

# COSSUP in Indiana: Fiscal Year 2020 Case Study

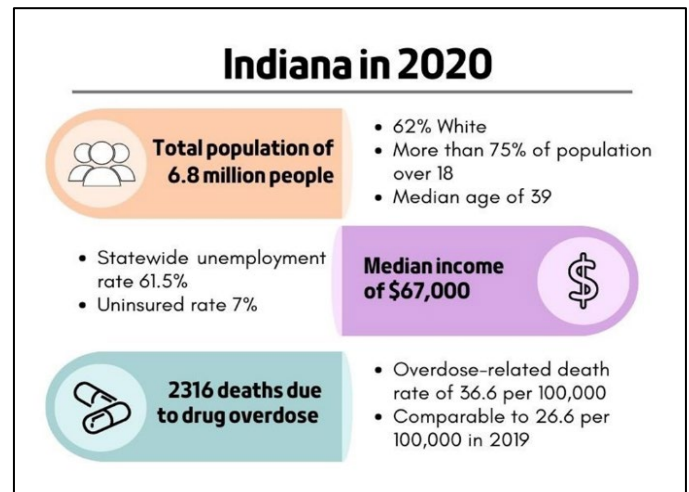
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## State Overview

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Mental Health and Addiction's (DMHA), decision to first apply for Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP) funding in Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 stemmed from increasing overdose rates across the state and legislation that established efforts to combat the overdose epidemic. These efforts were prioritized by state leadership: in 2017, newly appointed Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb announced the [Five Pillars Agenda](#), a list of five social and political focus areas he planned to address during his administration. The focus areas included initiatives to create an executive director for substance abuse prevention, treatment, and enforcement position; establish syringe exchange programs; and strengthen the prevention, treatment, and enforcement of drug laws.

## Grantee Overview

Indiana, through its DMHA, was originally awarded COSSUP funds in FY2018 as an enhancement to a



previously existing opioid-related grant; the site received another COSSUP award in FY2020. The focus of this report is the FY2020 award. DMHA led the proposal and subsequent award, in recognition of the fact that substance use and mental health disorders are often co-occurring.

The Indiana COSSUP team identified seven counties as priority areas in its application, chosen because of their high overdose rates, as well as program- or policy-specific areas that could be improved with additional funds. These counties—Allen, Clark, Fayette, Floyd, Knox, Madison, and Wayne—received subawards

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under the statewide grant, which were provided to one or more agencies in each county. Together, these areas comprise approximately 13 percent of the total population of Indiana and represent multiple rural areas across the state.

Many subgrantees implemented a multicomponent approach in their programming, incorporating an array of evidence-based strategies to address adult and youth substance use. These strategies were maximized through a braided funding approach, in which subgrantees leveraged contributions from multiple local groups and leaders to mobilize their efforts. This approach was beneficial to subgrantee activities by facilitating holistic, or wraparound, services to clients; allowing subgrantees to begin activities early in the funding cycle, since they were able to tap into existing strategies; and supporting the sustainability of current programming.

The key objectives of the Indiana COSSUP site are as follows:

- Create and support law enforcement and other first responder diversion programs for nonviolent drug offenders.
- Expand and enhance access to supervision, treatment, and recovery support services across the criminal justice system.
- Promote education and prevention activities—most specifically, within school systems.
- Address the needs of children and adolescents that are impacted by substance misuse.

To accomplish these objectives, DMHA established programming in three overarching domains: law

enforcement assisted diversion (LEAD); quick response teams (QRTs); and family and adolescent programming. Subgrantees in each of these domains are shown in the Table of Subgrantee Activities (*page 5*) and described in more detail in the sections below.

## Subgrantee Activities

### LEAD Programming

LEAD programming refers to efforts to divert low-level drug offenders out of the criminal justice system and into treatment. By diverting such individuals, LEAD programming aims to improve outcomes for them by treating and preventing future substance misuse rather than punishing current use. At the time of Indiana’s 2020 COSSUP funding application, LEAD programming did not exist in Indiana, but Governor Holcomb’s efforts to address the opioid epidemic set the stage for DMHA to apply for funding. Subsequently, several county law enforcement agencies across three counties (Fayette, Floyd, and Knox) launched the LEAD program. All participating agencies received project assistance from the LEAD National Support Bureau.

