

Surviving drug overdoses can have life-altering consequences; Drug-Free World joins others in addressing this problem

While thousands are dying from drug overdoses it has become important to give attention to those who are surviving but become crippled due to oxygen deprivation

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, October 19, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- While attention has been given to the mounting statistics of drug overdose deaths in the US, concerned parents and anti-drug advocates are turning their attention to what is happening to people who survive drug overdoses.

What really is happening to those who survive was a question focused on recently at several Washington, DC, conferences. Some conference panelists noted that Naloxone/Narcan could counteract opioid overdoses. But a new question is now being addressed. What about oxygen deprivation? What is it? And how can we help handle it?

“

Drug-Free World’s goal is to see that children and adults are educated enough not to take drugs in the first place.”

Thalia Ghiglia - Foundation for a Drug-Free World

it cannot function properly.”



Ms. Thalia Ghiglia works in the community to share drug education materials

A recent article on this subject states that, “Permanent [brain damage](#) due to opiate overdose is a common issue. One doctor in British Columbia states that as many as 90% of the overdose survivors in the intensive care unit (ICU) have permanent brain damage they will not recover from. The high rate of brain damage comes from loss of blood flow and oxygen to the brain – also called brain hypoxia. When the brain does not get enough oxygen and nutrients,

Doctors from around the United States and Canada are reporting higher numbers of patients

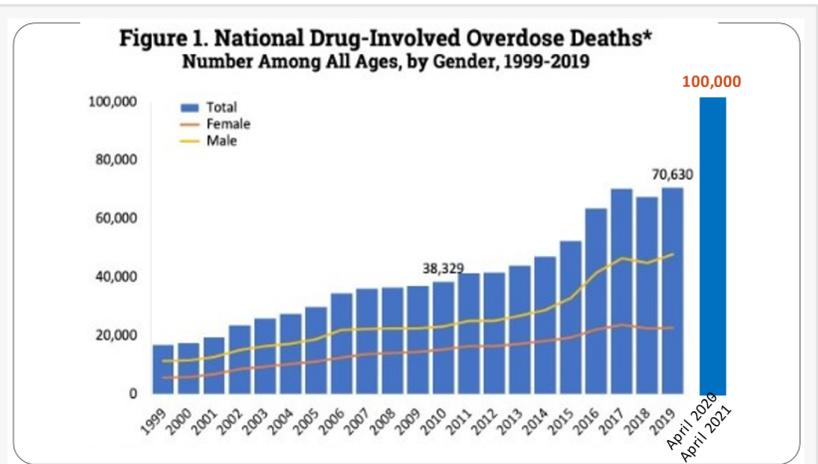
with permanent brain damage from overdoses relating to fentanyl, heroin, and/or other opiates. Many of these patients are in vegetative states. Family members must decide whether to pull the plug on their loved ones or keep hoping against the odds. Extensive permanent brain damage can completely change a patient's life, making them unable to ever walk, speak, or communicate again.

Ms. Thalia Ghiglia, faith liaison for the Foundation for a Drug-Free World in Washington, DC, has joined others in talking not only about the importance of drug prevention programs, but about those who have survived and are now damaged due to lack of oxygen. This highlights the importance of prevention, so families do not have to suffer through possible consequences.

Minutes, and even seconds, can alter the severity of the damage. On average, it takes three to five minutes of oxygen deprivation to the brain to cause permanent damage. [Lack of oxygen to the brain during an overdose](#) has left survivors incapacitated in a hospital or long-term care facility in a coma produced by an overdose of drugs. Many others are less severely injured but still require rehabilitation for the brain injury. In effect, they are not "survivors" at all, but just victims in a different way.

Ms. Ghiglia noted the following drug facts:

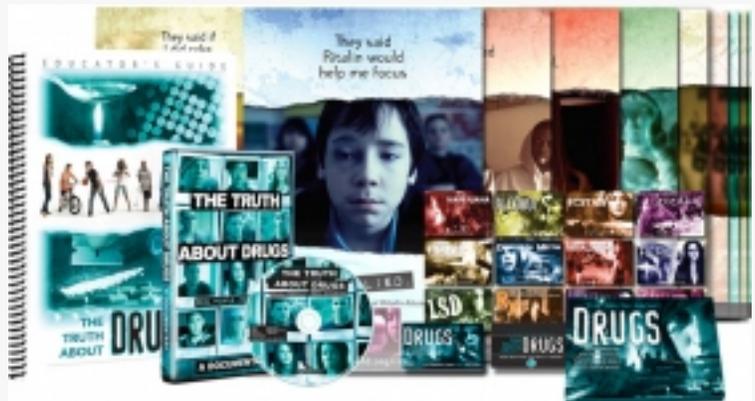
- Drug overdose deaths topped 100,000 per year for the first time in 2021, according to the



National Institute on Drug Abuse data



Lethal dose of fentanyl versus a penny. Credit U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration



The Foundation for a Drug-Free World materials available to educators for free

Center for Disease Control (CDC).

- Further statistics show there is a growing problem: The number of seized pills containing fentanyl has risen from 42,200 in 2018 to almost 2.1 million last year (2021).

- By June 2021, fentanyl was involved in an estimated [87% of opioid deaths](#) and 65% of all drug overdose deaths nationally.

- In Washington, DC, fentanyl is involved in over 94% of all opioid overdose deaths.

“We all need to be aware and educated to move even faster to help those who have overdosed. We also need to ensure that those who overdose do not become oxygen deprived,” shared Ms. Ghiglia.

“While all of what was discussed is extremely important the ultimate solution is making drug prevention programs a top priority. Drug-Free World’s goal is to see that children and adults are educated enough not to take drugs in the first place,” Ms. Ghiglia concluded.

The Foundation for a Drug-Free World has done presentations on the dangers of various drugs and the potential for overdose.

Knowing the consequences of surviving a drug overdose led many attending the presentation to ask for more information about drug overdoses and how to best educate friends and relatives to help them make positive choices to not use drugs.

The Foundation for a Drug-Free World is a nonprofit organization that empowers youth and adults with factual information about drugs so they can make informed decisions and live drug-free. Through a worldwide network of volunteers, 50 million drug prevention booklets have been distributed, tens of thousands of drug awareness events have been held in some 180 countries and Truth About Drugs public service announcements have been aired on more than 500 television stations. For well over a decade, these materials and activities have helped people learn about the destructive effects of drugs and thereby make their own decision not to use them. These educational materials are free and can be ordered at www.drugfreeworld.org.

References on statistics above:

<https://nida.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/2022/03/law-enforcement-seizures-of-pills->



[containing-fentanyl-increased-dramatically-between-2018-2021](#)

<https://ocme.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocme/Opioid%20related%20Overdoses%20Deaths%206.17.21%20FINAL.pdf>

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