

New and Deadly

One fentanyl exposure can kill



Deadly street fentanyl resembling candies is now in circulation in the U.S. Even one small dose of street fentanyl - the equivalent of 5-7 grains of salt - is enough to kill.

Pharmaceutical fentanyl is a synthetic opioid, that is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine. It is approved for prescription use in the U.S. to treat severe pain. While approved as a prescription drug, it can be redirected for abuse or misuse by those without a medical need. While prescription fentanyl is extremely dangerous, most recent cases of fentanyl-related overdose, death and injury in America are associated with illegally made and distributed fentanyl. Sold through the illegal drug trade, it is often mixed with other highly addictive and dangerous drugs like heroin and cocaine.

Local law enforcement, health and education officials are warning families to take the risk that fentanyl poses to their children seriously, and to learn more about signs of drug use, prevention and intervention resources.

Town Hall Planned



Sept. 15 at 6:00 p.m.

Local officials and Fox26 are coming together to build awareness and answer questions at a live Town Hall at Clovis North High School and livestreamed at cusd.com.

Start a Conversation at Home

- Don't dominate the conversation, be willing to listen.
- Set clear expectations about drug and alcohol use, including real consequences for not following rules.
- Develop strategies to deal with peer pressure to use drugs.
- Know where your child is and know their friends.
- Talk to your child often about school, friends and activities.
- Don't ignore signs that your child is changing in a negative way.

Resources for Families



If you believe your child may be struggling with drug use, reach out to your school to connect with resources to help. If you need help immediately, visit www.helpnow.org.

In Clovis Unified we are a partner with families to develop healthy young people. Parent Bulletins are designed to empower families with information about issues or dangers emerging in youth culture, and to give parents tools to engage their students in conversations, find resources, and avoid dangerous and sometimes life-threatening behaviors facing our youth today.

6 Things Parents Should Know

Monitor Social Media

1 Most of the fentanyl pills and powder are being sold on social media platforms. Common apps such as Snapchat, What's App, Twitch, Instagram, Telegram, etc. should be actively monitored for any signs of dealers reaching out to your child. Different lingo is used to solicit buyers with phrases such as "M30, percs, blues, tango and cash, and xannie bars."

Be Aware of Their Social Circle

Know who your children are associating with outside of the home. Look for changes in friend groups or certain behaviors. People who are under the influence of fentanyl do not have objective signs of intoxication that are common with other substances.

Signs and Symptoms

3 Look for signs such as drowsiness, sedation, confusion, disorientation, slurred speech, pin-point pupils, change in sleeping patterns, lack of good hygiene, unkept bedrooms, and falling grades. Often, young adults are found deceased from fentanyl poisoning while they are laying in their beds, where their family members believed, they were just listening to music, playing video games, or sleeping.

Influence of Vaping & Marijuana Use

Based on F.O.R.T. investigations and interviews, vaping and marijuana use cause anxiety based on the *higher* THC levels found in marijuana today. This increased anxiety leads the user to seek out drugs such as Xanax. Sadly, the "Xanax" they receive is a fake one laced with fentanyl.

Naloxone aka "Narcan"

5 This medication is used to reverse an opioid/fentanyl overdose, and if administered timely, can prevent a death. We encourage all parents to keep Narcan on hand, not only for their own children, but also for others who may be users and visiting your residence.

Cash Apps

Users purchase drugs using cash apps such as Venmo and Zelle. The average price for a counterfeit pill is \$20. Parents should monitor all cash apps and should be aware that dealers will often deliver the pill(s), which are easily concealed, directly to the user's home and simply drop it off in a location where it is undetected and easily accessible to the user.



"Fentanyl is the most addictive, lethal drug ever to be sold in our communities."



Lisa Smittcamp,
Fresno County District Attorney

Historically, fentanyl was a drug used only by medical professionals to provide pain relief to patients. When properly administered, it produces effects such as relaxation, drowsiness, and respiratory depression. When used in uncontrolled amounts via counterfeit pills or powder, it will slow respiration, reduce blood pressure, cause fainting and seizures, and can stop the heart and respiratory system entirely.

Non-prescription fentanyl, which is being put into counterfeit pills and powder form, is being sold to the public and killing *thousands* of Americans each year. In 2020, the CDC reported that 24,576 people died in the U.S. from fentanyl-related overdoses. In 2021, that number jumped to 71,238. In 2022, we expect death tolls from overdoses to precipitously increase. Law enforcement is seizing *MILLIONS* of counterfeit pills coming over the border containing enough fentanyl to kill hundreds of thousands of people.

Fresno County has led the way on educating our community on the realities of this dangerous and potentially fatal poison through PSA's, billboards, and social media posts. In addition, through our collaboration with the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools and our local media partners, we've been addressing this crucial topic on many platforms, from ABC30 producing the documentary, *KILLER HIGH: The Silent Crisis*, to FOX26 hosting live Town Halls, and Univision reaching the Spanish-speaking community.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Fresno Office with the Fentanyl Overdose Resolution Team (FORT) leads the way to bring education/awareness. It is the only task force in the area that investigates, arrests, and prosecutes the people who are selling this poison. FORT consists of members of the Fresno Police Department, DEA, Homeland Security Investigations, Fresno County District Attorney's Office, United States Attorney's Office, and the Fresno County Sheriff's Office.

Editor's Note: This article and 6 Things Parents Should Know were written by DA Smittcamp at the request of Clovis Unified and appear in the September issue of *CUSD Today*.