Protecting Youth from Fentanyl

Time to Take Action

Fentanyl-laced pills seized by KCPD

Local law enforcement are seeing deaths among Northland teens and young adults linked to pills that appear to be prescription pills.

- Often made to look like real prescription medicine, these illegal pills are laced with the deadly drug **fentanyl** and it's impossible to tell which ones are counterfeit.
- **Fentanyl** is a synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. Just traces of the drug fentanyl can be fatal.
- These pills are being sold on the black market and there is no regulation of any kind.

Parents, Guardians, & Caring Adults, Here's What You Can Do:

- **Emphasize to your kids to never take a pill from anyone or anywhere that isn't prescribed to them by a doctor and out of its original container.**

  Too many teens have the false perception that "medicine is safe, medicine can't hurt me." Let your kids know the dangers. Say something like this: "You have to assume that any pill that isn't prescribed to you and in the original container could be fake, and very possibly deadly. NO RANDOM PILLS!" and "Never share pills with anyone else."

- **Let teens know you will help them if they are seeking relief from feelings of anxiety or depression.**

  Discuss the steps to legally and safely obtain appropriate medications from a doctor, if needed.

- **Assure your child that their mental well-being is a priority and then make a plan to get help together.**

  The reasons kids turn to pills (i.e. feelings of depression, anxiety, boredom, restlessness, etc.) are very real. They need to hear from caring adults that they have options for relief other than taking matters into their own hands.

- **Practice scenarios and talk through what to say if your teen is offered something.**

  These roleplays let them know you support them and help give them confidence if a situation arises where they need to say "no." Work with your teen to come up with a code word to text you if they feel like they need your help to get out of an unsafe situation.

Here are some additional helpful resources:

- Read the warnings and tips about fentanyl straight from the DEA at DEA.gov.
- Parents can learn how to prevent all substance use in your kids, including fentanyl poisoning, at ParentUpKC.com.
- Song for Charlie has great Real Talk videos for youth at SongForCharlie.org.
- Worried your child may be using drugs? The Partnership to End Addiction can help. Learn more and find warning signs at DrugFree.org.

2 mg of fentanyl, a fatal dose for most adults (DEA, dea.gov)

BEACON MENTAL HEALTH | PARENT UP

Parent Up is a program of Beacon Mental Health and the Northland Coalition Prevention Network that empowers and equips KC Northland parents to care, connect, communicate, and pay careful attention to their child in order to prevent youth substance use. Get free resources and tools at ParentUpKC.com or on Facebook @ParentUp.