

# Fake Pills and Fentanyl

## Closing the Knowledge Gap to Reduce Youth Risk

Jon Epstein

Director of Analytics & Research



Song for Charlie

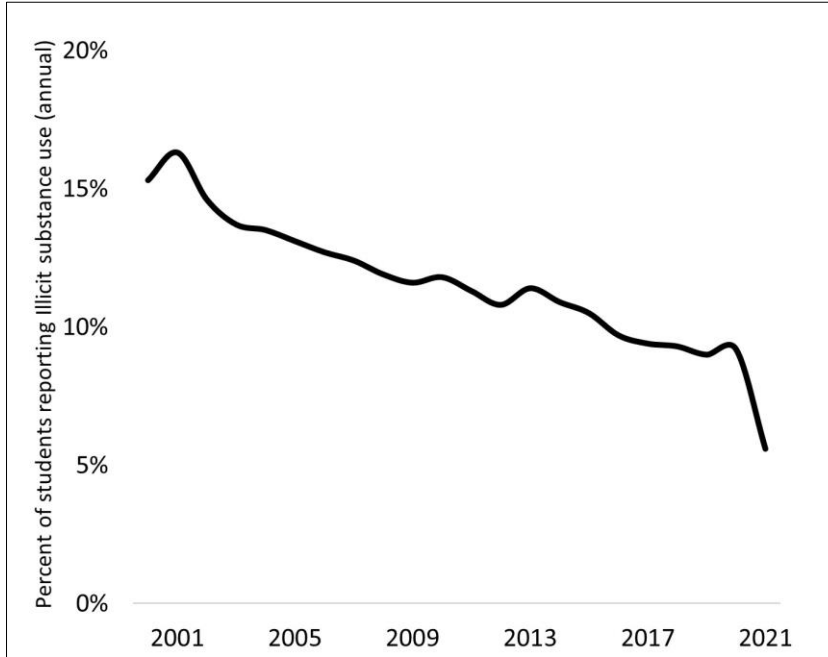
SAMHSA's 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Prevention Day  
January 30, 2023



**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

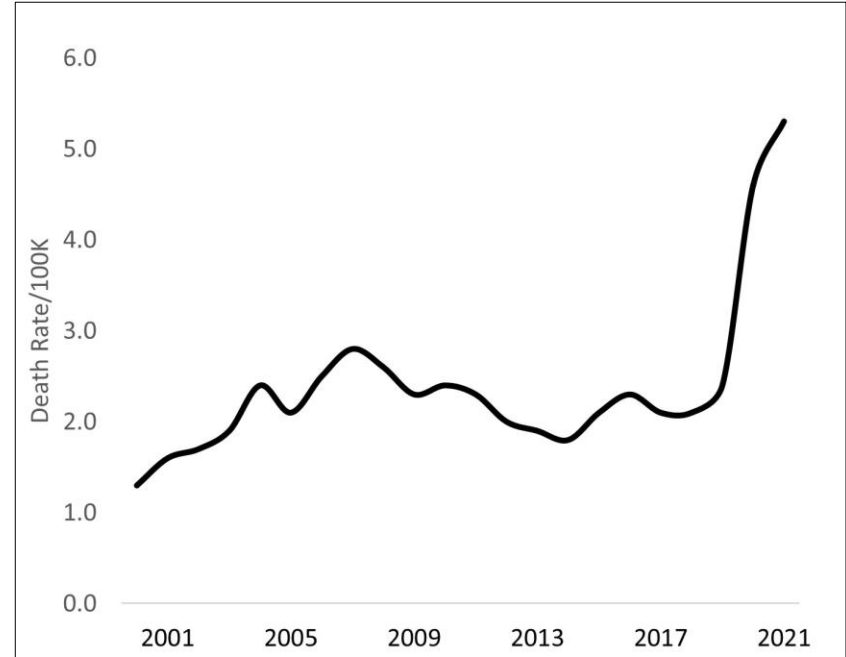
# An Unexpected Result

**Illicit Substance Use <sup>1</sup>**  
U.S. 8th, 10th, 12th Graders



\*excludes marijuana

**Drug-induced Mortality <sup>2</sup>**  
U.S. Teens age 14-18



# Objectives

- Recognize the **synthetic drug landscape** transition & impact on youth
- Understand the findings from Song for Charlie's **youth fentanyl survey research**
- Identify **misperception of harm** among young Americans, leading to increased risk
- Examine the important role that **targeted awareness campaigns** have in reducing this risk
- **Obtain resources** available to raise awareness and identify opportunities for use in practice

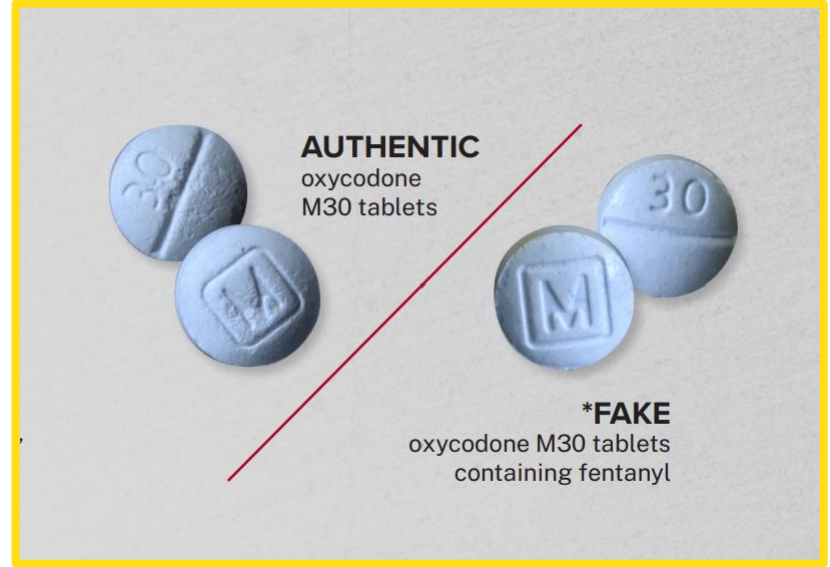
*NOTE: For purposes of this presentation and readability, any reference to “fentanyl” broadly applies to the category of drugs termed “synthetic opioid analgesics other than methadone, including drugs such as fentanyl and tramadol (MCD: T40.4). There is no systemic determination of illicit fentanyl-involved deaths vs. those involving pharmaceutical grade fentanyl; mortality and other discussion in the public square is generally described as ‘primarily fentanyl and its analogs and primarily illicit’. Many deaths involve multiple substances; unless otherwise noted, fentanyl-involved deaths represents any death with reported MCD T40.4, regardless of other substances involved.*

