

“Witnesses & Bystanders”

Episode Overview

In this episode, I talk about witnesses’ and bystanders’ roles, responsibilities, and reactions to overdose. I discuss how witnesses and bystanders address or perceive overdoses in the community, and the steps they take to save the life of someone who is overdosing. I talk about the hesitation witnesses experience around getting involved, and why education and access to resources are so important.



- Most bystanders are willing to help in overdose situations, even when they are afraid, especially if they understand the importance of their role.
- Training and access to tools can turn everyday people, even those without medical backgrounds, into lifesavers.
- Early intervention during an overdose is imperative and bystanders are often able to act before emergency services arrive.

TAKEAWAYS

- Fear and uncertainty can hold people back from responding to an overdose, which highlights the need for better public education.
- Empowering communities with knowledge and tools (like naloxone training and now, smartphone apps) allows for faster, more confident responses.
- Everyone has a role to play...witnesses, coworkers, neighbors, or passersby can be the difference between life and death when an overdose occurs.

References & Future Reading

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