

PARENT'S GUIDE TO HARM REDUCTION

*As part of our Spring 2023 **Pain to Purpose** campaign, supporting young people and families impacted by addiction and overdose, Young People in Recovery brings you a short and easy guide to help parents talk to kids about substance use/misuse, and prevent overdoses through harm reduction strategies.*

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:

Today, more than **six in 10 deaths** of young adults involved opioids. Deaths involving synthetic opioids other than methadone (primarily fentanyl) continued to rise with 70,601 overdose deaths reported in 2021.

Fentanyl is a **powerful synthetic opioid** that is similar to morphine but is 50 to 100 times more potent.

Fentanyl can be present in any powder, liquid, or pill, including but not limited to:

- MDMA ("Ecstasy," "Molly")
- Cocaine
- Illicit Marijuana
- Ketamine
- Heroin
- Methamphetamine
- It can also be found in counterfeit pills made to look like prescription painkillers or benzodiazepines, such as Xanax®, Klonopin®, and Valium®.

Resource: nida.nih.gov

106,000

overdose deaths reported in 2021

Drug overdose deaths rose between 2019 to 2021 with more than 106,000 deaths reported in 2021.

TIPS FOR TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE:

Set the intention to create a supportive and nurturing environment. Children make better decisions when they feel heard and seen.

Talk to them sooner than later. When parents talk with their children early and often about alcohol and other drugs, they can protect their children from many of the high-risk behaviors associated with using these drugs.

If you talk to your kids directly and honestly, they are more likely to respect your rules and advice about substance use.

Focus on providing facts and resources so that kids are well-equipped with the information that could save their or their friends lives.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Good Samaritan laws were designed to encourage people to call 911 without fear of arrest, even if drugs or other illegal substances are present when first responders arrive. However, these laws haven't always kept up with current drug trends. Not all Good Samaritan laws protect people who reach out for help if fentanyl is present at the scene of an overdose. These regulations must be updated on a state-by-state basis to prevent overdose deaths and injury. [Learn More.](#)

Fentanyl Testing Strips: Fentanyl test strips (FTS) are a low-cost method of helping prevent drug overdoses and reducing harm. FTS are small strips of paper that can detect the presence of fentanyl in all different kinds of substances (cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, etc.) and drug forms (pills, powder, and injectables). Public health officials also use FTS to better track fentanyl in the illicit drug supply so they can take steps to reduce overdose risks in their communities. [Learn More.](#)

Naloxone (brand name: Narcan) is a medication that rapidly reverses the effects of an opioid overdose and comes in two FDA approved forms: injectable and prepackaged nasal spray. Naloxone can be accessed at many health departments, pharmacies and recovery/treatment based organizations. Federal law recently changed to permit it to be sold over-the-counter without a prescription. [Learn More.](#)

Know the signs of an overdose:

Small, constricted "pinpoint pupils," falling asleep or losing consciousness, slow, weak, or no breathing, choking or gurgling sounds, limp body, cold and/or clammy skin or discolored skin.

If you see someone with the above symptoms, administer naloxone/Narcan if you have it (it won't hurt someone who is not overdosing) and call 911.

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY

National All-Recovery Meeting

Wednesdays; 6 pm PT, 6pm MT, 9pm ET

[ZOOM ID: 821 7216 6700](#)

Rainbow Recovery

Thursdays; 5:30pm PT / 6:30 MT / 8:30pm ET

[Zoom ID: 880 4681 4680](#)

Reunion de Recuperación en Español

Miércoles; 5 pm PT, 6 pm MT, 8 pm ET

meet.google.com/aso-upna-bma



youngpeopleinrecovery.org



WHAT IS RECOVERY?

A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

