

Sheridan Families,

Today, the Sheridan community and our local region experience serious, life-threatening situations due to fentanyl. Our students are at increased risk for overdose or witnessing overdose from fentanyl and other substances. There has been a significant increase of reported fentanyl-laced drugs in our community. Yamhill County Health Dept. reports students purchasing Oxycontin, Xanax, Aderrall, and other pills from individuals they meet on social media platforms have unknowingly received pills laced with fentanyl. Fentanyl can even be found in vape cartridges (dea.gov, 2019 data). One in four pills tested by the Department of Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) labs contain a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl, which can be as small as two grains of sand (Yamhill County Public Health).

How to Keep Your Teen Safe

Communicate openly: Talk to your child about never taking any medication that doesn't come directly from their doctor or pharmacist, even if it's from a friend. Listen to your child without judgment. As a trusted adult in their life, it is important to connect and hear what they have to say.

Look for changes in behavior: Changes such as irregular eating or sleeping patterns, low energy, general signs of depression or anxiety, unusual irritability, slipping grades, lack of interest in activities they love, and even drastic clothing style changes can be warning signs. If you notice a change, ask about it.

Monitor social media: Talk to your child and monitor their social media use. Substances can be offered by a friend or a stranger met online. Fake pills are sold online and on apps that are popular with teens, who may believe they are buying something safe for anxiety or depression or what they believe to be "study drugs".

What Sheridan School District is Doing

This District has a Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force that meets regularly to work on ways to prevent vaping and other forms of substance abuse. Community members interested in joining the Task Force are encouraged to contact the district office for more information. The District is also in the process of obtaining Narcan from the county Health Department, which is the rescue medication for an opioid overdose. This would allow trained staff to respond to an overdose on campus if one ever occurred. The District has also implemented an anonymous reporting system that allows students, staff, and parents to report concerns regarding substance abuse in the schools.

Last summer the Task Force recommended to the School Board that SHS close campus, changing district policy. A system was designed that allowed sophomores, juniors, and seniors to leave campus for lunch with parent permission, good attendance, and passing all classes. The campus is closed for freshmen, with the exception of parent permission. Currently, the Task

Force is exploring a student drug testing program, with the hope of providing support and recovery services.

Helpful Resources

Lines for Life: 800-273-8255

Oregon Youth Line: 877-968-8491 (text or call)

A Song for Charlie

Beaverton School District Fake & Fatal

Oregon Health Authority Naloxone Information

If you are interested in joining the Task Force or would like more information about substance abuse prevention, please contact the district office. Thank you for working with us to keep our students safe and healthy.

Alanna Russell, BSN, RN

Dorie Vickery, Ed.D