

Jackie Nitschke Center: U.S. overdose deaths hit a new record in 2020

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(Green Bay, Wis.) – Drug overdose deaths in Wisconsin increased to more than 1,500 last year, a jump of more than 25% from the previous year. Across the U.S., 2020 was the deadliest year on record for drug overdoses since tracking began in 1968.

“Those statistics are alarming and, sadly, they are reflective of what we have seen locally as well,” said Michelle Pierquet-Hohner, Director of Community & Donor Engagement at the [Jackie Nitschke Center](#) (JNC) in Green Bay. “That’s why we think it’s important to recognize International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31st. If it gets people talking about the problem, that’s a good thing.”

International Overdose Awareness Day is the world’s largest annual campaign to end overdose, remember without stigma those who have died and acknowledge the grief of the family and friends left behind. The campaign theme is “time to remember – time to act.”

This year, the city of Green Bay is lighting the downtown bridges purple in observance of International Overdose Awareness Day. “We want to thank [Mayor Eric Genrich](#) and his staff for recognizing the importance of this awareness effort,” Pierquet-Hohner added. “It is devastating and heartbreaking to see the impacts of addiction, including overdoses, knowing that there is help available in the community.”

While Aug. 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day, it leads right into National Recovery Month in September.

JNC has been serving adults and families in Northeast Wisconsin facing the struggles of substance addiction and mental challenges for nearly 50 years. It offers a continuum of care including residential treatment, intensive outpatient treatment, outpatient aftercare, family education, recovery housing and an alumni group.

More information about the services provided by the Jackie Nitschke Center is available at www.jackienitschkecenter.org.