

For Immediate Release

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It Is POSSIBLE Opioid Awareness Campaign Launched by Washtenaw County Health Department
Campaign promotes stories of recovery and ways to stop overdose deaths;
Opioid-related deaths decrease in 2019

YPSILANTI, Mich., March 5, 2020 – Washtenaw County Health Department’s recently launched [It is POSSIBLE campaign](#) tells stories of recovery and provides information on ways to prevent death and overdose from opioid use. The campaign aims to spark hope that both survival and recovery are possible.



Find campaign materials and images for articles at <https://www.washtenaw.org/3026/Stories-of-Recovery-Materials>

It is POSSIBLE stories of recovery show that not only is recovery possible, but it is also beautiful. Dathan, a Washtenaw County resident who shares his story for the campaign, used to refer to himself as a “hopeless addict.” But now, in his video for the campaign, he says, “I’m not a hopeless

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addict... I'm a person who suffered from substance use disorder, and through the program of recovery, I've found my way back to a life that's meaningful not only for myself, but my family and my community."

In addition to providing hope and resources for recovery, the campaign also includes ways to avoid overdose and death for people with active substance use disorders. These tips include:

- Never use alone
- Don't get faked out by knock-off pills sold on the street or online that can contain the deadly substance fentanyl
- Carry naloxone if you or anyone you know is at risk for an opioid overdose.

[Naloxone](#), often referred to by the brand name Narcan, is a safe, potentially life-saving medication designed to reverse an opioid overdose. It is now available at all major pharmacy chains without a prescription, as well as at some community organizations. Learn more on the Health Department's [naloxone webpage](#).

There were [62](#) opioid-related deaths among Washtenaw County residents in 2019, a decrease of over 20 percent compared to 2018. Increased access to naloxone has likely contributed to this decrease in deaths. An estimated 2,500 naloxone kits were distributed by public and non-profit agencies in Washtenaw County in 2019.

"Some of the best people I know wouldn't be alive if it wasn't for Narcan," says Tegan, a Washtenaw County resident in another *It is POSSIBLE* video.

It is POSSIBLE campaign materials will appear on bus ads, billboards, movie theater ads, posters, mirror clings, door hangers, and more. Campaign videos and materials, information on naloxone and treatment, and local data can be found at Washtenaw.org/ItsPossible. If you have questions about recovery or need help, call the Washtenaw County CARES team 24/7 at 734-544-3050.

The campaign is funded with federal funds by the Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan. It will also be shared in Livingston, Lenawee, and Monroe counties.

Washtenaw County Health Department

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.

The Washtenaw County Health Department has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. Visit us at washtenaw.org/health or call 734-544-6700.

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