



MIDWEST HIDTA KANSAS OVERDOSE REPORT - 2025



MIDWEST HIDTA – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DANIEL W. NEILL

Background Information

The results of the Midwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) 2025 Threat Assessment revealed that fentanyl and methamphetamine were again the top two drug threats to the region.^[1] This conclusion was made utilizing Midwest HIDTA initiative responses to a law enforcement survey (LES) and public health partner responses to the public health survey (PHS), as well as drug trend and other related information collected over the past 12 months. This is the third year in a row fentanyl was ranked as the number one drug threat.

Ongoing Causes for Concern

- Law enforcement initiatives in the Midwest HIDTA identify fentanyl as the region's primary drug concern. As the dominant synthetic opioid, fentanyl creates major risks in the area through its connection to criminal activity, widespread accessibility, and elevated overdose potential. ^[1]
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) laboratory testing in 2024, revealed 5 out of 10 fentanyl-laced counterfeit prescription pills now contain a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl, down from 7 out of 10 in 2023. ^[2]
- Fentanyl will likely continue to be the greatest driver of drug poisoning deaths. Adulterants such as xylazine and medetomidine are of great concern in the Midwest HIDTA area of responsibility (AOR) and will continue to be, especially as they have an increased impact on poisoning deaths in the region. ^[1]
- The trend continues of mixing fentanyl and other synthetic opioids into other drugs in the region's illicit drug supply, specifically cocaine and methamphetamine, as reported by both law enforcement and public health agencies. ^[1]
- Methamphetamine will continue to pose a significant threat to the region with its high levels of demand, use, and its transportation to and through the region. ^[1]
- Low-cost, high potency methamphetamine transported from the Southwest Border continues to saturate both rural and metropolitan drug markets, exemplified by methamphetamine being ranked the most available drug in the Midwest HIDTA AOR by LES respondents. ^[1]
- The level of violence and crime surrounding methamphetamine production, trafficking, and use will also remain a threat to both law enforcement officials and the public. ^[1]