### Case Study Examples

Knox County implemented a LEAD program through the Good Samaritan Hospital Network, headquartered in Vincennes, Indiana. The hospital received COSSUP funding to reduce substance use-related stigma and bring together shareholders across the county. Specifically, this program aims to reduce community burden through reductions in unnecessary utilization of emergency services; recidivism rates throughout the county; and stigma related to substance use disorder (SUD).

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Since implementation, referrals to the program by law enforcement and other community organizations have increased, and recidivism in Knox County in 2022 reduced to rates lower than the state averages. Program leadership frequently receives positive client feedback regarding successes in housing individuals with SUD and the program’s “shared power relationship,” in which the participant guides their own actions with assistance from a care manager. One success story shared by the program involved an individual experiencing homelessness, referred to the program by law enforcement, who received housing, identification, insurance, and general care management support within weeks of their involvement with the program.

Challenges remain for the Knox County LEAD program. One of the most frequently mentioned difficulties among Indiana’s sites, as well as those in other states, is in finding housing for clients in rural areas. Individuals are frequently without shelter, even if there are housing vouchers available, because of not only high demand but also lack of empty apartments in sparsely populated areas. In addition, COVID-19 took a toll on this subgrantee during its project launch. Because of this, engagement from community groups was low throughout the first few years of its program. Community and law enforcement buy-in remains a priority for the program, as well as putting into action a significant lesson learned moving forward: obtaining stakeholder engagement early and often, which is an important part of setting up a program.

### QRTs

Multiple emergency service organizations across the subgrantee counties used their COSSUP funding to

implement and/or support QRTs. QRTs reach out to individuals who have experienced an overdose within a few days of the overdose event, with the aim to link the person to any services they might need (e.g., social services, treatment services, health care). Two of Indiana’s subgrantees have implemented QRTs across Clark, Fayette, and Harrison Counties.

### Case Study Examples

Clark and Harrison Counties implemented their QRT through Lifespring Health, a nonprofit organization that provides a comprehensive array of mental health and primary care services. Lifespring Health launched Project CARE (Collaborative Access to Recovery Engagement) by partnering with local police departments and emergency medical services. Project CARE’s QRT model deploys a multidisciplinary team of mental health providers, medical care providers, and first responders to provide additional follow-up within 24–72 hours after an overdose call for service. In conjunction with initial police and emergency medical services (EMS) responses to overdose, the QRT aims to connect individuals to longer-term care options in the community.

Throughout the grant period, one of the largest barriers faced by Project CARE has been gaining law enforcement buy-in to the program. While the QRT program is in its third year of serving Clark and Harrison Counties, it has been difficult to expand QRTs into other regions in the state because of reluctance and staffing shortages within law enforcement agencies. For those counties that are participating in the QRT program, one of the biggest challenges has been locating unhoused individuals who were referred by law enforcement. It can be difficult to get in touch with these individuals

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because they often do not have a working phone number or permanent address. Despite these challenges, Project CARE has successfully contacted 448 individuals and connected 76 percent of them to recovery services in the community.

One of the most unexpected and rewarding parts of Project CARE has been offering support and resources to family members. QRTs are able to not only connect individuals with SUD to treatment options but also support family members. In addition, QRTs help shift the dynamic between law enforcement and the communities they serve to show officers that they can make a tangible difference in people's lives while also showing community members that they can have positive interactions with law enforcement.

### Family and Adolescent Programming

Two of Indiana's key objectives centered on programming for adolescents and families: to promote education and prevention activities, most specifically within school systems; and to address the needs of children and adolescents who are impacted by substance misuse. To address these goals, two programs in Allen County implemented programming that serves entire families and six programs across three counties (Knox, Madison, and Wayne) implemented programming that serves children and adolescents.





