

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ABOUT FENTANYL

Between January and July 2016, there have been 433 illicit drug overdose deaths in B.C. - a nearly 75 per cent increase from 2015. Eleven of these deaths have been individuals aged 10-19. In April, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Perry Kendall declared a public health emergency.

The information below will help you talk to your child about the danger of drugs and

### WHAT IS FENTANYL?

Fentanyl is a pain medication 50 to 100 times more toxic than morphine, and is being found in an increasing number of overdose deaths. Police have found other drugs contaminated with fentanyl, including powder cocaine, crack cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, and marijuana. Even a small amount of fentanyl can cause serious harm or death.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

One of the most important steps you can take in protecting your child is to talk to him or her about drugs and about the hidden and dangerous nature of fentanyl in particular. **You are your child's most important role model and his or her best defense against drug use.**

Start early and answer your child's questions about drugs **before** they are asked.

### HOW TO START THE CONVERSATION

#### BE OPEN, LOVING AND INVOLVED

- Respect that youth are experts in their own culture, and invite your child to teach you about their world. Make talking and having conversations about a variety of subjects with your kids a regular part of your day.
- Praising positive behaviour, showing respect and demonstrating genuine interest in your kids' lives on an ongoing basis will help make you more approachable to them when they are running into difficulties and need someone to talk to about their problems.
- Finding time to do things you enjoy together as a family helps everyone stay connected and maintain open communication.

#### USE THE NEWS

- You can use an external reference like social media, a newspaper article or TV show about drugs to start a conversation with your teenage child. Ask about what concerns, worries or questions that they have about 'what is happening'.

#### ASK QUESTIONS, THEN LISTEN

- The best way to talk to your kid about drug use is to listen to them. Ask your child to teach you more about fentanyl and other drugs by inviting them to tell you what they're hearing, seeing or have learned.
- Ask youth about the kinds of concerns and cautions youth are sharing with other youth about drugs and safety; about what steps have youth been taking to keep each other safe.
- Ask about what is it like for them for you to be talking about this.

#### SPEAK FROM YOUR HEART

- Focus on your heartfelt concerns for their safety and a deep regard for their wellness (in contrast to right/wrong, good/bad, obey/punish).
- Emphasize your deep caring, commitment to understand and be meaningfully present in their life in contrast to 'setting them straight.'



### RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS

It is important never to automatically assume your child isn't already thinking about experimenting with drugs, or that he or she hasn't already tried drugs. It's not always as obvious as we think. Below are some of the signs that your child may be using drugs:

- Abrupt change in mood or attitude
- Sudden decline in attendance or performance at school
- Sudden resistance to discipline at home or school
- Increased borrowing of money from parents or friends
- Heightened secrecy about actions or possessions

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

### INFORMATION ABOUT FENTANYL

Toward the Heart offers information on fentanyl and naloxone: <http://towardtheheart.com>

Know Your Source offers information on fentanyl:

### COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Fraser Health works with local agencies to provide youth substance use and outreach services. Trained professionals offer free, confidential information, assessment, counselling and referral. Find an agency near you using their online tool:

[http://www.fraserhealth.ca/find-us/services/our-services?program\\_id=9188](http://www.fraserhealth.ca/find-us/services/our-services?program_id=9188)

#### ALOUETTE ADDICTION SERVICES

201 - 22477 Lougheed Hwy

Maple Ridge, BC

<http://www.alouetteaddictions.org>

t. 604.467.5179

f. 604.467.8592

#### ASTRA OUTREACH SERVICES

t. 604.836.6580

#### FRASER HEALTH YOUTH CONCURRENT DISORDER THERAPIST

Dana Martin

t. 604.614.8735

#### CREEKSIDE DETOX

Surrey

t. 604.587.3755

#### MCFD, YOUTH

t. 604.476.2800

#### FRASER HEALTH CRISIS LINE

t. 604.951.8855

f. 1.877.820.7444

#### PLEA YOUTH SERVICES

Wilf Leong, Program Director

t. 604.762.8591

#### CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

t. 604.466.7300

#### CEED CENTRE

t. 604.463.2229

#### CYTHERA COUNSELLING

t. 604.467.9939

#### GREG MOORE YOUTH CENTRE

t. 604.467.7354

#### HEALTHLINK BC

t. 811

f. 1.877.820.7444