# A New Landscape

## Farm-to-Lab Synthetics



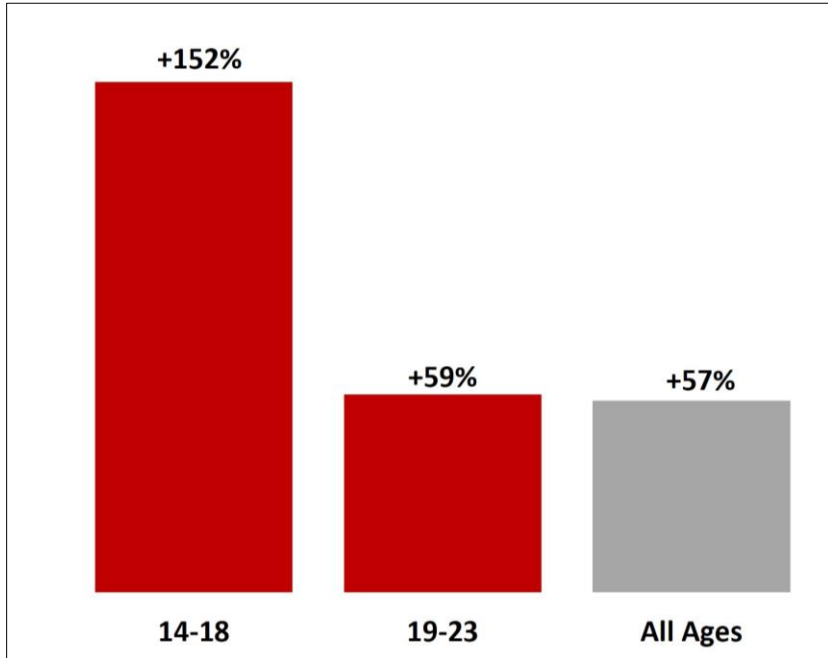
## Deception/The Unexpected



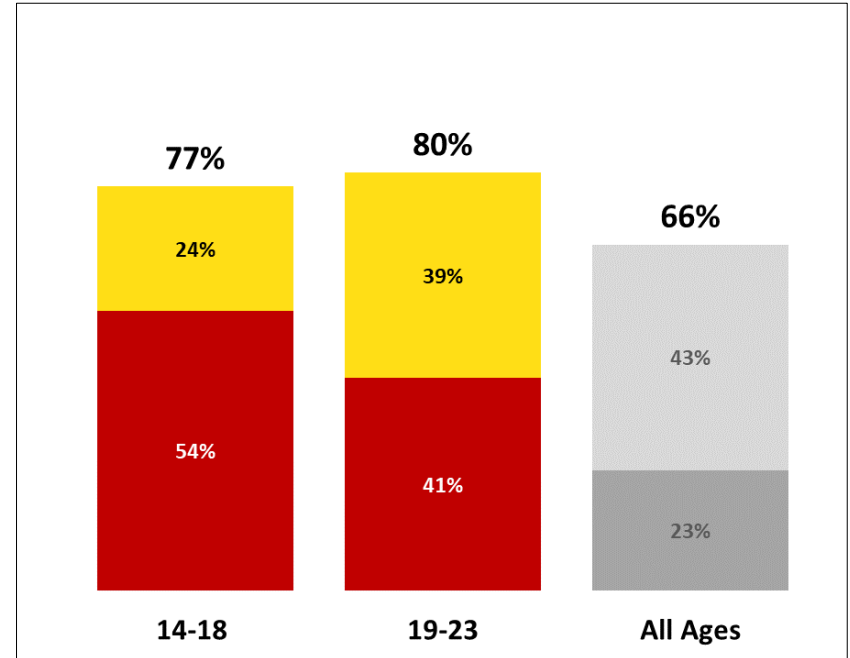
<sup>3</sup> DEA (2022)

