

Survey Results: How should Opioid Settlement funding be used in Sauk County?

1/17/24



In the coming years, Sauk County will receive at least \$2 million in Opioid Settlement funds as a result of national lawsuits against opioid-related corporations. **In the fall of 2023, Public Health Sauk County surveyed the community** to gather input on how to use these funds locally to address the opioid crisis.

236 people completed the survey, the vast majority of whom work, live, and/or serve people in Sauk County. Respondents were mainly people who worked professionally and/or personally to support people impacted by substance use (see page 7 for respondent details).

Sauk County currently uses grants and other funds to address substance use. Funds from the Opioid Settlement may be used to:

- 1) Continue these services when current funds are not available
- 2) Expand these services
- 3) Provide new services

Survey respondents most often selected these **strategies** to address substance use:

- Increasing **mental health** and access to mental health services was the top selected PREVENTION service.
- Providing a **re-entry program** at the jail was the top selected HARM REDUCTION service.
- Increasing availability of **mental health care** was the top selected TREATMENT service.
- Increasing availability of **housing** was the top selected RECOVERY service.

Note: Opioid Settlement funds cannot be used to enforce current laws; that is why law enforcement was not listed as a service to increase or expand on the survey.

For details on strategies, read on.

Questions? Contact Sara.Jesse@saukcountywi.gov



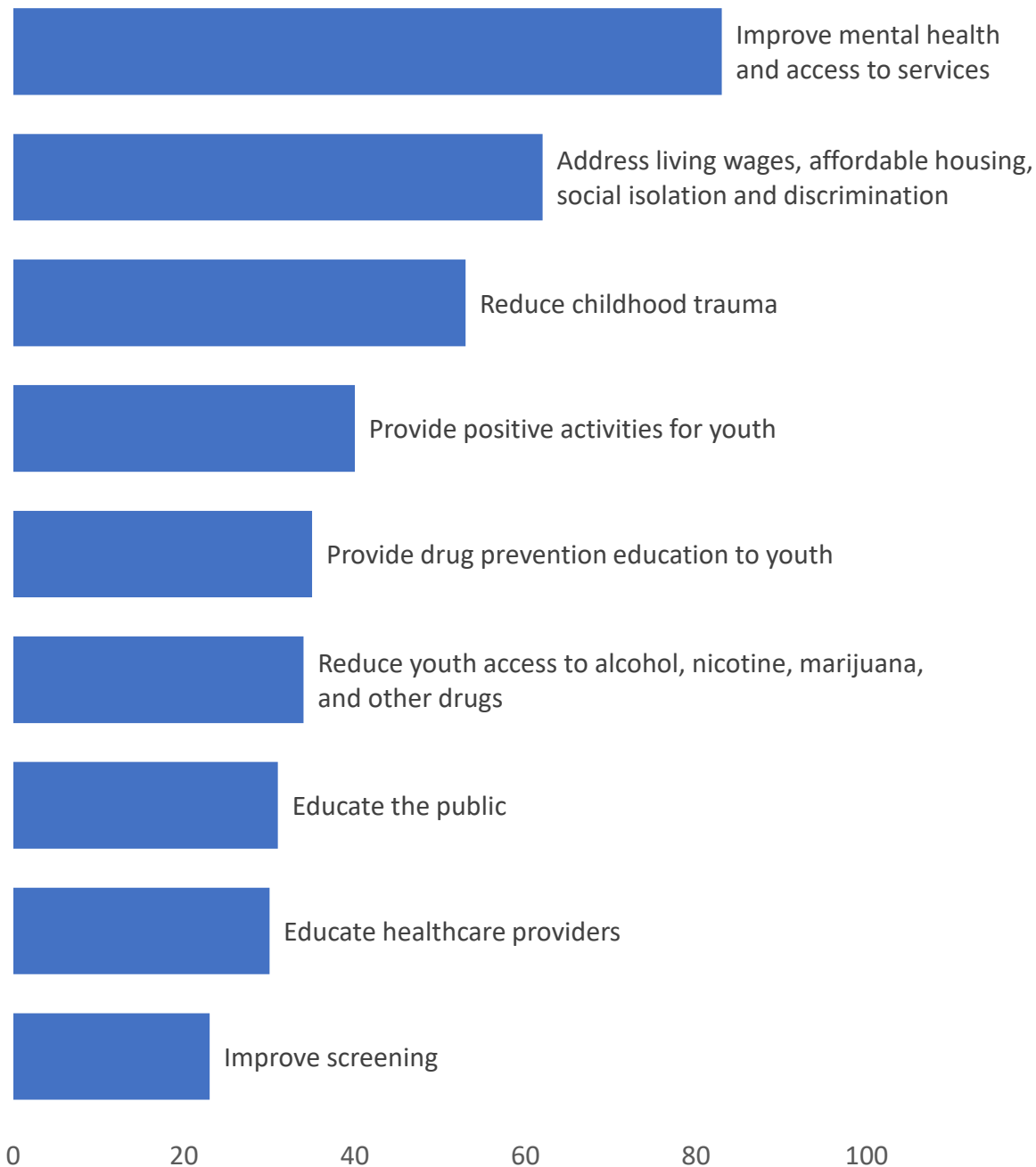
**PUBLIC HEALTH
SAUK COUNTY**

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Substance Use Prevention

Prevention activities support individuals and communities to prevent the use and misuse of drugs and the development of substance use disorders.

Survey respondents indicated that Opioid Settlement funds should be used to go upstream to prevent individual root causes of substance use: addressing **mental health, social determinants of health, and childhood trauma** were the top prevention strategies chosen.



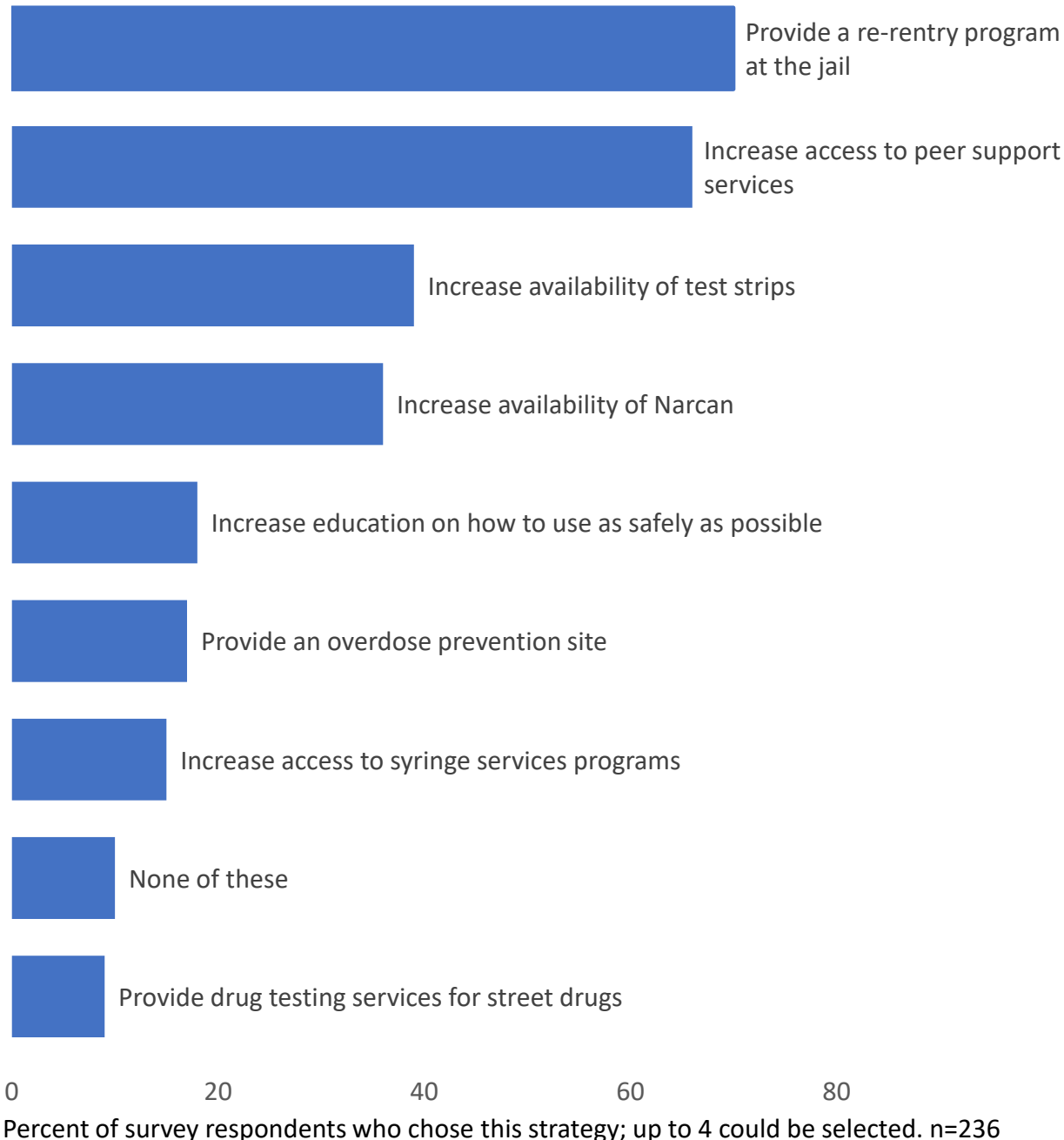
Percent of survey respondents who chose this strategy; up to 5 could be selected. n=236