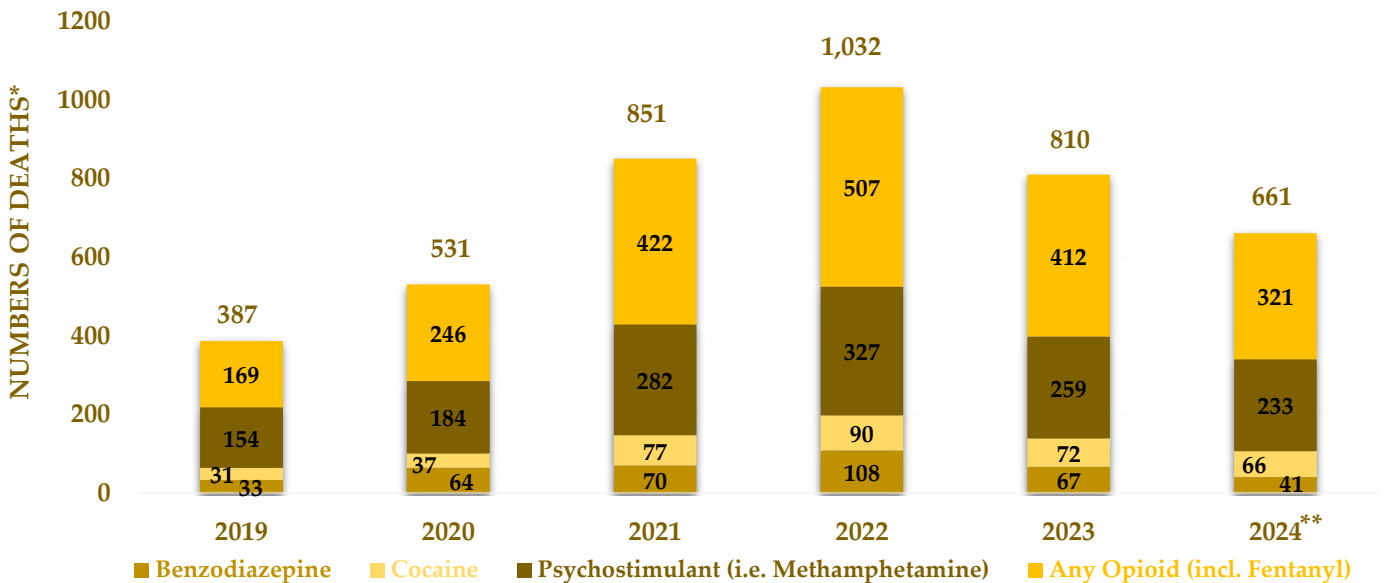
Kansas Outlook

The LES and PHS responses for Kansas coincided with the overall Midwest HIDTA results, ranking fentanyl as the primary threat and methamphetamine as the secondary threat in the state. The responses to the Kansas LES indicated the availability and use levels of fentanyl, in pill form, and methamphetamine were both considered to be “high,” while the availability and use levels of fentanyl in powder form were reported as “moderate.”^[1] The LES respondents also stated they had noticed an increased presence of cocaine in the region.

Kansas National Substance Use and Mental Health Services Survey – 2023

As of March 31, 2023, which is the most current survey available, there were 144 treatment facilities in Kansas, 78 of which were private non-profit (54.2%), 44 private for-profit (30.6%), 4 state (2.8%), and 15 local, county, or community (10.4%) government operated. These facilities were treating 11,061 clients, the majority of which were on an outpatient basis, 10,339 (93.5%). These facilities may accept more than 1 type of payment, the following are some of the payment options: cash or self-payment 95.1% (137), private health insurance 80.6% (116), Medicare 35.4% (51), Medicaid 80.6% (116), and treatment at no charge or minimal payment for clients who could not pay 47.9% (69).^[3]

Overdose Deaths in Kansas - Top 4 Drug Categories From 2019 to 2024 ^[4]