# Youth are Disproportionately Impacted

## Growth in Drug-induced Death<sup>2</sup> 2021 vs. 2018



## % Fentanyl-involvement in Drug-induced Death<sup>2</sup> 2021



■ "fentanyl only" : no other opioids, cocaine, benzos, amphetamines

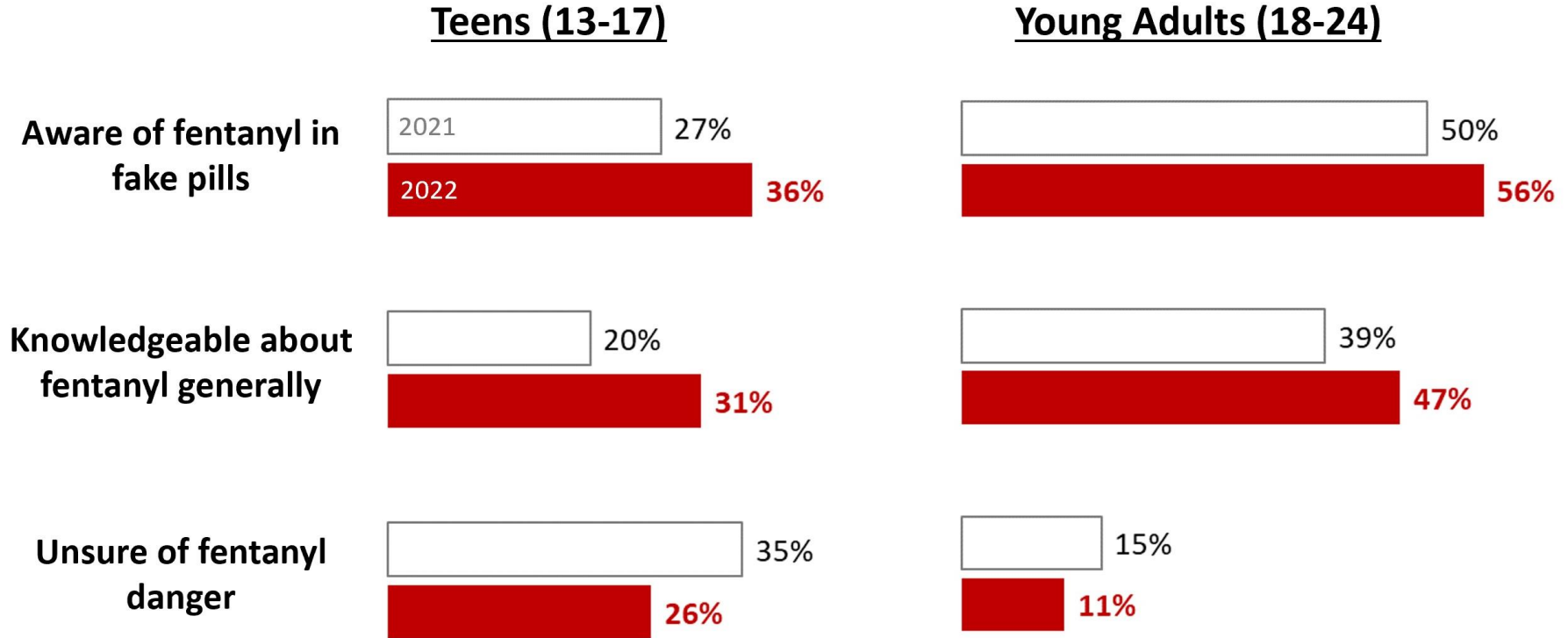
■ "fentanyl +" : fentanyl + other substance

# Youth Survey Research<sup>4</sup>

- **Commissioned by Song for Charlie and executed by Breakwater Strategy online August 2022**
- **In addition to questions on fentanyl & counterfeit pill knowledge, questions were asked on mental health, substance use motivations, peer perceptions, & social media. (backup)**
- Nationwide sample of 1,500 Young Americans aged 13-24; n=612 Teens (13-17) and n=888 Young Adults (18-24)
- Margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level
- Quotas and weights were used to ensure age cohort national demographic representation
- “Aware”, “Knowledgeable”, & “Dangerous” refer to responses of 7+ out of 10
- Comparisons to 2021 are based on data from “Research on Dangers of Counterfeit Drugs Among Teens and Young Adults” commissioned by Snap Inc. & executed by Morning Consult, 10.2021

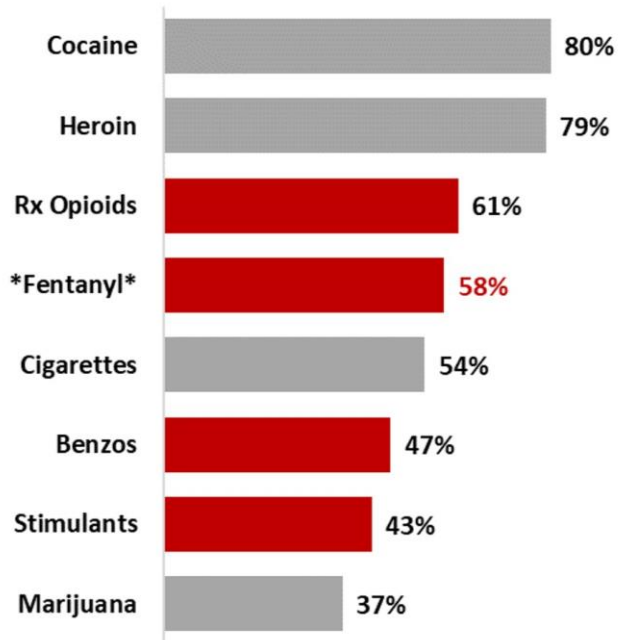
<https://www.songforcharlie.org/post/song-for-charlie-youth-fentanyl-survey-fall-2022><sup>4</sup>

# The Knowledge Gap<sup>4</sup>



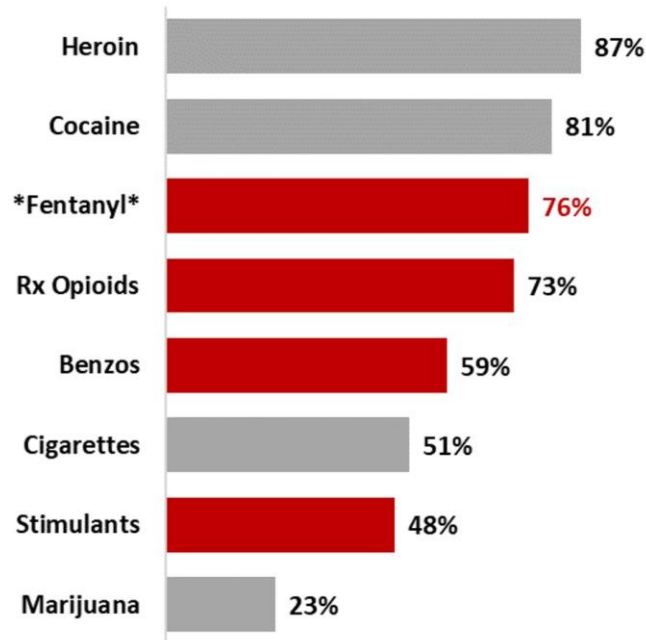
# Q: How Dangerous is it?<sup>4</sup> - A Misperception of Harm

