

Press Release

June 17, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Fentanyl Awareness and Youth

Summer is often a time of substance use initiation for youth and young adults. The serious threat of fentanyl in our communities looms large and it is important to focus on prevention messaging during this time of year.

Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. Just 2 milligrams of fentanyl, equal to 10 to 15 grains of table salt, is considered a lethal dose. Fentanyl misuse may result in an intense, short-term high; temporary feelings of euphoria; slowed respiration and reduced blood pressure, nausea, fainting; seizures or death. Methamphetamine misuse may result in agitation; increased heart rate and blood pressure; increased respiration and body temperature; anxiety and paranoia. High doses can cause convulsions, cardiovascular collapse, stroke or death.

From 2019 to 2021, overdose deaths among adolescents aged 10-19 increased. About 90% of these deaths involved opioids and 84% involved illicitly manufactured fentanyl. According to the DEA, Criminal drug networks are mass-producing fake pills and falsely marketing them as legitimate prescription pills to deceive the American public; Fake pills are easy to purchase, widely available, often contain fentanyl or methamphetamine, and can be deadly; Fake prescription pills are easily accessible and often sold on social media and e-commerce platforms, making them available to anyone with a smartphone, including minors; Many fake pills are made to look like prescription drugs such as oxycodone (Oxycontin®, Percocet®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), and alprazolam (Xanax®); or stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall®).

Prevention education is extremely important. Talking to kids about fentanyl helps keep them safe. It doesn't make them more likely to try drugs. Instead of waiting for the "right" moment, parents should bring up the topic of fentanyl anytime. Parents should be aware of all potential types of drugs that their child may be presented with and talking to kids about avoiding all drugs is incredibly important. Discussing types of drugs, and what to say when they may encounter drugs, is a key skill.

Parents should remind their child to tell them if something feels off or doesn't seem quite right, including if candy doesn't match the packaging or if a package seems tampered with, or already open. It is also good to remind children not to take medications from anyone, and to not eat or ingest food from strangers. Parents should try to stay calm, and ensure their kids understand what they may see and what they should do in specific situations.

The Drug Enforcement Administration is a United States federal law enforcement agency under the United States Department of Justice, tasked with combating drug trafficking and distribution within the United States. For more information on Fentanyl please visit <https://www.dea.gov/onepill/teens>.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is conducting an opioid prevention awareness campaign entitled, "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE," to educate and update the community regarding prescription and illicit drug use and its consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to learn more about prescription drug use and the Opioid Epidemic at www.safeglencove.org.