



Press Release/Media Invitation

August 27, 2021

Contact: J. Patrick Kerr

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Four Rivers Behavioral Health Public Affairs

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Overdose Awareness Day to be Recognized at Noble Park in Paducah

PADUCAH, KY - Four Rivers Behavioral Health's substance use disorder programs, including Turning Point Recovery Community Center, CenterPoint Recovery for Men and The Zone Youth Drop-In Center, are partnering with other area agencies and community groups to bring awareness to the tragedy of drug overdose in our community.

International Overdose Awareness Day is observed on August 31, and the groups will join together Tuesday evening at Noble Park for a balloon release and remembrance ceremony for those lost in the battle against addiction.

Brandon Fitch, director of Turning Point said, "Fatal overdoses continue to happen all too often in our region. The ongoing opioid crisis - that worsened during the pandemic - is responsible for the vast majority of overdoses in our area.

"We have made great progress in reducing the number of fatal overdoses with the use of NARCAN by getting it out to people in the community, but so much more needs to be done. One day we want to be able to celebrate a year with no deaths due to overdose," he said.

During the event, 410 balloons will be released representing the 41 fatal overdoses in the Purchase area last year.

Amanda Melton, McCracken County Coroner said, "In 2020, we lost nearly 2,000 people to overdose in the state of Kentucky. That's a 49% increase over 2019. So many people think, 'But, that only happens in big cities like Louisville or Lexington.' The truth is, it happens everywhere and I have seen it far too many times in our area."



Press Release: Overdoses Awareness Day - Page Two

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The event also will include experts and advocates of recovery with information and resources that foster change and promote harm reduction including the distribution of NARCAN by the Purchase Area Health Department and the Four Rivers Regional Prevention Center.

In addition, the mother of an overdose victim will share a powerful message about the loss of her son and the impact addiction has on families and loved ones.

The event is hosted by Turning Point, one the many substance use disorder services of Four Rivers Behavioral Health, along with the McCracken County Coroner's Office, The Purchase District Health Department, Kentucky Care, Edgewater Recovery Center, Neartown Recovery Center, Lifeline Recovery Center, Oxford House Recovery, Hope for the Broken, The Graves County Exchange and KORE - the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort.

The evening will begin at 5 p.m. at Noble Park's Shelter 16, with the balloon release at sundown, around 7 p.m. The event is open to the public.

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Four Rivers Behavioral Health is a private, not-for-profit community mental health agency that for more than 50 years has provided comprehensive mental health, substance abuse and developmental/intellectual disability services to clients in Ballard, Calloway, Carlisle, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Livingston, McCracken, and Marshall Counties.

Turning Point is a community center for people in early recovery from substance use disorders and includes peer support, group recovery meetings and post residential treatment services such as housing assistance and job search help.

Media Invitation: TUESDAY, AUGUST 31 • 5 P.M.



Media are invited to attend the event on Tuesday, August 31, at 5 p.m. at Noble Park, Shelter 16. Shelter 16 is located between the pool and Park Ave.