## Teens (13-17)



*\*12x more fentanyl-involved deaths than cocaine in 2021 for this age group<sup>2</sup>*

## Young Adults (18-24)



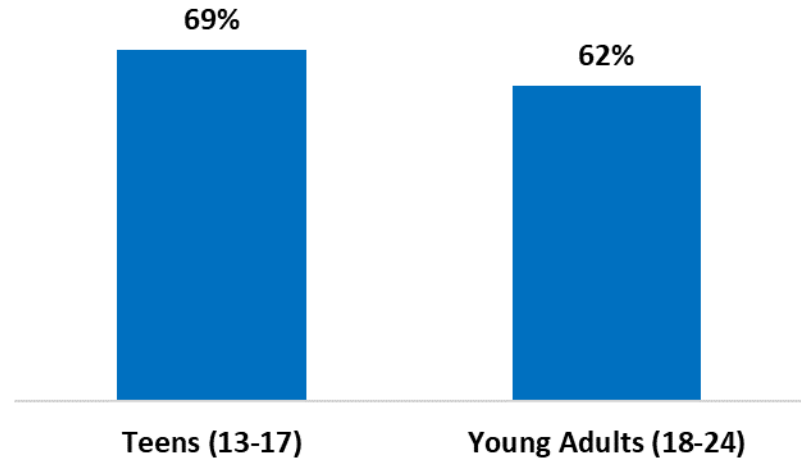
*\*15x more fentanyl-involved deaths than heroin in 2021 for this age group<sup>2</sup>*



# Convert a Risk Factor into a Protective Factor

- *“Historically, an individual's perception of the risks associated with substance use has been an important determinant of whether he or she engages in substance use. For example, youths who perceive high risk of harm are less likely to use drugs than youths who perceive low risk of harm.”*<sup>6</sup>
- *“Providing young adults with credible, accurate, and relevant information about the harm associated with substance use is a key component in prevention programming.”*<sup>7</sup>
- *“Young Adults are least concerned about the consequences of prescription drug misuse. They believe that these substances are generally used for legitimate purposes, and thus are not as harmful as other substances.”*<sup>8</sup>

## Less Likely to Consider Misusing Prescription Drugs after Receiving Targeted Information About Fentanyl & Counterfeit Pills<sup>4</sup>



*“Those who know the dangers of fentanyl are significantly less likely to consider misusing Rx drugs in the future”*<sup>5</sup>

# Warn the Kids - (not on your website in adult speak)

## Raise Awareness Fast...

- Primary prevention resources lag the synthetic shift
- Must reach the universal population at least down to middle school
- Fentanyl & counterfeit knowledge critical (+ signs of an OD, Naloxone)

## Where they are, in their language

Song for Charlie Presents: "Fentanyls - You Need to Know" - ENGLISH

**¡NO PÍLDORAS AL AZAR PÍLDORAS!**  
UNA PÍLDORA PUEDE SER FATAL

30

M

ESTO ES LO QUE ESTÁ SUCEDIENDO

¿QUÉ ESTÁ EL PROBLEMA?

¿QUÉ ESTÁ EL PELIGRO?

APRENDE MÁS. ¡DILE A TUS AMIGOS!

*CDC (12.15.2022): "Urgent efforts to prevent overdose deaths among adolescents are needed and include...educating about dangers of IMFs and counterfeit pills."<sup>9</sup>*

## Song for Charlie

- <http://www.songforcharlie.org>
- [Impact Videos & PSAs](#)
- [Posters/Flyers/Soc. Media Assets](#)
- [Middle School/High School Toolkit](#)
- [College Toolkit](#)
- [Facts about Fentanyl](#)
- [Current Data](#)
- Find us @Song for Charlie on: Snap, FB, Insta, TikTok, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn

## Other Resources

- [CADCA: Practical Theorist on Fentanyl](#)
- [U.S. Dept of Ed: Knowing the Facts About Fentanyl](#)
- [U.S. Dept of Ed: Preventing and Addressing Fentanyl Use](#)
- [Ad Council: Drop the F Bomb](#)
- [Ad Council: Real Deal on Fentanyl](#)
- [Ad Council: PSA's/Assets](#)
- [DEA: One Pill Can Kill](#)
- [CDC: Stop Overdose](#)
- [Arizona SACLAZ: Fentanyl Toolkit](#)
- [King County, WA: Talk Even If](#)
- [King County, WA: Laced & Lethal](#)
- [Connecticut Prevention: You Think You Know](#)
- [Oregon/Idaho HIDTA: Community Threat Bulletin](#)
- [Oregon Health Authority: School Toolkit](#)
- [Beaverton S.D.: Fake & Fatal](#)

# Thank You!



[realtalk@songforcharlie.org](mailto:realtalk@songforcharlie.org)

