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### **Kids Escaping Drugs honors International Overdose Awareness Day**

On August 31, Kids Escaping Drugs (KED) honored [International Overdose Awareness Day](#) with a remembrance ceremony to honor those who have died from drug overdose.

The ceremony, which included two family speakers, concludes the organization's 30 Days of Remembrance campaign that tells the stories of individuals who have been lost to drug addiction. Every day throughout the month of August, which also serves as International Overdose Awareness month, KED featured the story of one individual who died from an overdose. This campaign focused on who the individual was beyond their addiction – which amounts for over 100,000 deaths in the United States annually, according to the CDC. During the ceremony, all the names featured throughout the month were written on doves and displayed throughout KED's campus in West Seneca.

International Overdose Awareness Day was initiated in 2001 and is now 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 acknowledges the profound grief felt by families and friends whose loved ones have died or suffered permanent injury from a drug overdose. International Overdose Awareness Day spreads the message about the tragedy of drug overdose deaths and that drug overdoses are preventable.

"Participating in this event is important to us because Kids Escaping Drugs work tirelessly to ensure we can educate individuals from all walks of life about the warning signs, triggers, and mental health issues surrounding addiction," Director of Community Partnerships and Marketing **Jennifer Szustakowski** said. "Addiction is a disease that impacts us all, but it is important to remember that help is available and that recovery is possible."

Founded in 1987, Kids Escaping Drugs empowers adolescents and families to live a life free from the disease of addiction through community outreach, education, and early intervention.

For resources or for ways to support KED, please visit [ked.org](http://ked.org).

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