



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
Center for the Study  
of Ethics in Society

# “Does Community-Wide Public Health Prevention Work? From Reducing Teen Births to Addressing Today’s Opioid Epidemic”



**6 p.m., Monday, March 18**  
**210 Bernhard Center, WMU**

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Morbidity and mortality due to opioid misuse and addiction has hit historic highs. Most of the increases in deaths currently are due to the dangerous combination of opioids and other drugs laced with fentanyl and its derivatives. However, current approaches focus on reducing deaths in those addicted to opioids, and little is done to highlight the dangers and prevent first-time and more recreational opioid use, particularly in teenagers.

A successful prevention initiative focused on reducing teen birth rates in Milwaukee will be highlighted to guide our work in addressing the current opioid crisis. Ethical considerations to be discussed include: (1) How well, and how quickly, do primary prevention efforts work? (2) Do social marketing campaigns that raise awareness actually call attention to and promote risky behaviors? (3) What types of messages can capture the attention of our youth, and what current modes of communication are most effective? (4) Are we willing to bring our efforts into our schools, and how early do we try to reach our youth?

**Co-Sponsor: College of Health and Human Services**  
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