

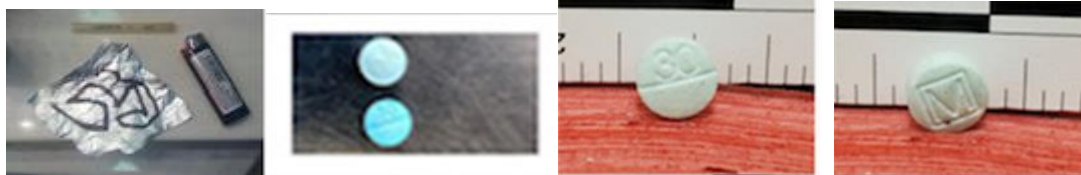
Teenagers and Young Adults Overdosing on Counterfeit Fentanyl

The Crisis Among Us

A serious health crisis is currently invading the Nez Perce Reservation and across the United States. Over the past 10 years, the overdose rate has increased. According to data in 2019, every 8 minutes someone dies (**170 American's daily**) from an Opioid overdose. Recently, there has been a surge in synthetic (man-made) opioids such as fentanyl (FENT-uh-nul) being illegally imported from Mexico. The illegal version of fentanyl is a major contributor to the current overdose crisis. According to the DEA, fentanyl is a dangerous synthetic opioid drug approximately **100 times more potent than morphine** and **50 times more potent than heroin**. **The size of a grain of salt can cause a deadly overdose**. Along with the increase of usage of these synthetic drugs, heroin use has increased as well. It is reported that children as young as 10 years old have tried heroin on the Nez Perce Reservation.

What to Look For

Some signs you may see in relation to fentanyl use are burned tinfoil, silverware, lighters, matches, hollow pens with no ends, needles, empty pill bottles, fentanyl patches that have been discarded and burned, powdery substance on furniture, or black residue on fingertips and on clothes. Below is an example of paraphernalia, prescribed pills, and counterfeit pills.



Signs of Being Under the Influence

Do you know the signs of your loved one being under the influence? It is easy to overlook the signs that are right in front of us. Signs of being under the influence of Opioids can last 4-6 hours in the blood stream.

- Constricted pupils/Non-reactive to light
- Unusual sleepiness or lethargy (droopy eyelid)
- Raspy voice and clearing the throat often
- Dehydration (drinking more water than usual)
- Rubbing of face or nose
- Constipation
- May have nausea, stomach cramps, shaking, sweating (if in withdrawal)

Signs of Opioid Overdose (**This is a medical emergency and 911 must be called**)

- Slow/Shallow breathing (less than 10 breath per minute = 1 breath every 6 seconds) or no breathing
- Blue/Grayish fingernails, lips, or skin.
- Slow or erratic heartbeat (60 BPM) Or stopped completely
- Constricted Pupils

Drug Overdoses in Youth 2019

Drug Overdoses, Age 15-24	Number of Deaths, 2019
Total Overdose Deaths	4777
Female	1459
Male	3318
Alcohol	109
Cocaine	850
Heroin and other illicit opioids	3391
Benzodiazepines	727
Prescription Opioids (pain relievers)	672
Synthetic Cannabinoids	Nationwide numbers are not currently available
Marijuana	There are no reports of teens or young adults dying from an overdose of marijuana alone. But there are reports of individuals who have sought treatment in emergency rooms, reporting uncomfortable side effects after consuming high THC levels in smoked marijuana or marijuana edibles.

Drug Use and the Adolescent Brain

Drug use at a young age results in significant and long-lasting impacts on the developing brain and body. Youth are at risk to experience disproportionate harm due to the stage of development in their brain. Because of this, youth are much more likely to engage in risky and impulsive behavior. Further, this growth difference limits teens' ability to accurately assess the risk of substance use as well as their ability to resist peer pressure.

Due to the brain not completely developing until about age 25, a youth who uses substances is at an increased risk of the following:

- Delinquency
- Academic underachievement
- Teenage pregnancy
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Multiple sexual partners without using protection
- Violence or injury including physical and sexual assault
- Mental Health problems including suicide attempt or ideation

Risk Factors

Biological and Environmental factors increase the likelihood for youth to engage in problematic substance use. Genetics and the stage of development as well as chaotic home environments, lack of parental support and the availability of substances in the community and among peers increase this risk. The age of use is decreasing and when talking to youth on the Nez Perce Reservation, it's reported that our youth are experimenting as young as 9 years old. The earlier they begin using increases the likelihood of an addiction, as well as the way they administer the substance. Smoking and injecting increases the speed and intensity of how it enters the brain and increases the risk of dependence on the substance.

Protective Factors

Protective factors safeguard the negative impacts of substance use or prevent an undesirable outcome. Protective factors include

- Individual – Lifelong aspirations, personal wellness, self-efficacy, and positive coping skills

- Family/Relationships – Stable adult support (parent, grandparents, or other family/community member)
- Community – Positive engagement (Sports, organized group activities, spiritual, culture connectedness and involvement)

What You Can Do to Prevent Underage Substance Use in Your Tribal Community

- Engage your children in frequent conversations and use active listening skills
- Teach them refusal skills when pressured by peers
- Establish rules and clear boundaries
- Acknowledge what they are doing “right”
- Let them know it is not about “right” or “wrong” but “not now”
- Recognize the impact of generational trauma
- Engage them with positive role models

Reach Out for Help

If you or a loved one needs help, please reach out. We are here to assist your family. Our office hours are 8:00-4:30 Monday-Friday and have walk in crisis service available during these hours. If you need help after hours, please go to the local emergency room or call 911.

It only takes one call to save a life!

Nimiipuu Behavioral Health	208-843-7244
National Suicide Hotline	800-273-8255
Idaho Suicide Hotline	208-398-4357
COVID Hotline	1-986-867-1073 (text or call)
	1-866-947-5186

Resources

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/drug-overdoses-youth>
http://headsup.scholastic.com/sites/default/files/NIDA_YR18_INS2_downloadall_508.pdf
<https://www.pinalcountyz.gov/sheriff/documents/overdosingoncounterfeitpillscontainingfentanyl.pdf>
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