# End Notes

1. University of Michigan. (2022). 1975-2021 Data for In-School Surveys of 8th, 10th, and 12th Grade Students. Monitoring the future. Retrieved May 15, 2022, from <https://monitoringthefuture.org/data/21data.htm> \*Trends by Reporting Interval, Tables for All Three Grades Combined, Annual Drug Use. "Any illicit drug other than marijuana".
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System, Mortality 1999-2020 and Provisional Mortality on CDC WONDER Online Database. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2020 and from provisional data for years 2021-2022, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-icd10.html> & <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-icd10-provisional.html> in Oct, 2022 \* NCHS has defined selected causes of death groups for analysis of all ages mortality data. "Drug poisoning (overdose)" deaths are identified by the ICD if any one of the following ICD-10 codes, indicating poisoning by drugs, medicaments, and biological substances, is in the underlying cause of death: X40–X44 (unintentional), X60–X64 (suicide), X85 (assault), and Y10–Y14 (undetermined intent). ICD-10 allows for the identification of specific drug classes in overdoses by the ICD-10 codes T36–T50, "Poisoning by drugs, medicaments, and biological substances." Drug overdose & poisoning deaths involving selected drug categories are identified by specific multiple cause-of-death codes: heroin (T40.1); natural opioid analgesics, including morphine and codeine, and semisynthetic opioids, including drugs such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, and oxymorphone (T40.2); methadone, a synthetic opioid (T40.3); synthetic opioid analgesics other than methadone, including drugs such as fentanyl and tramadol (T40.4); cocaine (T40.5); Benzodiazepines (T42.4), and psychostimulants with abuse potential, which includes methamphetamine (T43.6). "Fentanyl-involvement" is (MCD T40.4/All drug overdose deaths). "Fentanyl-only" uses (Any T40.4) minus (Any T40.4 + any involvement of T40.1 and/or T40.2 and/or T40.3, and/or T40.5, and/or T42.4 and/or T43.6). "Fentanyl +" is total drug deaths minus Fentanyl-only deaths. Multiple drugs may be involved in one drug death. Death rates, where used, are per 100K population and growth uses death rates, not counts, unless otherwise noted.
3. Drug Enforcement Agency (2022). *Fake Pills Fact Sheet*. One Pill Can Kill. Retrieved December 14, 2022, from [https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2022-07/DEA-OPCK\\_FactSheet-07262022.pdf](https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2022-07/DEA-OPCK_FactSheet-07262022.pdf)
4. Song for Charlie (2022, November 2). *Song for Charlie: Youth Fentanyl Survey – Fall 2022*. Retrieved November 10, 2022, from <https://www.songforcharlie.org/post/song-for-charlie-youth-fentanyl-survey-fall-2022>
5. Song for Charlie (2022, November 2). *Key Findings from Research on Dangers of Counterfeit Drugs and Fentanyl among Teens and Young Adults (10.2022)*. Retrieved November 10, 2022, from [https://89faea1f-4bca-418b-930f-c1d2a3e99c7d.usfiles.com/ugd/89faea\\_974648e12a1140dd96bafbe1d8bb4f5c.pdf](https://89faea1f-4bca-418b-930f-c1d2a3e99c7d.usfiles.com/ugd/89faea_974648e12a1140dd96bafbe1d8bb4f5c.pdf)
6. Lipari, R. and Jean-Francois, B. *Trends in perception of risk and availability of substance use among full-time college students*. The CBHSQ Report: August 16, 2016. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, MD. [https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/report\\_2418/ShortReport-2418.html](https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/report_2418/ShortReport-2418.html)
7. Palmgreen, P., & Donohew, L. (2006). Effective mass media strategies for drug abuse prevention campaigns. In Z. Sloboda & W. J. Bukoski (Eds.), *Handbook of drug abuse prevention* (pp. 27–43, Part II, *Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research series*). New York: Springer US.
8. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: *Substance Misuse Prevention for Young Adults*. Publication No. PEP19-PL-Guide-1 Rockville, MD: National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2019. <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/pep19-pl-guide-1.pdf>
9. Tanz LJ, Dinwiddie AT, Mattson CL, O'Donnell J, Davis NL. Drug Overdose Deaths Among Persons Aged 10–19 Years — United States, July 2019–December 2021. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2022;71:1576–1582. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7150a2>

# Supplementary Information

# “Warn the Kids” Research – Key Findings

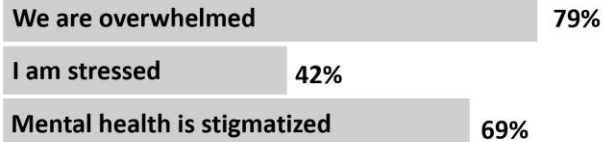
- 4 out of 5 young Americans say people their age feel overwhelmed
- Common stressors for young Americans include academics, social concerns, finances, and their future. Coping with stress & anxiety is a leading reason for young Americans to misuse prescription medication
- 16% of young Americans have misused prescription medicine, 22% have thought about it, and 20% say they are likely to or are unsure about misusing prescription medication in the future
- 89% of young Americans feel that misusing prescription medicine is ‘risky’, but only 68% consider taking Rx opioids off script as ‘dangerous’ (even less for benzos (eg Xanax) and stimulants (eg Adderall))
- Less than half (48%) of young Americans – including just more than a third (36%) of teens – are aware that fentanyl is being used to create counterfeit pills
- Only 2 in 5 young Americans consider themselves knowledgeable about fentanyl. 68% consider fentanyl to be dangerous, far less than heroin (84%) and cocaine (81%) even though fentanyl is involved in 17x more deaths than heroin and 5x more than cocaine. Nearly 20% of young Americans don’t know enough about fentanyl to rate its danger.
- After reviewing targeted information about fentanyl in fake pills, 65% of young Americans are less likely to consider misusing Rx drugs
- Those who know the dangers of fentanyl are significantly less likely to consider misusing Rx drugs in the future

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# “Typical” Gen Z (Age 13-24)

## Gen Z says...



- Top stressors: **Academics, social, financial, future**
- Top reasons to misuse Rx: **Party, coping, image...experiment**

## Prescription medication ‘off script’



- **16% of Gen Z have misused prescription medicine; studies show Rx misuse is 5-10x higher than heroin or cocaine by this age group\***
- **20% of Gen Z say they are likely to or are unsure if they might in the future**

