



Middle School Fentanyl Presentation

Activity One (5 minutes)

Purpose: Intro - Engagement - Social Norming - *Most Kids Don't Use Drugs*

Show Slide 1

The officer will begin by introducing themselves and connection to the school/community – they may want also to have school leadership or representative give a welcome and introduction at the beginning of the lesson to set the tone. Once the introductions and welcomes are complete, the lesson will begin.

Please include this statement in the introduction:

The D.A.R.E. program began in 1983 to combat the drug epidemic that was impacting families throughout the nation. Since that time, D.A.R.E. has existed in thousands of communities across the United States and around the world. Today it is a K-12 evidence-based curricula, led by law enforcement officers, that is focused on teaching students good decision-making skills to help them lead safe and healthy lives.

Officer: This is a lesson that has been made available by D.A.R.E. for all students, even those who may not have an active D.A.R.E. program in their school, in recognition of a crisis that is endangering students across the country.

I'm here today to talk to you about the growing problem of fentanyl. What is fentanyl?

Acknowledge any responses from the audience. Students may know a little or a lot, but it's important to affirm their participation by thanking them for contributing, this will encourage them to continue.

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Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid made in a lab, not grown in nature. It is significantly more potent than morphine. It is primarily used for managing severe pain in medical settings. However, this illicit fentanyl made in unregulated "labs" which may be run by drug cartels is increasingly mixed with other drugs, including counterfeit prescription pills. Its safety, strength, and purity are unknown.

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Now, I know that most kids your age are making good decisions about drugs. Even by 8th grade 90% of teens are not using any drugs, including marijuana, and not including marijuana, it's even lower than that, less than 5%. So I'm not here to lecture you because I'm suspicious that you are using drugs. But I do know that this is a risk you may face in the future, and I do know that we are seeing more young people die from fentanyl poisoning because they don't fully understand the risks involved. Having good information so that you can make safe decisions has become a critical life skill in this situation.

Activity Two (20 minutes)

Purpose: Explore the idea that "*The Game Has Changed*" - with a case study (from Song for Charlie or DEA materials)

Show Slide 4

Officer: Although we're clear on the message that most kids don't use drugs, a small number of kids still decide to engage in high-risk activities like using drugs. When making these decisions, it is extremely important to have the best information to base them on.

I called it a critical life skill because today drug experimentation is a different game than it once was.

Fentanyl is a **game-changer** substance - meaning it changes the rules, it creates a life-or-death risk out of every single "drug experimentation" decision. Has anyone heard the phrase "*One Pill Can Kill?*" [wait for response – acknowledge and solicit comment if appropriate]

It's a campaign started by the Drug Enforcement Agency and adopted by organizations nationwide. It's not an exaggeration.

Show Slide 5

Show *One Pill Can Kill* resource with Fentanyl lethality facts – dea.gov/onepill

This is a great resource to learn and share current and trusted information. It's free to use and adapt for your own school or group campaigns because it's created and distributed by a federal agency – our tax dollars at work.

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One organization that shares the DEA *One Pill Can Kill* message is **Song for Charlie**. Each parent involved in this organization has lost a child to fentanyl. Here is one of their stories.

Present a case study or youth example from Song for Charlie – slide 8 features “Eli’s story but you can choose another story from the resources at the link below. Charlie’s story “One Pill: The Dangers of Fentanyl” is also available with Spanish subtitles, but may be a bit repetitive if added to the video on slide 9.

Song for Charlie resources: <https://www.songforcharlie.org/toolkit>

Eli’s story – 6:01 <https://songforcharlie.org/elis-story/>

Show Slide 7

We’ve already learned some facts about fentanyl and its effects. This video talks about one specific risk to young people – counterfeit pills.

Video - Fentapill Facts – 3:53 <https://youtu.be/Rc-jLOfqmvo>

After video, you may lead a review of the following questions if time permits:

What are counterfeit pills?

Counterfeit pills, sometimes called “fentapills,” are . They are often produced illegally and may contain incorrect or dangerous ingredients. Counterfeit pills are commonly sold on the black market or through illegal online pharmacies.

Why are counterfeit pills dangerous?

- Inaccurate dosage: Counterfeit pills may contain too much or too little active ingredient, making them unpredictable and potentially harmful.
- Unknown ingredients: Counterfeit pills can be manufactured with different substances, including dangerous chemicals, which can have severe health consequences.
- Lack of quality control: Different from regulated pharmaceuticals, counterfeit pills are produced without quality control measures, increasing the risk of contamination or improper manufacturing processes.

