

Fentanyl Resource Sheet and Talking Points

The nation is facing an unprecedented rise in overdoses and poisonings caused by fentanyl, an extremely deadly opioid that is often laced into pills, powdered illicit drugs, and marijuana. This discussion guide is designed to help you talk with the teens about fentanyl in a way that empowers them to make safer choices.

MAKE IT A CONVERSATION

Telling teens not to do drugs is NOT an effective strategy. Teens that are the most at risk may just tune this warning out if they feel like they're being judged for their drug use. Focus the conversation on scientific facts and life-saving tips. Listen instead of sharing your own opinion.

EXPLAIN THE REALITY

Impress upon teens that fentanyl isn't a distant danger—it's hurting our community and young people are very much at risk. The idea that "only people who get drugs from random people overdose" is completely false. Fentanyl is a poison. There are no trustworthy sources for illicit drugs.

BE CLEAR ABOUT THE RISK

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. It is tasteless, odorless, and too small to see. In fact, an amount about the size of two grains of salt can cause an overdose. It is commonly cut into pills that are made to resemble other prescription opioids but can also be found in other illicit drugs including cocaine and recently it has been found in marijuana. Dispel the myth of a "safe" source: substances are laced with fentanyl long before they reach the friends, dealers, and friends-of-friends teens trust to supply them. Fentanyl can be anywhere, as distribution in pills and powders is totally random. While one pill might not be deadly, another one could be.

INFORM THEM ABOUT NALOXONE

Naloxone is an opioid antagonist that can safely and quickly reverse an opioid overdose. The teens around you may or may not already know about naloxone. Let teens know that naloxone is legal for ALL ages and can be obtained at local pharmacies And a variety of governmental and non-profit organizations. Teens are welcome to ask a pharmacy or physician any questions they may have about naloxone. It is always best to include a parent in the discussion and let them know why you may feel like you want naloxone.

STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF LOOKING OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER

The value of life is greater than friendship. If you have a friend you are concerned about tell someone. Encourage them to seek help. Report anonymously through Say Something if you suspect someone is providing drugs to students or someone is in danger of harm. Talk to your friends about what you learned today.

REMIND THEM TO SEEK HELP

Impress upon teens the importance of calling 911. Remind teens of the Good Samaritan law: if you seek medical assistance in a drug-related overdose, you and the victim cannot be prosecuted for drug possession.

KEEP YOUR DOOR OPEN

Tell students your door is open if they need to talk or suggest resources on campus and off campus.

Resources:

Resources on fentanyl

<https://www.cdc.gov/stopoverdose/fentanyl/index.html>

Information on naloxone

<https://www.cdc.gov/stopoverdose/naloxone/index.html>

National Institute on Drug Abuse

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/>

Raising Healthy Teens

<https://www.raisinghealthyteens.org>

Partnership for Drug Free Kids- Treatment eBook

<https://drugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Treatment-ebook.pdf>

SAMHSA's National Helpline

800-622-HELP (4357); or text your 5-digit ZIP Code to 435748

National Drug Helpline

844-289-0879

Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Text CONNECT to 55753

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-TALK (8255)