

## Example of a letter to a school district:

Dear <<insert name of education leader>>,

I am reaching out to you about an urgent crisis that is affecting students and their families across our nation, including in our own community. And I am requesting specific action on the part <<school district>> in order to educate, protect, and serve these students amidst this crisis. Young people are dying in alarming numbers after taking pills they think are safe medicines, but which turn out to be counterfeits made of fentanyl. If you are unaware of this issue, I encourage you google your state name and 'fentanyl', note the resources on page two of this letter, and read this recent CDC press release\*: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p1218-overdose-deaths-covid-19.html/>

Until recently, like most parents across the United States, I was unaware of how this next wave of the opioid epidemic might affect me. Then in December of 2020, our family was unexpectedly struck by tragedy. Our 18-year old son Caley, a former student at Sunset High School, died of fentanyl poisoning while home from college over Christmas break. As is becoming more common, Cal was a 'regular' kid who showed no evidence of having drug use issues. He made a poor choice by experimenting with a prescription pill he thought was safe, and paid for it with his life. Kids and young adults often make poor choices as they grow up. They should have the opportunity to learn from them, they should not die from them.

In the wake of Cal's death, I have learned that the drug landscape has changed dramatically since fake prescription pills made of fentanyl began flooding the US market a few years ago. Young people today are used to taking prescription pills, and often even share pills. Drug traffickers exploit this demand by pressing realistic counterfeits designed to look exactly like legitimate Xanax, Oxycodone, Percocet and other familiar brands. To maximize profits, they use the powerful opioid, fentanyl, as the active ingredient. Then, they falsely advertise their fake pills on social media to our youth.

In my fentanyl research, I have discovered two accurate, comprehensive, and free resources I would like to share with you:

- **Fake & Fatal campaign created by Beaverton School District (BSD) in Oregon.** Fake & Fatal was developed after several students in the BSD school district lost their lives due to fentanyl poisoning, and the district wanted to warn their community of the danger of fake pills. The Fake & Fatal campaign was rolled out to the Beaverton, OR community in April/May 2021, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. In the interest of saving lives, BSD has made their content available to be freely used by school districts across our nation. **All of the material around BSD's Fake & Fatal campaign is now available online for others to use in the existing form, or to modify to make their own... no strings attached.** This includes content and teaching material such as lesson plans and teaching aids.
- [www.SongforCharlie.org](http://www.SongforCharlie.org). Song for Charlie (SFC) is a nonprofit charity dedicated to raising awareness about 'fentapills' — fake pills made of fentanyl. SFC partners with experts, educators, parents and other influencers to reach the most vulnerable group: young people between the ages 13-30. SFC programs highlight the emerging dangers of self-medication and casual drug use in the fentanyl era and encourage healthier strategies for coping with stress.

Now as I try to spread the word about the dangers of the fake pills our youth can order on social media as easily as ordering a pizza, I need your help. **I would like to request that <<my school district>> host a Fake & Fatal community conversation about the danger of fake pills, promote awareness through the districts website, social media, and other communication vehicles, and add specific content on the dangers of fake pills to the health curriculum for all middle and high school students beginning in Fall 2021.** I understand this is not a small request, but I feel strongly this needs to be done in order to save lives of students in our district. Fortunately, the free comprehensive material developed by BSD and the resources on

**www.SongforCharlie.org will make this task a much easier than if <<my school district>> had to create the material from scratch.**

The CDC recommends that harm reduction, public safety, and public health organizations partner to disseminate the latest information on local drug supply and overdose trends. I have found that <<state or country name>> is not yet focused on this deadly growing and present danger to our unsuspecting youth amidst the broader concerns of the umbrella opioid epidemic and addiction. Schools are the best and most effective way to reach the potential victims with this information as soon as possible. I encourage you to contact officials in those organizations such as <<name ally and org here>> to gain additional insight on how this danger is affecting our community right here.

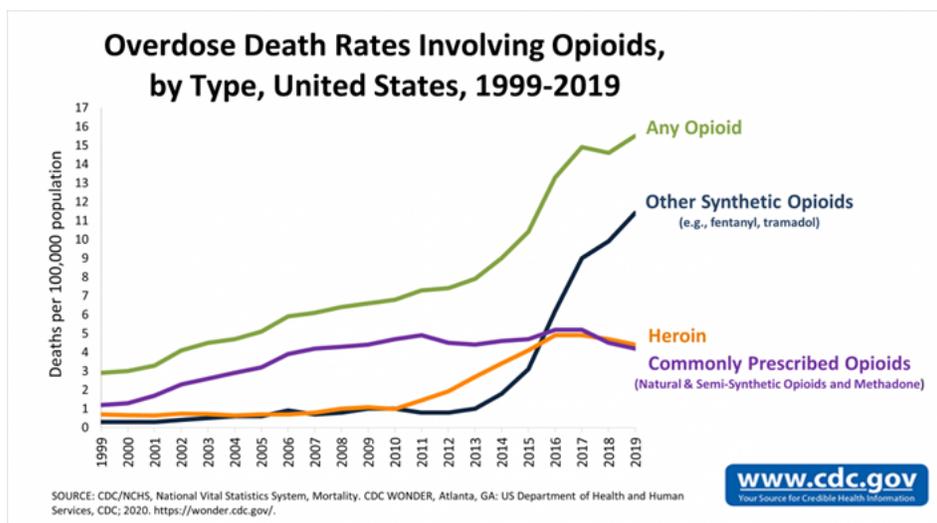
If it would be helpful, I am willing to share our family's story to help people recognize that is an issue that is already impacting our community. If there is anything else I can do to help with this endeavor, please let me know. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon regarding whether this is a project you can support. If I don't hear from you I plan to follow up by <<date>>.

Sincerely,  
<<your name>>  
<<your email address>>

**CDC Recommendation:**

- *Harm reduction organizations:*
  - *Partner with public safety and public health to obtain and disseminate the latest information on local drug supply and overdose trends.*<sup>51,52</sup>

Source: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2020/han00438.asp>



Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/analysis.html>

\*For additional state detail on this CDC press release, click here:

<https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2020/han00438.asp>

## Fake Pill/Fentanyl Awareness Middle School/High School Campaign Material Available for Free



ONE PILL CAN KILL

### Beaverton School District Fake & Fatal Campaign:

[www.beaverton.k12.or.us/departments/communications-community-involvement/fake-and-fatal](http://www.beaverton.k12.or.us/departments/communications-community-involvement/fake-and-fatal)

This website is an example of a successful fake pill awareness campaign that was created by Beaverton School District in Oregon. Free resources that are available for other school districts to use and modify as needed include:

- Complete middle school and high school fake pill curriculum, including lesson plans, teacher guide, and other resources.
- Recording from community conversation
- Presentation from community conversation
- Cal's story video
- Free graphics and market campaign material



### Song for Charlie:

[www.songforcharlie.org](http://www.songforcharlie.org)

Song for Charlie (SFC) is a family-run nonprofit charity dedicated to raising awareness about 'fentapills' — fake pills made of fentanyl. SFC partners with experts, educators, parents and other influencers to reach the most vulnerable group: young people between the ages 13-30. SFC's programs highlight the emerging dangers of self-medication and casual drug use in the fentanyl era and encourage healthier strategies for coping with stress."

SFC has a webpage where districts can share their educational material. If you have material that you think would be helpful for others trying to educate kids/young adults about the dangers of fake pills, please post them here: xxxxxx (add SFC Webpage)