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PHILADELPHIA RADIO HOSTS JOIN CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE BLACK OVERDOSE DEATHS WITH LIFE-SAVING NALOXONE

Radio Celebrities Send Powerful Messages for ‘You Have the Power to Save Lives’ Campaign

PHILADELPHIA, PA – Two of Philadelphia’s popular radio hosts, Mikey Dredd, Morning Host of the Rise & Grind Morning Show on Power 99 WUSL, and Adimu Colon, Host of the Quiet Storm on 105.3 WDAS FM, are channeling their voices and energy to the *You Have the Power to Save Lives* campaign. As overdose has risen to become the leading preventable cause of death among Black adults in the US, the collaboration of local and national leaders seeks to promote public uptake of the overdose-reversing medicine, naloxone, in the community and raise awareness of its benefits.

The hosts have recently hit the radio airwaves with strong messages advocating for the Black community to get free naloxone, also known by its brand name Narcan, that is available in their neighborhoods. Having lost friends and relatives to drug overdose, the hosts’ narratives are authentic and powerful. Their messages resonate. To listen, go to the [audio section](#) in our website's newsroom.

“I am excited about the continued collaboration with Vital Strategies as we unite our efforts in expanding access to Narcan,” said Dredd, Morning Show Host on Power 99 WUSL. “Together, we are committed to tackling the opioid crisis by ensuring that life-saving resources are available to those who need them the most. This partnership reflects our shared dedication to saving lives, reducing harm, and creating healthier communities for all.”

Additionally, Adimu Colon of Quiet Storm on WDAS FM 105.3 said: “I have friends and family who have been impacted by the overdose crisis within the Black community, which makes me eager to collaborate once more with Vital Strategies to tackle this issue. WDAS has consistently invested in the community, and my show provides a powerful platform with unmatched reach, enabling us to educate, raise awareness, and deliver essential resources across the tri-state to our loved ones who need them the most.”

The *"You Have the Power to Save Lives"* campaign launched last month in Philadelphia and six other cities: Albuquerque, New Mexico; Detroit, Michigan; Louisville, Kentucky; Durham, North Carolina; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Newark, New Jersey. The campaign, with its strong focus on community engagement, focuses on activating community leaders in Black communities to expand the availability and utilization of naloxone, a lifesaving, overdose-reversing nasal spray medication. At the heart of the campaign is a new website – YouCanSaveLives.org – where people can find out where to obtain naloxone near them, hear powerful, real-world testimonials, and take action to spread the word about the importance of naloxone.

"We know that naloxone can save Black lives," said Keli McLoyd, Director of the Overdose Response Unit, City of Philadelphia. Naloxone is easy to use and available for free. The key to saving a life with naloxone is administering it as quickly as possible. Think of it as another tool in the toolbox, another medicine in the medicine cabinet – one without judgment. It doesn't say anything about who you are or what's happening in your house. There's aspirin, there's Pepto, and now there's naloxone too."

Supported by public health organization Vital Strategies, the campaign includes more than a dozen community groups, health organizations, and local government agencies. Their efforts focus on establishing new naloxone distribution points in Black communities—including neighborhood gathering spaces and local health providers—to reduce stigma around carrying naloxone and empower individuals to save lives in the event of an overdose.

The campaign also released [a report](#) consolidating recent evidence that illustrates the need for urgent action to save lives, finding:

- In Philadelphia, the rate of overdose death in the Black population [was almost twice the rate](#) in the white population in 2023.
- The rates of overdose deaths in North and West Philadelphia, both historically Black communities, [are among the highest in the city, respectively](#).
- Overdose is [the leading cause of injury death for Black adults](#) in the United States, surpassing gun violence and car crashes. In many cities, older Black men are [four times more likely](#) to die of overdose than other men in their age group.
- [Overdose rates in Black communities have been rising for the past ten years](#), but have skyrocketed since 2020, when overdose rates in the Black population overtook rates in the white population.

The rising death toll has alarmed the radio hosts, driving them to participate in the campaign and use their platform to influence the community.

Adimu Colon tells his audience: “I wanna share with you that in my family we have a cousin that's been struggling with addiction for at least 10 years now. Right? And we've learned that the Black community is in the midst of the worst overdose crisis we have had in history. And so for our loved one, there's always the concern of an overdose and the fear that their drugs may be laced with fentanyl or opioids without them even knowing it. Right? And so, if you're like us, you might feel like you can't help them. And you know, we all want and need affirmation that our lives have meaning. And you can help. You have the power to save lives at YouCanSaveLives.Org. You'll see where you can get naloxone for free. It's an easy-to-use nose spray that is harmless and can reverse an overdose. We keep it in our medicine cabinets, we carry it with us just in case. You never know when you may need it to save someone's life. Visit. YouCanSaveLives.org.”

Mikey Dredd outlines the dangers drug users face, noting that fake prescription pills masquerading as counterfeit OxyContin, Percocet, and Xanax are often laced with fentanyl.

“Fentanyl remains the deadliest drug threat facing Philly, just two milligrams of fentanyl. The small amount that fits on the tip of a pencil is considered a potential deadly dose,” he says. “The counterfeit pill problem we have in Philly is a major misfortune, and you or someone you know could be taking fentanyl or other opioids without even knowing it. Save the life of a friend, a stranger or loved one that has overdosed with knowledge and preparation. Naloxone can save the life of someone that has overdosed with a simple and safe nose spray. You have the power to save lives. Visit. Visit YouCanSaveLives.org now to get your free naloxone.

Daliah Heller, Vice President for Overdose Prevention Initiatives at Vital Strategies, thanked the radio hosts for participating in the campaign, saying, “They have powerful voices that can help the campaign save lives in Philadelphia. We are grateful for their participation.”

Further, Heller said, “We are cautiously optimistic about declining overdose death rates nationally, but after years of skyrocketing rates, the wide disparities experienced by Black communities are raising the alarm. Rates are higher among Black adults than their white counterparts; we urgently need equitable and focused strategies. This campaign is making lifesaving naloxone more widely available in Black communities in Philadelphia and six other cities, and mobilizing Black people to carry it to protect friends, family, and community.”

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(For print or broadcast interviews about the campaign, contact Michael K. Frisby Mike@frisbyassociates.com 202-625-4328 or Tony Newman tnewman@vitalstrategies.org 646-335-5384.)

About Vital Strategies

Vital Strategies is a global health organization that believes every person should be protected by a strong public health system. Our overdose prevention program works to strengthen and scale evidence-based, data-driven policies and interventions to create equitable and sustainable reductions in overdose deaths in several U.S. states and local jurisdictions.

About the National Black Harm Reduction Network:

The National Black Harm Reduction Network is dedicated to advancing harm reduction principles that optimize health and wellness for Black people who are disproportionately harmed by public health initiatives, the criminal legal system, and drug policies.