

Snapshot | Emerging Drugs

Synthetic opioids have been identified as emerging drugs in Wyoming and across the U.S. Between 2018 and 2021, the number of synthetic opioid-involved fatal overdoses has continuously increased at a faster rate than any other opioid type¹.



Fentanyl is one type of synthetic opioid that is contributing to the rising number of fatal drug overdoses. While fentanyl can be obtained with a prescription, fentanyl-involved fatal overdoses have been linked to illicitly manufactured fentanyl. Fentanyl is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine and is often mixed with other illicit drugs to increase euphoric effects. Individuals using illicit drugs that are laced with fentanyl are often unaware of its presence, putting the user at an increased risk of a fatal overdose. In Wyoming, synthetic opioid-involved fatal overdose reports increasingly mention fentanyl¹.

Strategy Highlight | Substance Abuse Media





When the Game Slows Down is a locally developed media campaign that seeks to prevent potential prescription drug misuse among injured student athletes that are exposed to opioid based pain medication.

The media campaign focuses on increasing awareness and education of the student athlete population and their parents/guardians on the potential harms and addictiveness of prescription opioids. Campaign messages also provide information on medication management and social support.

Four counties implemented *When the Game Slows Down* to provide targeted messaging using traditional print, digital, and social media channels. Community Prevention Specialists partnered with local school districts and club sports organizations to reach student athletes where they learn and play.

County Highlight

During the 2021/2022 Community Prevention Grant cycle, Wyoming Community Prevention Specialists in 22 counties implemented numerous evidence-based substance abuse prevention strategies.

18 counties implemented media campaigns to prevent alcohol and/or prescription drug abuse among identified priority populations.



References

- 1. Wyoming Department of Health, Opioid-Involved Fatal Overdose Fact Sheet, 2022
- 2. Wyoming Vital Statistics Services, Death Certificates, 2004-2021