

“The Stories We Tell: News Media”

Episode Overview

In this episode, I talk about how news media shapes the stories we hear about drugs and overdose, and why that matters for public understanding and policy. I break down how media coverage determines which overdose stories get attention, how people and communities are portrayed, and how narratives can be amplified, even when they aren't strongly supported by evidence. I also explore how advocates and people with lived experience can use media to challenge dominant narratives and push for more effective, compassionate responses.



- News media is a primary source of information about drugs and overdose, shaping public opinion more than academic research or policy reports.
- The language, imagery, and sources used in news reporting shape stigma, policy debates, and public understanding of addiction.

TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Media coverage selectively highlights certain overdose stories and frames them in ways that influence which deaths are seen as important or sympathetic.
- ✓ Repeated or amplified media narratives can shape public opinion even when they are not strongly supported by evidence.

References & Future Reading

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