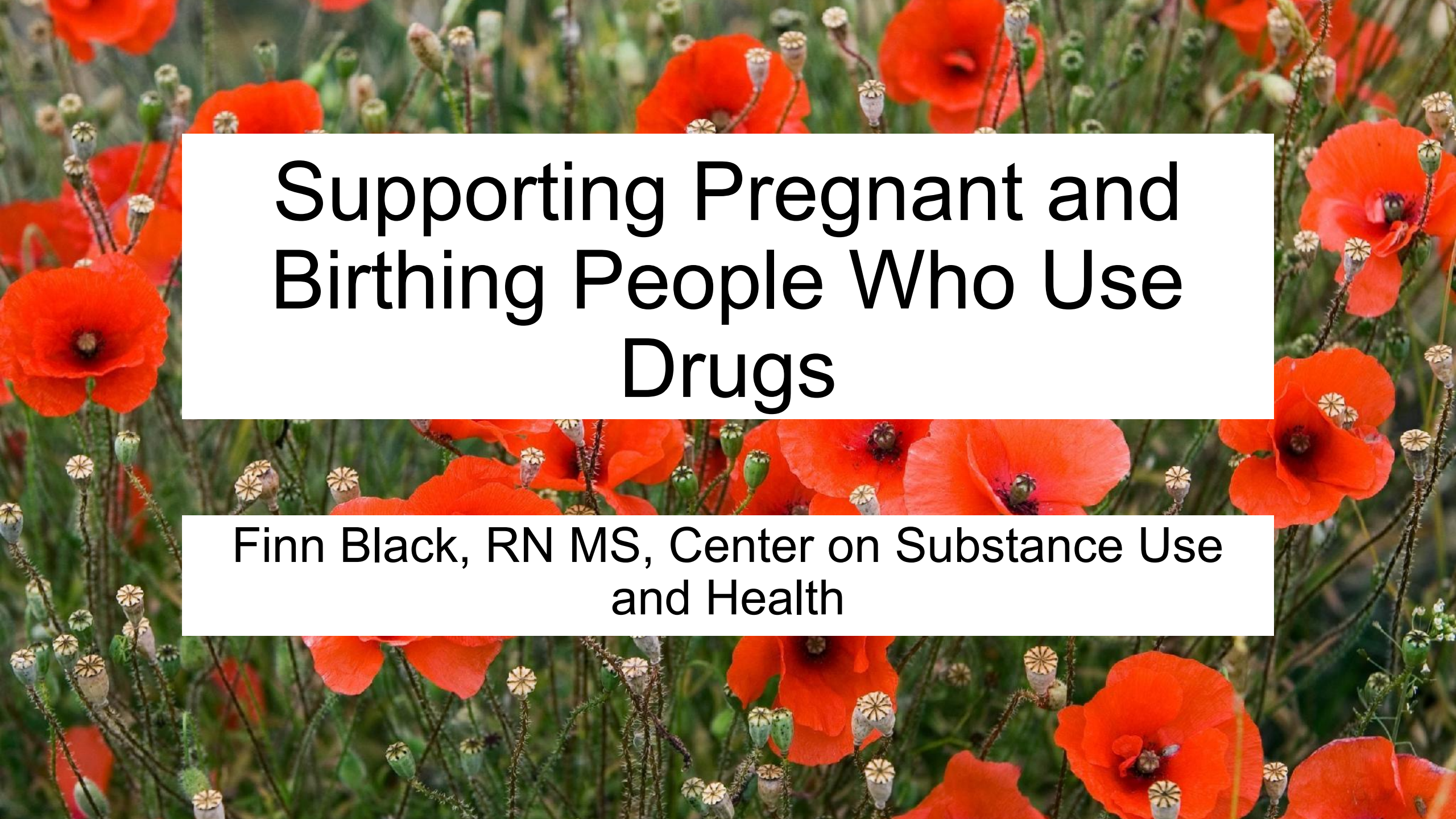


Supporting Pregnant and Birthing People Who Use Drugs

Finn Black, RN MS, Center on Substance Use and Health

Thank you to our partners and funders.