From research commissioned by Song for Charlie & executed by Breakwater Strategy. Full results available @ <https://www.songforcharlie.org/data>. Interviews conducted online 8.19.22 - 9.30.22 among a nationwide sample of 1,500 Young Americans aged 13-24 and delivered under the report: "Youth Fantasy Survey - Fall 2022". Sample included n=612 Teens (ages 13-17) and n=888 Young Adults (ages 18-24). Reference to Gen Z includes all respondents ages 13-24. Teens refers to respondents ages 13-17, and Young Adults refers to respondents ages 18-24. Parental consent was required for minors between the ages of 13-17 before participation in the survey. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of +2.5 percentage points @ 90% confidence level and larger for subgroups. Some percentages may add to more or less than 100% due to rounding. Quotas and weights were used to ensure national demographic representations among this age cohort. Comparisons to 2021 are based on data from original instrument used in "Research on Dangers of Counterfeit Drugs Among Teens and Young Adults" commissioned by Song Inc. & executed by Morning Consult, 10.2021. "Dangerous" refers to a response of 7+ out of 10 where 10 is "extremely dangerous". "Stressed" refers to a response of 7+ out of 10 where 10 is "extremely stressed". \*Death involvement comparisons use deaths with ICD10-MCC code T40.4 vs. those with T40.1, T40.2, T40.4, T40.5 for full year 2021 reported as of 10.22 @ <https://seemiller.cdc.gov/docs/default/03/professional.html>. Comparison to heroin & cocaine use estimated from NIDA/KDC/SAMHSA publications such as Monitoring the Future & Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

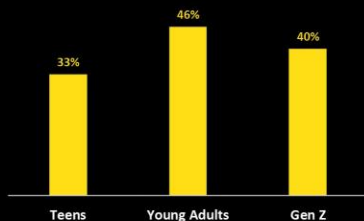
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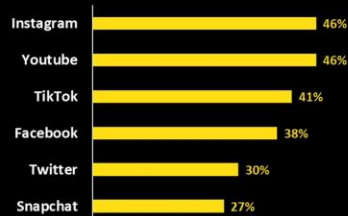


# Where and How to “Warn the Kids”

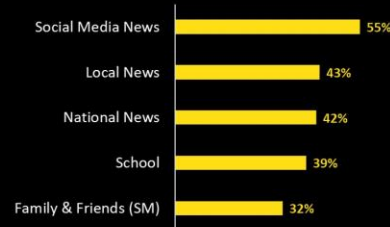
## Seen PSA/Ads on Social Media:



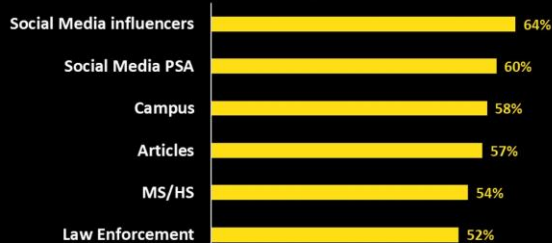
## Seen on:



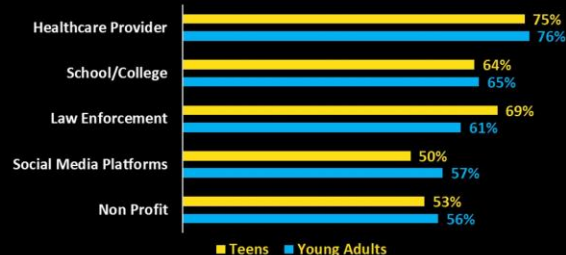
## General Awareness from:



## Receptivity



## Trust



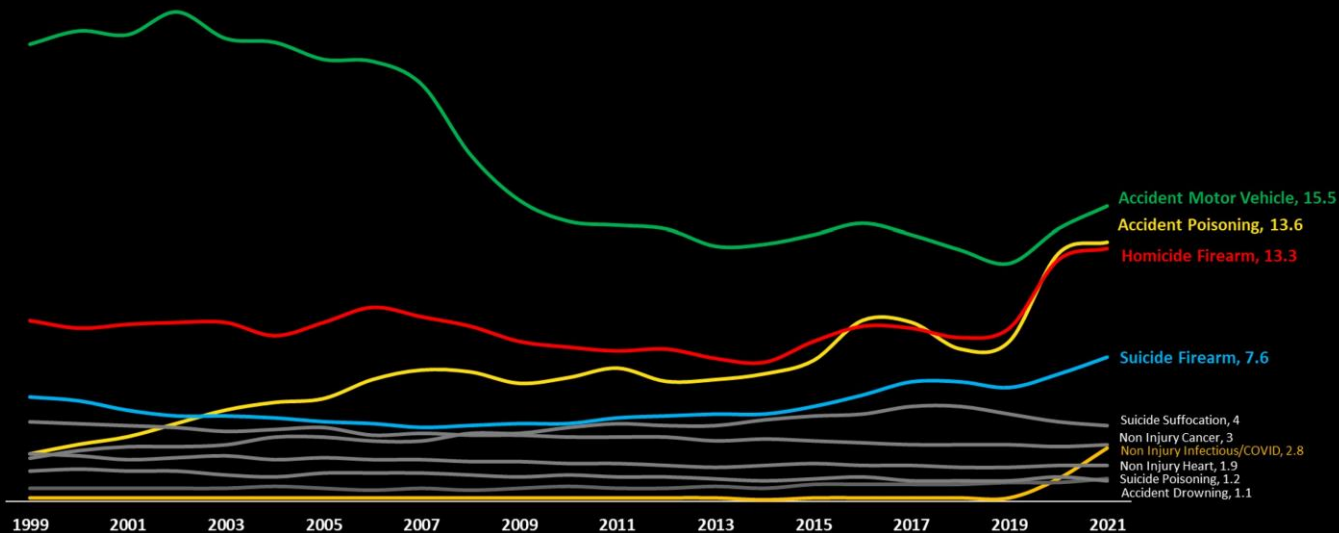
From research commissioned by Song for Charlie & executed by Breakwater Strategy. Full results available @ <https://www.songforcharlie.org/data>. Interviews conducted online 8.18.22 – 9.30.22 among a nationwide sample of 1,500 Young Americans aged 13-24 and delivered under the report: “Youth Fentanyl Survey – Fall 2022”. Sample included n=612 Teens (ages 13-17) and n=888 Young Adults (ages 18-24). Reference to Gen Z includes all respondents ages 13-24. Teens refers to respondents ages 13-17, and Young Adults refers to respondents ages 18-24. Parental consent was required for minors between the ages of 13-17 before participation in the survey. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of +2.5 percentage points @ 95% confidence level and larger for subgroups. Some percentages may add to more or less than 100% due to rounding. Quotes and weights were used to ensure national demographic representations among this age cohort. Comparisons to 2021 are based on data from original instrument used in “Research on Dangers of Counterfeit Drugs Among Teens and Young Adults” commissioned by Snap Inc. & executed by Morning Consult, 10.2021. “Dangerous” refers to a response of 7+ out of 10 where 10 is “extremely dangerous”. “Stressed” refers to a response of 7+ out of 10 where 10 is “extremely stressed”.  
\*Death involvement comparisons uses deaths with ICD10-MCD code T40.4 vs. those with T40.1, T40.2, T40.4, T42.4, T43.6 for full year 2021 reported as of 10.22 @ <https://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-cd10-provisional.html>. Comparison to heroin & cocaine use estimated from NIDA/CDC/SAMHSA publications such as Monitoring the Future & Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

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# What is Preventable?

