



Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration



FentAlert: Empowering Youth for Safer Choices - SAMHSA Fentanyl Awareness Youth Challenge

SAMHSA is conducting this Challenge under the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) Reauthorization Act of 2010, as amended [15 U.S.C. § 3719].

The Goal

How can young people be a part of the solution to increase awareness about the risks of fentanyl?

In this Challenge, we are seeking the best ideas from U.S. youth, aged 14-18, on a community strategy to increase youth awareness, education, and prevention around the dangers of fentanyl, especially the hidden dangers of fake pills and other contaminants that can lead to drug overdose deaths.

These are the facts:

- Among adolescents age 10-19, from 2019 to 2021:
 - Monthly [drug overdose deaths](#) increased 109%.
 - Deaths involving illicitly manufactured fentanyls increased 182%.
 - About 90% of these deaths involved opioids and 84% involved illicitly manufactured fentanyls.
 - Counterfeit pills were present in nearly 25% of these deaths.
 - Two-thirds of those who died had one or more potential bystanders present, but most didn't provide overdose response (many bystanders were in another room or didn't know that drugs were being used).

- Criminal drug networks are mass-producing [fake pills](#), and falsely marketing them as legitimate prescription pills. They are made to look just like prescription drugs such as oxycodone (Oxycontin[®], Percocet[®]), hydrocodone (Vicodin[®]), and alprazolam (Xanax[®]); or stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall[®]).
 - 7 out of 10 fake prescription pills (seized by the DEA) contain a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl.
- Xylazine (often known as “tranq”), is a central nervous system depressant and animal tranquilizer that has been showing up in combination with fentanyl and has been involved in a growing number of overdose deaths.

What is the best way to make your friends aware of these risks and keep them safe? **You** have the answers. **You** are a trusted resource with your friends and in your community. **You** are an important part of the solution.

SAMHSA wants **you** to pitch your idea that educates youth in your community (among your friends, or at school, or within an organization to which you belong) about fentanyl and fake pills, and prevents overdose. Your idea could include any innovative ways to reach youth on this topic like social media posts, vlogs, podcasts, video journals, etc.

Award Information

Challenge Launch: December 1, 2023

- **Submission Start/End:** December 1, 2023, to February 26, 2024 6 p.m. ET
- **Judging:** February/March 2024
- **Winner Announced:** April 2024

The top 6 ideas will be awarded a \$5,000 prize each, and up to 25 youth will receive a \$2,000 honorable mention prize.

SAMHSA prizes awarded under this Challenge will be paid by electronic funds transfer (EFT) and may be subject to Federal income taxes. Winners will be required to provide financial institution information to SAMHSA to facilitate the EFT process. Awards can be made to legal guardian if the winner does not have their own bank account. HHS/SAMHSA will comply with the Internal Revenue Service withholding and reporting requirements, where applicable.

All winning submissions will be prominently featured on the SAMHSA website and via social media; additional opportunities to be profiled by SAMHSA may be developed in the future.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to win a prize under this Challenge, the video author –

- At the time of submission, shall be aged 14 to 18, and reside within the U.S. or its territories; youth under the age of 18 must submit a signed parent/legal guardian consent form;
- Shall have registered to participate in the Challenge under the rules and process set forth in this Announcement;
- Shall have complied with all the requirements set forth in this Announcement;
- Shall be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States, for purposes of winning a SAMHSA cash prize;
- May not be a Federal employee acting within the scope of the employee's employment;
- May not be a Federal employee of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (or any other component of HHS) acting in their personal capacity;
- An individual employed by a federal agency or entity other than HHS (or any component of HHS), should consult with an agency Ethics Official to determine whether the federal ethics rules will limit or prohibit the acceptance of a prize under this Challenge;
- May not be currently listed on the Excluded Parties List;
- May not be a member or employee of SAMHSA or a judge or evaluation panel member of the Challenge, or any other party involved with the design, production, execution, or distribution of the Challenge or the immediate family of such a party (i.e., spouse, parent, step-parent, child, grandchild, or step-child).

If you have questions, contact: challenge@samhsa.hhs.gov

How to Participate

Create a [Challenge.gov](https://www.challenge.gov) account and learn how to enter [FentAlert: Empowering Youth for Safer Choices - SAMHSA Fentanyl Awareness Youth Challenge](https://www.fentalert.org), as well as eligibility, participation rules and requirements.

All submission materials must be submitted through Challenge.gov by the specified submission deadline date and time.

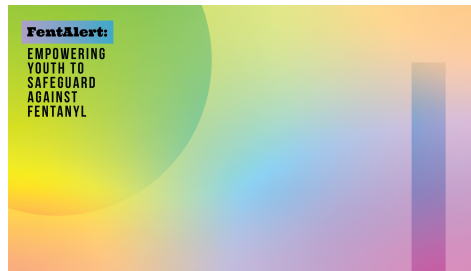
Additional Resources

- Opioid overdose – [how to prevent, recognize, and treat it](#).

- How to use [naloxone](#) – to reverse an opioid overdose.
- [Prescriptions, opioids, fake pills](#) – and how to protect yourself and those around you.
- How to use [social norms and framing \(PDF | 2.7 MB\)](#) [↗](#) – to communicate with other youth about substances.
- [Voices of Youth](#)

Meeting Backgrounds

Help us spread the word about the FentAlert Challenge using this Zoom/Teams background!



- [Virtual Background \(PDF | 791 KB\)](#)

Last Updated: 11/27/2023

Source: https://www.samhsa.gov/about-us/who-we-are/offices-centers/csap/fentanyl-awareness-youth-challenge?utm_source=SAMHSA&utm_campaign=8cb2f05472-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_11_06_07_21&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-8cb2f05472-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D