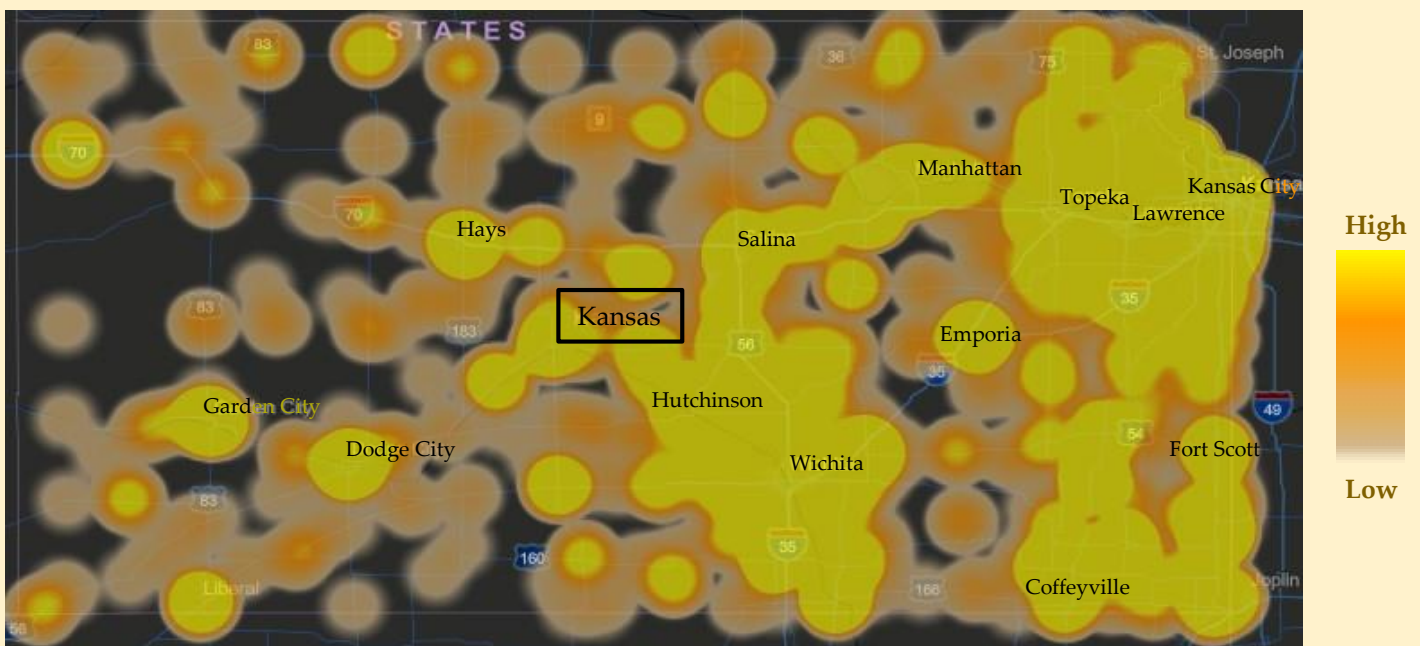


Source: CDC WONDER

*Deaths can be counted in more than 1 category due to polysubstance use

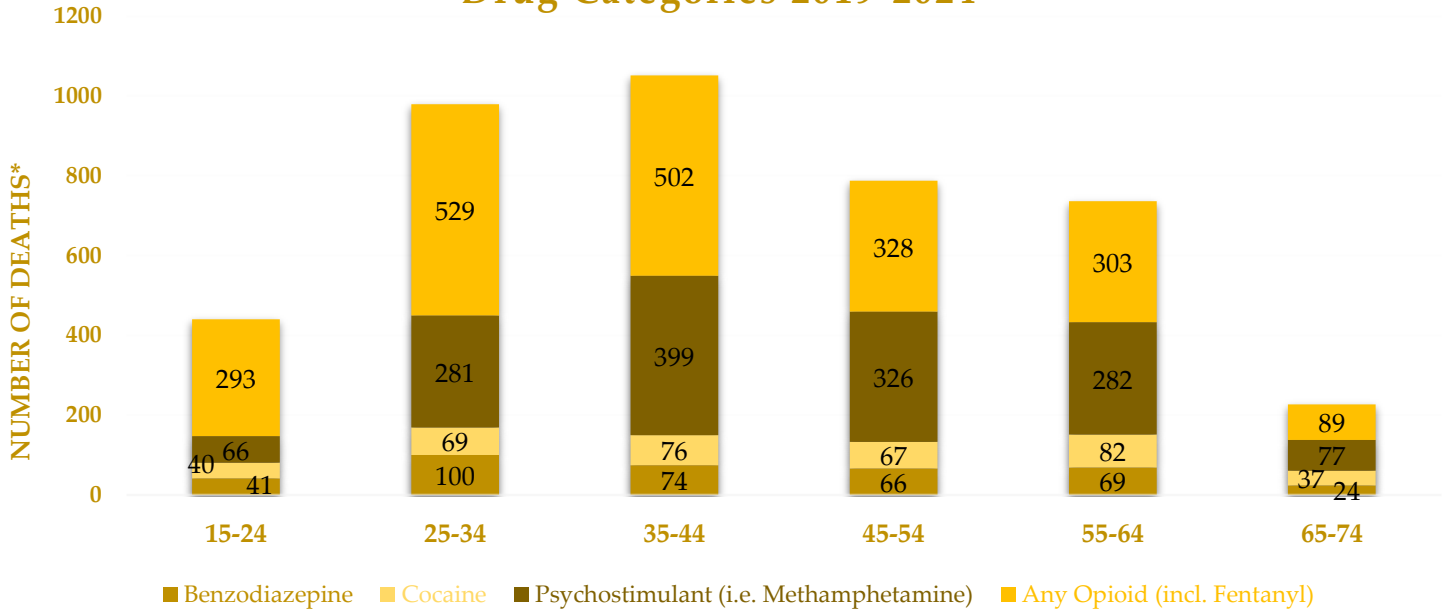
**Provisional Numbers

- Cocaine overdose deaths increased 132.3% (31 to 72) from 2019 to 2023 ^[4]
- Any opioid deaths increased 143.8% (169 to 412) from 2019 to 2023; 83.7% of the 2023 deaths were attributed to synthetic opioids (345 of 412) ^[4]
- From 2019 to 2023, the overall overdose deaths increased 109.3% (387 to 810) with a provisional decline of 18.4% (810 to 661) from 2023 to 2024 ^[4]
- The highest annual % increase was from 2020/2021, 60.3% (531 to 851), while the highest annual decrease was from 2022/2023, 21.5% (1,032 to 810) ^[4]



- The above heatmap is a visual representation of the 10,748 suspected overdoses reported to ODMAP from June 30, 2024, to June 30, 2025. The use of naloxone was reported at 1,777 of these incidents.

