

#EndOverdoseKY

~~HARM~~

REDUC TION

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



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STATEWIDE COORDINATOR

Harm Reduction: Community Advocacy and Policy Discussions at the Local and State Levels

R E D U C T I O N



VOCAL
KENTUCKY

WHY JOIN THIS WORKSHOP?

To provide HR Care Navigators the communication skills necessary to speak in front of a multitude of audiences while advocating for change, public health implications and extending a voice to those who may not have a voice.

WHAT WE'LL COVER

- **Activity – (mini self-interest)– Why do we do harm reduction work? (Report back)**
- **Go over learning objectives & why we're here**
- **Interactive Activities– Craft/personalize persuasive messagesfor specific audiences**
- **Tools & resources**

MINI ACTIVITY

- 1. Why do we do harm reduction work?**
- 2. What stigmatizing language/phrases have you heard about substance use or SUDs?**

R E D U C T I O N

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Learn shared language**
- **Acknowledge & Identify your targeted audience**
- **Craft persuasive messages for those audiences**
- **Relationship building**
- **Advocating at local level**
- **Advocating at state level**

Learning shared language

National Institute of Health

INSTEAD OF SAYING....

SAY....

Habit/Addiction

Substance Use Disorder (SUD)

WHY

- Inaccurately implies that a person is choosing to use substances or can choose to stop.
- “Habit” may undermine the seriousness of the disease.

INSTEAD OF SAYING....

SAY....

Abuse

Use, misuse or other than the prescribed

WHY

- The term “abuse” was found to have a high association with negative judgments and punishment.
- Legitimate use of prescription medications is limited to their use as prescribed by the person to whom they are prescribed. Consumption outside these parameters is misuse.

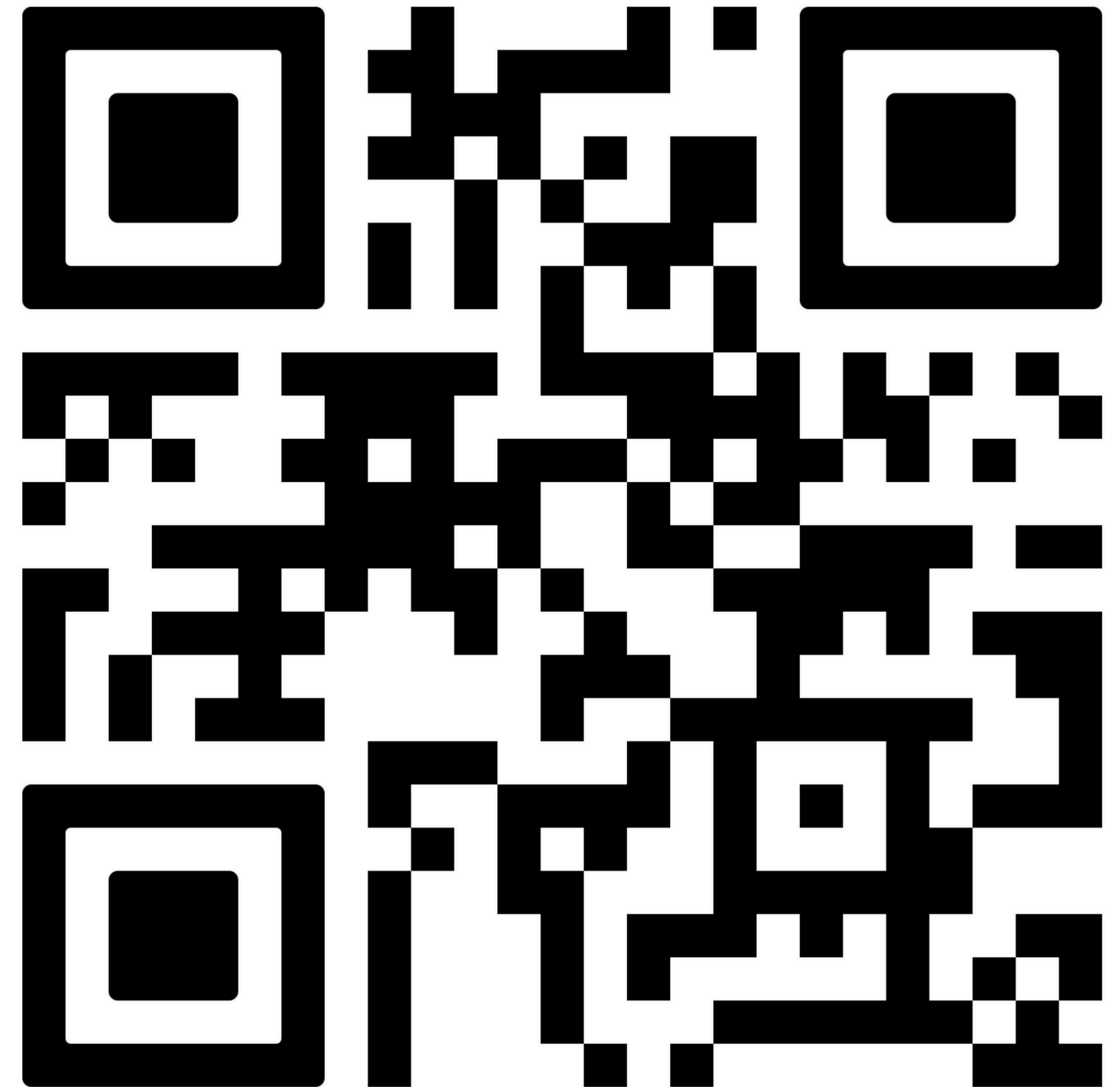
INSTEAD OF SAYING....

