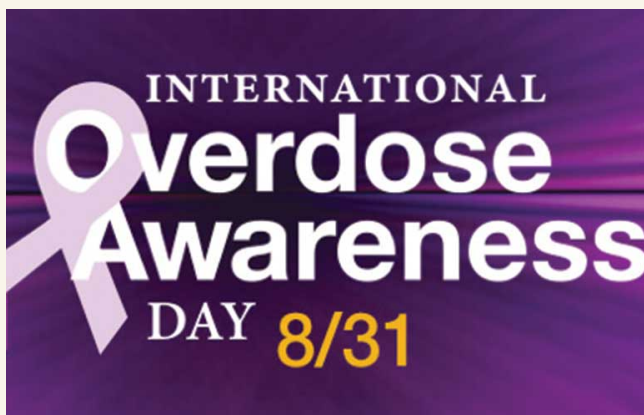


International Overdose Awareness Day & National Recovery Month 2020

The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) announces the #Recovery Belongs social media campaign in order to increase awareness and recognize International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD). #RecoveryBelongs is the first step across the state to recognize the month of September as Recovery Month. These events provide an opportunity to honor the lives of people who have died from a drug overdose, celebrate the lives of people in recovery and raise awareness about the tools we have to reduce the harms of substance use. The Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (IDHS/SUPR) encourages organizations to spread the message that drug overdose death is preventable, treatment works, and recovery is possible. To help do so, IDHS/SUPR will light up the Chicago skyline in purple from August 31st through September 4th to raise awareness about International Overdose Awareness Day and National Recovery Month. Illinois residents are also encouraged to stand with nearly 13,000 IDHS staff on August 31st to raise awareness for recovery by wearing purple.



Celebrate International Overdose Awareness Day and National Recovery Month in your community by hosting or attending a related event!

International Overdose Awareness Day, recognized around the world, aims to raise awareness about overdose and reduce the stigma associated with substance-related deaths. Each year, drug overdose death claims the lives of thousands of Illinoisans. Their deaths leave a hole in the lives of their loved ones and their communities. The people who our communities lose to overdose death are parents, children, siblings, significant others and friends. Their lives should be remembered and not hidden due to stigma. International Overdose Awareness Day is a chance to remember them and support solutions that can prevent overdose deaths in the future.

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This day leads directly into National Recovery Month in September. Faces and Voices of Recovery have announced this year's theme as *Join the Voices for Recovery: Celebrating Connections*. National Recovery Month informs people about mental and substance use disorders and effective treatment and recovery support options for people with these conditions. Too often, people living with a mental illness or substance use disorder are misunderstood and discounted. National Recovery Month is a time to recognize the gains made by people in recovery and show appreciation for the dedicated service providers who help people pursuing recovery.

IDHS/SUPR continues to promote and implement strategies targeted at reducing the harmful effects of substance use in Illinois. Since 2015, over 60,000 people in Illinois have been trained to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose through the Drug Overdose Prevention Program (DOPP) and groups enrolled in the program have been responsible for over 5,000 overdose reversals. In FY18 alone, SUPR also funded treatment services for over 34,000 people across the state who were suffering from substance use disorders.

As the world faces the concurrent public health crisis of COVID-19, the need to remember the impact of drug overdose and the possibility of recovery is even greater. Social distancing measures that prevent the spread of COVID-19 make it more difficult for people who use drugs and those in recovery to access sources of support. However, that has not stopped providers in Illinois from finding innovative ways to help. Many organizations that provide Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) services are offering virtual training on overdose response and contactless naloxone distribution options. To find the nearest organization offering harm reduction services, visit the Illinois Helpline:

<https://helplineil.org/app/staysafe>. To help individuals find virtual recovery support options, IDHS/SUPR created the Digital Recovery Support page: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=123318>.

To learn more about International Overdose Awareness Day and National Recovery Month, including where to find additional materials and how to promote your organization's events, please visit:

<https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=118655>.

If your organization is planning to use social media as part of your events, please tag @ILHelpline and add #RecoveryBelongs to any of your posts. Recovery belongs in Illinois.