Nothing to disclose.

Note: The opinions presented in this presentation and on the following slides **are solely those of the presenter** and not necessarily those of the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH).

CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE ACADEMIC DETAILING ON OPIOIDS AND STIMULANTS

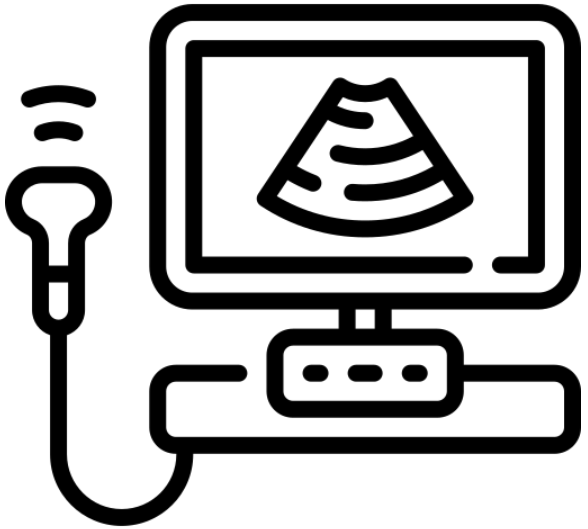
SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Prenatal Care Basics

8-28 Weeks
- Visits every 4 weeks

28-36 Weeks
- Visits every 2 weeks

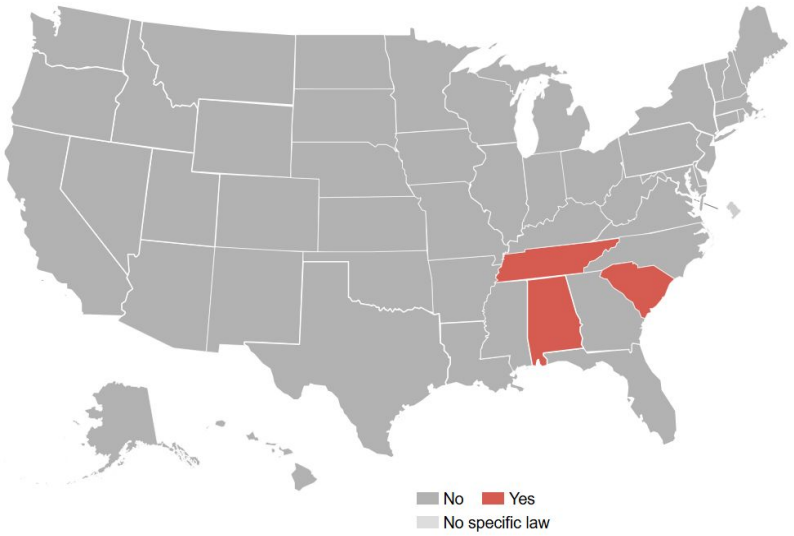
36 Weeks -birth
- Weekly visits



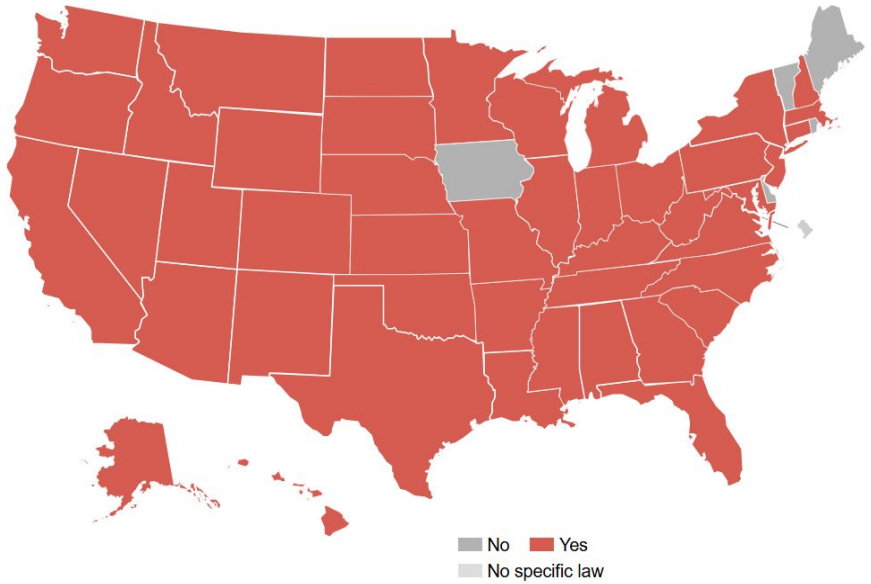