SAY....

- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT)

WHY

- It is a misconception that medications merely “substitute” one drug or “one addiction” for another.⁶
- The term MAT implies that medication should have a supplemental or temporary role in treatment. Using “MOUD” aligns with the way other psychiatric medications are understood (e.g., antidepressants, antipsychotics), as critical tools that are central to a patient’s treatment plan.



ACKNOWLEDGE & IDENTIFY YOUR TARGETED AUDIENCE

- FAITH BASED
- ELECTED OFFICIALS
- LAW ENFORCEMENT
- YOUR COMMUNITY
- PEOPLE WHO ACTIVELY USE
- HEALTHCARE FIELD

Faith Based

Tailoring messages toward the compassionate values of that religion.

“Mend The Heart”:

A part of “Faith In Action” and A Harm Reduction Church Project, with VOCAL-KY, presented on Sep. 14th, 2024. Sponsored by C4AA and Open Society Foundation.

<https://c4aa.org/>

Open Society Foundations

Open Society Foundations

<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org>

A huge thank you to Bluegrass Productions Studio, bluegrassproductionstudio.com for constructing the heart for us!



Elected Officials



Bring notice to the cost-effectiveness of harm reduction, or a “value-for-money” framing. However, these messages should be paired with meaningful stories from constituents and messages emphasizing harm reduction’s role in promoting their community’s goals: efficacy in terms of reduction of infection, not encouraging drug use.

VOCAL-KY attends Metro Council, Urban Council, and we take members and leaders to our Reps & Legislatures during and after session to discuss topics of interest and what we’re fighting for.

Law Enforcement

Speak to the fact that it's an intervention that contributes to public safety, including the safety of both communities and officers.

Also, this isn't what they went into it for. Included messages about how OPCs and SSPs can decrease officers' (and communities') contact with used syringes:



VOCAL-KY held No More Drug War Coalition Town Halls throughout the state. Everyone was invited... this way, we could share with each other and be on the same page

Your Community - & Active Users -

They need their pain, challenges and fears acknowledged
& a way to make a difference that works for them.

They are the experts, we NEED their voices and experiences.

