



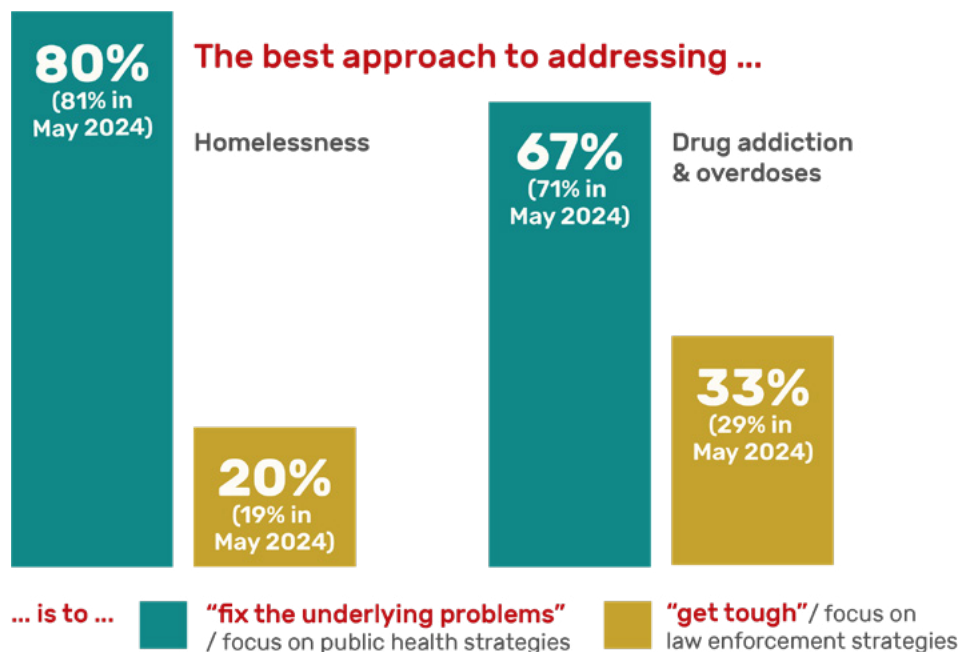
CITY RESIDENTS SUPPORT INVESTMENTS IN PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS

The [Big Cities Health Coalition](#) polled residents in its member jurisdictions (35 big cities*) about how government should address drug use and related issues like homelessness. The results show broad support for a public health approach to addressing these problems – as well as support for increased investment in those solutions.



City residents support a public health approach to addressing drug use and homelessness.

Seven in 10 city residents think a public health approach is the right way to tackle issues of homelessness and drug use and improve the overall well being of their city. This includes prioritizing access to drug treatment programs and affordable housing over arrests and incarceration.



* BCHC partnered with Hart Research on the polling design and analysis. The results are based on an online survey with 1,004 respondents, a representative sample across BCHC’s 35 member cities conducted in March 2025. Credibility interval is ± 3.09 percentage points for the full sample.

City residents think economic factors and poor mental health are the top drivers of crime, substance use, and homelessness.

Two thirds or more say that unaffordable housing, high inflation and cost of living, and the mental health crisis in the U.S. are each main causes or a big cause of these other problems. They see foundational solutions as required in order to solve crime, homelessness, and drug use and overdoses in their cities.

The top drivers of crime, drug overdose, and homelessness in my city are ...

Unaffordable housing



High inflation & cost of living



Mental health crisis

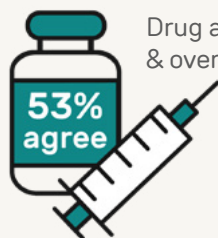


Number indicates percent who listed this cause in their top 3 drivers.

City residents want greater resources to support effective services and programs.

Six in 10 city residents think their city does not invest enough in services and programs that save lives and improve health. Additional investments are needed at the federal level to ensure adequate funding in communities across the country.

My city invests in and provides too little in services and programs in ...



Drug addiction & overdoses



Homelessness



The Big Cities Health Coalition is a forum for the leaders of America's largest metropolitan health departments to exchange strategies and jointly address issues to promote and protect the health and safety of their residents. Collectively, BCHC's 35 member jurisdictions directly impact more than 61 million people, or 1 in 5 Americans. bigcitieshealth.org

Contact us

Send questions or requests for further information to info@bigcitieshealth.org

Learn more

View more recommendations on our website bigcitieshealth.org/overdose-prevention-messaging-2025



POLICY NEXT STEPS

City residents support investing in proven public health strategies. We are in the midst of a once-in-a-lifetime moment when billions of dollars in opioid settlement funds are seemingly reaching local jurisdictions.

Local policymakers should look to their health department leadership to provide expert guidance on how to invest opioid settlement dollars.

For additional support, see the [resource compendium](#) created by Prevention Institute, BCHC, and other partners.



amount awarded to states and localities from opioid-related lawsuits