### Case Study Examples

In Wayne County, the Boys & Girls Clubs partner with the sheriff's office to provide programming about the risks of substance use to Wayne County elementary, middle, and high school students during school hours. Since these programs are administered by law

enforcement officers, another goal is to provide positive interactions between law enforcement and youth to improve these relationships in the community. While school year-calendar conflicts and lack of teacher buy-in made it difficult to get the program off the ground in year one, teachers became much more invested and excited about the program during years two through four of funding. In addition, students who participated in the program reported that they formed positive relationships with training facilitators, learned life lessons, and understood the influence this program had on their health, life, and leadership skills. Currently, the program evaluation partner, Prevention Insights, is collecting program outcome data using a comprehensive youth survey. The Boys & Girls Clubs expect to find a decrease in reported substance use among participants during the 30 days following program participation.

Another key success from this program is the meaningful partnership formed between the Wayne County School System and the Wayne County Sheriff's Office. Through braiding of funding among prevention grants and COSSUP grants, these partners have served 52 percent of youths aged 8–15 in Wayne County with evidence-based substance use prevention programming at least twice during their time in school. Students in the Richmond Community School, specifically, experience higher risk levels for the community indicators that drive substance use. In response to this increased risk, Richmond students will have participated in the prevention training six times before graduating (during the third through eighth grades). In 2023, prevention training was administered to 2,304 youths in the county. Since its initiation, the understanding, respect, and belief in this program among the community has been incredibly rewarding.

## Table of Subgrantee Activities

 <p>LEAD Programming</p>	<p>Several county law enforcement agencies in Fayette, Floyd, and Knox Counties launched <b>LEAD programs</b> to divert low-level drug offenders out of the criminal justice system and into treatment. All participating agencies received project assistance from the LEAD National Support Bureau through state support.</p>
 <p>Quick Response Teams</p>	<p>The <b>Project CARE (Collaborative Access to Recovery Engagement) QRT</b> was implemented in Clark County by LifeSprings Health Systems in collaboration with the Jeffersonville Police Department. Project Care involves immediate, 24/7 responses to overdose and SUD-related police encounters, linking patients to treatment and providing families with prevention and harm reduction education.</p> <p>The <b>Choices Emergency Response Team (CERT)</b> was implemented in Fayette County as a treatment alternative to incarceration for individuals at high risk of opioid use disorder or SUD. CERT focuses on emergency response and linkage with treatment, transportation, and other resources.</p>
 <p>Family Programming</p>	<p>The <b>Hope and Recovery Team (HART) Program</b> was expanded in the Fort Wayne Police Department, in Allen County, to incorporate social workers who can assist the families of overdose patients.</p> <p>The <b>Allen County Family Recovery Court</b> was expanded to incorporate social workers who can assist parents experiencing SUD and their children in need.</p>
 <p>Family and Adolescent Programming</p>	<p>The <b>Books and Breakfast Program</b> was implemented in Knox County schools to positively impact students' school experience and promote positive interactions between students and law enforcement officers.</p> <p>The <b>Law Enforcement Education Day (Project LEED)</b> was implemented in Knox County as an educational event to promote positive interactions between youth and law enforcement officers and reduce the occurrence of adverse childhood experiences.</p> <p>The <b>Students Having an Alternate Positive Experience (SHAPE) Program</b> was launched in Knox County to promote positive alternatives to out-of-school suspension.</p> <p><b>Law Enforcement Education and Prevention Programming</b> was launched across five school districts in Madison County, in partnership with the Madison County Sheriff's Office, several local law enforcement agencies, and the Madison County Mental Health and Addictions Coalition, in order to present decision-making and consequences information to seventh- and eighth-grade students.</p> <p>The <b>Turning Point recovery resource system</b> is a 30-agency coalition in Madison County, working in partnership with the county's sheriff's office to present programs to middle-school children on decision making and consequences.</p> <p>The <b>Too Good for Drugs Program</b> in Wayne County was developed in partnership with the Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of Wayne County, Drug Free Wayne County, and the Wayne County Sheriff's Office to promote youth education on the risks of drug use.</p>

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Visit the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP) Resource Center at [www.cossup.org](http://www.cossup.org).

## About BJA

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