



# Bringing International Human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals to Dayton: A Closer Look at the Opioid Crisis & SDG Target 3.5

*By: Bailey Johnson*

*POL 334*





# Human Rights Cities

There are currently  
11 Human Rights  
cities in the U.S.

“...Municipalities that refer explicitly to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards and/or law in their policies, statements, and programs.” Human rights cities...

- “Glocalize” human rights issues- applying human rights principles at the global level to local human rights issues
- Engage local activists in human rights work
- Create an infrastructure for the universal realization of human rights at the local level



**HUMAN RIGHTS CITIES**



## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3**

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

SDG Target 3.5- “Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.”



# It Isn't Difficult to See How 3.5 and Dayton are Related

## Dayton No. 1 in nation for drug overdoses

Montgomery County overdose deaths on pace to set new record — by June

- Montgomery County had the highest unintentional overdose death rate in the state of Ohio from 2011-2017
- Additionally, Montgomery Public Health determined that accidental drug overdose deaths are much more likely to impact low-opportunity, vulnerable communities
- Unintentional Overdose Deaths in Dayton and Montgomery County:
  - 2009-2014: 953
  - 2016: 349
  - 2017: 566

Top 10 Ohio Counties with the Highest Rates of Overdose Emergency Department visits by Home Location, 2017

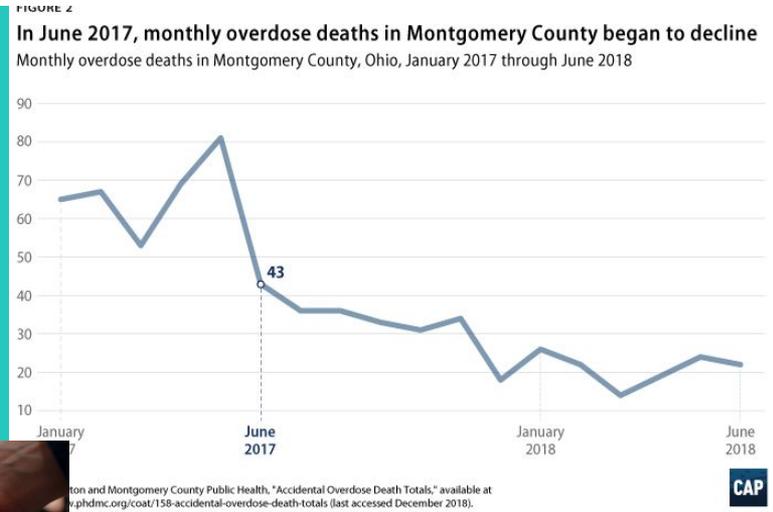
Rank	County	Rate (per 100,000)
	All of Ohio	302.6
1	Fayette	868.3
2	Montgomery	737.9
3	Clark	636.6
4	Ross	602.6
5	Butler	570.3
6	Highland	560.1
7	Preble	552.8
8	Gallia	549.7
9	Summit	509.5
10	Marion	500.8



# However, the News Isn't All Bad.

Dayton, Ohio, had one of the highest overdose death rates in the nation in 2017. The city made many changes, and fatal overdoses are down more than 50 percent from last year.

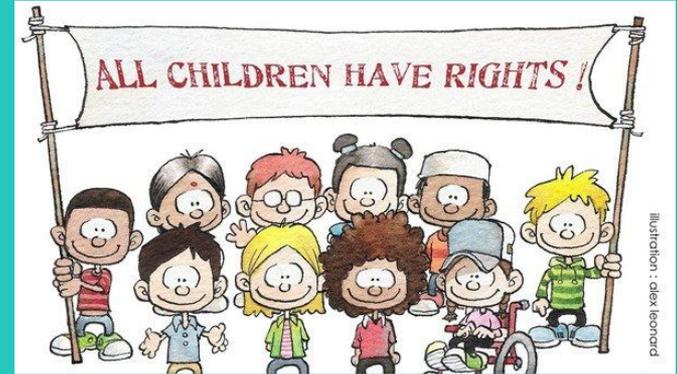
- The Community Overdose Action Team (COAT), an interagency collaboration between Montgomery County and the City of Dayton that formed in '16 to address the opioid crisis, helped halve overdose deaths from '17-'18
- Dayton, OH has become nationally recognized for this success and for taking a collective, compassionate/"help not handcuffs" approach
- Unintentional Overdose Deaths in Dayton and Montgomery County:
  - 2009-2014: 953
  - 2016: 349
  - 2017: 566
  - 2018- 289
  - 2019- 288