Meeting them where they're at

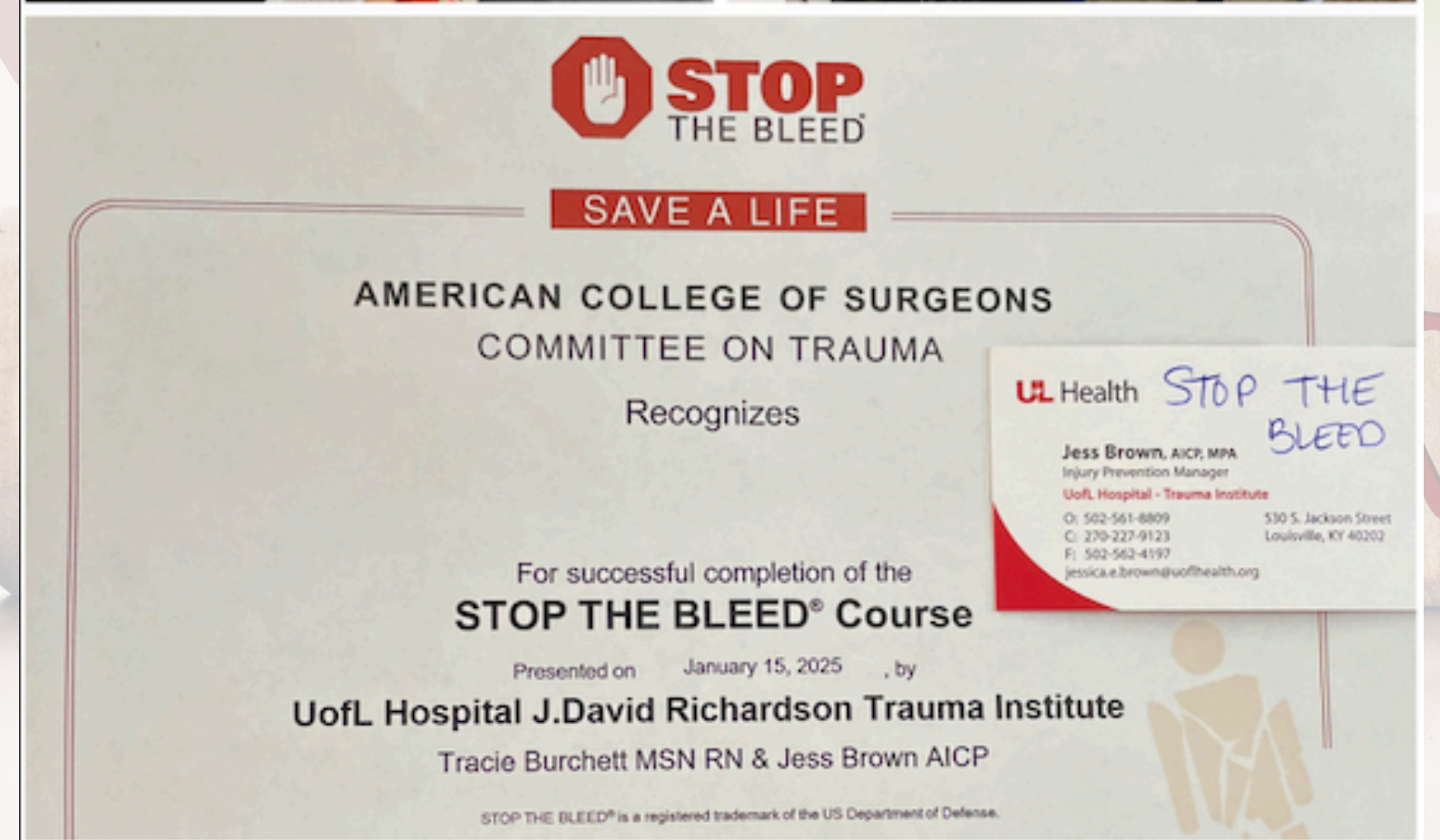
Education and information about safe usage, what's being
identified in these substances after the testing of used.

syringes



Healthcare Field

- **Focus on Public Health:** Emphasize that harm reduction is a public health approach, crucial for addressing the interconnected crises of substance use, mental health, and community safety.
- **Offer ways for them to be involved in your projects along with the education you are conducting**
- **Ask them for their expertise, time and insight for the projects you are planning to conduct**
- **Burnout.** (Suggestion- have people shadow you so that it changes the dynamic, makes it more likely to understand the human you're serving)



CRAFTING PERSUASIVE MESSAGES FOR THOSE AUDIENCES



- **Changing the Narratives**
 - Identifying your audience
 - Appealing to their self-interest; that aligns with yours
- **Identifying YOUR self-interest**
 - How do YOU feel about?
 - You can then re-evaluate your appeal or self-interest, to theirs
- **Personalizing stories**
 - Considering your self-interest, how do you want others to perceive your POV?
 - Considering how you've tailored the narrative you seek to change, find fitting, personalized stories that **shout** to the purpose of your overall reason and purpose of engagement

VOCAL-KY



IMPACTED AND IMPACTFUL



Raquel Salazar is another amazing leader who works tirelessly helping with phone calls and text banking as she is impacted by our housing crisis. She states, "that when you're homeless, you can either be part of the problem or part of the solution. And VOCAL-KY gives me a place to be a part of the solution".