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Harm Reduction and Connections to Treatment

Harm reduction is a set of tools, strategies, and ideas that reduce negative consequences associated with drug use, such as overdose. Examples are providing naloxone (Narcan) to people currently using drugs and offering access to healthcare, social services, and treatment to improve health and wellbeing.

Survey respondents showed most support for **jail re-entry** services and increasing access to **peer support**.

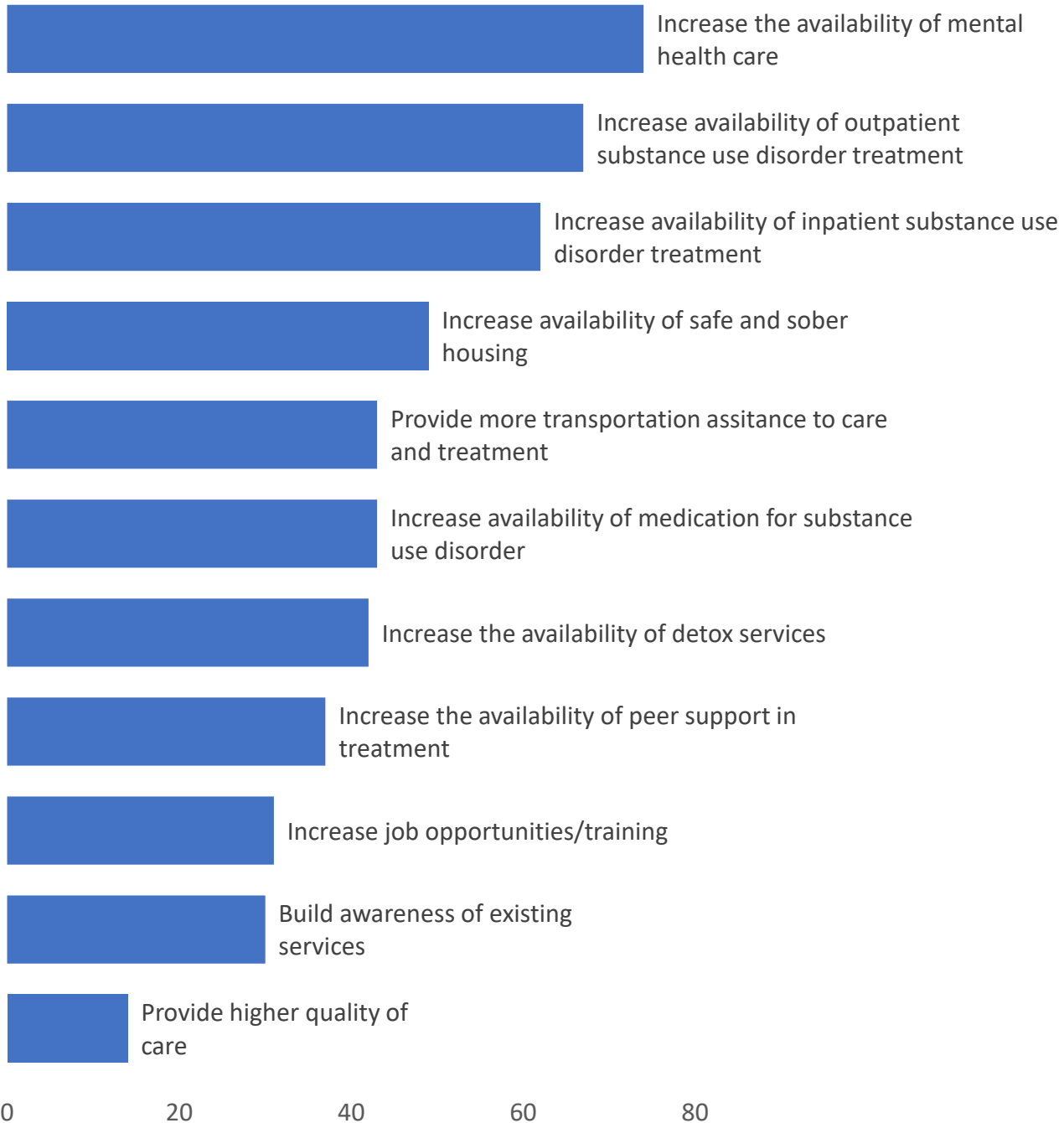


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Treatment

Treatment for substance use includes medical and therapeutic interventions

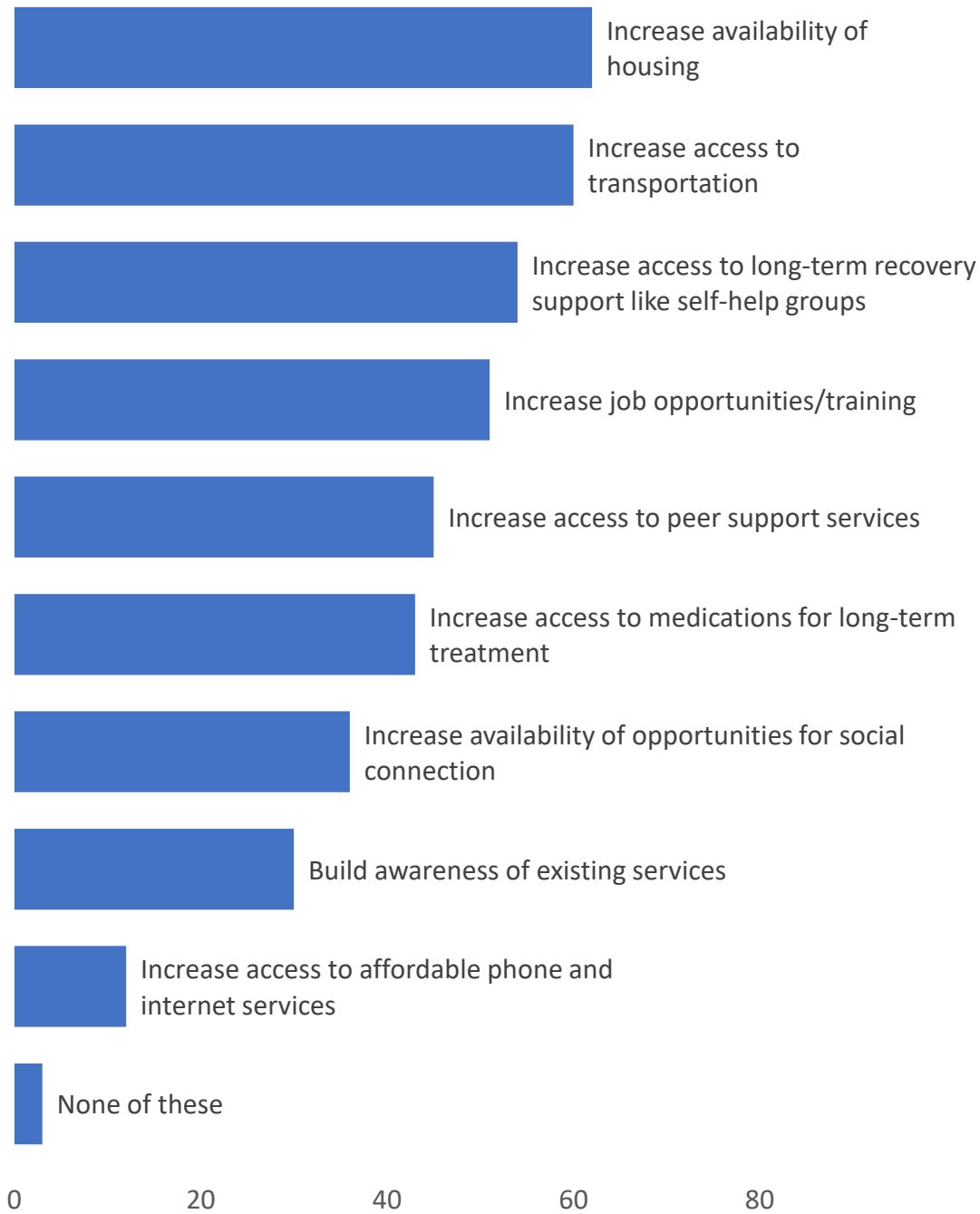
The most supported treatment strategies were **mental health care** and both **outpatient** and **inpatient** treatment for substance use disorder.



