which pill testing can't test
- **48%** died from **co-using** Ecstasy with alcohol, cocaine etc - pill testing doesn't do blood tests
- **29%** died from (mostly vehicle) **accidents while intoxicated** - pill testing can't test for accidents
- Ecstasy is causal in all these deaths, yet pill testing gives Ecstasy a pass

### Legalise Cannabis

- Colorado loosened medical cannabis laws in 2009, then legalisation in 2013:
- cannabis related **suicides** increased **410%** by 2016
- cannabis **hospitalisations** increased **360%**
- cannabis-related **traffic deaths** increased **230%** by 2016
- adult cannabis **use doubled** by 2016

### Decriminalise all drugs

- Portugal decriminalised use of all illicit drugs mid-2001
- the aim of their policy is to 'dissuade' users from illicit drugs
- but **drug use** has gone up **59%**
- **use by minors** up as much as **80%**
- overdose **deaths** by **85%** since 2002
- wastewater tests across cities in the European Union show Portugal in the top three countries for use of most illegal drugs
- Their policy clearly did not work
- Oregon and California copied Portugal creating social debacles which you can read about - Oregon recriminalised recently

### Another injecting room

- the Sydney injecting room had overdoses **63 times higher** than clients' own recorded overdose rates before they registered to use the facility
- such extraordinary numbers of overdoses can only mean clients are buying more heroin and more drugs from local dealers to be able to

overdose, making injecting rooms a **government-funded accessory to the drug trade**

- Melbourne's MSIR overdose rate was a staggering **102 times higher** than street rates
- Melbourne's government-funded 2020 evaluation showed **deaths actually increased** in the area, as in Melbourne overall
- These facilities prolong heroin use, allowing extended exposure to fatal overdoses, causing greater loss of life

### Drive legally while intoxicated

- 62% of Australians use cannabis legally for 'chronic pain' - but 20 RCT studies show it does **not** alleviate chronic pain
- drivers are intoxicated with cannabis AND opiates in a very dangerous synergy

We know exactly what works - see over

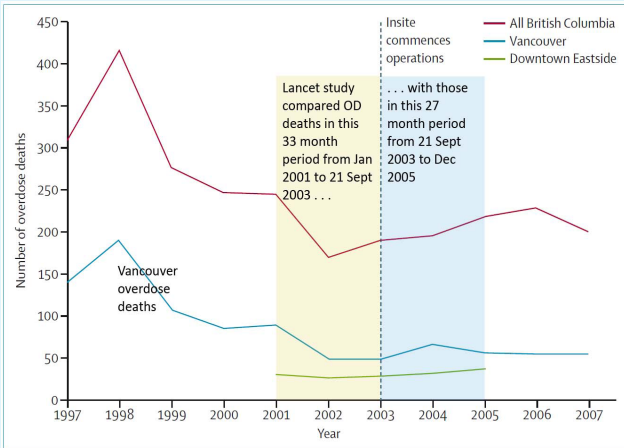
# How they fool you

The science on Harm Reduction should often be questioned.

Take the 2011 Lancet study on injecting rooms which 'found' that Vancouver's injecting room had reduced overdose deaths by 9%.

The official British Columbia coroner's figures (below) show deaths actually increasing by 37% the year after its 2003 opening, and still up 12% in 2005. So how did they achieve their bogus result?

By comparing total deaths in the 33 month period before Insite opened, when overdose deaths were still coming off their 1998 high due to a Canadian heroin drought, with 27 months once they had bottomed out (the year before Insite opened). This is how the 'science' is cheated.



BC Coroners Service  
Illicit Drug Deaths 1997 to 2007  
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Age	Year										
	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
20 and under	5	9	7	8	7	5	7	10	12	6	
21-30	37	47	40	43	34	38	52	38	49	73	61
31-40	55	54	64	64	49	56	97	101	111	174	141
41-50	66	77	75	67	72	66	65	78	82	101	81
51-60	32	38	29	26	22	12	19	28	24	35	17
61 and over	5	3	4	2	5	2	6	1	2	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>316</b>

Town / City	Year										
	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
100 Mile House	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	9	6	6
108 Mile Ranch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abbotsford	0	8	8	5	5	1	11	14	6	6	8
Agassiz	0	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	1
Alexis Creek	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armine (BC)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black Creek	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Coquitlam	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enderby	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Everett (BC)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fraser Valley	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Langley	9	6	7	3	8	2	11	0	13	20	13
Campbell River	3	4	3	3	4	1	1	2	2	9	2
Carleton Place											
Trail	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Midland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Vancouver	56	54	55	67	51	49	90	87	108	191	140
Vancouver	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vancouver	3	4	1	4	7	3	2	4	4	4	2
Victoria											
Warfield	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
West Vancouver	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
Westbank	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Wilder	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
White Rock	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Williams Lake	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Worsley (BC)	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yieldville	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yzer	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>316</b>