Myths and Facts About Drug Use In Pregnancy

- The non-prescribed drugs most likely to cause harm to a fetus are **alcohol** and **tobacco**
- Opioids and stimulants are **non-teratogenic**
  - Neonatal opioid withdrawal is **treatable and does not cause long-term harm**
  - Stimulants are statistically associated with lower birthweight, which is at **partly/almost totally explained by socioeconomic factors like poverty**
- Human milk feeding isn't automatically off the table

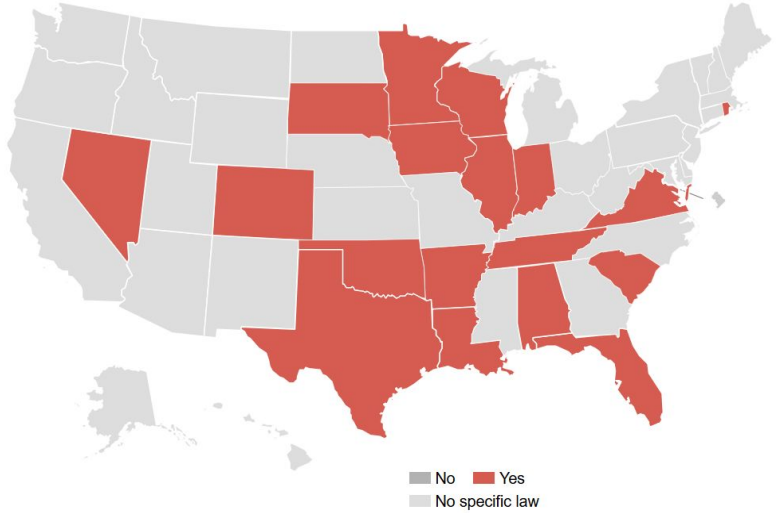
Drug Use and Mandated Reporting in California



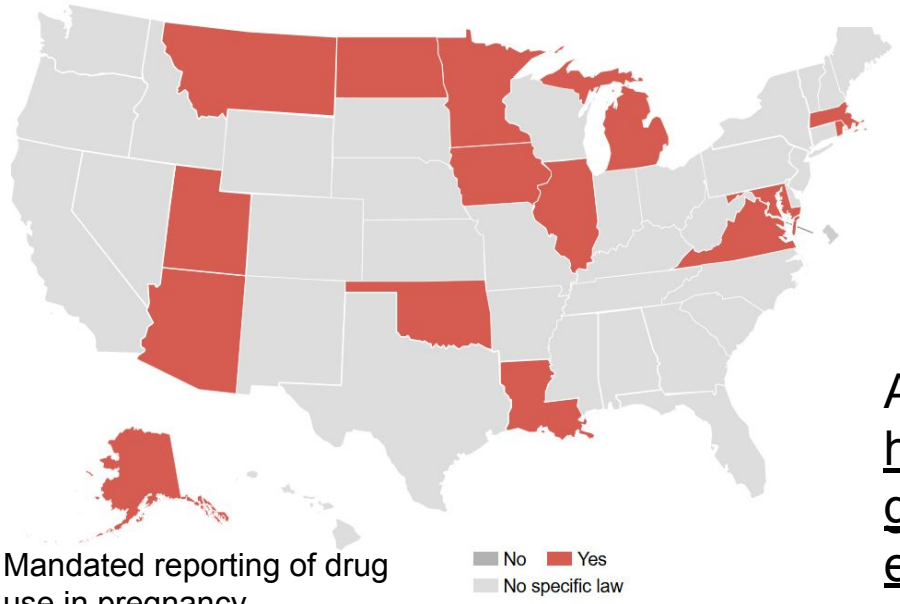
Drug use in pregnancy considered a crime