Anthony Hall who is pictured above (2nd from left) is another great leader who volunteers in our Drop-in Center everyday that we're open. He dedicates his time "so the houseless population doesn't have to worry about being out in the cold and hopefully overcome any other problems they may be facing".

Lamont Anthony (also pictured above in the black hat) says, "I love VOCAL-KY because they prioritize people and provide what we need to fix the of problems".

Carl, who hosts meetings for our unhoused community states, "It gives a positive outlook on being homeless. It turned my loss of normal life into providing survival skills to those who struggle with substance use and heartache experienced because of HB5. This includes connecting them to resources for housing or treatment. Thank you VOCAL-KY, through support I've turned the nothing I have into help for others!"



Shameka Parrish-Wright
Executive Director



Pony Morris
Community Organizer

MEET THE VOCAL-KY STAFF WHERE JUSTICE, COMPASSION & LOVE COME FIRST



Jackie Floyd
Building Support



Jennifer Twyman
Community Organizer &
Drop-In Manager



Stephanie Johnson
Statewide Coordinator



Tania Whitfield
GROW Canvasser



WWW.VOCAL-KY.ORG



Put your
mission and
purpose
into action
to show
that the
desired/
necessary
solution, is
evidence
based



VOCAL-KY members and leaders do this work with
Love, Compassion and Justice
VOCAL-KY.org



RELATIONSHIP

BUILDING....

