



Parent's Guide: Talking to Your Kids About Fentanyl

A Comprehensive Guide



FREE DOWNLOAD



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What is Fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a powerful opioid that is used to treat severe pain, but it's also being illegally made and sold.

It's often mixed with other drugs like heroin, cocaine, or fake pills that look like prescription medications.

Because fentanyl is so strong, even a very small amount can cause an overdose or death.

Many young people may not realize they're taking fentanyl because it's hidden in fake pills.



Why This Talk is Important

Fentanyl is the leading cause of drug overdose deaths in the U.S.

It affects teens from all backgrounds.

Teens may get pills from friends, online, or social media thinking they are safe.

Talking to your children about fentanyl can prepare them to make smart decisions and avoid deadly risks.

Starting this conversation early can build trust and open the door for future talks.



How to Talk to Your Kids

Ages 5–9

Start with simple, clear messages about safety.

Explain that medicine should only come from a doctor or parent.

Use language they understand.

For example, you might say:

'Medicine is not candy. Only take it if Mommy or Daddy gives it to you.'

Teach them to never pick up pills they find on the ground or at a friend's house.

How to Talk to Your Kids

Ages 10–13

This age group may begin to hear about drugs at school or from friends.

Begin talking about peer pressure.

Use scenarios like:

'What would you do if someone at school offered you a pill?'

Discuss how pills can be fake and may contain dangerous drugs like fentanyl.

Teach them to say 'No' and to walk away from risky situations.

Reinforce that they can always come to you if they feel uncomfortable or confused.

How to Talk to Your Kids

Ages 14–18

Teens face real-life choices and social pressures.

Be honest and factual.

Show them news stories or videos of teens harmed by fentanyl.

Let them ask questions and express their opinions.

Discuss real risks like:

Some pills sold on social media are fake and have killed teenagers who thought they were safe.

Emphasize they can call you or another trusted adult anytime they feel at risk.

Teach them how to help a friend in danger and the importance of not being a bystander.

Helpful Tools

Here are tools to help with these conversations and protect your family. You can locate these free resources at www.TalkToYourKids.org.

- Social media safety checklist
- Quick facts about fentanyl
- How to use naloxone



Digital Safety

Talk about how some people use Snapchat, Instagram, or TikTok to sell drugs.

Show your child how to recognize suspicious behavior online.

Use parental controls and privacy settings.

Remind your kids to never accept or buy pills from people online, even if they look like regular medications.



What If You're Worried?

If you think your child might be using drugs, stay calm.

Reacting with anger may make them hide things from you.

Ask open-ended questions like:

'Is something bothering you lately?' or 'Have you seen other kids using drugs?'

Find a doctor, counselor, or school social worker who can help.

Learn how to use naloxone and keep it at home. It can reverse an overdose if used quickly.



Stay Connected

Spending time together helps keep communication open.

Eat meals together, go for walks, and check in often.

Ask about their day, their friends, and how they feel.

Kids who feel close to their parents are more likely to make safer choices.



Final Thoughts

Your voice matters. Your child listens more than you think.

Honest conversations about fentanyl could save their life.

It's okay if you don't have all the answers - what matters most is showing love, care, and a willingness to listen.



References

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