Overdose Death Rates in Kansas by Age Group - Top 4 Drug Categories 2019-2024 ^[4]

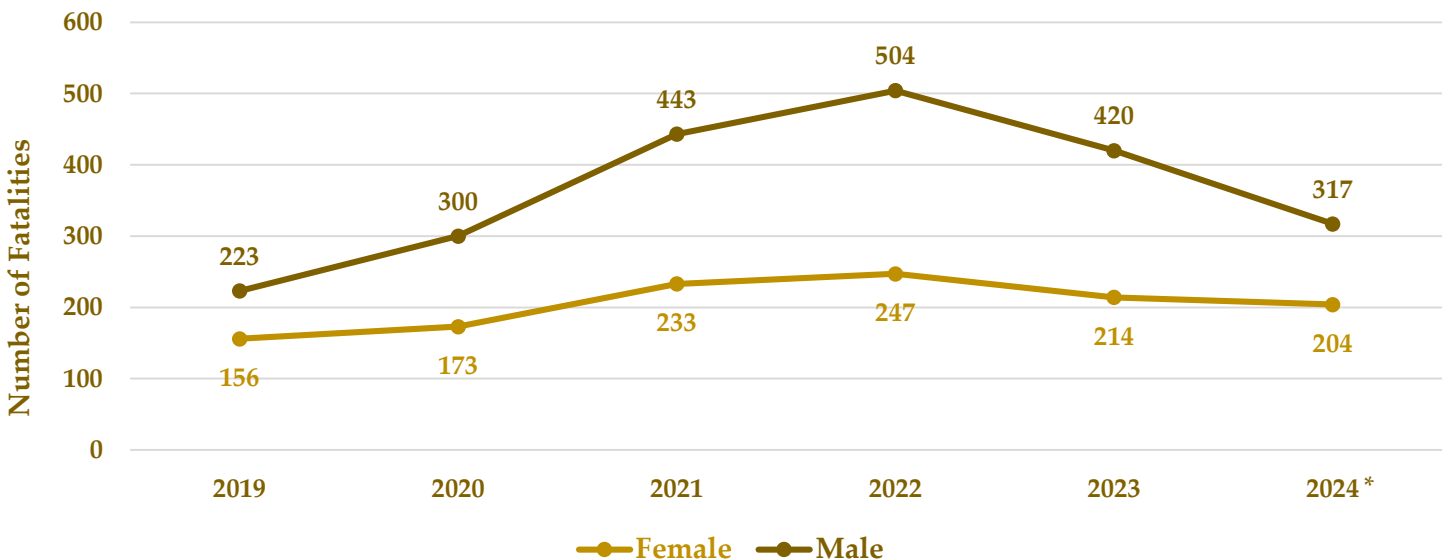


Source: CDC WONDER

*Deaths can be counted in more than 1 category due to polysubstance use

- There is an 143.9% difference in benzodiazepine overdose fatalities between age groups 15-24 and 25-34 (41 to 100). ^[4]
- There is a 72.5% difference in cocaine overdose fatalities between age groups 15-24 and 25-34 (40 to 69). ^[4]
- There is a 325.8% difference in psychostimulant overdose fatalities (including methamphetamine) between age groups 15-24 and 25-34 (66 to 281). ^[4]
- There is a 80.5% difference in opioid overdose fatalities (including fentanyl) between age groups 15-24 and 25-34 (293 to 529). ^[4]

Kansas Overdose Death Rate by Sex - All Drugs - 2019 to 2024 ^[4]