Pregnant people have been prosecuted for using drugs while pregnant

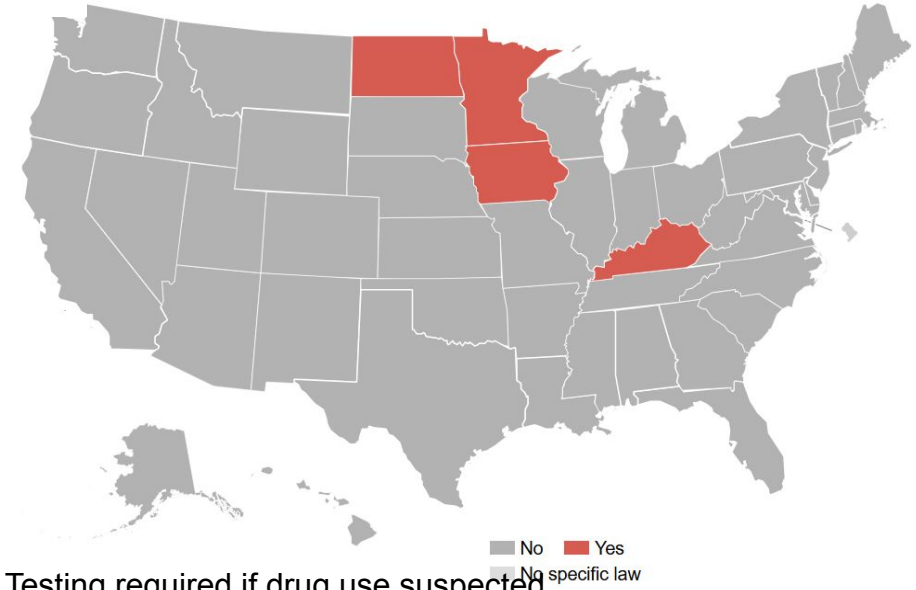


Drug use in pregnancy considered child abuse



Mandated reporting of drug use in pregnancy

All maps from ProPublica - https://projects.propublica.org/graphics/maternity-drug-policies-by-state



Testing required if drug use suspected

Drug Use and Mandated Reporting in California

Urine drug screening, pregnancy, and mandated reporting in California

Testing cannot be done without informed consent.

A positive urine drug screen for a non-prescribed substance is not child abuse.

There are no laws requiring urine drug screening.

