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**Light Up Purple for
Overdose and Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness
Join Activities on August 30 and 31**

On August 30, 2021, the United Way of Hastings (UWH), in collaboration with the City of Hastings, Confluence Development LLC, and concerned citizens and families, will participate in a city-wide recognition of International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD). Held on August 31st every year, IOAD is the world's largest campaign to end overdose and poisoning deaths, remember those who have died, and acknowledge the pain of family and friends touched by these deaths. The color purple symbolizes the day.

The 7:00 p.m. event on August 30th is being hosted by Confluence Development LLC, the developer of The Confluence project at the former Hudson Manufacturing building in downtown Hastings on 2nd Street East. Participants will gather on the top level of the public parking deck, across the street from The Confluence, for a short recognition program. At 7:45 p.m., Confluence Development will light the newly restored cupolas purple in recognition of IOAD.

Hastings Mayor Mary Fasbender will present a proclamation recognizing IOAD to Mrs. Bridgette Norring and her family. Mrs. Norring's son, Devin, died of fentanyl poisoning in April 2020, one of several opioid-related deaths in Hastings over the past 18 months. The Norring family will accept the proclamation on behalf of all families and friends of those whose lives have been affected by these deaths.

Mrs. Norring will speak, as well as others who have lost loved ones due to overdoses and/or fentanyl poisoning. Tables will be available to display photos of loved ones. Law enforcement from Hastings and Dakota County will also speak. The event is open to the public, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

In addition to the proclamation, the City of Hastings will be displaying purple ribbon bouquets and purple lighting on City Hall the week of August 30-September 4. The Confluence cupolas will remain lighted in purple during that week as well. United Way of Hastings is joining the efforts to build awareness by lighting its office windows in downtown Hastings. Community members and businesses are encouraged to use purple lights to build awareness.

One Pill Can Kill

According to the CDC, in 2020 over 93,000 people died in the United States from opioid overdoses and poisonings, including fentanyl. This was a 30% increase from 2019. In that same period, over 1,000 died in the State of Minnesota¹. In 2020, 56 overdose and/or fentanyl poisoning deaths occurred in Dakota County².

Opioids are a class of highly addictive drugs used to reduce pain and include prescription opioids like oxycodone and hydrocodone, as well as illegal opioids like heroin.

Overdoses and poisonings can occur in people who have an addiction to substances, as well as those who do not. A person may accidentally overdose on prescription opioids after a surgery or an injury, a teenager can experiment with illegal drugs for the first time, or a child can take opioid pills or powders from a home medicine cabinet. Unused pain prescription medications in the home can be stolen by guests and consumed or resold.

Illicit fentanyl is being laced in pills that look like pharmaceutical drugs such as Xanax, Percocet, and Adderall; it is also being cut into methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin. Area youth & young adults are purchasing pills through social media, such as SnapChat, not knowing they are purchasing deadly fentanyl. A tiny amount can kill a teen or adult.

Call 2-1-1 For Help

- The influx of fentanyl, isolation & reduced access to healthcare during COVID, mental health challenges, & addictions have led to this crisis.
- Call 9-1-1 (emergency) if someone is overdosing. Seconds count. The Minnesota Good Samaritan law provides protections.
- Call United Way's 2-1-1 24/7 help line for trained help on substance use, suicide, anxiety, housing, & more.
- TIP4-1-1 (nonemergency) to leave an anonymous tip for Hastings law enforcement. Dial 847411 and text Hastings then leave your tip.
- Visit www.unitedwayofhastings.org for more resources.

Unused Medication Disposal

Dakota County has multiple drop off locations to safely dispose of unused medications. Residents can bring old medications to the Sheriff's Office in Hastings at the Dakota County Government Center, 24/7.

Visit the Dakota County web site for other drop off locations around the county:
<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/LawJustice/CrimePrevention/PrescriptionDrug/Pages/default.aspx>.

Opioid addictions and deaths affect all members of a community. The United Way of Hastings will be hosting a series of educational and awareness events during the fall and winter months. Please visit www.unitedwayofhastings.org for event schedules.

For information on the IOAD recognition event on August 30th, please contact the United Way of Hastings, 651-438-3337.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>

² <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/c75d76b3e2204465879401f7544ccfec/>

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