

**COMMUNITY IN CRISIS GOES PURPLE TO MARK OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY**  
*The Somerset Hills Community Shows Support*

**BERNARDSVILLE, NJ. AUGUST 22, 2023.** On Thursday, August 31, 2023, 7 p.m., at the Community Hub, 9 Church St., Bernardsville, Community in Crisis (CiC) will again welcome parents, families, community leaders and faith leaders to a remembrance gathering. At 8 p.m., a vigil will mark the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual International Overdose Awareness Day which seeks to reduce the stigma of drug-related deaths and spread the message that overdose death is preventable. Speakers at the event will include local officials, family members and a person in recovery. All are welcome; parking is available behind the building and across the street opposite the Community Hub.

With the volunteer support of local girl scout troops and middle school volunteers, trees and lampposts throughout town will sport a purple ribbon, and large remembrance posters displaying photos and names of those lost to overdose will be displayed in front of the Hub, presenting a reflective setting for the event. 50 flags will represent the 50 mothers, fathers, sons and daughters who tragically lost their lives to overdose in Somerset County in 2022. 17 locations across Somerset County are also joining the effort with flags and banners. These include Congregation B'nai Israel and the churches of Somerset Hills Lutheran, Bishop Janes United Methodist, St. Mark's Episcopal, St. James' Catholic in Basking Ridge; Bernardsville Public Library and the churches of Bernards United Methodist and St. Bernards Episcopal in Bernardsville; Liberty Corner Presbyterian Church in Liberty Corner; St John's Church and Somerville Borough Municipal Center in Somerville; Trinity United Church in Warren; Bound Brook Presbyterian Church in Boundbrook; St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Bridgewater; Montgomery-Rocky Hill Municipal Center in Skillman; Clover Hill Reformed Church in Clover Hill; and Hillsborough Reformed Church in Hillsborough.

Following International Overdose Awareness Day, September is National Recovery Month, designed to educate Americans on mental health and substance use disorders, in addition to celebrating the work of individuals in recovery and providing support to affected families and patients.

Ken Musgrove, CiC's Director of Recovery Support, commented, 'It is important to reflect that our remembrance is about the names, not the numbers, about the faces, not the flags, and that addiction and overdose impacts all communities and many, many families. We want our community to know that there are resources available at CiC and that there are peer recovery specialists on staff with lived experience who can help all individuals find hope and a purposeful life in recovery.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), more than half of individuals misusing prescription opioids bought, were given, or stole the prescription drugs from a friend or relative, often from the home medicine cabinet. In an effort to reduce the availability and potential abuse of prescription medications, Community in Crisis gives out free packets of DisposeRx for homeowners to safely dispose of unused, unwanted medications, Narcan nasal spray that can reverse an overdose, fentanyl test strips, and educational materials. Residents wishing to obtain any supplies can visit the Community Hub, 9 Church St., Bernardsville, or contact Sarah: [spopa@communityincrisis.org](mailto:spopa@communityincrisis.org).

Community in Crisis is a community-wide coalition of volunteers, community group leaders, law enforcement, clergy, medical professionals, mental health experts, local government officials and school representatives working together to combat this ever-growing epidemic with programming, awareness and education about substance use disorder. CiC also offers an array of programs, meetings and sober social opportunities to individuals in and seeking recovery.

Community in Crisis began in 2013 following the overdose deaths of two young adults in the Somerset Hills community. The organization, a coalition of community group leaders, law enforcement, clergy, medical professionals, mental health experts, local government officials and school representatives, offers

bi-weekly support groups for families of loved ones struggling with substance use disorder, innovative educational opportunities in the school environment, peer recovery pop-up sites throughout the county, vaping education presentations, a 'parent university' series, sober social events and meetings, a youth leadership council, middle school Hub Club, and more.

For more information on this event, please contact Andi Williams at [awilliams@communityincrisis.org](mailto:awilliams@communityincrisis.org)

For more information or to get involved with CiC, please contact Community in Crisis at [info@communityincrisis.org](mailto:info@communityincrisis.org) or go to [www.communityincrisis.org](http://www.communityincrisis.org).