



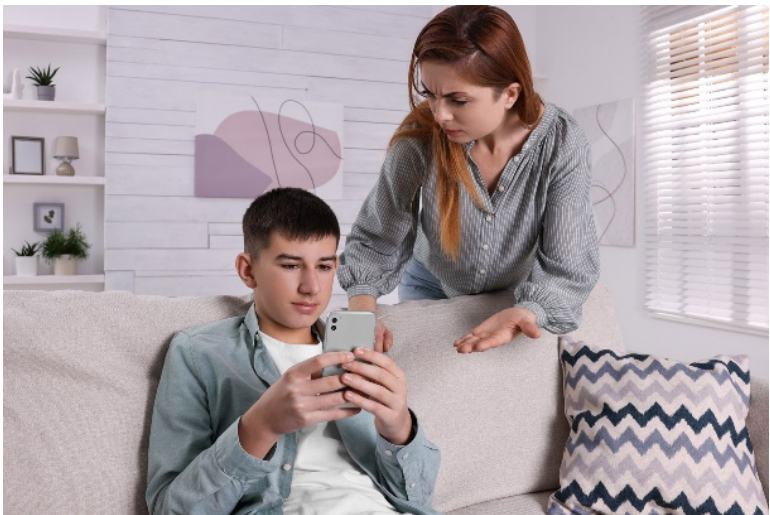
Challenge

OF TARRANT COUNTY

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Purposeful, Preventative Parenting

Hey parents! Your teens do hear you! “Right”, you say, as your daughter or son roll their eyes after asking how their day went and return laser focused on their cell phone or game system. We know it may not always seem like they are listening, but research shows that parents play a major role in their teen’s decisions regarding drug and alcohol use. You are the most important influence on your teen’s decision to use or not use drugs. Teens are 50% less likely to use drugs when their parents talk to them. Get this.... two-thirds, yes two-thirds, of teens say that losing their parents’ respect and pride is one of the main reasons they choose to not drink or use drugs. That is more important than any new Tik Tok challenge or social media influencer. Never has there been a more crucial time for parents to remain important influences on their teens.



Ongoing conversations with your teens about the Fentanyl epidemic and the importance of prevention may save their life.



Fentanyl Facts

Let's learn the facts about Fentanyl. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. In a nutshell, Fentanyl is being illicitly manufactured, pressed into pills that are visually indistinguishable from legitimately manufactured pills, then sold on the streets and online inexpensively as the real deal. The DEA has determined that 2 out of 5 pills, or 40%, of pills sold illegally have enough Fentanyl in them to cause death.



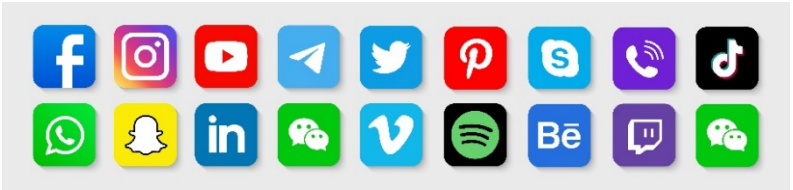
The amount of Fentanyl necessary to cause a death is the size of a sesame seed, or about 2 milligrams.



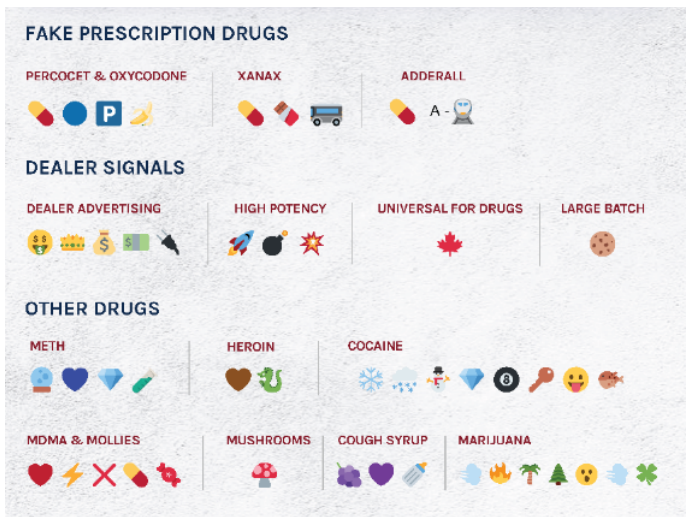
Fentanyl is being sold as Xanax, Percocet, MDMA, or other recreational/illicit drugs like cocaine and methamphetamine, making these drugs cheaper to

