
Guest Column: Grandparents Can Pass Along Valuable Information About Fentanyl

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Fentanyl continues to be a significant threat across the state. Prevention and education remain critical in reducing this threat. Grandparents can stay informed and pass this information on to others, like their grandchildren and adult children.

Grandparents have a significant influence over their grandchildren and can help them by being a reliable source of factual information. Recreational drug use and fentanyl have led to countless overdose deaths. Deaths related to fentanyl in California began to rise exponentially around 2019.

Between 2021 and 2022, close to 6,000 people died in the state after ingesting synthetic opioids, which accounted for 86% of all opioid-related deaths.

Resources like the Seniors' Guide to Fentanyl and local drug education play a critical role in helping keep people informed about the risks.

Grandparents can converse with their grandkids about these risks and pass along valuable information.

Keep things age appropriate and use language and examples that are easy for a child or teen to understand. How you would talk to a child about drugs and medication is entirely different when speaking to an adolescent or young adult.

When speaking to teens or young adults, ask open-ended questions like: What do you know about fentanyl? Or What are your thoughts on drug use? Are you concerned about someone offering you drugs? This can help start a conversation and fill the void with factual information about fentanyl and its risks.

Share personal experiences and examples of peer pressure and how it was managed. While the approaches to peer pressure are much different today because of social media, the practical methods of handling or avoiding it can still be applied.

Encourage them to speak to their parents or caregivers and help them create a trusting environment with the people they live with. Get them to ask questions and voice their opinions, as this becomes the best way to share ideas and gain knowledge.

The opioid epidemic shows no signs of slowing down, but prevention and education can save lives. Anyone can stay informed, regardless of age. Grandparents can pass along valuable information about fentanyl and the risks involved with drug use.

Marie Garceau has been working in the field of substance use and addiction recovery for over a decade. Her primary focus is to reach out to the community and spread awareness. She does this to educate others about the dangers of drug use and help them make informed decisions.