

# America Walks United—Grassroots Nationwide Walk Against Fentanyl Led by Bereaved Families Kicks off on Brooklyn Bridge

*NYC joins Over 100 Walk for Lives events nationwide uniting bereaved families and communities to raise awareness to America's #1 killer of 18–45-year-olds*

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, June 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On Saturday, July 11, New



York City will become the launching point of a national movement aimed at ending the fentanyl crisis. Organized by [United Against Fentanyl](#) (UAF), New Yorkers will begin [Walk for Lives](#) at the Brooklyn Bridge as the official national kickoff of 100+ events taking place all on the same day. As walkers cross the Brooklyn entrance of the bridge en route to City Hall Park in Manhattan, over 100 communities across America will be marching throughout the day in solidarity.

Walk for Lives kicking off in NYC will be a powerful spark in empowering survivors along along with public and private sector organizations across the nation."

*Paul Martin*

Walk for Lives NYC starts at 9:00 a.m. at the Brooklyn entrance. Confirmed speakers include Paul Martin, Founder and President of UAF, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)'s Northeast Associate Chief of Operations, Frank Tarentino, and Lyudmyla Tarelkine, a mother whose 14-year-old daughter Sasha fell victim to peer pressure and was unknowingly exposed to fentanyl, and others to be announced.

"I was also one of those parents who only learned the word 'fentanyl' after it shattered my heart and my world," said Tarelkine. "Our Sasha was just 14, our perfect child—beautiful, brilliant, with a heart of gold. Now I carry her portrait with me, desperate to spare other parents the unbearable agony of losing a child."

Fentanyl is now the leading cause of death for Americans ages 18 to 45. Over 10 high school students die every week from fentanyl — often after unknowingly taking a single counterfeit pill. Approximately one million American parents have buried a child to this crisis in the past decade. "Since 2021 alone, the DEA has seized more than 250 million counterfeit fentanyl pills and roughly 72,000 pounds of fentanyl powder—enough to represent well over a billion potentially

lethal doses," said Paul Martin, UAF's founder. "They have also been a predominant leader in providing front-line education across the nation and supporting bereaved family members. Walk for Lives, kicking off in NYC will be a powerful spark in empowering survivors along with both public and private sector organizations across the nation."

UAF [joined this year](#) with the DEA's Fentanyl Free America initiative. "The partnership between Drug Enforcement Administration and United Against Fentanyl's Walk for Lives reflects what can be accomplished when law enforcement, advocates, families, and community members come together with a shared purpose," stated DEA Northeast Associate Chief of Operations Frank Tarentino. "The fentanyl crisis has touched far too many families, leaving behind empty chairs, broken hearts, and communities forever changed. This walk is more than a remembrance of those we have lost; it is a powerful demonstration that we stand united in our commitment to save lives and prevent future tragedies. This nationwide walk honors every life lost, supports every family still grieving, and reaffirms the DEA's unwavering commitment to building a Fentanyl Free America."

Last year, the inaugural Walk for Lives brought together more than 3,000 participants and 250 nonprofit organizations across 46 walks in 26 states. In 2026, UAF aims to scale the movement—reaching every corner of the country on a single day. This year, all efforts will point UAF's flagship Walk for Lives on the Mall in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, September 26th.

Media are invited to cover the Walk for Lives NYC and nationwide. The Brooklyn Bridge crossing offers a powerful visual: hundreds of walkers — including bereaved parents, law enforcement leaders, and community members — crossing one of America's most recognized landmarks in solidarity. Interviews with Paul Martin, Frank Tarentino, bereaved family members, and additional officials are available upon request.

## ABOUT UAF

United Against Fentanyl is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization working to end the illicit fentanyl and broader synthetic drug crisis in America. Founded in 2024 by Paul Martin, UAF organizes bereaved families, law enforcement, public health leaders, and community members to drive awareness, education, and prevention. UAF's work includes the Fentanyl Families Network, a nationwide membership community providing grief support and grassroots paths to advocacy and policy change.

[www.UnitedAgainstFentanyl.org](http://www.UnitedAgainstFentanyl.org)

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