

# Opioid Epidemic Awareness Campaign

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## Learn: How Opioids Work

### Physiological effects:

When trauma occurs to the body, for example a broken bone, neurons register this trauma and send impulses to the brain. These impulses are registered as pain, which alerts the person that trauma has occurred. Opioids bond with the receptors on neurons, preventing these pain impulses to go through. Thus, they can be used to treat pain. However, this also creates addiction. The body needs these drugs to prevent pain. For this reason, opioids are extremely addictive.

## Teach: Advocate Opioid Safety and Raise Awareness

Opioid overdoses in Milwaukee have increased to 220 % of what they were in 2011. Since 2011, nearly 2,000 Milwaukee residents have fatally overdosed on opioids. It is vital that we raise awareness of this citywide crisis and advocate ways to combat the opioid epidemic. Advocate drug drop offs, as many opioid addictions begin with old prescription medications found in medicine cabinets. Drug drop offs are safe ways to dispose of unwanted and unneeded pills. Spread awareness of the ongoing epidemic in our area. To fight the crisis, we need to educate and advocate.

## Support: Addiction is a disease

Addiction often accompanies a stigma that it is the sole fault of the substance user, and therefore should be treated by the user alone. However, addiction is by definition a disease, and should be treated as such. Encourage those in need to seek treatment for opioid addictions. Addiction is treatable with the help of medical professionals. By encouraging rehabilitation and treatment, the number of fatal overdoses can be reduced. Furthermore, encourage those around you to say no to drugs. A key part in helping fight peer pressure is, understanding that one pill is all it takes for your neurons to become addicted. I understand the need to fit in, but no high, no party invitation can ever mitigate the pain of addiction, or the sorrow it brings to loved ones; so say no. Refuse illegal pills; be the change to make the change.