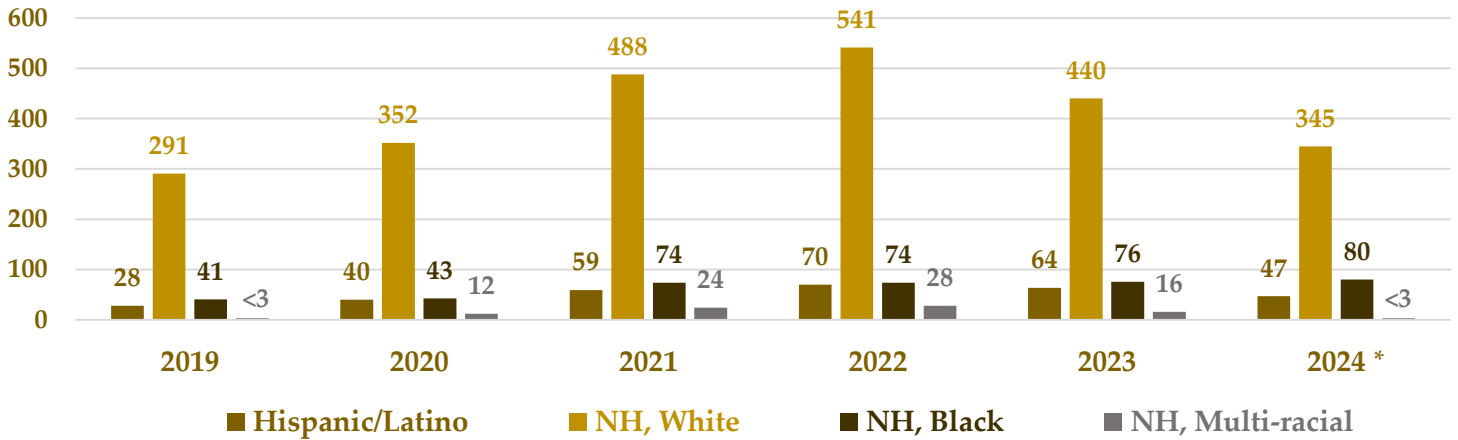


Source: CDC WONDER

*Provisional Numbers

- From 2019 to 2024, the number of male overdose fatalities increased 42.2% (223 to 317) with a provisional decline of 24.5% (420 to 317) from 2023 to 2024 ^[4]
- From 2019 to 2024, the number of female overdose fatalities increased 30.8% (156 to 204) with a provisional decline of 4.7% (214 to 204) from 2023 to 2024 ^[4]

Kansas Overdose Deaths by Race/Ethnicity - All Drugs 2019 to 2024 ^[4]

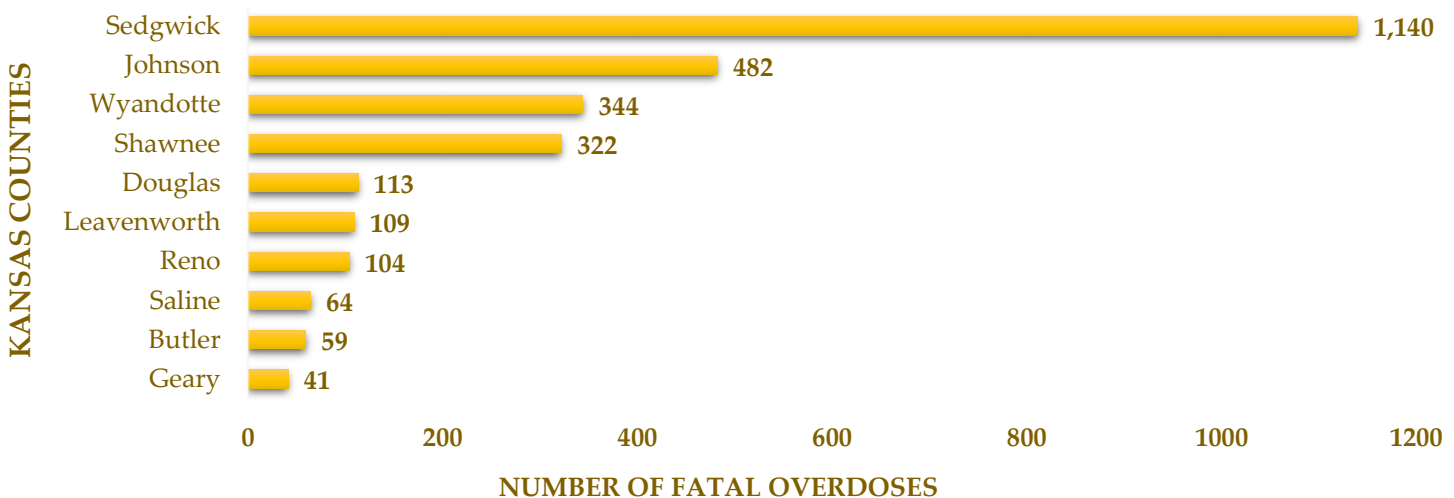


Source: CDC WONDER

*Provisional Numbers

- From 2019 to 2024, the number of “Hispanic/Latino” overdose fatalities increased 67.9% (28 to 47), peaking at 70 in 2022, with a provisional decline of 26.6% (64 to 47) from 2023 to 2024 ^[4]
- From 2019 to 2024, the number of “NH, White” overdose fatalities increased 18.6% (291 to 345), peaking at 541 in 2022, an 85.9% increase from 2019 (291 to 541), with a provisional decline of 21.6% (440 to 345) from 2023 to 2024 ^[4]
- From 2019 to 2024, the number of “NH, Black” overdose fatalities increased 95.1% (41 to 80), peaking at 80 in 2024, with the largest annual increase taking place from 2020 to 2021, 72.1% (43 to 74) ^[4]

