

# 3 new ways to put harm reduction in action at EDM events.

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## About the Drug Policy Alliance & its Music Fan program.

- DPA is a national drug policy advocacy organization
- 7 offices around the country, headquarters in NYC
- We promote drug policies based in science, compassion, health and human rights
- Music Fan program goals:
  - Expanding the conversation about drug use in nightlife settings
  - Promoting health & reducing harm at festivals, concerts and clubs
  - Amending the RAVE Act and advocating for other policy change that will create safer settings at music events

## What's the problem? A.K.A. Why do we need harm reduction?



## Harm reduction philosophy.

- Harm reduction is a public health philosophy and intervention that seeks to reduce the harms associated with drug use and ineffective drug policies.
- A basic tenet of harm reduction is that there has never been, and will never be, a drug-free society.
- Therefore, harm reduction advocates seek to reduce harm through
  - Spread of accurate, fact-based information;
  - Taking steps to allow for drug-based illness or injury prevention;
  - Reducing the impact of drug policies that cause harm



## How to improve what you're probably already doing: Safer Settings



- FREE WATER – everyone needs water.
- CHILL SPACES – everyone needs a break from the crowd.
- REDUCE CAPACITY – how about less of a crowd?

August 25, 2015

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5

## How to improve what you're probably already doing: Medical



- HIRE THE RIGHT TEAM – require festival medical experience.
- TRAIN THEM ANYWAY – on drug effects and interactions.
- ENACT "GOOD SAMARITAN" POLICY – and advertise it.

August 25, 2015

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6

## Harm Reduction Tip #1: Onsite Mental Health.



- For patrons who are having a difficult experience, but medically stable, an optimal practice is to incorporate trained mental health counselors, therapists and peers to provide compassionate care.
- Medical teams can provide critical care for those actually in need.
- Onsite mental health reduces unnecessary hospital transfers, arrests, and potential additional trauma to patrons.

August 25, 2015

3 new ways to put harm reduction in action at EDM events.

7

## Harm Reduction Tip #2: Education.



- People (especially young people) are often poorly informed about basic alcohol and other drug effects and safer use practices.
- Accurate, **non-judgmental**, realistic information consistently conveyed can do more to change behavior than any other intervention.
- Implementing peer-based services is an effective, evidence-based practice.

August 25, 2015

3 new ways to put harm reduction in action at EDM events.

8

### Harm Reduction Tip #3: Drug Checking.



- Drug checking ("pill testing") allows people who use drugs to identify and avoid ingesting unknown substances.
- Given the highly adulterated drug market, this harm reduction service has the biggest single impact on reducing deaths.
- There are many technologies and approaches to doing drug checking depending on the goals of the event and its host community.

### A harm reduction approach to law enforcement.

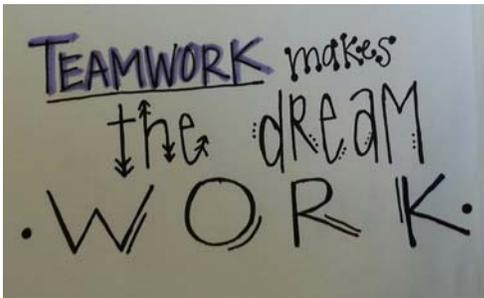


VS.



- **DRUG ARRESTS ARE A HARM.** Arrests do not prevent the majority of use or even of sales.
- **AMNESTY BINS ARE A START.** The philosophy should be applied at point of entry searches.
- **STOP SEARCHING FOR DRUGS.** Focus on violent or dangerous behavior.

### The most important element.



### Let's do this!

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