U.S. Youth Leading Causes of Death by Intent & Mechanism  
Age 14-23 (accident = unintentional & undetermined)

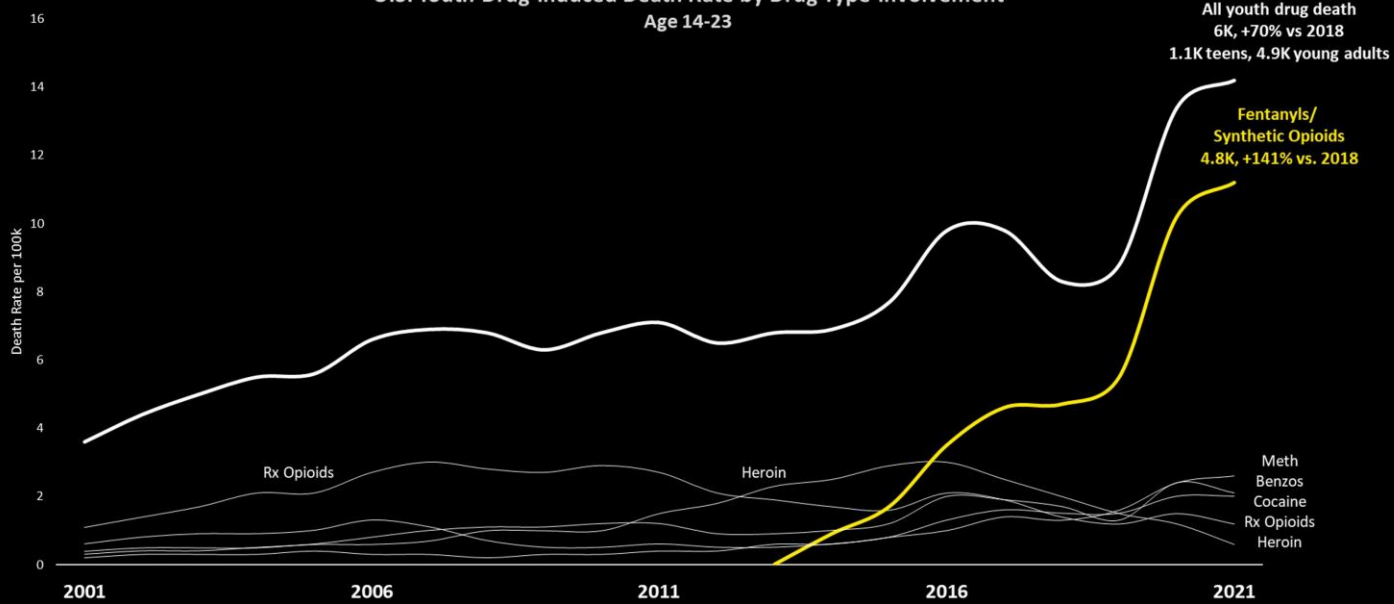


Derived from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System on CDC WONDER Online Database. Data are provisional for years 2021-2022 and final for 1999-2020 from Multiple Cause of Death files as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Provisional data for 2021 may change until "12-2022. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-ud10-provisional.html> & <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-ud10.html> in Oct. 2022. All data are reported, not predicted. NCHS has defined selected causes of death groups for analysis of age-specific mortality data. "Drug poisoning (overdose)" deaths are identified by the ICD-10 codes, indicating poisoning by drugs, medications, and biological substances, in the underlying cause of death, X40-44 (unintentional), X50-59 (suicide), and Y10-14 (undetermined intent). ICD-10 allows for the identification of specific drug classes as overcodes by the ICD-10 codes T36-T50. "Poisoning by drugs, medications, and biological substances." "Drug overdose & poisoning" deaths involving selected drug categories are identified by specific multiple cause-of-death codes: heroin (T40.1); natural opiate analgesics, including morphine and codeine, and semisynthetic opiates, including drugs such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, and tramadol (T40.2); methadone, a synthetic opiate (T40.3); synthetic opiate analgesics other than methadone, including drugs such as fentanyl and tramadol (T40.3); benzodiazepines (T42.4); and psychostimulants with abuse potential, which include methylphenidate (T43.0); "No Drugs" cases: T40-T43.9; "Fentanyl/synthetic opiate involvement" uses T40.4; "benzopi" % of all drug deaths" is (MCD T40.4/Drug overdose deaths); "Fentanyl only" uses drug T40.4 minus drug T40.4 in any involvement of T40.1 and/or T40.2 in T40.3, and/or T40.1 and/or T40.3; Multiple drugs may be involved in one drug death. Death rates, where used, are per 100K population and growth rates, death rates, not counts, unless otherwise noted.