Top 10 Counties with the Highest Mortality Counts - All Drug Types - 2019 to 2024* ^[4]



Source: CDC WONDER

*Provisional Numbers

Nine of the top ten counties with the highest fatal overdose counts were also in the top ten most populated counties in Kansas, with the lone exception being Geary County, which was ranked fifteenth in population in 2025 estimates. ^[5] The top four counties with the highest fatal overdose counts were consistent regardless of the drug type. ^[4]

Overdose Deaths – Top 4 Drug Categories – 2019-2024

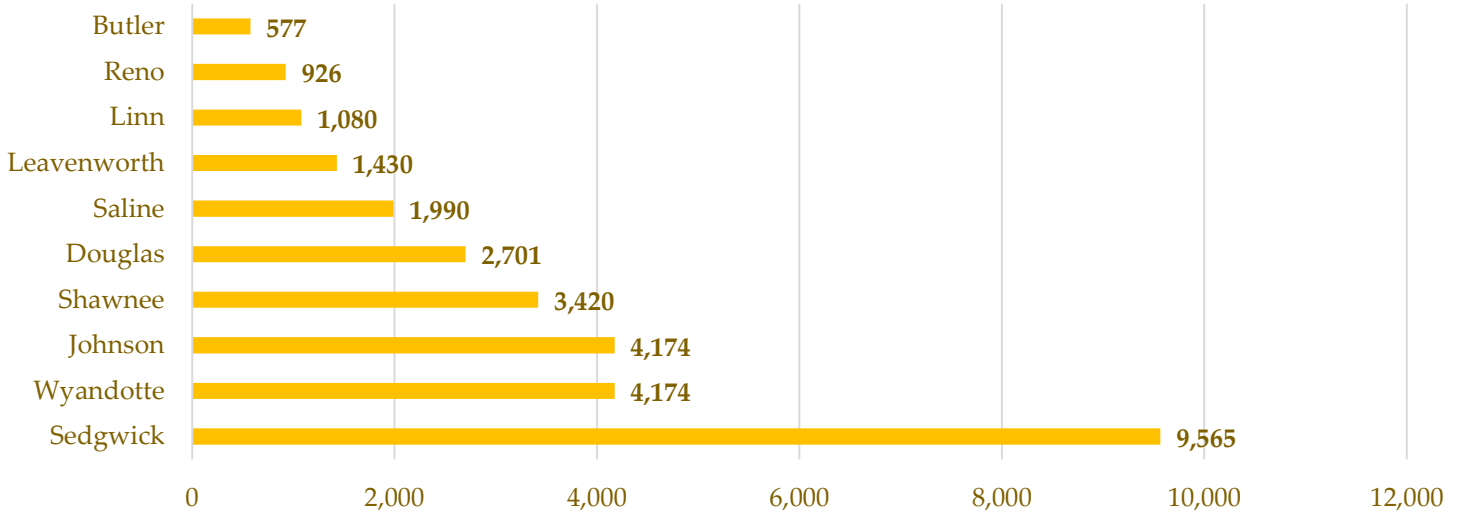
- Any Opioid OD deaths: Sedgwick (781), Johnson (331), Wyandotte (199), and Shawnee (151) ^[4]
- Benzodiazepine OD deaths: Sedgwick (123), Johnson (92), Shawnee (31), and Wyandotte (30) ^[4]
- Cocaine OD deaths: Sedgwick (171), Wyandotte (66), Johnson (43), and Shawnee (21) ^[4]
- Psychostimulant OD deaths: Sedgwick (509), Shawnee (196), Johnson (129), and Wyandotte (116) ^[4]



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Naloxone Kits Distributed by County (Top 10 Counties for 2024) ^[6]



Source: DCCCA

NUMBER OF NALOXONE KITS

Developing Caring Communities Committed to Action (DCCCA) provides the bulk of naloxone to local communities through a mail-based program. Some communities, such as Sedgwick, Reno, and Wyandotte counties, have some form of community-based naloxone distribution and those numbers are not reflected in the above chart.

