



Brodbeck, Tom. "Kids might be getting crackpipes [Columnists | Opinion | Winnipeg Sun." Winnipeg Sun, N.p., 21 Oct. 2012. Web. 13 May 2013. <<http://www.winnipegsun.com/2012/10/22/crack-kits>>.

# Risk Management Considerations for Crack Kits

“Safer crack use kits” are used to provide crack users with hardware for a safer and clean way to use the drug as well as provide harm reduction information. Crack kit distribution programs are pragmatic, community-driven initiatives to reduce harm among crack users and reduce the risk of diseases being spread such as Hepatitis C and HIV.

**The typical contents of a ‘safer crack use kit’ are as follows:**

- Glass crack pipe
- Metal screens (brass)
- Pyrex stem with mouth piece (‘straight shooter’)
- Push stick
- Matches
- Petroleum jelly
- Hand wipes
- Alcohol wipes/swabs
- Chewing gum
- Condoms
- Packets of lubricant
- Smoking instructions

In addition, health tips for drug users and information on harm reduction services are included.

The cost of each kit can vary. To recoup some of the costs facilities request donations from users when possible. The overall cost to produce the kits is far less than it would be to supply a person with the proper medication throughout their life to treat disease(s) contracted as a result of drug use.

## What are the risks involved?

- Violent customers
- Pipes breaking before use
- Drug deals in the facility
- Quality control of the kits – a kit might be missing something (e.g. a screen)?
- Break ins

If your organization is participating in a “Safer Crack Kit” program, here are some tips on how to mitigate the risk:

- Proper training for staff and volunteers
- Packaging for breakable pieces and ensure breakable pieces are packaged properly
- Have security in place
- Establish site behaviour expectations with clients, or a needle exchange code of conduct. Enforce this code of conduct by addressing every infraction
- Monitor the outside area every 15 minutes, and enforce a policy of not using outside the site

- Consistent training and clinical practice guidelines
- A minimum of three needle exchange staff members aside from nurses should be on duty at all times
- Have safety protocols readily available
- Have procedures in place and training for staff on how to handle violent or dangerous clients
- Ensure that all staff hired have the appropriate qualifications
- Behaviour expectations of staff and clients (e.g., no discrimination, no violence, no dealing or using on-site or in the vehicles) and consequences for violating behavioural expectations.

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