



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Overdose Awareness Vigil – Time to Remember. Time to Act.
Overdose Awareness Vigil will be held ONLINE on Friday, August 28th, 2020

FAIRFIELD, Connecticut (8/4/2020) – Drug overdose deaths cause the lives of over 47,000 Americans each year and are the leading cause of death in Americans under the age of 50. According to the Connecticut Department of Public Health, there were 1,200 opioid overdose deaths in Connecticut in 2019, an increase in years past. Statewide figures for the months of March through May 2020 show that deaths from opioid overdoses rose 21.4 percent between 2019 and 2020, rising year over year for each month through April. According to the state health department, there were 560 confirmed fatal drug overdoses by mid-June 2020, and 275 more pending confirmation.

International Overdose Awareness Day takes place on August 31st every year. People and communities come together to raise awareness of one of the world's most urgent public health crises – one that, unfortunately, is only getting worse.

In Honor of International Overdose Awareness Day, the Fairfield Health Department, along with Fairfield CARES, and the Fairfield Police Department will be hosting the third annual Overdose Awareness Vigil. Due to COVID-19 and the restrictions of large gatherings, this Overdose Awareness Vigil will take place on Friday, August 28th, 2020 at 7pm via Zoom for the safety of all those who attend.

This Vigil is a great place for people to come together who have lost loved ones due to an overdose, for those in recovery, for those who know someone who is struggling with the hardship of addiction, and for anyone who would like to support community members or learn more. The Candlelight Vigil will allow us to remember those in our community we have lost to this terrible disease, and to find the strength and support to fight for those we know who are battling with addiction. All are welcomed to attend.

We encourage those who attend the event to participate in the event as much as possible. During the vigil, there will be a candle lighting and we encourage attendees to do so at home. All information from the event, along with additional resources will be available online that can be accessed on your own electronic devices. You can register to attend the vigil at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0odO-hpj4sGt2WYeZcZGUXNj6typwCUQIS>.

Fatal drug overdoses are killing too many people. In 2019, fentanyl was responsible for 82% of the overdose deaths due to the potency of the drug. From 2012 to 2020, there have been 35 drug overdose deaths in the town of Fairfield. These deaths could have been prevented.

If you or someone you know is struggling with addiction it is imperative to seek help in order to prevent further drug overdose deaths. Please visit <https://www.fairfieldct.org/Opioids> and/or <https://www.fairfieldct.org/fairfieldcares> for

resources on treatment and additional information. Drug addiction can happen to anyone. Helping people that have a drug addiction is the only way to stop overdose deaths.

Fairfield CARES Community Coalition is a task force established in 2009 by the Fairfield First Selectman's Office to prevent underage drinking and substance misuse. Members include parents, school representatives, local business leaders, law enforcement, clergy, counseling professionals, and members of youth services organizations.

For questions about the Vigil and for more information please contact the Fairfield Health Department at 203-256-3020.

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