



MILWAUKEE COUNTY SUBSTANCE  
ABUSE PREVENTION COALITION

For immediate release: August 25, 2021

Media contact: Lisa Kaiser, [lkaiser@communityadvocates.net](mailto:lkaiser@communityadvocates.net)

## **MCSAP Invites Community to Overdose Awareness Day Memorial Event**

**Tuesday, August 31**

The Milwaukee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MCSAP) is inviting all community members to a memorial event to mark International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31. The event will remember those lost to overdose, support individuals and families coping with substance abuse and grief, and explore how to prevent overdose from claiming another life.

Last year, Milwaukee County experienced a record high of 546 people who lost their lives to overdose, with more than 1,500 lost in Wisconsin, up from 1,200 in 2019. The availability of the ultra-potent synthetic opioid fentanyl along with a socially isolating pandemic likely contributed to the high number of fatal overdoses.

“Our community is hurting and one result is the high number of overdoses, especially from opioids,” said Alexandria Kohn, coordinator of MCSAP. “We want to bring the community together to remember our loved ones, support those who are struggling with substance use disorder, share resources, and learn the warning signs of overdose.”

This free event will include:

- An open mic and memorial board
- A resource fair with information from community organizations
- Grief counselors from Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division and the Multicultural Trauma and Addiction Treatment Center of Wisconsin
- Narcan overdose prevention demonstration from Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers
- Free COVID-19 vaccinations from City of Milwaukee Health Department
- Free food
- A fundraiser for the Milwaukee Overdose Response Initiative (MORI)

The event will be held from 12 noon to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, August 31, at Zeidler Union Square, 301 W. Michigan St., Milwaukee. All are welcome to attend.

Community partners include: City of Milwaukee Health Department, City of Milwaukee Tobacco-Free Alliance, Community Medical Services, 53206 Drug-Free Communities Project, Goal Chasers 2020 LLC, Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division, Milwaukee Fire Department, Milwaukee Overdose Response Initiative (MORI), Milwaukee Women’s Center, Multicultural Trauma and Addiction Treatment Center of Wisconsin, Oxford House, The Parenting Network, Safe & Sound 27<sup>th</sup> Street West Drug Free Coalition, Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, and more.

**Reporters are welcome to interview experts and relatives of those lost to overdose before the event, as well as attend on August 31. Contact Lisa Kaiser at [lkaiser@communityadvocates.net](mailto:lkaiser@communityadvocates.net) to schedule interviews.**

*Coordinated by Community Advocates Public Policy Institute, the Milwaukee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MCSAP) is a diverse coalition of Milwaukee County partners who prevent and reduce substance use and misuse. To learn more, go to [mcsapmilwaukee.org](http://mcsapmilwaukee.org).*