2001 - 90 OD deaths  
2002 - 49  
2003 - 51  
2004 - 67  
2005 - 55  
2006 - 54

## We know exactly what works

and Parliamentarians can vote to save lives, not waste them



- **Sweden** reduced secondary student illicit drug use by **80%** (1971-1990)
- **Iceland** reduced secondary student illicit use by **60-90%** (1998 – present)
- **Australia's** Tough on Drugs reduced student and adult use combined by **40%** (1998-2007)
- **The US** 'Just Say No' campaign reduced secondary student use by **70%** (1981-1991)

Figure 5: Life-time prevalence of drug use among 15-16 year old students in Sweden, 1971-2006

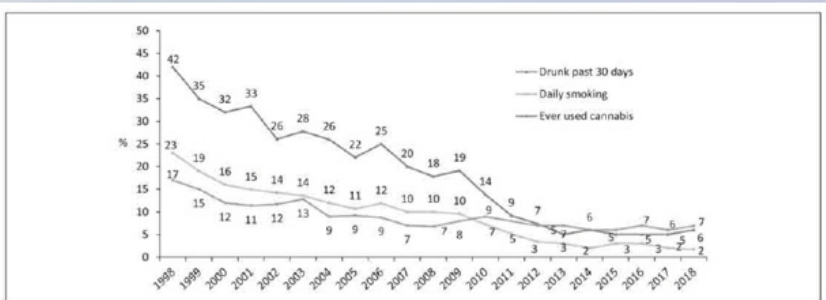
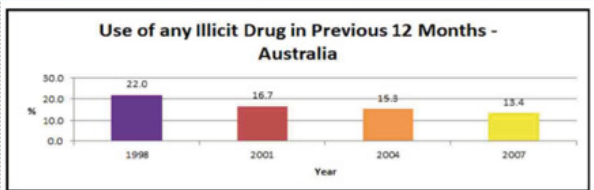
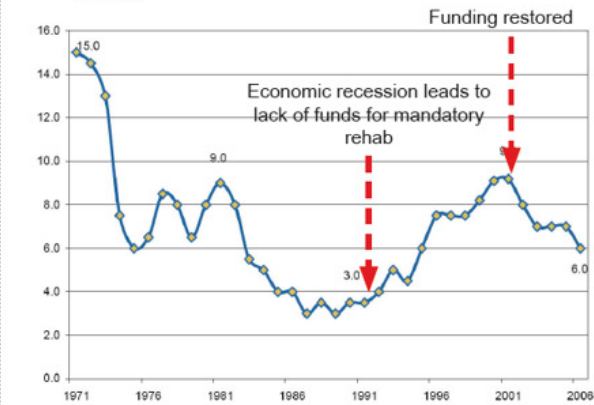


FIGURE 2 Annual Percentage of Self-Reported Substance Use Among Icelandic Adolescents, 1998-2018  
SOURCE: Kristjánsson et al. (2016).

Table 2.1. Trends in Prevalence of Lifetime and Last Year Marijuana Use by Age<sup>1</sup> (NHSDA 1974-1996)

	1974	1976	1977	1979	1982	1985	1988	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Lifetime</b>														
12-17 years	23.0	22.4	28.0	26.7	23.2	20.1	15.0	12.7	11.1	9.1	9.9	13.6	16.2	16.8
18-25 years	52.7	52.9	59.9	66.1	61.3	57.6	54.6	50.4	48.8	46.6	45.7	41.9	41.4	44.0
26-34 years	-	-	-	45.0	51.5	54.1	57.6	56.5	55.2	54.3	54.9	52.7	51.8	50.5
26+ years	9.9	12.9	15.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35+ years	-	-	-	9.0	10.4	13.9	17.6	19.6	21.1	22.2	23.8	25.4	25.3	27.0
<b>Last Year</b>														
12-17 years	18.5	18.4	22.3	21.3	17.7	16.7	10.7	9.6	8.5	6.9	8.5	11.4	14.2	13.0
18-25 years	34.2	35.0	38.7	44.2	37.4	34.0	26.1	23.0	22.9	21.2	21.4	21.4	21.8	23.8
26-34 years	-	-	-	20.5	21.4	20.2	14.2	14.4	11.6	11.5	11.1	11.5	11.8	11.3
26+ years	3.8	5.4	6.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35+ years	-	-	-	4.3	6.2	4.3	3.7	4.2	4.6	3.8	4.6	4.1	3.4	3.8

For the fully cited evidence on everything within these pages, and for much more science on the failure of HR, go to [www.drugfree.org.au](http://www.drugfree.org.au) Resources - HM - click "Harm Reduction 2024"