In 2024, the two most populous counties in Kansas (Johnson and Sedgwick) were also the top 2 counties where the most naloxone kits were distributed by DCCCA, along with Wyandotte, which is fourth most populous county in Kansas. ^[6]

HIDTA INITIATIVE	SEIZED DRUG - YEAR - AMOUNT								
	FENTANYL (GRAMS)			FENTANYL PILLS (GRAMS)			METH/ICE (GRAMS)		
	2023	2024	TOTAL	2023	2024	TOTAL	2023	2024	TOTAL
GARDEN CITY/FINNEY CO. DTF	406	14,360	14,766	744	17,672	18,416	5,201	7,524	12,725
KC DEA INTERDICTION	2,123	16,234	18,357	7,194	6,380	13,574	96,611	95,791	192,402
KC FBI COMBINED TF	52,169	902	53,071	4,603	292	4,895	230,348	128,205	358,553
KC/OVERLAND PARK DEA TF	17,628	9,278	26,906	23,962	16,167	40,129	78,600	103,623	182,223
KS INTERDICTION SUPPORT KHP	15,577	14,562	30,139	12,767	101,705	114,472	191,111	423,033	614,144
NORTHEAST KANSAS DTF	19	28	47	106	23	129	6,372	1,291	7,663
TOPEKA DEA TASK FORCE	115	0	115	510	1,823	2,333	16,170	9,681	25,851
WICHITA DEA TASK FORCE	8	1,809	1,817	966	54,374	55,340	86,031	183,550	269,581
TOTALS	88,045	57,173	145,218	50,852	198,436	249,288	710,444	952,698	1,663,142

➤ Over the past two years, these initiatives have seized approximately 73,946,490 potentially lethal doses of the two types of fentanyl reported to Midwest HIDTA. ^[7]

Kansas Overdose Response Strategy

Deflection and Diversion Training

In early 2025, Midwest HIDTA Program Coordinator Todd Hixson spearheaded an initiative to implement groundbreaking training across the state. The training, titled “Deflection and Diversion 101,” is an introductory training webinar or educational session series focused on foundational concepts of deflection and diversion strategies in addressing substance use disorders (SUD). Presented in partnership with Face Addiction Now (FAN), a Michigan-based nonprofit that provides recovery support, harm reduction, and community outreach, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) through its Overdose Response Strategy (ORS) program.

This training is part of broader efforts to build capacity among public safety, public health, and community partners. It draws from FAN's practical experience with programs like Quick Response Teams (QRTs) and jail diversion services, combined with ORS's national framework for interdisciplinary collaboration. The goals of the training are to educate and build the skills of the attendees pertaining to non-punitive responses to SUD, reduce overdose deaths and incarceration, strengthen cross-sector collaborations, and initiate local implementation.

The initiative received crucial financial backing from multiple organizations, including the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), the Midwest HIDTA program, and the CDC's Overdose Data to Action program.



Source: ORS

The coordinated effort brought together key law enforcement agencies, with the Midwest HIDTA, KDHE, and the Kansas DIO working alongside the Kansas Highway Patrol, the Kansas City Kansas Police Department, and the Johnson County Sheriff's Department. Each of these departments served as hosts for the training sessions, which took place from April 29 to May 1. The program achieved remarkable participation, attracting 106 professionals representing 24 different agencies and organizations throughout Kansas.

This successful implementation demonstrates the Kansas ORS' exceptional leadership capabilities in fostering meaningful partnerships and effectively utilizing national networks. The initiative stands as a testament to their commitment to bringing evidence-based, impactful programming to local communities, ultimately working towards a more comprehensive and compassionate approach to substance use challenges.



Source: ORS



REFERENCES

1. Midwest HIDTA 202 Threat Assessment Report; Midwest HIDTA Intelligence Support Center; pages 4, 11-29.
2. Drug Enforcement Administration, Press Release (December 16, 2024), *Overdose Deaths Decline, Fentanyl Threat Looms*; <https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2024/12/16/overdose-deaths-decline-fentanyl-threat-looms>
3. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, National Substance Use and Mental Health Services Survey, 2023 Kansas State Profile, <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2023-n-sumhss-state-profiles>
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System, Provisional Mortality on CDC WONDER Online Database. Data are from the final Multiple Cause of Death Files, 2018-2022, and from provisional data for years 2023-2024, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-icd10-provisional.html> in August 2025
5. World Population Review, Population of Counties in Kansas (2025); <https://worldpopulationreview.com/states/kansas/counties>
6. Mayer, M. (September 2025); Developing Caring Communities Committed to Action (DCCCA); Wichita; Unpublished Data
7. Frazier, R. (August 2025), Midwest HIDTA Performance Management Process Data, 2024. Kansas City; Midwest HIDTA, Unpublished Data