

Event	International Overdose Awareness Day
Date & Time	August 31, 4pm. Speaking from 4:03 – 4:07pm (4 minutes)
Location	NSC
Introduction	Jenny Burke

Debbie Hersman Remarks:

Earlier today, we shared some critical data regarding attitudes and behaviors of Illinois residents when it comes to opioid use and addiction.

This important survey helps us understand how people just like you and me are experiencing what has become the biggest public health crisis of our time.

We found that 1 in 3 know someone who has been directly impacted by this crisis.

One out of every three people either know someone who has started using, died because of an overdose, or survived.

We learned that too many don't realize how addictive painkillers can be, don't feel confident they can spot signs of abuse, and don't know where to go to get treatment.

In Illinois, 2,350 died from drug overdose last year. More than double the deaths we had due to car crashes.

In Chicago, 681 died from an overdose just this past year. 606 of these, 89% were caused by opioids, including heroin.

These numbers are shocking. And while the numbers are important, that isn't what brings us together today.

The science journalist Paul Brodeur famously said that statistics are just humans with the tears dried off.

We are here to talk about people.

These are our neighbors, our co-workers, and our children.

We have all become interconnected because of this crisis.

The good news, is that we can do something about it.

This is why we are here today.

International Overdose Awareness Day is both a reminder and a call to action.

Today you will hear from a sports legend, public health and safety officials, policymakers, and survivors on solutions to prevent overdoses, and save lives.

We are focused on eliminating preventable deaths in our communities.

Today, the National Safety Council signed onto a joint statement with the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing (PROP) to call on FDA to remove ultra-high dosage painkillers from the market.

We are committed to finding new solutions and ensuring more access to effective pain management and substance use treatment to combat this epidemic.

Saving lives is why the National Safety Council exists. What could be more important?

Thank you to each of you, to NSC staff, to all our wonderful speakers here today, and most important, survivors and family members, here to share what we know, what we can do, and what we can change so that together we can say, not one more.