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# A New Landscape

U.S. Youth Drug-induced Death Rate by Drug Type-involvement  
Age 14-23

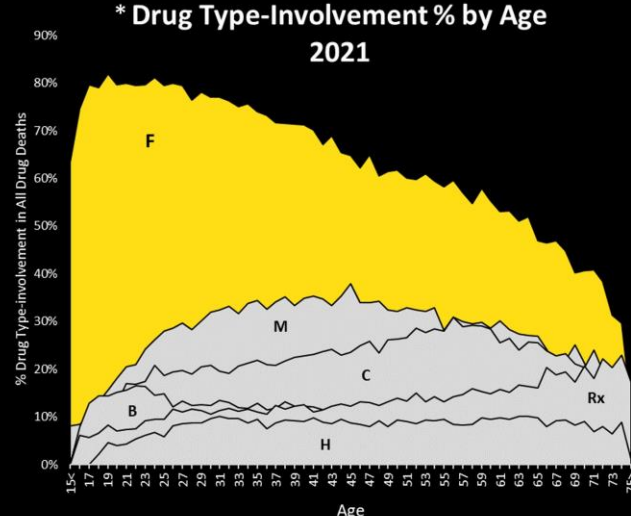
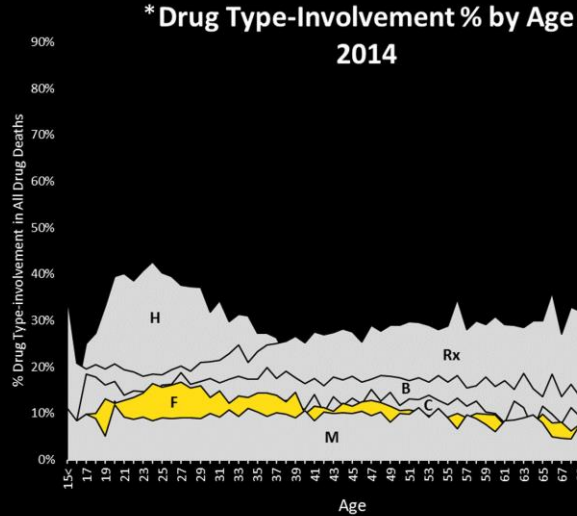


Sourced from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System on CDC WONDER Online Database. Data are provisional for years 2021-2022 and final for 1999-2020 from Multiple Cause of Death files as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Provisional data for 2021 may change until 11/2/2022. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-oid10-provisional.html> and <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-oid10.html> in Oct, 2022. All data are reported, not predicted. NCHS has defined selected causes of death groups for analysis of all ages mortality data. "Drug poisoning (overdoses)" deaths are identified by the ICD if any one of the following ICD-10 codes, indicating poisoning by drugs, medicaments, and biological substances, is in the underlying cause of death: X44-444 (intentional), X45 (accidental), X46 (assault), and T40-T44 (unintentional poisonings). ICD-10 allows for the identification of specific drug classes as evidenced by the ICD-10 codes T36-T39. "Poisoning by drugs, medicaments, and biological substances." Drug overdose and poisoning deaths involving a specific drug category are assigned by specific multiple cause of death codes: heroin (T40.1) intentional overdoses, including morphine and cocaine, and synthetic opioids, including drugs such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, tramadol, and carboxylates (T40.2); methadone, a synthetic opioid (T40.3); synthetic opioid analgesics other than methadone, including drugs such as buprenorphine and tramadol (T40.4); cocaine (T40.5); benzodiazepines (T40.6); and paracetamols with abuse potential, which include methamphetamine (T40.6). "No Opioids" uses T40.2+T40.3, "Fentanyl/Synthetic opioid involvement" uses (MCD) T40.4+Drug overdose deaths. "Fentanyl-only" uses (MCD) T40.4 minus (MCD) T40.4 + any involvement of T40.1 and/or T40.2 + T40.3, and/or T40.5 and/or T40.6 and/or T40.8). Multiple drugs may be involved in one drug death. Death rates, where used, are per 100K population and growth rate death rates, not counts, unless otherwise noted.

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# Fentanyl's Growth, Multi-substance, Youth Impact



\*Will sum to greater than 100% because multiple substances can be involved in one death

H = Heroin (T40.1)  
C = Cocaine (T40.5)

Rx = Prescription Opioids (T40.2)  
B = Benzos (T42.4)

F = Fentanyl's/Synthetic Opioids (T40.4)  
M = Methamphetamine (T43.6)

Derived from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System on CDC WONDER Online Database. Data are provisional for years 2020-2022 and final for 1999-2020 from Multiple Cause of Death Files as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Provisional data for 2021 may change until "12-2022. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/multi-cause-of-death-overview.html> & <http://wonder.cdc.gov/multi-cause-of-death-overview.html> in Oct. 2022. All data are reported, not processed. NCHS has defined selected causes of death groups for analysis of all-ages mortality data. "Drug poisoning (overdose)" deaths are identified by the ICD-10 code of any one of the following ICD-10 codes, indicating poisoning by drugs, medications, and biological substances, as in the underlying cause of death: T40-T44 (poisoning), T48-T49 (poisoning), and T50-T54 (underdosed intent). ICD-10 allows for the identification of specific drug classes in overdoses by the ICD-10 codes T40-T45. "Poisoning by drugs, medications, and biological substances." Drug overdose & poisoning deaths involving selected drug categories are identified by specific multiple cause-of-death codes: Heroin (T40.1), natural opiate analgesics, including morphine and cocaine, and synthetic opiates, including drugs such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, and tramadol (T40.2); methadone, a synthetic opiate (T40.3); synthetic opiates other than methadone, including drugs such as buprenorphine and fentanyl (T40.4); cocaine (T40.5); Benzodiazepines (T42.4); and psychotropics with abuse potential, which include methamphetamine (T43.6). "Rx (opioid)" uses T40.2-T40.3. "Fentanyl/Synthetic opioid-involvement" uses T40.4. "Fentanyl" % of all drug deaths" is (MCD) T40.4/Drug overdose deaths). "Fentanyl-only" uses (any T40.4) minus (any T40.4 + any involvement of T40.1 and/or T40.2 + T40.3, and/or T40.5 and/or T42.4 and/or T43.6). Multiple drugs may be involved in one drug death. Death rates, where used, are per 100K population and growth rates death rates, not counts, unless otherwise noted.

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