



DRUG USE & FENTANYL



Drugs, vaping, alcohol, and fentanyl are topics that many young people hear about every day—online, at school, or through friends. If you or a friend are in danger from drugs or fentanyl overdoses, understanding the truth will help you get back on track for a healthy life.



SIGNS TO WATCH FOR

One sign alone doesn't necessarily mean someone is using drugs. Many of these behaviors can also be related to stress, mental health challenges, or normal changes during adolescence. The key is noticing multiple changes that are unusual for you or a friend:

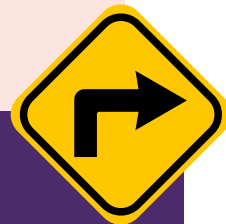
SUDDENLY becoming secretive or dishonest.

SPENDING TIME with a new group of friends while distancing from longtime friends.

A DROP IN GRADES or school attendance.

TROUBLE CONCENTRATING or remembering things.

UNUSUAL SLEEP PATTERNS (sleeping much more or less than normal).



WHAT YOU CAN DO...

If you're concerned about yourself:

Be honest with yourself about how often and why you're using. Noticing the pattern is the first step to changing it.

Talk to a trusted adult, counselor, coach, parent, or caregiver, even if it feels hard. They're there to help, not to punish you.

Remember that asking for help early is easier than waiting until things get worse.

If you're concerned about a friend or family member:

Check in privately and without judgment.

Focus on what you've noticed rather than making accusations.

Encourage them to connect with a trusted adult, counselor, coach, parent, or caregiver.

If you think they may be in immediate danger, seek help from an adult right away.





IF IT'S ALREADY HAPPENING

Talk with them when they're sober and in a private place.

Offer to go with them for help.

Let them share their perspective—avoid arguing, threatening, or lecturing.

Getting help is not “snitching”—it’s looking out for someone’s well-being.

Remember that you don’t have to agree with their choices to show you care.

Know the signs of an overdose. If someone is unconscious, difficult to wake up, or having trouble breathing, call 9-1-1 immediately.



REMEMBER

You can’t make someone stop using drugs, but you can let them know they matter, encourage them to get help, and connect them with trusted adults who can support them. Sometimes caring enough to speak up is the most important thing you can do.



988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Call or text 988 for immediate mental health or substance use crisis support (free, confidential, 24/7)

YouthLine Call 1-877-968-8491 or text “teen2teen” to 839863 (free, confidential peer-to-peer support from trained teen volunteers)



Online Harms
Prevention Work Group
fairplayforkids.org

