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Odessa Student Crime Stoppers

There has been a big uprise in fentanyl overdoses in the past year. Many of those are younger people who are trying to continue their use or doing all sorts of drugs and are overdosing because their drugs are laced with fentanyl. Seeing people overdose in school is a scary situation to see unfold before your eyes. Now fentanyl is a more trending type of drug that can be mixed into all sorts of substances. This means it's probable that THC and nicotine vapes, candy, gum, and even wrappers carrying these contaminated substances can be lethal. It only takes about 2 milligrams to take down an adult male, which is compared to about two little grains of salt or sugar.

Being a part of Crime Stoppers has opened my eyes as to what is happening around myself and my community. I have now been able to make myself and others at my school more aware of what is going on in the nation and more specifically the state of Texas. Since Governor Abbott has initiated the *One Pill Can Kill* campaign that shows fentanyl related deaths after each year. The graphs have shown that there have been a skyrocketing amount of fentanyl related overdoses. An antidote for most overdoses is the use of Narcan administered by officers at our school district, due to the current events at my school, there have been cases where students were found to be overdosing around campus, and officers have been the only ones at the capacity to administer doses. A little less than two years ago, campus officers were required to carry Narcan at all times. Officers have to get to their location and administer the amount of doses needed for the person to start breathing again.

Within our school district alone, there were a few students that overdosed during the school day that have had a lethal dose of fentanyl and have sadly had their lives taken by this drug. This is also related to vaping since students have been up taking on vaping in schools every year. With fentanyl being more popular to use it can be mixed in the oils of vapes, nicotine or THC; that can carry lethal doses unbeknownst to the user. There have also been new types of vapes being sold online to purchase that look like school supplies, at first glance it may look like a highlighter or a pen. This is something that has become more prevalent in my school district. Odessa Student Crime Stoppers has a display to show to parents and kids what they look like to make sure that word is being spread about these dangerous ways drugs are making their way into schools. As mentioned before, Fentanyl can be made to have the appearance of a typical candy; which are sweet tarts, gum, pop rocks, skittles, etc. These are the more mainstream ways of production of fentanyl in schools. These candies are also carrying various amounts of fentanyl in their packaging which can be entirely pure or not have any at all.

In the near future, Odessa Student Crime Stoppers is planning to start a PSA regarding students carrying Narcan for potential use on overdoses that they may be able to administer to help aid first responders. This PSA is something that we need in schools and even our community because these things not only happen in schools, but also within communities state and nationwide. I hope this information spreads around the community, and there may be a decrease of fentanyl related deaths because some bystanders carried Narcan with them and give that person some time to get help. If even one life is saved by this newsletter, it'll be more than worth it to have written it.