produce, more powerful, more addictive, and far more dangerous.

You might be thinking, where would my teen find these drugs? The internet and social media platforms (Apps) are a vast virtual mega-shopping mall for anything your teen might be interested in or curious about.



Pills are being marketed in coded language and animated emojis through social platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Snapchat. Technology and search algorithms can bring the dealers to your teen simply based on interests and collected information. Unfortunately, this means that dealers can be just a click away.



Your teen may also get a pill from a friend or an acquaintance, who may have no clue that the “pill” promoted to calm you down, make life better, or help with concentration for schoolwork is fake and potentially deadly.

We acknowledge that we just provided you a lot of heavy information. You are the #1 influences in your teen's decisions regarding drugs and alcohol and that influence is strengthened through having positive conversations with your teens. Whether you are the teen whisperer or have no idea how to say good morning without receiving attitude, it is never too late to start having great conversations with your teens.



Get Ready

Conversations are like relationships. It takes time, effort, and a genuine desire to connect with one another. It's not a one and done thing. It is a continually evolving process that gets stronger over time. It has been proven that 60 1-minute conversations are better received than a single lengthy conversation.

Get Set:



A few things that can set the stage for a good conversation: 1) timing and 2) setting. The mood of teens right after school can be like ours after a full day of adulting. Being hungry, stressed from work/school, and in need of downtime are a few factors to consider. General conversation starters you may want to try could be "tell me about your day" or "what was the best part of your day?" instead of "Did you have a good day?" Research (and probably your own experience) show us that questions that

can be answered with a yes or no tend to be conversation stoppers. Try to think about how you can ask questions in a way that will allow you to learn the most about your teen's world and remember they are the expert in their world and report the desire to share more about their world with you and for you to value their unique experiences.

Go:



So how do we start a more difficult conversations about topics such as drugs, Fentanyl related overdose, and prevention? Timing, setting, respect for teen's expertise in his/her world, and a genuine concern for your teen's health and safety are the best bets for getting started off on the right foot. Some examples of conversation starters would include: 1) "I am curious what you have heard and what you know about Fentanyl?" or 2) "If you were offered a pill at a party what would you do?" Once you start a conversation, be mindful of allowing for the conversation to

be organic instead of preplanned with expectations and to actively listen with your full attention, no distractions, and no interruptions. Remember, the goal is to prepare your teen to make wise choices. This may be done by sharing information and encouraging your teen to keep talking to you, and then preparing for ongoing conversations. Some topics you may want to cover are sharing stories about Fentanyl deaths in the community and practicing refusal skills together so that if offered a pill, they are prepared, and practiced in saying no.



For additional information on these crucial conversations, download the *Talk, They Hear You* APP available on the App Store, Google Play, and the Microsoft Store.



Remember...you are the #1 influence. Mistakes provide opportunities for growth. See you tomorrow!



Contemplate/Evaluate



So, the conversation went south. Take heart, this will happen. Parenting is not for the weak of heart. All of the next steps start with a realistic evaluation of the conversation. What went well and what didn't? We have lived experiences and knowledge our teens do not have, but the same can be said for them. We know that experimentation, any first-time use of many of the drugs that teens and young adults have historically experimented with, can be fatal due to the prevalence of Fentanyl.