Percent of survey respondents who chose this strategy; up to 6 could be selected. n=236

Supporting Recovery from Substance Use

To best support recovery, survey respondents chose increasing **housing** and **transportation** options most often.



Percent of survey respondents who chose this strategy; up to 5 could be selected. n=236

A Sampling of Respondent Comments

“Provide social opportunities for young adults that DONT center on a bar. Libraries, community centers - heck, it would be great to be able to "borrow" a room in the old community center building to have additional space to work on a project when your living space is limited!” Participant 154

“The worse the socio-economic situation is for an individual the more tempting it is to use drugs/addictions as a scapegoat to problems rather than working on active methods to reduce stressors. Providing skill set educational opportunities so people can advance to better paying jobs or learn how to live on a budget is critical. Also how to raise children. People have them and think they can raise themselves without a parent guiding them. Parents are too stressed and should take parenting classes their whole life!” Participant 151

“We would benefit from providing basic needs, safe affordable housing, affordable inpatient treatment including housing coverage, residential outpatient treatment, transportation to treatment, re-entry program with training for sustainable career. Affordable childcare for people who are attending treatment services and or vocational training.” Participant 143

“We need much greater access to and focus on treating and healing parents to limit and heal trauma exposure to our youth. Narcan vending machine. Safe injection sites.” Participant 72

De-criminalize weed so people won't have a record and can get jobs. AFFORDABLE HOUSING. expand for alcohol treatment too.” Participant 219

“have treatment affordable to all. With or without insurance.” Participant 40

“This survey and current practices are focused way too much on those who have made the choice to use illegal drugs. This detracts from those who have been the victims of crimes perpetrated by drug users. The current lack of consequences for drug users has made the problem much worse. Sometimes, negative consequences are necessary to prevent or curb unwanted behavior in society. People should not have to wait until they have committed crimes (or become "justice involved") to see increased access to services. Focus efforts on those who want to change for their own benefit, not to reduce consequences for choices.” Participant 226

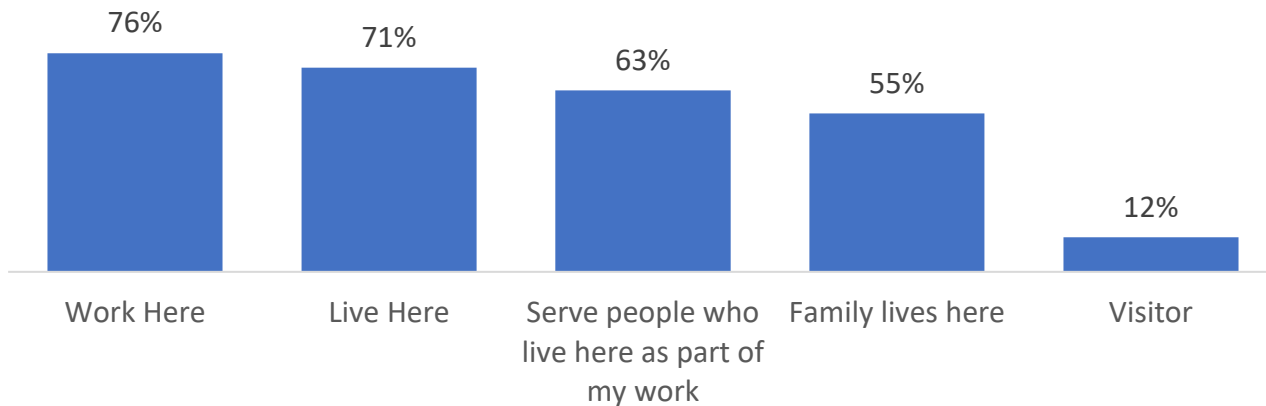
236 Survey Respondents

Gender: 71% female; 26% male; 3% declined to answer; 0% non-binary or transgender.

