



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness



# TEACHING GUIDE FOR 'Connecting to Culture'

## INDIGENOUS HARM REDUCTION VIDEO SERIES 2.0

"I try to keep culture at the center of my approach to harm reduction. I believe that low barrier and no barrier access to culture really makes a huge difference"

- MARNIE SCOW, HEILTSUK/KWAKIUTL FIRST NATIONS

In 2022, the First Nations Health Authority and Vancouver Coastal Health worked with filmmaker Asia Youngman (Cree/Métis) to create a second video series about Indigenous Harm Reduction. Connecting to Culture is a follow-up to the highly regarded Taking Care of Each Other video series launched in 2018.

The Connecting to Culture videos are teaching tools intended to support discussions in First Nations communities about harm reduction, substance use and stigma. The video series uses an Indigenous lens and includes the perspectives of Elders, peers and youth.

There are three videos in the Connecting to Culture series:

1. [Indigenous Harm Reduction \(7 min\)](https://youtu.be/K4ikf0EB1Nw) [youtu.be/K4ikf0EB1Nw](https://youtu.be/K4ikf0EB1Nw)
2. [Connecting to Others as Part of Harm Reduction \(5 min\)](https://youtu.be/UkpxHMLWS1s) [youtu.be/UkpxHMLWS1s](https://youtu.be/UkpxHMLWS1s)
3. [Harm Reduction Practices in Communities \(6 min\)](https://youtu.be/wlbghYYrUEI) [youtu.be/wlbghYYrUEI](https://youtu.be/wlbghYYrUEI)

## Defining Harm Reduction

Harm reduction for substance use is an approach to keep people safer, whether or not they continue to use substances. A harm reduction approach includes compassionate attitudes and actions by family members, community members and health workers. Harm reduction strategies include:

- > Educating people about substance use and harm reduction e.g., naloxone training
- > Making drug use equipment available e.g., sterile syringes and pipes for safer injection and smoking
- > Establishing safe consumption sites and overdose prevention sites (OPS)
- > Prescribing opioid agonist therapy (OAT)
- > Providing peer support and making low-barrier housing with wrap-around services available

*Indigenous* harm reduction is more than this, however. Indigenous harm reduction means undoing the harms of colonialism, which place Indigenous people – First Nations, Métis and Inuit – at higher risk of harmful substance use. This means a decolonized, Indigenous approach to harm reduction that re-connects people to culture, and rebuilds relationships with the interconnected spiritual, human and natural worlds.

## Resources about harm reduction:

- > [FNHA: What is Harm Reduction?](http://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-harm-reduction-policy-supplement-3-of-3.pdf) [www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-harm-reduction-policy-supplement-3-of-3.pdf](http://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-harm-reduction-policy-supplement-3-of-3.pdf)
- > [BCCDC Harm Reduction \(Naloxone, trainings, supplies, resources\)](http://www.towardtheheart.com) [www.towardtheheart.com](http://www.towardtheheart.com)
- > [VCH Overdose Prevention and Response](http://www.vch.ca/public-health/harm-reduction/overdose-prevention-response) [www.vch.ca/public-health/harm-reduction/overdose-prevention-response](http://www.vch.ca/public-health/harm-reduction/overdose-prevention-response)
- > [Policy Brief: Indigenous Harm Reduction = Reducing the Harms of Colonialism](http://www.icad-cisd.com/pdf/Publications/Indigenous-Harm-Reduction-Policy-Brief.pdf)  
[www.icad-cisd.com/pdf/Publications/Indigenous-Harm-Reduction-Policy-Brief.pdf](http://www.icad-cisd.com/pdf/Publications/Indigenous-Harm-Reduction-Policy-Brief.pdf)

## Discussion Questions



### Indigenous Harm Reduction

#### Before watching the video, ask:

- > What have you heard about culture in harm reduction?

#### During the video, ask viewers to watch for:

- > Words or quotes that stand out to you
- > Different ways that people incorporate culture into harm reduction
- > The strengths that people draw from culture

#### After watching the video, discuss:

- > What did you see that stood out to you?
- > How do the people in the video incorporate culture into their harm reduction work?
- > How can you increase access to culture for people that use substances?



### Connecting to Others as Part of Harm Reduction

#### Before watching the video, ask:

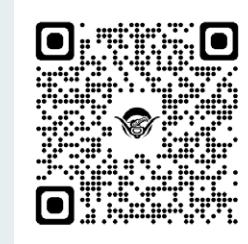
- > How can we connect with people who use substances to offer support?

#### During the video, ask viewers watch for:

- > Quotes or stories that stand out for you
- > Advice for connecting with people who use substances

#### After watching the video, discuss:

- > What stood out for you in the video?
- > What examples did people give of ways to connect with people using substances?
- > What works for you when connecting with people to provide harm reduction support?



### Harm Reduction Practices in Communities

#### Before watching the video, ask:

- > What harm reduction services are available in your community?

#### During the video, ask viewers to watch for:

- > Any quotes or moments that stand out to you
- > Hands-on support offered to community members who use substances
- > Wise practices in Indigenous Harm Reduction

#### After watching the video, discuss:

- > What stood out to you?
- > What examples of practical support were described?
- > Which of these practices could be helpful in your community?

You can watch the Taking Care of Each Other video series here:

[www.youtube.com/playlist?reload=9&app=desktop&list=PLDKOxTJMuk\\_d-sfu6VcralfrlxZy4Fkj](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?reload=9&app=desktop&list=PLDKOxTJMuk_d-sfu6VcralfrlxZy4Fkj)