Why is fentanyl so dangerous:

- High potency: Fentanyl is highly potent; even small amounts can cause an overdose or death.
- Unpredictability: Fentanyl is often mixed with other drugs, making it challenging to know its precise presence and dosage, increasing the risk of accidental overdose.
- Hidden in counterfeit pills: Fentanyl is frequently found in fake pills made to resemble prescription opioids, such as oxycodone or hydrocodone. Users may unknowingly ingest fentanyl when seeking other substances.

Activity Three (15 minutes)

Purpose: Explain - connect to experience and correct misperceptions with *Fact or Myth* activity - Beliefs about Consequences.

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Officer: To make sure everyone has the best information to base decisions on, let's talk about some of the most common questions, myths, and misperceptions people sometimes have about fentanyl.

Instructions:

- *Let's begin by identifying a shoulder buddy who will be your partner for this activity. They might be sitting right beside you, or if you are at the end of a row, they might be right in front of or behind you. This person will be your partner for the entire activity.*
- I will show a series of questions on the slides at the front of the room. After you read the question, please think about your response for 30 seconds before speaking.
- Share your thoughts with your partner. Be sure to listen carefully to their thoughts, too. Discuss why you think people might believe this statement is true, and why believing it could put them at risk.
- We will repeat this process for each question (*proceed through slides 9-13, giving students 2-3 minutes per question*)

Topics from Slides 9-13:

- Some people believe that prescription pills they buy on the internet are safer to take than "street drugs" – do you think this is true?
- Are pills safe to take if you have a prescription for the same kind of pill? Why or why not?
- Are pills safe to take if you've taken one before and nothing bad happened? Why or why not?
- Your friend says they know someone that is safe to buy pills from on social media, is that reliable? Why or why not?
- What is Narcan? Can Narcan revive people from a fentanyl overdose? (use to discuss xylazine adulteration)

Review facts related to topics – Most of this is a review from facts we've already covered:

- Today, many pills are mixed with fentanyl and look identical to prescription pills. Don't take them unless they are prescribed and distributed to you from your trusted pharmacy. It is very risky.

- The one new piece of information I want to make sure you understand is related to **Narcan**.

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- Narcan is a medicine that can help reverse opioid overdose. Because fentanyl is so powerful, it can take multiple doses and still may not work.
- Increasingly, even the fentanyl supply is being tainted with a drug called xylazine. This drug is not an opioid, and Narcan does not work to revive a person who has overdosed on this drug.

Activity Four (5 minutes)

Purpose: Evaluate/Wrap-Up with Quiz and Summarize Take-Home Messages

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To summarize what we've learned today, it's important to walk out of here with two big ideas. What do you think they are?

Solicit a few responses from the audience about what they believe to be the most important pieces of information they are taking home with them.

These are great thoughts, thank you for sharing them. Here are mine.

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Summary statements:

- Most teens don't use drugs, but knowing the facts is essential to make good decisions and look out for your friends.
- Even a one-time "experimental" use of prescription pills can be fatal if they have been mixed with fentanyl, and unless they are prescribed to you, and you got them from a pharmacy, you don't know!

Show Quiz Slides – Slide 17 or 18 - 22

We will end the presentation with a brief quiz. This is to help me know if I did a good job communicating the information. Retrieving new information from memory soon after hearing it also helps your brain remember it long-term, so it's a joint benefit.

***If you are using the QR Code method – show **Slide 17** and allow students to complete the quiz independently.*

***If you want to do the quiz live and interactively with raised hands, skip Slide 17 and proceed to the following slides 18-22. Questions and Answers are on the next page.*



MS Fentanyl Presentation Quiz Questions (Correct Answers Highlighted)

1. Is it true or false that almost 60% of middle school students use drugs?
 - a. True
 - b. False

2. What are fentapills? Are they...
 - a. Weight loss pills
 - b. Counterfeit pills made to look like real prescription pills
 - c. Dangerous pills often sold via social media
 - d. B and C

3. Narcan is effective in case of fentanyl overdose
 - a. True
 - b. False
 - c. It may or may not be

4. What makes fentanyl so dangerous when mixed into other drugs?
 - a. Unknown amount/dose
 - b. Very high potency
 - c. The user is unaware they are taking it
 - d. All of these are dangerous

5. When is it safe to take prescription pills?
 - a. When they are prescribed to you, and come from your pharmacy
 - b. When they come from your close friends
 - c. When they have the name of the drug printed on the pill
 - d. When they are in a bottle with a label clearly printed