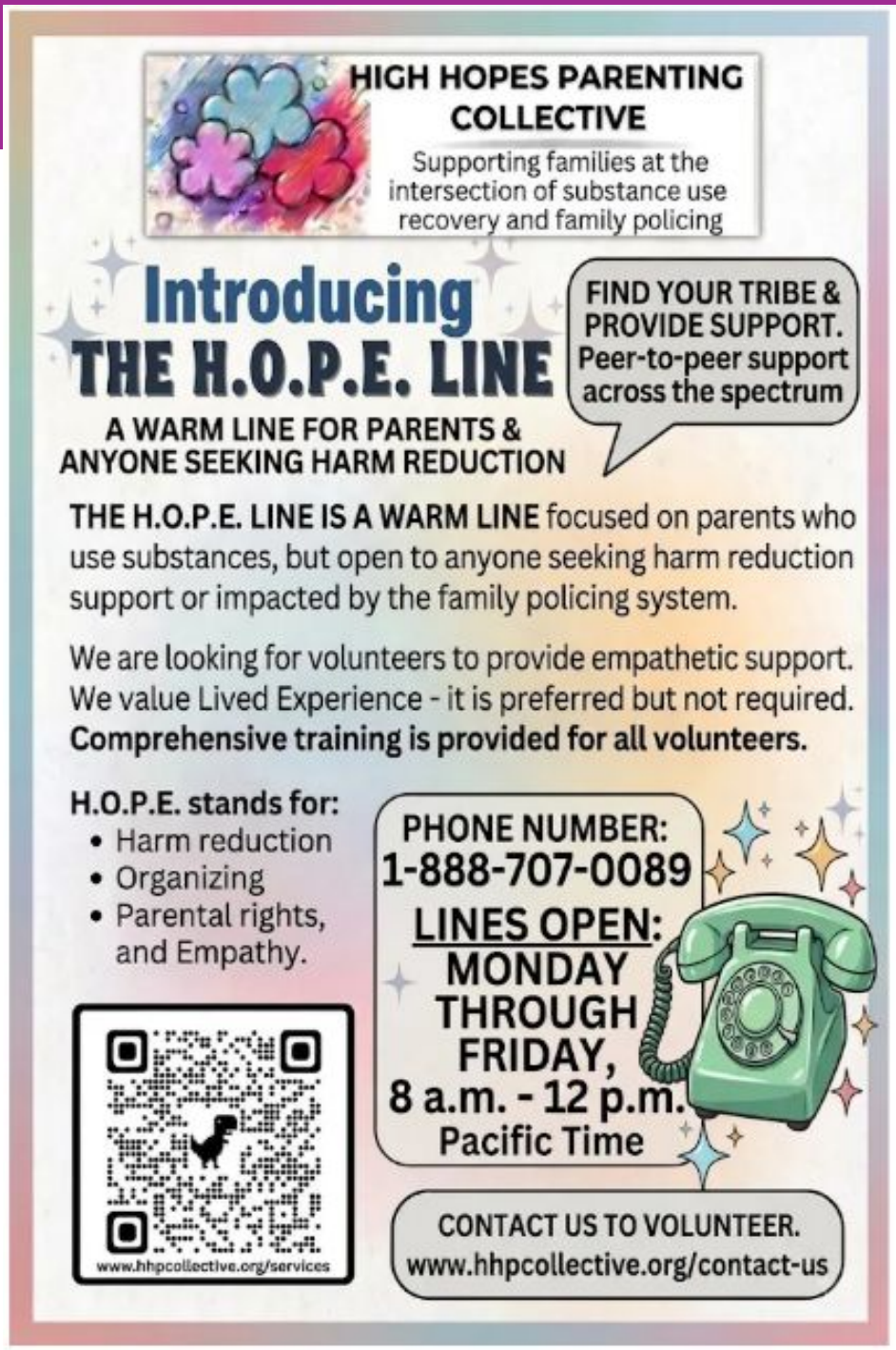
Clinicians are not required to notify child protective services because of a positive urine drug screen.[3]

Miscarriage and stillbirth are not crimes.

Treatment for substance use disorder cannot be mandated during pregnancy.

UDS in Pregnancy

- Fentanyl specifically can continue to show up in urine > 1 year after cessation of use
- CPS workers are generally not trained in interpreting UDS results but might be responsible for doing so anyway

Further Resources

- Academy of Perinatal Harm Reduction – www.perinatalharmreduction.org
- LactMed (drugs and lactation database – not paywalled)
- Elephant Circle (rad birth justice org) - www.elephantcircle.net
- Free drop-in HIV/STI services (drug user friendly, no ID or appointment needed, pregnant folks welcome) - www.berkeleyfreeclinic.org/street-medic-services