

# Overdose deaths outpacing homicides in the Nation's Capital, almost all caused by fentanyl without the user's knowledge

*Groups working to teach people the dangers of fake "prescription drug" pills that are often laced with deadly doses of fentanyl.*

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, February 3, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This week in a short span of time 10 people overdosed and three people died from illicit fentanyl within blocks of the US Capitol Building, with ambulances arriving almost hourly to respond to the calls for help.

Overdoses now outpace homicides in Washington, DC, with fatal overdoses up 46% in 2020 from the year before. While full 2021 statistics are not yet available, monthly trends show overdoses continue to increase.

This shocking scenario is, unfortunately, much more common than you might think.

The US Drug Enforcement Administration has issued a public safety alert warning Americans of the dangerous increase of fake prescription pills containing fentanyl and methamphetamine. The DEA warned that the United States is seeing a crisis of [overdose deaths](#) from fentanyl and is warning the public about this unprecedented



Ambulance rushes to a call – throughout the US, ambulances are regularly having to respond to fentanyl overdoses.



Lethal dose of fentanyl versus a penny. Photo credit: U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

danger. In fact, the DEA found that [four out of 10 counterfeit pills](#) they analyzed were potentially fatal.

Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that can be 50-100 times more powerful than morphine, is often mixed with other drugs and sold in pills designed to look like prescription pills.

Substance abuse continues to rise across the United States, taking its toll in the tens of thousands each year. The Center for Disease Control shows drug overdose deaths soared by close to 30% from 2019 to 2020, reaching a high of 93,000, with illicit fentanyl being the primary driver. The CDC projects that this trend will continue and January 2022 showed a continued increase in opioid deaths.

Struggling to reverse the trend of overdoses and drug abuse, the Mayor of Washington, DC, rolled out a new public education campaign initiative to combat opioid, alcohol, and other drugs abused in the city.

Participating in this citywide campaign to educate citizens about the dangers of fentanyl and other drugs, the Foundation for a Drug-Free World works with other drug-education organizations to alert the public to this danger.

Thalia Ghiglia, faith liaison for the Foundation for a Drug-Free World in Washington, DC, said, "We're definitely seeing a fentanyl problem here in our city and surrounding states, just like in the rest of the country. Some people don't know their drug of choice has had fentanyl added to it. Some don't think they will be the one to go and others seek it out for its high. The most tragic are the kids who think they are taking an OxyContin, Xanax or Adderall pill and it turns out to be fentanyl. And just like that, they're gone."

"We all know that the solution to drug abuse is not one-size-fits-all. We need to work together as a community. The solution starts in our own homes, with our own children, having meaningful conversations, getting ourselves educated and then making sure our youth are educated as well as others," Ms. Ghiglia continued.



Foundation for a Drug-Free World volunteers getting community members to pledge to stay off drugs.



Ms. Ghiglia has spent two years liaising with prevention advocates, city agencies and others, bringing The Truth About Drugs to various populations. The Foundation for a Drug-Free World brings vital drug information to people in a simple, clear way through its drug education booklets, public service announcements and its award-winning documentary film on 14 different drugs, including pain killers.

Working with other agencies and organizations in the city, Ms. Ghiglia has been giving drug education lectures virtually to school-age youth, parents, seniors, and adults during the pandemic with the goal of bringing more understanding about the dangers of various drugs, especially to at-risk neighborhoods.

“We need to reach people with this message before they become addicted or decide to try pain killers to attempt to get high. There is only one way this can be done, and that is a full-community effort, shoulder to shoulder, supporting city officials and having them, in turn, support the efforts of those working directly in the city’s hot spots,” said Ms. Ghiglia.

The Foundation for a Drug-Free World is a nonprofit public benefit corporation sponsored by the Church of Scientology and Scientologists all over the world that empowers youth and adults with information about drugs so they can make informed decisions and live drug-free. Through a worldwide network of volunteers, the Foundation for a Drug-Free World has gotten 50 million drug prevention booklets distributed. Tens of thousands of drug awareness events have been held in some 180 countries and The Truth About Drugs public service announcements have been aired on more than 500 television stations. These materials and activities have helped people around the world learn about the destructiveness of drugs so individuals can make their own informed decision not to use them.

The Foundation for a Drug-Free World offers all its educational materials for free. Materials can be ordered at [www.drugfreeworld.org](http://www.drugfreeworld.org). The Foundation for a Drug-Free World is an international organization with materials in 22 languages.

Thalia Ghiglia  
Drug-Free World  
+1 202-667-6404  
[email us here](#)

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