That Leads to Further Engagement

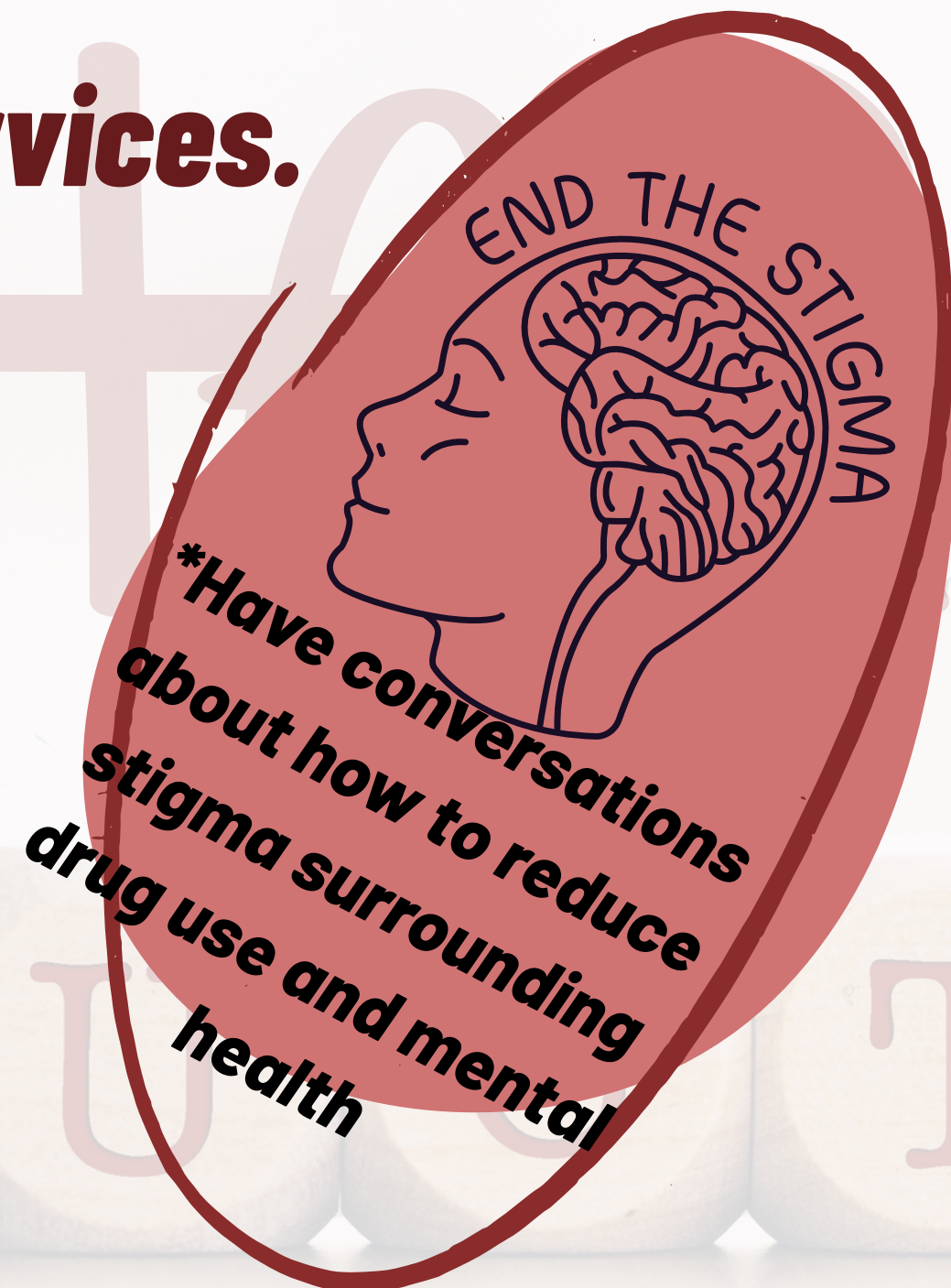
REDUC TION

How Do We Do That?

Glad You Asked!!!

- **Community meetings**
 - **Townhalls**
 - **Listening sessions**
- **Meeting regularly with legislatures for state, council members for local**
 - **Reach out via phone, emails and in-person to build a repore**
 - **Learn session days, times and agenda**
 - **Bring personal stories along with stats as well as, and more importantly, impacted persons**
- **Have conversations with local businesses**
- **Invite targeted audiences into your work- Collaborate**

Discuss what harm reduction services do in general or have been deployed, to support those who need these services.



****Level setting: focus groups, surveys, online engagement***

You may be unable to overcome someone's prejudices or misconceptions in one conversation. But you can start opening their eyes to the benefits of harm reduction by simply explaining what it is and what it provides. If nothing else, lean into this fact about harm reduction: IT SAVES LIVES!!!

ADVOCATING AT LOCAL LEVEL

- **Connect with Local Organizations:** Engage with existing harm reduction organizations like the Kentucky Harm Reduction Coalition (KyHRC) and VOCAL-KY, who have experience and established networks.
- **Build Trust with the Community:** Conduct outreach with humility (lived experience- Keep someone who has it to outreach with you if you don't), fostering relationships with individuals who use drugs and marginalized communities. This is essential for creating initiatives that are effective and trusted.
- **Form Partnerships:** Collaborate with local health departments, community centers, faith-based organizations, and other relevant groups to broaden your advocacy efforts.
- **Engage with Religious Leaders:** Some state leaders have found it effective to involve religious leaders in delivering messages about harm reduction, as their voices can resonate with compassionate values held within faith communities.

ADVOCATING AT STATE LEVEL

Key aspects of state-level advocacy include:

- **Understanding the legislative process:** Familiarize yourself with how bills are introduced, debated, and voted on in your state.
- **Identifying your state representatives:** Find out who represents your district in the state legislature & **building relationships:** Connect with legislators and staff to establish a rapport and build trust.
- **Communicating effectively:** Craft clear and concise messages that highlight the importance of your issue.
- **Using various methods:** Engage in letter writing, email campaigns, phone calls, and meetings.
- **Raising awareness:** Organize events, create public service announcements, and use social media to educate the public and build support.
- **Collaborating with others:** Partner with like-minded organizations and individuals to amplify your voice.
- **Staying informed:** Monitor legislation and regulations, attend legislative sessions, and track the progress of your advocacy efforts.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

kypolicy.org

kyhrc.org

Your paragraph text

REDUCTION