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May 8, 2023
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEA Recognizes National Fentanyl Awareness Day

WASHINGTON – DEA is proud to join “Song for Charlie” and many of our valued law enforcement, public health, and non-profit partners in recognizing National Fentanyl Awareness Day. Tomorrow represents an important opportunity to remember the victims of fentanyl poisoning and educate people in our communities about the deadly threat that fentanyl poses to the national security, health, and safety of the American people.

One year ago, on the first National Fentanyl Awareness Day, DEA opened the *Faces of Fentanyl* Memorial at DEA Headquarters—a wall in DEA’s West Building that displays the photos of those who lost their lives to fentanyl poisoning. The memorial started with 100 photos; over the past year, Americans from across the country have sent DEA more than 5,000 photos. The memorial reflects the reality that fentanyl is killing Americans from all walks of life, in every state and community in this country. The youngest person on the wall is Forever 17-months old. The oldest is Forever 70 years old. The *Faces of Fentanyl* Memorial has become a safe and compassionate space for grieving families impacted by fentanyl to visit when in the Washington, D.C., area.

To mark National Fentanyl Awareness Day 2023, the DEA Museum and the Faces of Fentanyl Memorial will have extended hours on Tuesday, May 9, from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m.

“Fentanyl is the greatest threat to Americans today. It kills more Americans between the ages of 18 to 45 than terrorism, than car accidents, than cancer, than COVID. It kills nearly 200 Americans every day. And the number of children under 14 dying from fentanyl poisoning has increased at an alarming rate,” said DEA Administrator Anne Milgram. “The two drug cartels responsible for bringing fentanyl into the United States—the Sinaloa and Jalisco cartels—are intentionally driving addiction by selling fake pills and hiding fentanyl in other drugs, and they are reaching our kids through using social media platforms. I encourage you to use this day to talk to your families about the dangers of fentanyl and have an important conversation with your kids about who they are communicating with on social media.”

DEA urges the public to be vigilant about fentanyl and the deadly threat it poses:

- Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is approximately 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine. Just two milligrams—the equivalent of a few grains of salt—can kill a person.

- Fentanyl comes in two forms: pills and powder. The Sinaloa and Jalisco cartels are hiding fentanyl in fake pills that look like oxycodone, Xanax, and Percocet. The cartels are also mixing fentanyl powder in with cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine. This is why many of the people poisoned by fentanyl had no idea they were even taking it.
- The cartels and their members and associates are using social media applications—including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat—and encrypted platforms—including WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, Wire, and Wickr—to sell pills and powders that are advertised as something else but actually have fentanyl inside.

DEA has identified the two drug cartels responsible for the influx of fentanyl into this country—the Sinaloa and Jalisco cartels—and its top operational priority is to defeat these cartels. In April 2023, DEA and our federal partners [announced](#) the indictment of 28 members and associates of the Sinaloa Cartel operating in Mexico, China, and Central America, including the leaders of the cartel known as the “Chapitos.” In May 2023, DEA and our law enforcement partners [announced](#) the results of a year-long national operation, “Operation Last Mile,” which included the arrests of 3,337 operatives, associates, and distributors affiliated with the Sinaloa and Jalisco cartels responsible for the last mile of fentanyl and methamphetamine distribution on our streets and on social media.

To get more facts about fentanyl, visit [One Pill Can Kill](#).

If you would like to submit a photo of a loved one to be included in the Faces of Fentanyl Memorial, please submit a photo with their name and age to fentanylawareness@dea.gov. Help spread awareness about the dangers of fentanyl by posting a photo on social media using the hashtags #NationalFentanylAwarenessDay and #JustKnow.

The [DEA Museum](#) and [Faces of Fentanyl Memorial](#) are located at 700 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, Va., 22202. There is metered street parking around the building and a parking garage at the Fashion Centre at Pentagon City across the street.

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