# Connections to International Human Rights Law

- Convention on the Rights of the Child
  - “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.”
  - The Convention on the Rights of the Child, though not ratified by the U.S., has been signed by the U.S.
  - The U.S. has international and legal obligations to protect the welfare of the child. A part of this protection includes appropriate measures to combat the opioid epidemic





# Envisioning an Advocacy Response

- Form a broad-based alliance of “unlikely allies”
  - This might include government agencies and organizations, direct service non-profits, recovery groups, physical and mental health care professionals, local legislators, law enforcement, religious communities, etc.
  - Partner with existing organizations like COAT
- Leadership by those most affected
  - Reach out to “low-opportunity” communities from the beginning
  - Partner with local activists and story-tellers
- Maintain sustained research and documentation over time
  - The dataset compiled by POL 334 is a good starting place
  - Track data trends
  - Look for existing successful models and maintain past successful models





# Personal Reflections

During this semester, we learned much about the hard work of advocacy together as a class. Though our plans for in-person, community advocacy were cut short by COVID-19 concerns, there was much to be learned about advocacy efforts from the topics we researched. One thing that surprised me the most is that for every negative article explaining how the terrible opioid epidemic is plaguing the city of Dayton, there was an article explaining the success of the Dayton community in responding to the opioid epidemic in such a collective and compassionate way that it has become a model for other communities across the U.S. in addressing the opioid epidemic in their own communities. These stories of success and hope are necessary for the longevity of any advocacy movement, and are as necessary as the other pitfalls of advocacy work.



# References

Community Overdose Action Team . (2018, March 26). Data Unit 2017 Full-year Report: Community Overdose Action Team. Retrieved March 3, 2020, from <https://www.phdmc.org/agency-publications/agency-reports/808-2017-coat-data-report/file>.

Ebron, D. L. (2016). Unintentional Drug Overdose Data Review.

Goal 3 .: Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3>.

Goodnough, A. (n.d.). This City's Overdose Deaths Have Plunged. Can Others Learn from It? . The New York Times. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/25/health/opioid-overdose-deaths-dayton.html>.

Human Rights City. (2020, March 30). Retrieved April 13, 2020, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_Rights\\_City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Rights_City) (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://ushrnetwork.org/national-human-rights-city-alliance>.

Malagarie, D. (2020, February 11). Narcan Training Comes as Overdose Rates Remain Stable. Dayton 24/7 Now. Retrieved from <https://dayton247now.com/newsletter/narcan-training-comes-as-overdose-rates-remain-stable-02-12-2020>  
<https://www.change.org/p/united-states-senate-ratify-the-united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-uncrc>  
Montgomery County Human Services Planning and Development 2018 Report. (2018).



# References

Starr, S. (2019, March 4). How Dayton, Ohio Halved Opioid Deaths- and Inspired Other Cities. The Guardian. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/mar/04/help-not-handcuffs-how-us-cities-on-the-frontline-are-fighting-to-stem-the-opioid-tide>

The Human Rights Guide to the Sustainable Development Goals. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://sdg.humanrights.dk/en/targets2?combine\\_1=xxx&goal=72&target=&instrument=All&title\\_1=&field\\_country\\_tid=All&field\\_instrument\\_group\\_tid=All&combine=](https://sdg.humanrights.dk/en/targets2?combine_1=xxx&goal=72&target=&instrument=All&title_1=&field_country_tid=All&field_instrument_group_tid=All&combine=)

Trump Administration Declares Opioid Crisis a Public Health Emergency. (2017, October 26). National Public Radio. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/2017/10/26/560083795/president-trump-may-declare-opioid-epidemic-national-emergency>

Welch, E. (2019, January 10). A Community of Recovery: Dayton, Ohio's Compassionate, Collective Approach to the Opioid Crisis. Retrieved March 29, 2020, from <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/criminal-justice/reports/2019/01/10/464889/a-community-of-recovery/>