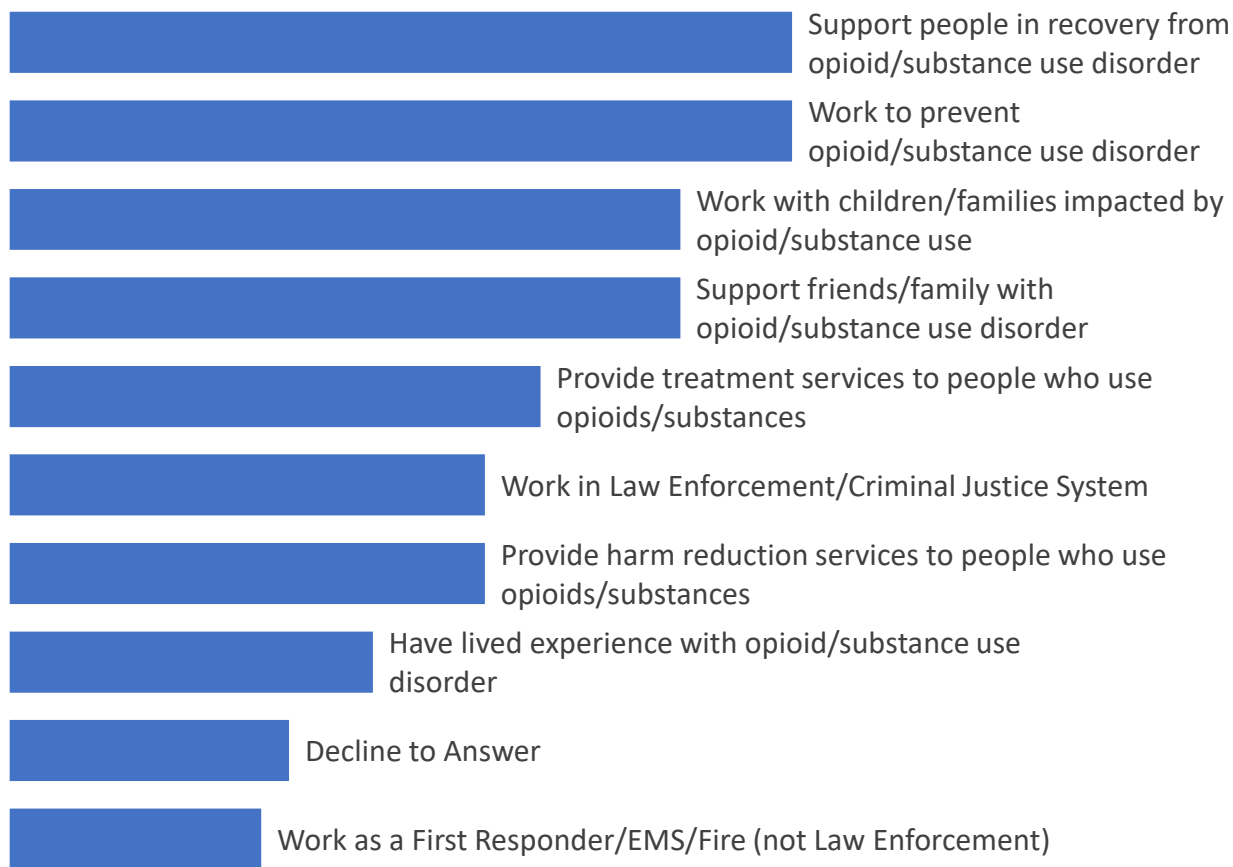
Race/ethnicity: 93% White, 2% Latino, 1% Native American; 0.5% Black; 0.5% Asian.

5% declined to answer. Multiple options could be selected.

The majority of those who took our survey were connected to Sauk County by **working, living, and/or serving county residents.**



People who took the survey had various interests in the Opioid Settlement, including **supporting people in recovery, working to prevent use, and working with those impacted** by substance use.



0 5 10 15 20 25 30
Percent of survey respondents; multiple options could be selected. n=236