

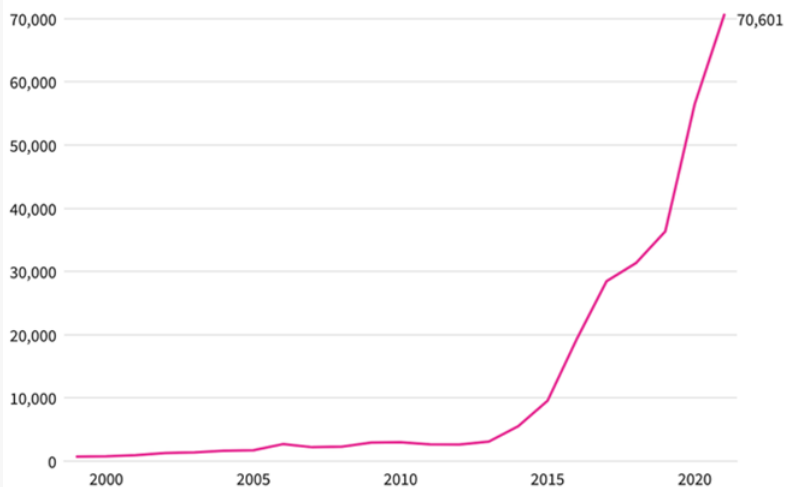
Drug-Free World's DC chapter raises awareness with senior citizens ahead of National Fentanyl Awareness Day

The District of Columbia has close to 400 opioid related deaths per year – contributing to the third highest opioid mortality rate in the country

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, March 22, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- National Fentanyl Awareness Day coming up on May 9th, serves as a reminder of how vital it is to spread the word about the dangers of fentanyl, an opioid fifty times more powerful than heroin, and thereby save lives. Foundation for a Drug-Free World (DFW) held a training seminar on this important issue for senior citizens this week. Many senior citizens are raising or helping to raise their grandchildren and need this information to protect themselves and their families.

Fentanyl deaths have increased every year since 2012

Synthetic opioid overdose deaths (mostly fentanyl), 1999 – 2021



2021 data is provisional and subject to change.

Source: [Centers for Disease Control](#)

USAFACTS

USAFACTS graph based off CDC statistics on drug overdose deaths

According to a recent report from USAFacts, "Fentanyl is responsible for more than half of all

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None of us are immune to the dangers. Being informed about these risks is the first step to initiating these preventative actions.”

Thalia Ghiglia, Foundation for a Drug-Free World DC chapter

[yearly opioid overdose deaths](#) since 2017." The deadly opioid crisis hasn't shown any signs of slowing in recent years, but instead, has been increasing drastically. For example, data has shown that "the District of Columbia has close to [400 opioid-related deaths](#) per year – contributing to the third highest opioid mortality rate in the country with 34.7 deaths per 100,000 persons compared to the national average of 14.6 deaths." Nationally the deaths have been rising as well.

Consequently, DFW sees the need for drug education and raising awareness in these majorly affected areas. Senior citizens may be affected by unknowingly ordering pain pills online that they are not aware might contain fentanyl or by having family members who use drugs recreationally.

Thalia Ghiglia, the Foundation for a Drug-Free World DC chapter's faith liaison, after presenting to a group of seniors commented, "The seniors were very attentive, now alerted to how prevalent fentanyl is and how severe its consequences. They had a lot of questions about what they could do."

On a national level USAFacts reports, "The fentanyl epidemic has reached every state, but the effects are not felt equally across the US. When adjusted for population, West Virginia and Washington, DC, had the highest rates of opioid overdose deaths." This epidemic has shaken American families and citizens who have been the effect of overdoses and deaths of loved ones.

A [New Orleans doctor](#) stated, "Of the nearly 500 drug overdose death in New Orleans last year [in 2022], 95% of them were from fentanyl." This is being seen in all states with fentanyl overdoses continuing to climb. Many who overdose and survive have permanent brain damage as a result of lack of oxygen to the brain.

Ms. Ghiglia stressed, "None of us are immune to the dangers. Being informed about these risks is the first step to initiating these preventative actions."

We have seen on the news that opioid addiction in the United States has risen sharply over the past twenty years from under 20,000 in 1999 to over 100,000 in 2019, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The cause is the increased drug trafficking of fentanyl and fentanyl-laced pills into the United States from China and through Mexico.



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

The image shows the logo for the Foundation for a Drug-Free World, which consists of a globe with a figure holding a scale. To the right of the logo is the text "Foundation for a Drug-Free World". Below this is the title "Truth About Drugs Program" in a large, teal font. Underneath the title is a collage of various educational materials, including booklets, brochures, and posters. Some of the visible titles include "THE TRUTH ABOUT DRUGS", "LSD", and "DRUGS". The materials feature various images, including a person's face and abstract designs.

The Truth About Drugs program materials available to educators for free and online downloads

The Daily Mail this March reported on the dangers from discount pills, "Nearly a dozen teens in one Texas school district overdosed on fentanyl in just six months - as it's revealed two out of three pharmacies in Mexico border towns are selling 'discounted' medications laced with illegal drugs." It went on to say, "Of the ten students, aged between 13 and 17, who were hospitalized in the district, three died because of the pills."

Since 2020, drug overdoses are now linked to more than 100,000 deaths a year nationally, with about two-thirds of them fentanyl-related. As has been stressed by the DEA and CDC, fentanyl-laced pills are more prevalent than ever. Foundation for a Drug-Free World has continued to educate and warn

people to take precautions. The stakes are just too high. Knowledge of the harm and the danger that can be done by fentanyl-laced drugs can save lives.

In response to the urgent need for drug education, the Washington, DC, chapter of Foundation for a Drug-Free World has greatly increased the distribution of it's Truth About Drugs educational booklets at the grassroots level through booths, lectures and virtual presentations to educate and equip people with information so they can prevent harm to those they love by spreading the truth about this deadly drug.

Foundation for a Drug-Free World is a nonprofit public benefit corporation that empowers youth and adults with factual information about drugs so they can make informed decisions and live drug-free. DFW produces and widely distributes high-impact, effective drug education materials. Used widely by many local community organizations, nonprofits, and service providers, the Truth About Drugs booklets and videos are all offered for free, including free online courses.

Materials can be ordered or downloaded from www.drugfreeworld.org. The Foundation for a Drug-Free World is an international organization with materials in 22 languages. The free online courses help individuals learn about specific drugs and how to talk about them with friends and family.

References

1. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/overdoses-states-harsher-fentanyl-penalties-97985110>
2. <https://www.fox8live.com/2023/03/16/catastrophe-95-overdose-deaths-new-orleans-were-fentanyl-2022/>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prevention/index.html>



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