Our fear of losing our teen to this epidemic can fuel the urgency for them to hear us. Fear, disappointment, and/or anger will stop your teen from hearing your words as this and risks turning into a lecture and not a conversation. If you feel the conversation has turned down a road that will not be productive, feel free to stop and self-check. If you

don't think you can stay calm, it may not be the best time to start a conversation or to try to force one to continue. It's completely ok to call a time out to reconvene at a specific time.



Be real...apologize if you handled the situation poorly. We suggest doing your best to remember that you are modeling to your teen that you make mistakes and hold yourself accountable for your actions. In essence, you are teaching them they can trust you and that you respect them by asking for their forgiveness.

Once you are ready to have a conversation again, you may consider beginning by saying "this is hard to talk about, but we need to discuss it" "I would rather us (you and your teen are a team) be uncomfortable for a few seconds rather than endure the loss of someone for the rest of your life."

One of the most important things you can do during these conversations is to value their position of expert of their world. We cannot filter their experiences through ours and it's important that you meet your teen where they are.



If there is a time-out taken, make specific plans to continue to the conversation. Remember, this is not a one and done. You should try to continue to build rapport with your teen by connecting every day. The connection will develop communication skills and relationship building skills that transcend into all areas of life.

Remember, you are the #1 influence on your teen's decision to use or not use drugs as research shows that teens are 50% less likely to use drugs when their parents talk to them.



Mitigate!

Let's discuss how to recognize a Fentanyl overdose and what to do. A person who has overdosed from Fentanyl may:

- 1) be breathing very slow or not breathing,
- 2) have blue or purplish lips or fingernails,
- 3) be vomiting or gurgling,
- 4) not wake up or respond if you try to rouse him.



If a person shows signs of a Fentanyl or other opioid overdose:

- call 911 immediately, and
- give the person naloxone (Narcan). Two doses might be needed and if given soon enough,

naloxone can counter the overdose effects, usually within minutes.

Naloxone only pauses the effects of the opioids. Emergency medical help is still required. Naloxone will not provide medical rescue to non-opioid substances such as alcohol or Xanax. Though naloxone will not help them, it also will not harm them. The Good Samaritan Law is intended to encourage bystanders to provide emergency help to those in need.



Naloxone is available in a nasal spray or injection. Texas has a standing order at all pharmacies so anyone can purchase. Prices vary depending on the pharmacy and supply, but often ordering through GoodRX can save you money.

Challenge of Tarrant County can provide Naloxone training to your parent group, PTA/PTO, Church Group or

Community Group. After the training, everyone who attends receives two doses of Narcan.

Are there warning signs that my child is using drugs? Some behavioral signs that might suggest drug use include:



- 1) changes in friends,
- 2) withdrawal from family,
- 3) falling behind in school,
- 4) getting caught in lies, and
- 5) changes in moods.

If you need resources, your child's school can be a great place to go. They frequently have interventionists, counselors, or social workers who can assist you and your teen in getting connected to much needed resources.

Remember, you are incredibly important in your child's life. We suggest talking to your child and talk often (60-1-minute conversations) and trying to do things together that

promote opportunities for connection and relationship building.

If your child is put in the situation to make the choice to take the pill. let it be your voice they hear saying "I want you to live; I love you!"

Additional resources in Tarrant County:

Recovery Resource Council: 817-332-6329

Tarrant Cares: <https://www.tarrantcares.org/>

DEA One Pill Can Kill: <https://www.dea.gov/onepill>

MADD: Power of Parents: <https://madd.org/power-of-parents/>

SAMHSA Treatment Locator: 1-800-662-HELP

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222 or text POISON to 797979 to add Poison Control to as a contact in your mobile phone.

The "Talk. They Hear You." campaign mobile app: Available on the App Store, Google Play, and the Microsoft Store.

<https://realdealonfentanyl.com/get-the-facts> Ad Council website on Fentanyl overdose information.